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The Licensing, Preparation, and Role of High School Department Chairs

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Walden University
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Abstract

The Licensing, Preparation, and Role of High School Department Chairs

by

Gina Mathews

CAGS, Bridgewater State University, 2006

MAT, Emmanuel College, 1998

BS, St. Michael's College, 1991

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Limited existing research indicates that high school department chairs may not be prepared to fulfill their duties because of varying role descriptions and training. This qualitative comparative layered case study examined the alignment of high school department chairs' contextual intelligence in an eastern seaboard region of the United States from 3 perspectives: (a) school districts' role descriptions, (b) local universities' leadership courses, and (c) a state's education department's licensure requirements. Sternberg's contextual intelligence, the learned skill of decision-making based on past experiences, present settings, and future ideals, conceptually framed this study. The primary research question explored the extent to which conceptual similarities existed amongst those perspectives. Purposeful, chain, and stratified sampling techniques were used. Institutions' public email addresses were used to request participation from 10 education professors, 21 high school department chairs, and 41 school departments. Three education professors and 4 department chairs participated in semistructured interviews. The education department's website and 6 school districts provided artifact data. Inductive and deductive content analysis strategies were used to identify, compare, and triangulate themes. Findings suggest that state department's licensure requirements for supervisor/director align with local universities' leadership courses but may not align with local school districts' department chair role descriptions. Thus, participating school districts may need to revisit role descriptions. These findings may promote positive social change by influencing school districts, universities, and a state's education department to continue to recognize and develop high school department chairs' contextual intelligence.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Contextual intelligence, as defined by Sternberg (1984, 1997), is the ability to adapt and make decisions based on past experiences, current perceptions, and an ideal future that is agreeable within the cultural setting. Contextual intelligence is a necessary skill for those in leadership positions and can be learned (Brown, 2002; Kutz, 2008; Sternberg, 1997). For the ensuing study, I investigated the alignment between high school department chair role descriptions, preparatory coursework, and licensing in an eastern seaboard state of the United States with respect to decision making based on past experiences, current perceptions, and an ideal future that is agreeable among constituents. Previous researchers have concluded that the success of those in the middle management position of department chair may be inhibited because of the identified lack in detailed role descriptions and preparation (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Inman, 2009; Nguyen, 2012). The state in which the study was conducted offers a supervisor/director license for high school department chairs. License requirements included leadership coursework and practicum hours. However, leadership coursework for this middle management position may need to be aligned more with current job descriptions in an effort to assist high school department chairs in successfully attending to the needs of upper administration, departmental faculty, students, and parents (Eager Sirkis, 2011). Therefore, higher education institutions may need to evaluate leadership coursework to ensure the success of department chairs serving as middle managers in education.

The results of this study supplement the limited body of research regarding department chairs and describe the alignment of department chair duties, leadership program offerings, and licensure requirements with respect to the contextual intelligence necessary for success in this middle management position. The conclusions from this study may influence stakeholders to reflect upon current credentials perceived as necessary for potential high school department chairs and the manner in which candidates earn such credentials. Aligning role descriptions, preparation courses, and licensure of high school department chairs may help prospective department chairs succeed and may also help systems use department chair teams to increase student learning and create positive school climates. This research may benefit local high schools, local higher education institutions, and a state's department of education, by bettering preparation practices and ensuring the success of department chairs in the state where this research took place. I aimed to create positive social change by inspiring continued recognition and development of high school department chairs' contextual intelligence through increased collaboration by school districts, higher education institutions, and a state's department of education.

I engaged in a conceptually framed qualitative case study based on Sternberg's (1984, 1997) idea of contextual intelligence. I investigated the alignment of the high school department chairs' contextual intelligences within role descriptions, leadership training opportunities, and licensure in an eastern seaboard community. I collected both interview and artifact data in an effort to address a gap in research regarding the high school department chair role and training for the role's contextual intelligences. This

research may increase communication amongst stakeholders regarding middle level administrators and their professional development needs. Although the study has limitations, future researchers may be able to further the findings of this study in their own geographic area.

Background

Inman (2009), as well as Anderson and Nixon (2010), concluded that the lack of training opportunities in conjunction with scant job descriptions may hinder potential department chairs' success. Researchers who examined the roles of department chairs and teacher leaders in secondary schools and universities found little congruence amongst employers' department chair role descriptions (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Feeney, 2009; Inman, 2009). It stands to reason that the lack of general consensus and clarity for the department chair role may impact the creation of formal training opportunities that address contextual intelligence for department chairs negatively (Inman, 2009). Contextual intelligence may be learned if a program addresses the realities of the middle management position (Brown, 2002). Inman observed that, at the university level, those promoted to department chair usually learned role obligations experientially. In other words, Inman found the norm for professional educators promoted to the middle management position of department chair was to learn most job responsibilities while executing job tasks and attending conferences in lieu of formal training.

Formal leadership and managerial training geared towards the realities of the department chair role may assist department chairs and increase the probability of their success (Brown, 2002; Inman, 2009). Although department chairs may need intimate

knowledge of departmental members' duties in an effort to assist and lead employees, assisting and leading employees requires additional skillsets in leadership and management. Unfortunately, researchers found that, in businesses and schools alike, middle managers frequently earned their promotions because they excelled at departmental duties not because they displayed leadership skills (Inman, 2009; Thompson, Purdy, & Summers, 2008). Researchers routinely noted the shortsightedness of those who promoted employees without vetting them for managerial and leadership potential (Inman, 2009; Thompson et al., 2008). For example, at the university level, Inman (2009) found that those offered the department chair position were typically those who excelled in their research efforts. However, excellent research skills may not indicate excellent managerial and leadership potential (Inman, 2009). Many department chairs may not be well suited for the managerial and leadership role and not have the skillset necessary to embrace change aimed at improving student learning. In addition to clearly stated job descriptions, schools may also find it beneficial to include a listing of pertinent managerial and leadership skills, skills that may assist middle managers in succeeding.

Identifying job duties along with pertinent skills may assist school principals in addition to potential department chairs. For example, Conway and Monks (2011) found that middle managers need to manage larger workloads than in their previous positions, not just different workloads. However, the researchers also found that upper managers failed to disclose the additional workload expectations to middle management candidates (Conway & Monks, 2011). Conway and Monks identified the lack of disclosure as the probable provocation to the stress experienced by middle managers who found the

additional workload to be problematic. If upper managers and school administrators engage current middle managers and department chairs to create rich job descriptions by identifying responsibilities, implicit and explicit, as well as necessary leadership and managerial skills, middle managers' stress may lessen. Well-defined job descriptions may enable employees the opportunity to reflect on their current roles and goals in conjunction with their personal lives to assess if they may find success as a middle manager.

In addition to employees recognizing their own potential, rich job descriptions may help upper managers and school administrators to identify potential middle management candidates. Upper managers and school administrators need middle managers who can realize an increased workload successfully while leading change initiatives. Implementing change effectively, researchers found, was a vital component to the middle management position in both business and education (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011; Mantere, 2008; Melville, Bartley, & Weinburgh, 2012; Wang, 2010). Middle managers may need to understand that they assist in shaping their environment purposely towards a common goal (Sternberg, 1984 1997). School administrators should vet department chair candidates for their communication, leadership, and management skills in lieu of promoting educators based solely on their success as a classroom teacher or researcher (Inman, 2009; Nguyen, 2012; Thompson et al., 2008).

Success as a classroom teacher or researcher may not directly translate into success as a department chair or middle manager. Although department chairs, as well as middle managers in business, work with numerous stakeholders, Inman (2009) found that

available training opportunities vary between the two groups of middle managers. Inman found that higher education institutions offer a variety of programs to train business professionals for various leadership positions, but these same institutions lack similar programs for educators. The creation of leadership programs geared towards educators interested in the department chair role may not only improve department chair teams, but such programs may also increase the likelihood of implementing change initiatives.

However, higher education institutions need to know role expectations for department chairs to create meaningful leadership programs that aim to develop contextual intelligence for those aspiring to become a department chair. In some states, departments of education offer licensing for middle level educational leaders; however, middle level leaders' duties may differ amongst various school districts (Martin & Coleman, 2011). Martin and Coleman (2011) highlighted that even when licensure is available, clear role descriptions are lacking for middle level leaders in education. Role descriptions of middle level educational leaders, department chairs, and teacher leaders, may need to be created and communicated to both state departments of education and higher educational institutions for them to offer meaningful leadership programs for these jobs (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Feeney, 2009). As Machado (2012) noted, higher education institutions must continuously examine leadership programs' alignment with the needs of those they serve, local schools.

Research indicated the existence of a need to investigate the contextual intelligences of department chairs from the perspectives of local schools, higher education institutions, and a state's department of education. The needs of local schools

should influence the coursework that department chairs engage in while pursuing licensure as a supervisor/director. With this study, I examined contextual intelligences of department chairs and how it is addressed by local schools, higher education institutions, and a state's department of education. I informed stakeholders of the results in an effort to increase awareness of contextual intelligences and the need to develop them purposively in order to increase the probability of department chairs finding success. I also added to the limited body of research that exists regarding the high school department chair for others to use and extend upon in their own geographic regions.

Problem Statement

With this research study, I aimed to investigate the development of the contextual intelligences high school department chairs need to be successful. The high school department chair role uses contextual intelligences while working with administrators, teachers, parents, and students. However, little research exists regarding the development of contextual intelligence for department chair candidates.

The research that does exist highlights a lack of clear standards and contextual intelligence training for the department chair role (Inman, 2009). Additionally, according to researchers, there exists a need for schools to create role descriptions and higher education institutions to use those role descriptions and create contextual learning opportunities for department chairs (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Inman, 2009).To address this need, I investigated high school department chairs' contextual intelligence as perceived by school districts, higher education leadership programs, and a state's

department of education. This research may increase training opportunities geared towards the department chair role specifically.

Inman (2009) concluded that middle level educational leaders may not realize their potential because the lack of clear job descriptions makes creating meaningful training opportunities difficult. Both Anderson and Nixon (2010), in a Scottish secondary school, and Feeney (2009), in an American high school, highlighted the lack of clear job descriptions while investigating the role of teacher leaders and department chairs. They surmised that the lack of clear job descriptions may impede an employee's ability to meet the demands of the job and, because of this, middle level educational leaders may not realize their leadership potential (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Feeney, 2009). Inman supported and broadened the findings of Feeney and Anderson and Nixon while investigating middle level leaders in higher education. Inman concluded that due to the lack of leadership training opportunities, newly appointed department chairs learned job expectations after beginning their tenure in the position.

However, learning job expectations while on the job without the benefit of a formal contextual training program may translate into a less successful and more stressed middle manager. Inman (2009), who researched department chairs in higher education, and Thompson et al. (2008), who researched middle managers in a business setting, observed that employers often promote subordinates because of their high skill level, not because they exhibit leadership potential. They concluded that employees skilled at job specific tasks may not have necessary managerial and leadership skills to succeed as a middle manager (Inman, 2009; Thompson et al., 2008). Employees interested in pursuing

a middle management position may need contextual intelligence training to increase the probability of their success. Therefore, with this qualitative, layered case study, I examined role descriptions for high school department chairs and compared those role descriptions to the expectations of the state and leadership preparation courses that universities offered to determine alignment of perceived necessary contextual intelligences. I aimed to inform a state department of education, education leadership programs, and school districts as to the alignment of each stakeholder's perception. This research addressed the gap in the literature regarding high school department chairs' contextual intelligence training for both practitioners and researchers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, comparative case study was to examine the alignment of the high school department chair role, contextual preparation for the role, and middle level leadership licensure practices through content analysis (Patton, 2002). I compared role descriptions to the expectations of a department of education's licensure division and leadership preparation courses offered by accredited universities to determine alignment. The comparison highlighted the alignment of perceptions regarding high school department chairs' contextual intelligences. I identified areas in which all three stakeholders' perceptions coincide and areas in which communication amongst the stakeholders may need to increase. I investigated if contextual intelligences in the high school department chair role descriptions, leadership coursework, and licensure requirements align. With the research, I informed a state's department of education, education leadership programs, and school districts as to the perceived alignment of

contextual intelligence competencies necessary for the role according to role descriptions, preparatory coursework, and state expectations. I aimed to create positive social change by inspiring continued recognition and development of high school department chairs' contextual intelligence through increased collaboration by school districts, higher education institutions, and a state's department of education.

Research Questions

My primary research question asked if there was conceptual similarity among these units of analysis: job descriptions of high school department chairpersons, department of education expectations of these chairpersons, and coursework undertaken at accredited universities that prepare these chairpersons to be successful. The results of this research may inform school districts, state department of education licensure entities, and education leadership programs in helping chairpersons succeed. The following secondary research questions guided investigations into each unit of analysis to identify themes to answer the primary research question:

1. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are present in the high school department chairperson job description?

2. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do high school department chairpersons frequently use?

3. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are considered in department of education procedures for licensing high school department chairpersons?

4. How does the department of elementary and secondary education perceive the role of department chairs in high schools?

5. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do university faculty incorporate into coursework that prepares future high school department chairpersons to be successful?

6. Is there alignment between what university faculty believe is the role of a high school department chairperson and the chairperson's job description?

Conceptual Framework

This research was framed within Sternberg's (1984, 1997) concept of contextual intelligence and previous researcher findings. Sternberg defined contextual intelligence as the ability to adjust and make decisions based on past experiences, current perceptions, and an ideal vision within a cultural setting. Sternberg, Brown (2002), and Kutz (2008) identified contextual intelligence as a necessary skill for leaders that can be learned. As Kutz noted, leaders need to be able to understand the context in which events happen, extrapolate pertinent information regarding the context, then synthesize previously learned knowledge with current events and a culture's ideal vision when making decisions. I evaluated perspectives regarding high school department chairs' contextual intelligence from three units of analysis: (a) various school districts' high school department chair role descriptions, (b) local colleges and universities, and (c) the state department of education.

The state department of education in this study offered educators a supervisor/director's license for middle leadership positions such as department chair and lead teacher. The licensure requirements included both advanced coursework and a practicum experience. Local colleges and universities offered leadership courses and

practicum experiences for educators interested in the high school department chair position. Therefore, a relationship amongst the units of analysis was assumed to exist. For example, because the department of education offered a supervisor/director license, then it was reasonable to assume that licensed educators possess the necessary contextual intelligence as well as leadership and management skills to perform as a middle level administrator. Additionally, given that local colleges and universities offered leadership coursework for aspiring middle level administrators, it was reasonable to assume that local colleges and universities aligned coursework with both the department of education licensure requirements and local high school department chair role descriptions. However, researchers concluded that department chair role descriptions lack clarity and congruence (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Feeney, 2009; Inman, 2009). The lack of clear standards may inhibit higher education institutions from creating leadership preparation courses aimed to assist aspiring department chairs in developing contextual intelligence aligned with local job descriptions while meeting licensure requirements.

Although limited research existed regarding the high school department chair, those who have conducted research on middle level education administrators identified the importance of the interdependence amongst licensing agencies, higher education institutions, and role descriptions. For example, Inman (2009) concluded that the lack of clear job descriptions for department chairs may be the principal cause for the lack of leadership training programs created to prepare prospective department chairs. Inman, as well as Nguyen (2012), reasoned that leadership training programs for potential department chairs may increase the probability that, once in the role, they will realize

their leadership potential. Both Nguyen and Inman's conclusions support Johnson and Uline's (2005) research that highlighted the value of meaningful training programs for educational leaders. Thus, I investigated the alignment between department chair role descriptions and leadership training courses for high school department chairs. Additionally, I researched how a department of education's license for this middle management position, called the supervisor/director license, aligned with role descriptions and preparation coursework. I engaged in content analysis by analyzing textual data consisting of interview transcripts and documents to identify patterns and themes to determine alignment (Patton, 2002).

In the past, researchers indicated the significance of aligning licensure, leadership training, and role descriptions. For example, Davis, Erickson, Kinsey, Lindsey, Moore-Steward, Padover, and Wise (2010) noted the importance of creating educator licenses that reflect the preparedness and contextual intelligence of those in leadership positions. I aimed to add to previous researchers' findings by examining the alignment of department chair role descriptions, leadership training programs, and state department licensing policies. This study's conceptual framework was based on potential relationships, Sternberg's (1984, 1997) contextual intelligence, and previous researchers' findings.

Nature of the Study

With this conceptually framed study, I aimed to determine the level of alignment, at the time of the study, amongst local schools' department chair role descriptions, local universities' leadership program offerings, and a state department of education's supervisor/director license. Specifically, I investigated how each stakeholder addresses

contextual intelligences for high school department chairs. Creswell (2013) and Patton (2002) defined a case as a finite event, circumstance, or processes encountered by an individual or group of individuals, regardless of size. Therefore, case study researchers endeavor to examine these situations or processes experienced by an individual or group. I collected high school department chair role descriptions from various local school districts and interviewed three high school department chairs. I also interviewed three education professors from accredited institutes of higher education. From the state's department of education website and the state's executive office of education website, I collected artifact data regarding licensure. By collecting data from numerous sources with various perspectives, I engaged in a layered case study to determine the alignment amongst local high schools' department chair role descriptions, local universities' leadership program offerings, and a state department of education's supervisor/director license.

According to Creswell (2013) and Patton (2002), the layered case study approach enabled me to triangulate data during data analysis. I wrote a narrative description for each unit of analysis' perspective, a thematic analysis amongst the units of analysis, and a report of my interpretation of the themes. I conducted a content analysis of the textual data gathered to identify common themes and patterns (Patton, 2002). With the results of this study, I endeavored to add to the current research and inform the state department of education's licensing division, education leadership programs, and school districts on each stakeholder's perception of the high school department chair's role within the conceptual framework of Sternberg's (1984, 1997) contextual intelligence.

Definitions

The investigation into the role of the high school department chair required the following definitions:

Content analysis: The qualitative data analysis practice in which the researcher identifies commonalities, patterns, and themes within collected textual data (Patton, 2002).

Contextual intelligence: The ability to adjust and make decisions based on past experiences, current perceptions, and an ideal vision within a cultural setting (Sternberg, 1984, 1997).

High school department chair: A person responsible for direct supervision, curriculum development, and mentoring of teachers within an academic discipline (Feeney, 2009; Spillane & Kim, 2012).

Leadership programs: Higher education institutions' available coursework and practicum opportunities for educators interested in pursuing a supervisor/director license.

Licensing and licensure: The process required by a state's department of education to become certified as a supervisor/director.

Middle level educational leader: A person responsible for direct supervision, curriculum development, and mentoring of departmental faculty within an academic discipline but not limited to the high school setting.

Middle level managers: People who work in business and serve upper management, those on their team in a supervisory and mentoring capacity, as well as other middle managers (Thompson et al., 2008).

Role descriptions: Written job descriptions delineating duties required of department chairs (Inman, 2009).

University, *college*, and *higher education institutions*: Accredited 4-year institutions that offer graduate level leadership courses for educators.

Assumptions

For this study, I made assumptions regarding the relationship between local schools' role descriptions, higher education institutions' leadership programs, and a state's department of education licensing division. I assumed that the three stakeholders rely on one another. I assumed that each of the previously noted stakeholders affected the other two in such a fashion that open communication amongst stakeholders was necessary for all to function at capacity. These assumptions were made based on previous researchers' findings regarding the necessity of leadership training, clear job descriptions, and state level licensing to acknowledge teachers who pursue middle level administrative positions (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Davis et al., 2010; Feeney, 2009; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Inman, 2009; Johnson & Uline, 2005; Nguyen, 2012). The assumptions assisted in establishing the research problem and questions. The assumed relationship amongst the three stakeholders enabled me to focus my data collection and interpretation around their perceptions about high school department chairs' contextual intelligences. I engaged all three stakeholders in the data collection as well as informed them of my findings.

Scope and Delimitations

This qualitative case study was a comparative study to investigate the alignment between high school department chair role descriptions, leadership courses offered by local higher education institutions targeting contextual intelligence training, and the licensing department within the state's department of education. Ensuring alignment amongst these units of analysis may assist various stakeholders in performing their jobs well. For example, the conclusions in this study may assist higher education institutions create meaningful leadership courses for the unique needs of high school department chairs who tend to serve administrators, faculty members, parents, and students. As researchers have noted, many who assume middle management roles find themselves unprepared for the demands of the job and may not perform to their fullest potential (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Feeney, 2009; Inman, 2009).

Similar to researchers before me, I limited my study to the investigation of high school department chairs only. I did not investigate other middle management roles within schools such as lead teachers in elementary schools; nor did I investigate department chair roles at local higher education institutions. Although the conceptual framework may be applicable to lead teachers in elementary schools, this study was bounded by the limited population of high school department chairs. However, stakeholders in education systems that use department chairs and lead teachers may be able to use this research to initiate conversations. The case study may be transferable to school systems that employ lead teachers and department chairs.

Limitations

Although this case study may be transferable, it was also limited. Data collection was limited because of time constraints. For example, I limited the number of times I asked participants to engage in member checking. Additionally, data collection was limited by geography. Interviewees and the collection of artifact data were limited to one eastern seaboard city's surrounding area.

Because case studies are bounded by finite parameters, the research findings are limited in generalizability (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Additionally, I employed comparative data analysis strategies. I aimed to identify common themes not causal relationships. Therefore, I did not inform readers of cause and effect relationships in the results section. Instead, I aimed to apprise stakeholders of high school department chairs' contextual intelligences alignment amongst the three units of analysis and influence potential research projects.

The units of analysis' perceptions may also have been a limiting factor regarding the conclusions I derived from interview and artifact data. Participants supplied interview data regarding their perceptions. Although member checking occurred, alignment of participants' perceptions regarding contextual intelligences necessary for the department chair role were the foundation for identifying themes during data analysis. Additionally, my own perceptions may have influenced data analysis, creating a limitation. Transcription and member checking may have alleviated most bias in transcribed interview data and analysis; however, given that bias may be a limiting factor, I aimed to educate stakeholders, not create mandates. I offered talking points to stakeholders

regarding the middle management role of high school department chair in an effort to increase communication amongst stakeholders and empower department chairs.

Significance

Investigating alignment of the contextual intelligences for the high school department chair role amongst stakeholders may increase communication between a state's department of education licensing department, local higher education institutions, and local school districts. Open communication that encourages collegial discourse amongst stakeholders may influence higher education preparation programs designed for the middle management role of high school department chair. The role of high school department chair, an educational middle manager, is unique. However, Inman (2009) found that many new department chairs learn the job on the job because they do not have the opportunity to engage in a leadership program. Hence, by increasing communication amongst stakeholders, this research may assist higher education institutions in developing leadership programs for middle level administrative positions in schools. If leadership programs and licensure align regarding the perceived necessary contextual intelligences for department chairs, then the vetting of high school department chairs for leadership qualities may improve. As noted by researchers, many middle managers demonstrated great ability with departmental duties prior to their promotion but lacked the leadership and managerial skills necessary to succeed as a middle manager (Inman, 2009; Nguyen, 2012; Thompson et al., 2008). For example, as a servant to multiple stakeholders, department chairs need to create trusting atmospheres open to collegial discourse (Mantere, 2008; Raes, Heijltjes, Glunk, & Roe, 2011). Trust has been found to be the

cornerstone of a positive school climate (Rhodes, Stevens, & Hemmings, 2011). Leadership and licensure programs may need to reflect upon and review how they teach the previously stated contextual competency. Overall, I strove to improve school climates by informing stakeholders about the alignment of high school department chairs' contextual intelligences within role descriptions, preparation courses, and licensure.

Summary

I engaged in a conceptually framed qualitative case study based on Sternberg's (1984, 1997) idea of contextual intelligence. I investigated the alignment of the high school department chairs' contextual intelligences within role descriptions, leadership training opportunities, and licensure in an eastern seaboard community. I collected interview and artifact data from local schools, local higher education institutions, and a state's department of education. I engaged interviewees in transcript and member checking to decrease bias and increase validity. Additionally, I triangulated data within and amongst the units of analysis to increase validity during content analysis. I endeavored to create a valid and reliable report aimed at assisting stakeholders in communicating about this important middle management position within schools. In addition to results assisting stakeholders within school communities, I added to the limited the research regarding middle level school administrators, namely high school department chairs. I added to the limited research that exists concerning the high school department chair role, preparation, and licensure. This research may prompt an increase in communication amongst stakeholders regarding middle level administrators as well as further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

After reviewing the limited research available for department chairs in education databases, I researched middle managers in business databases because the high school department chair, similar to a middle manager in business, serves multiple stakeholders. Researchers concluded that middle managers in both academia and business are crucial to implementing change initiatives (Conway & Monks, 2011; Hanuscin, Rebello, & Sinha, 2012; Hope, 2010; Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011; Mantere, 2008; Raes et al., 2011; Wang, 2010). However, researchers identified the lack of clear role descriptions and formal training as problematic (Feeney, 2009; Inman, 2009). Additionally, researchers noted the importance of managers having contextual intelligence to succeed in leading others through reforms (Kutz, 2008). Therefore, there exists a need to investigate the importance of department chairs, their primary duties, contextual intelligences, and training needs from various perspectives. I conducted a conceptually framed qualitative case study to determine alignment amongst department chairs' contextual intelligences within role descriptions, preparation courses, and licensure.

Problem Statement

High school department chairs use contextual intelligence while serving the needs of upper administration, departmental faculty, students, and parents. However, limited research exists regarding the high school department chair role. Additionally, I observed over many years that little consistency existed in role descriptions amongst schools in a region on the eastern seaboard of the United States. This observation was supported by

Inman's (2009) research that highlighted the lack of clear standards for the department

chair role. Researchers identified a need for schools to create role descriptions to increase

the probability of success for those who take on the role (Anderson & Nixon, 2010;

Inman, 2009). For example, high school department chairs may take on the role of lead

teacher, curriculum director, or liaison between administration and classroom teachers.

The role of department chair may vary from school district to school district. Hence,

clearly stated role descriptions may assist department chairs in their performance of job

duties within school districts.

   Both Anderson and Nixon (2010) in Scotland, and Feeney (2009) in the United

States, examined the role of teacher leaders and department chairs at the secondary level.

Researchers in both studies concluded that these roles lack clear job descriptions.

Without clearly stated role expectations, a middle manager may experience difficulty

performing the duties of the job. If an employee cannot meet the demands of a post, then

the employee may find difficulty excelling in a post. According to researchers, those in

middle management roles may not be working to their fullest potential because of this

lack of communication with regards to role descriptions (Anderson & Nixon, 2010;

Feeney, 2009). Inman (2009), who investigated middle level leaders in higher education,

not only supported the findings of Feeney and Anderson and Nixon, but furthered their

findings. Inman concluded that the problem may be caused by a lack of formal training

due to the absence of clear job descriptions. Inman observed that those promoted to

middle level leadership positions learned job expectations while in the role by attending

conferences and performing job tasks. Middle manager candidates may need contextually

based learning opportunities to increase the probability they realize their leadership potential by using their contextual intelligence (Brown, 2002; Kutz, 2008).

Inman (2009) and Thompson et al. (2008) observed that in-house candidates for middle management positions in both academia and business were typically promoted because of their high skill level, not because they demonstrated an aptitude in applying their contextual intelligence and leadership skills suited for middle management. Middle managers who perform well in nonmanagement positions may not possess the contextual intelligence, the leadership and management skills, necessary to lead departments effectively. Therefore, this qualitative, layered case study investigated contextual intelligences of high school department chairs through role descriptions and compared them to state licensing board requirements and leadership courses offered by accredited universities to determine alignment between the three units of analysis. This study addressed a gap in research. With this study, I informed state departments of education, college education programs, and school districts as to the alignment of their perspectives regarding valued contextual intelligences for the high school department chair role.

Background

Through their examinations of teacher leaders and department chairs, Anderson and Nixon (2010), Feeney (2009), and Inman (2009) concluded that the role of department chair is not defined well. Additionally, Inman determined that efforts to train potential middle level administrators are lacking and may depend on creating detailed job descriptions. Inman supported earlier observations of the lack of middle management training by further observing that those promoted to middle level leadership positions

learned job expectations after they took the position by attending conferences and performing job tasks. However, Kutz (2008) indicated that in today's global society, managers need to employ contextual intelligences in order to lead others effectively, not just learn role duties.

Although formal training may not ensure success for middle level administrators, formal training opportunities geared to developing contextual intelligence for potential middle level administrators may increase the probability of success and decrease middle managers' frustrations (Brown, 2002). Researchers of promotion practices concluded that middle managers tend to be promoted from within because of their excellent job performances in lieu of their demonstrated contextual intelligence and leadership and management skills (Inman, 2009; Thompson et al., 2008). For example, Inman (2009) found that universities promoted faculty members to the position of department chair primarily because of their research in lieu of their potential leadership abilities or their ability to make decisions based on past experiences, current conditions, and the school's ideal vision. Hence, those promoted to academia's middle management may not be well prepared for the challenges of the post. Given previous researchers' findings, role descriptions for middle managers may not only need to include tangible duties, but role descriptions may also need to include contextual intelligences and leadership and managerial skills (Inman, 2009; Thompson et al., 2008). Not only would such descriptions assist in creating rich training programs, but it may also assist upper managers during the hiring process and middle managers in producing quality work once hired.

Detailed job descriptions may help middle manager candidates recognize their own potential for performing the job well prior to accepting a position. If prospective middle managers identify their potential to perform necessary leadership and managerial tasks well, then the candidate pool for middle management positions may be stronger because of well written job descriptions. Conway and Monks' (2011) research supports the need for clear and detailed job descriptions. For example, they found that upper management did not disclose the amount of additional work required to perform the middle management job well to candidates during the hiring process (Conway & Monks, 2011). Conway and Monks also observed that unprepared middle managers found the additional time commitment to be problematic and stressful. In an effort to create a strong middle management team, upper managers may need to express job expectations clearly in order to enable prospective middle managers the opportunity to assess their potential to perform the middle management job duties well.

Not only may prospective middle managers benefit from detailed job descriptions, but upper managers may benefit as well. Upper managers may be able to use detailed job descriptions to assist them in identifying employees who may be well suited for the middle management position. For example, researchers have identified the importance of middle managers to possess both management and leadership skills during times of change (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011; Melville, Bartley, & Weinburgh, 2012). Additionally, Kutz (2008) and Melville et al. (2012) identified the need for contextual intelligence within managers to lead subordinates effectively. More specifically, while researching reform implementation within a secondary school, Melville et al. found the

department chairperson essential to leading subordinates through effective reform implementation. School communities may benefit from detailed department chair descriptions if principals use those role descriptions to identify potential faculty members who may possess the necessary contextual intelligence and leadership and managerial skills to create an environment conducive to implementing curriculum changes.

For example, department chairs may need to be able to create collegial relationships amongst departmental members as well as with school administrators to implement change effectively (Mantere, 2008; Raes et al., 2011). Researchers concluded that creating an atmosphere that encourages collegial discourse may be a key component to successful reform implementation (Conway & Monks, 2011). By creating an atmosphere that encourages collegial discourse, department chairs may be able to enhance communication, trust, and respect amongst coworkers. As Melville et al. (2012) observed, the relationship between the department chair and departmental members may enhance the probability of successful reform implementation because open communication within a trusting relationship enables participants to formatively assess and revise implementation plans continuously. By crafting detailed job descriptions, administrators may enhance the probability of creating a department chair team consisting of professionals who may be able to create a collaborative work environment, support faculty members' innovations, and promote the school's vision while making decisions.

Department chairs must be able to serve faculty members and administrators as well as students and parents. Department chairs work for multiple stakeholders similar to

the fashion in which middle managers serve their departmental personnel, upper management, and customers. Although department chairs may be the middle managers in high schools, there appears to be a discrepancy in their training when compared to middle managers in business. Higher education institutions train workers to lead at various levels within multiple industries with the exception of the education industry (Inman, 2009). Inman (2009) noted the lack of training opportunities for middle level administrators in education. Hence, the creation of job descriptions for the middle management teams in academia may increase the training opportunities for prospective department chairs (Inman, 2009). Johnson and Uline (2005) supported Inman's suggestion for varied administrative training opportunities and added that educational leadership training for all levels should incorporate contextual preparation as well as mentoring. Leadership training, based on role descriptions that describe necessary contextual intelligences in addition to leadership and management skills, for department chairs may enhance the quality of work done by these middle managers similar to the coursework offered to middle managers in business.

However, Inman (2009) found clearly defined role descriptions and performance standards for department chairs lacking. Higher educational institutions may need to work with school districts to determine training needs by creating role descriptions based on best practices of high school department chairs. The collaborative effort may assist leadership programs in training department chairs for their unique roles and school districts in creating unified definitions and role descriptions for department chairs (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Feeney, 2009). However, little research exists on the

department chair role. Therefore, a need exists to research and identify the best practices of department chairs in education similar to the research done on the best practices of middle managers in business in an effort to create meaningful role descriptions and training opportunities.

Much research has been done on the middle management role in business. The middle manager is more than just a liaison between departmental personnel and upper management. Middle managers also act as cheerleaders of their department members, supporters of their ideas, implementers of change, and synthesizers of information (Mantere, 2008).

This conceptually framed case study investigated the primary duties of department chairs, training needs for prospective department chairs, and the licensing process. The knowledge gained from the research may assist school officials, education professors, and licensing agencies align their efforts to create strong middle management teams within high schools. Strengthening the middle management team in high schools may strengthen school reforms aimed at improving learning.

Literature Search Strategy

Library Databases and Search Engines

The databases I searched included: Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, Education Research Complete, Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC), ProQuest Central, PsycINFO, SAGE, and Thoreau. In addition to the Walden University library's EBSCO host, I used Google Scholar. To assist in finding digital object identifiers (doi) for referenced articles, I used crossref.org. If a doi was not

available, I searched Google Scholar to find the home page of the journals where articles were published.

Search Terms

The terms I searched related to education, business and management, as well as research methodologies. When searching for articles regarding the department chair role, I searched using the terms: *academic*, *department chair*, *department chairperson*, *department head*, *high school*, *Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium*, *lead teacher*, *licensure*, *professional development*, and *secondary school*. I added the terms *middle manager* and *training* when I searched the business and management databases. While investigating research frameworks, I used the terms: *Charmaz*, *conceptual frameworks*, *contextual intelligence,* and *Sternberg*. Overall, the terms were used as complete phrases and individual words to enhance the probability of finding relative, peer-reviewed articles.

Search Process

The search process highlighted the limited research available regarding high school department chairs. I began by searching education databases using Walden's EBSCO host. Initially, I searched ERIC. I used the phrase "department chair" initially. However, little research surfaced. I expanded the search by adding additional education databases. I then tried different variations of the title "department chair." Much of the research that surfaced was related to colleges and universities. I added the term "high school." Once again, little relevant research related directly to high school department chairs surfaced. At that time, I changed "high school" to "secondary school." Additional

articles surfaced with this slight change. As I read research articles, I noted that "lead teacher" was listed on some articles as keywords. Hence, I added "lead teacher" to my search.

After exhausting the education databases, I then used the interdisciplinary databases. I used the same word searches as in the education databases to start. After noting that many of the same articles appeared again, I added the phrase "professional development." Some of the articles in the interdisciplinary databases used the word "training" in their keyword list. Therefore, I added "training" to my keyword search.

The word "training" produced additional results. After searching the databases using the keywords together in one line and splitting them up as two individual keywords, I decided to move on to business and management databases. In the business and management databases, I used the keywords "middle manager" along with "training" and "professional development." The research conducted in the business databases exposed me to a greater number of articles regarding middle managers.

Although I retrieved a number of articles regarding the middle manager and department chair, the collection of articles lacked information regarding the licensing process of school administrators. Returning to ERIC and Education Research Complete, I used the word "licensure" to locate articles regarding licensure practices for administrators. After reading some articles, I noticed that there exists a licensing consortium, namely the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). I searched for articles using the consortium's name in the keyword field. Throughout the search process, I limited searches by only searching for peer-reviewed articles and

articles that were no more than 5 years old. However, when searching databases for licensing information, I noticed that little detailed information exists. Therefore, I expanded my search to encompass ten years. With the ten year window, I found informational articles relevant to the current research project.

The research project was a conceptually framed, qualitative investigation. To gain further insights regarding conceptually framed investigations, I searched Google Scholar using "conceptual frameworks" as my keyword. While reading text regarding conceptual frameworks, I came across Dr. Kathleen Charmaz, a qualitative researcher. Returning to ProQuest, I used her name in the keyword search. Additionally, I found information regarding contextual intelligence while researching conceptual frameworks using Google Scholar. I searched "contextual intelligence" using both Walden University library's EBSCO host and Google Scholar. While reading an article found during a Google Scholar search, I came across contextual intelligence researcher Robert Sternberg. I then searched "Sternberg" using both Walden University library's EBSCO host and Google Scholar. On the Walden University library's EBSCO host, I searched in PsycINFO for "Sternberg" and "contextual intelligence." Overall, using a variety of research databases and articles, I was able to identify keywords to further my investigation. I used a chain sampling technique to obtain keywords that enriched my search for articles to support this conceptually framed research.

Conceptual Framework

I framed the current qualitative research project conceptually based on Sternberg's (1984, 1997) concept of contextual intelligence. Sternberg defined contextual

intelligence as the ability to adjust and determine courses of action based on previous experiences, current understandings, and a community's ideal vision. Middle managers serve multiple stakeholders and strive to assist members of the community realize their institution's vision. Brown (2002), Kutz (2008), and Sternberg (1997) indicated that contextual intelligence is a learned skill essential for managers who aimed to lead not just manage. I investigated contextual intelligence within the high school department chair role from three perspectives. I inquired about perceived necessary contextual intelligences from the department of education, local colleges and universities, as well as various school districts.

I assumed that the three previously stated units of analysis have a cyclical relationship. The supervisor/director certification offered by the state department of education indicates that those certified have the contextual intelligence as well as leadership and management skills necessary to perform the duties itemized within department chair role descriptions and become successful middle level administrators. Local higher education institutions' leadership programs for those who aspire to become department chairs offer coursework tailored to develop contextual intelligence in middle level leaders and prepare these administrators to attain licensure, as well as lead and manage departments. Additionally, in order to provide meaningful coursework and licensure programs, department chair role descriptions amongst various school districts should be similar. Hence, I based this study on the concept of contextual intelligence with respect to middle level school administrators given the assumed cyclical relationship amongst the units of analysis.

Various researchers have recognized the relationships amongst the units of analysis in this qualitative study. For example, Inman (2009) concluded that if schools create detailed department chair job descriptions, then they could create meaningful training programs for aspiring department chairs. Training programs specifically based on the needs of education's middle managers may increase the probability that department chairs will perform their duties well and be successful (Inman, 2009). Nguyen (2012) also found that the success of department chairs may be impacted by the lack of training for the middle level administrative position. Thus, I investigated the alignment between contextual intelligences within role descriptions and leadership training courses as well as the alignment of the department of education's supervisor/director certification with this qualitative case study. Johnson and Uline (2005) emphasized the importance of creating meaningful training programs for educational leaders while Davis et al. (2010) identified the need to create meaningful licenses that reflect the preparedness for aspiring administrators. Through a content analysis of interview and artifact data, I extended previous researchers' findings by examining the likely relationship between role descriptions of middle level administrators, leadership training opportunities for middle level administrators, and state department licensing. I created a conceptual framework for this qualitative case study based on the concept of contextual intelligence, previous researchers' findings that support the need for contextual intelligence training, and probable relationships amongst the units of analysis.

With interview and artifact data, I organized raw data into a case record as suggested by Patton (2002). I used the case record to assist in analyzing data within and

amongst units of analysis. I identified themes and patterns within and amongst each unit's collected data (Patton, 2002). As noted by Patton, analyzing data to identify patterns and themes is often referred to as content analysis. Content analysis, therefore, enabled me to investigate relationships amongst the units of analysis and gain novel insights. I anticipated patterns and themes emerging during data analysis. I conducted inductive content analysis and constructed meaning from emergent patterns and themes within the context of the research parameters to understand associations amongst the units of analysis and create meaning for the audience (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Additionally, since the case study is finite, I employed postmodern techniques. I examined the conditions in which participants experience the department chair role to gain an understanding of participants' perspectives (Creswell, 2013). As Charmaz (as cited in Puddephatt, 2006) indicated during an interview, qualitative researchers who employ constructivist techniques attempt to understand participants' interpretation of the studied entity while recognizing that researchers' composed conclusions are influenced by personal perspectives.

I anticipated that investigating perspectives would offer unique and unforeseen insights to the alignment of the units of analysis. I investigated contextual intelligence within the high school department chair role from each unit of analysis' perspective. I framed the case study using both constructivist and postmodern techniques. I conceptually framed the case study using the research findings of those who investigated contextual intelligence and department chairs at the university and high school level as well as researchers who investigated the role of business middle managers. Hence, the

concept of alignment amongst the state department of education, higher education institutions' leadership programs for middle level administrators, and high school department chair role descriptions arose logically from the findings of previous researchers and recommendations from licensing boards.

Literature Review

Although there did not exist an overabundance of research regarding the high school department chair, researchers have investigated the department chair role at the university level and the middle manager role in the business sect. Researchers used a variety of techniques. However, qualitative research methods appeared to be most prevalent in this field.

Research Methodologies

Although the qualitative methodology appeared to be used often by researchers investigating middle managers, researchers use a variety of approaches within the qualitative research umbrella to investigate their research questions. For example, Thompson et al. (2008) explained and justified their coaching frameworks for middle managers using a narrative approach. The researchers offered examples from their work regarding how the frameworks effectively coached middle managers (Thompson et al., 2008). Viviano (2012) took a different approach. Viviano used a phenomenological approach in describing his findings regarding how school administrators should lead by creating trust filled environments in which respect is apparent versus creating an environment in which leaders manage others using authoritarian methods primarily (Viviano, 2012). Aslan and Reigeluth (2011) also used a phenomenological approach

when concluding that school leaders, during the 1990s, neglected to offer adequate

professional development opportunities for classroom teachers to implement

technological advances. Their research led them to identify the necessity for school

leaders to create implementation plans that empower educators to embrace change (Aslan

& Reigeluth, 2011).

Melville et al. (2012) used qualitative case study in their investigation into

implementing change within secondary schools. They focused their case study on a single

change in a single school (Melville et al., 2012). As with the current study, the

researchers kept the units of analyses small but investigated deeply. Conway and Monks

(2011) also undertook a case study when interviewing employees within the Irish

healthcare system to identify and explain themes regarding the role of middle managers.

Investigations into the role of department chairs and middle managers tend to be

qualitative.

Although research questions regarding roles and preparation of middle managers

in education and business lend themselves to qualitative research investigations,

researchers have used both qualitative and quantitative methods when investigating

preparation and licensing of education administrators including department chairs and

teacher leaders. For example, using secondary data sets, Bathon and Black (2011)

quantitatively analyzed data in an effort to identify correlations between the location of

administrative preparation programs and where graduates work as administrators. Martin

and Coleman (2011), however, conducted a qualitative case study when they examined

how Kansas created their licensing schemata for educators. Researchers used qualitative

and quantitative methods discretely as well as mixed. Machado (2012), for example, directed a mixed methods study when investigating how updated educator licensing guidelines affected professors in educator preparation programs. Overall, researchers used a variety of methods depending on their research question. However, qualitative case study research appeared to be prominent when researchers investigated relationships between middle managers and stakeholders.

Research Frameworks

Interestingly, most researchers conceptually framed their investigations. For example, Davis et al. (2010) framed their qualitative investigation into California's administrative licensing protocol by explaining the history of professional licensing. Zulu (2011) framed a mixed methods study to investigate women's leadership styles as university department chairs using others' research to create a framework from which the research questions evolved. Similarly, Wang (2010) framed a qualitative study, in which department heads were interviewed regarding the implementation of educational mandates, using others' research regarding problems middle managers may encounter when attempting to implement top-down reforms. Overall, previous researchers have framed their studies investigating educational leaders conceptually by using the research of those before them which is similar to the conceptual framework of this study.

Although previous researchers investigated department chairs, middle managers, and licensing of school administrators in similar fashions to the current study, the researchers choice of conceptually designed qualitative studies limited the generalizability of their research. The current study was also limited in generalizability.

The current study investigated the high school department chair role from various perspectives in one small geographical region of northeastern United States deeply. The current study's depth was similar to that of previous researchers in the field. Many researchers also investigated licensing within a single state such as Davis et al.'s (2010) investigation into California's licensing and Martin and Coleman's (2011) investigation into Kansas' licensing protocol. The current research may be limited on generalizability due to the small number of participants, but similar to other researchers, the current study investigated themes within a small unit intensely. The current research added to the narrow body of research regarding administrative licensing, leadership programs, and the high school department chair role.

High School Department Chairs, the Middle Managers of Schools

There is limited research on the role of high school department chairs. However, researchers who investigated the role described the position of department chair as a part-time administrator (Spillane & Kim, 2012). Researchers found that this part-time administrator serves both school administrators, such as principals, and faculty members within their department (Feeney, 2009; Spillane & Kim, 2012). Additionally, akin to department chairs at the college level, they also serve the student population (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Nguyen, 2012). The department chair services multiple stakeholders.

Similarly, middle managers in business serve multiple stakeholders simultaneously. Thompson et al. (2008) found that middle managers in business serve upper management, those on their team, as well as other middle managers. Those who hold middle management positions in education and business fields serve multiple

stakeholders within the confines of the workplace and externally in a variety of ways (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011).

For middle managers to serve various stakeholders effectively, they must be both leaders and managers. However, researchers established that employees promoted to middle management, whether education or business, tend to be promoted because of their skills in their current post, not because they demonstrate leadership skills that may propel departments and businesses forward (Inman, 2009; Thompson et al., 2008). Such promotion practices do not coincide with either the importance of the position or the hiring process of most institutions. Many institutions engage in lengthy vetting processes while searching for a new team member (Eager Sirkis, 2011). For example, in education, hiring faculty members who have a command of their subject area and can teach well takes time. Education administrators may request evidence of successful teaching and research. Some institutions may require applicants to allow a representative from the hiring team to observe a lesson within the applicant's current environment or the potential new environment. Similarly in business, managers seek to find personnel who will perform the duties of the post well. Some business administrators may hire employees with the caveat of a trial period during which management can observe the applicant's work. These vetting processes for new hires, however, do not align with researchers' findings regarding promotion practices for new middle managers.

Promoting an employee to a middle management position, that entails more than just performing the duties of the team well, should entail a process similar to the initial hiring procedure (Eager Sirkis, 2011). Upper management should investigate the

leadership and managerial qualities of candidates for these positions. Therefore, the hiring of middle managers should not simply be a promotion as a result of being a good classroom teacher, university researcher, or salesman. The hiring for middle management positions should require administrators to vet candidates in business and academia in an effort to match current and potential skills with the duties of the job.

Duties in middle management positions encompass both leadership and managerial tasks. However, the lack of vetting candidates who may be well suited for the position of department chair may lead to department chairs simply managing departments in lieu of leading departments (Feeney, 2009). Feeney (2009) found that high school department chairs feel a responsibility to serve both administration and teachers within their department rather than work collegially. The need to serve, according to Feeney's participants, led department chairs to manage daily operations, such as ordering supplies, instead of leading department members in discussions regarding teaching and learning. Unfortunately, participants in Feeney's study did not realize the unique opportunity high school department chairs have to work with teachers in an effort to improve student learning in a nonthreatening fashion since many still retain teaching responsibilities (Spillane & Kim, 2012).

Leading change. As middle managers, many department chairs are part-time administrators and part-time teaching faculty (Spillane & Kim, 2012). As part-time administrators, faculty members may view them as more approachable than full-time administrators, such as principals, who do not retain teaching responsibilities typically (Spillane & Kim, 2012). The teaching responsibilities that department chairs retain may

afford them opportunities to engage in collegial discourse with faculty members regarding teaching and learning naturally. However, if administrators do not hire department chairs for their capabilities as leaders, department chairs may simply manage departments with no overt attempts to improve teaching and learning.

Feeney (2009) concluded that department chairs could impact teaching and learning positively. For example, to develop critical thinking and creativity in today's learners, students should participate actively in daily lessons not just receive information passively (Longo, 2010). To create a classroom of active learners, educators may need to increase their own innovative thought processes to create lessons that enhance learning experiences in an effort to develop critical and lateral thinking. Educators may need support when attempting to change their teaching methodologies in an effort to improve student learning. School leaders need to create environments that embrace educators' innovative behaviors while offering support. Support for innovative teaching methodologies may begin with department chairs.

Spillane and Kim's (2012) research highlighted the importance of the support offered by part-time leaders such as department chairs and lead teachers. The researchers found that part-time leaders were more likely to broker relationships amongst teachers than full-time leaders (Spillane & Kim, 2012). Part-time school leaders, who also had teaching responsibilities, were more likely than school principals to be involved in the instructional networks within a school, offering advice and information to teachers (Spillane & Kim, 2012). Spillane and Kim's research suggests that part-time, formal leaders play an important role in creating a collegial school atmosphere based on trusting

relationships because of their dual role as classroom teacher and administrator. In these roles, department chairs, similar to middle managers in business, listen, interpret, and explain while building trusting relationships and empowering others (Thompson et al., 2008). Overall, researchers found that department chairs' influence may result in increased student achievement (Feeney, 2009). A component of this middle management position may be to empower others to improve their craft in a trusting environment.

Researchers found that educators need to trust and feel trusted in order to take risks and be innovative (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). While conducting their researcher study, Carmeli and Spreitzer (2009) investigated the relationship between thriving and innovative behavior. They hypothesized that those who thrive in the workplace, those who continuously learn and have vitality, may be more innovative than employees who do not grow within their work environment (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). The researchers also examined the impact of trust and connectivity on thriving (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). Through their quantitative research study with a sample population of 172 employees from various companies and industries in Israel, Carmeli and Spreitzer found that thriving in the workplace positively affected innovation. Researchers also found innovative behavior to be positively correlated with trust and connectivity in the workplace (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). Trust in one's employer helps build relationships amongst employees. Relationships amongst employees build community in the workplace. Community fosters a thriving atmosphere, which welcomes innovative behaviors (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). For example, the support of a trusting community may assist educators who want to incorporate technology in meaningful ways, but may be

a novice at incorporating technology into their craft. Within a trusting community, failure may be a teachable moment rather than a moment feared. School administrators, including department chairs, need to demonstrate that growth and continued learning are valued goals for everyone in the school community not just the students. Therefore, fostering innovative behaviors in a trusting school community may be necessary if school administrators want educators to continuously develop their craft and improve student learning.

Department chairs, serving as immediate supervisors to classroom teachers, may need to both model continuous learning and foster collegial atmospheres based on trust within departments. The department chair has a responsibility to engage those in the department in collegial relationships that foster trust and respect. Through trusting relationships, department members may seek out department chairs for advice and information (Spillane & Kim, 2012). As relationships grow, department chairs become a pivotal person between administration and faculty. Nguyen (2012), who conducted research at the university level, depicted department chairs as middle level administrators with obligations to those in positions above and below that of department chair. They have access to a wealth of information that could assist administrators in creating educational reforms to improve learning and teaching.

Identifying potential needs. Middle level administrators, such as department chairs, may prove invaluable to the planning process of education reforms. Middle level administrators have direct access to those who typically implement reforms, classroom teachers (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Middle level administrators can create opportunities to

discuss possible reformations with classroom teachers. The feedback they receive may prove valuable to administrators responsible for policy creation. Additionally, middle level administrators interact with student and parent populations regularly. The parent and student populations may offer significant insights to the teaching and learning practices within the school. Their insights and perceptions may assist policy makers in shaping school reforms in ways that may increase stakeholder involvement. Stakeholder involvement in school reform may help develop a community based on trust which then may increase the probability of successful implementation (Kaufman, Oakley-Browne, Watkins, & Leigh, 2003). Middle level administrators' relationships with a variety of stakeholders may provide information to policy makers that may otherwise remain unspoken (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011).

Serving multiple stakeholders implies that middle level administrators need to be able to communicate well with those in upper management positions, those within their department, middle level administrators from other departments, and external stakeholders, such as students and parents. Department chairs must know how to do more than simply manage the daily happenings. Department chairs must be able to implement change effectively, define visions, and create collegial work environments, in addition to the mundane managerial tasks, such as ordering supplies (Nguyen, 2012). Hence, when hiring middle level administrators, upper level managers need to predict potential department chairs' abilities to lead and manage those around them, as well as manage their time wisely. Professional licensure may assist administrators in the identification of

potential middle managers who have demonstrated proficient leadership skills to the department of education (Davis et al., 2010).

Preparing to lead. The demonstration of leadership skills to an outside licensing office may also assist those pursuing middle management roles in education. Floyd and Dimmock (2011) found that department chairs in universities had multiple identities within and between their professional and personal lives, such as researcher, manager, and parent. Respondents in Floyd and Dimmock's research alluded that the duties of department chair affected their personal and professional aspirations. Some respondents, who perceived that the position limited their aspirations, felt discouraged enough to leave their post as department chair while others made conscious efforts to separate the role of department chair from their personal identity (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011). Many participants in Floyd and Dimmock's study indicated that administration did not explain the position's expectations well enough during the hiring process. These respondents communicated their unpleasant surprise with the demands of the job (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011). Administrators hiring department chairs should ensure that those interested in the position know the expectations and potential workload of the position. According to Davis et al. (2010), professional licensure procedures may assist states in educating interested parties in the role expectations of administrative positions. Therefore, school systems, preparation programs, and licensing boards may need to work collegially to create unified understandings of various administrative roles.

Communication regarding role expectations may allow potential department chairs to pursue or not pursue the middle management position. Continuous, open

communication throughout the preparation, licensing, and hiring processes may increase the probability of collegial working relationships developing between middle and upper level administrators. Mantere (2008) and Wang (2010) concluded that middle level administrators play a central role in reform implementation. Middle level administrators' interpretation of reform initiatives is critical (Wang, 2010). In an effort to increase the probability of successfully implementing an initiative, policymakers must communicate with middle level administrators. Such communication, however, begins with the hiring process during which administrators explain the responsibilities of the department chair role. Although licensing may exist for middle level educational leaders in some states, roles and expectations may differ amongst school districts and within various school communities (Martin & Coleman, 2011). Middle level administrators should be hired for their communication, leadership, and management skills; administrators should not hire candidates solely based on their prior success as a classroom teacher or researcher (Inman, 2009; Nguyen, 2012; Thompson et al., 2008). Administration needs to hire candidates who are willing and able to take on the extra responsibilities of department chair within the school environment. The licensing of such candidates may enhance the identification of potential candidates. For example, Bathon and Black (2011) found that when professional development opportunities for potential administrators were made available to local educators, many of those educators became licensed administrators and continued to work in the geographical area they attended their training. Candidate training courses may assist in creating department chairs who may be more likely to

succeed as a middle level manager and leader than those simply promoted to the position blindly, without training or licensing.

The Importance of High School Department Chairs

Carmeli and Spreitzer's (2009) research indicated that those successful in supervisory positions need to demonstrate trust and support explicitly to teachers as they continuously develop their craft. Sahin's (2011) findings corroborate Carmeli and Spreitzer's conclusions regarding the importance of school leaders supporting educators as they strive to continue learning and honing their craft. Sahin based a study on previous research that indicated instructional leaders support educators' new ideas, promote innovative instructional techniques, and maintain a positive school culture. The quantitative study with 157 urban elementary school teachers in 16 Izmir schools aimed to examine the effects of instructional leadership on school culture (Sahin, 2011). Sahin explored the perceptions elementary school teachers had of the relationship between instructional leadership and school culture, their perceptions of how demographics influence instructional leadership and school culture, and their overall perceptions of instructional leadership and school culture. The findings indicated that instructional leadership and teacher collaboration correlate positively with school culture (Sahin, 2011).

Through leadership styles that encourage collaboration such as instructional leadership, school administrators could invite teachers to engage in decision making processes. Engaging teachers in the decision making process may benefit the school community in multiple ways. For example, by engaging teachers in discussions regarding

school issues or initiatives, school administrators may learn more about teachers and their needs. Such data may be helpful when planning professional development and identifying potential needs. Department chairs may empower teachers to work collaboratively and innovatively by using leadership styles that invite others to participate in open discussions regarding student learning.

School administrators can foster leadership in a variety of people within a school. Bruce et al. (2011) conducted a qualitative, case study to investigate how lead teachers evolved as educational leaders and empowered others to lead. They created multiple teacher teams in Ontario (Bruce et al., 2011). Bruce et al. engaged teachers in collaborative action research. Educators, working with researchers, identified the educational needs of students, created interventions, implemented interventions, and formatively assessed implementations. Researchers found the lead teacher to be the manager, motivator, model, and mediator within their teams (Bruce et al., 2011).

Within the high school setting, school administrators designate department chairs as lead teachers typically. As Bruce et al. (2011) and Melville et al. (2012) found, department chairs act as immediate supervisors and managers to those within the department. Department chairs tend to stated needs of department members such as ordering supplies and creating meeting agendas (Bruce et al., 2011). Department chairs also mediate between members of the department and administration by acting as a liaison (Bruce et al., 2011; Melville et al., 2012). Department chairs relay information to and from school administrators.

Department chairs serve as a middle manager within the school. Additionally, department chairs model teaching and communication practices, as well as motivate teachers (Bruce et al., 2011; Melville et al., 2012). As a lead teacher, department chairs work closely with department members to enhance the educational experiences for students and teachers alike. Department chairs who create trusting, learning communities within their departments have been found to enjoy collegiality amongst members (Melville et al., 2012). Relationships between department members and their department chairs plays an important role in educators taking calculated risks aimed at improving student achievement (Melville et al., 2012).

Creating relationships that motivate teachers to learn continuously and improve their craft is essential for implementing new teaching methodologies aimed at increasing thinking skills. Improving one's craft may require educators to change their methodologies when aiming to increase student learning and creativity. Some changes may be observed daily as educators differentiate lessons in an effort to service students' needs; other changes may take the shape of formal school reforms (Dewey, 1938; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Department chairs may be in a unique position to observe, unobtrusively, daily changes and offer continuous support to educators. Such relational leadership may increase the likelihood of successful implementation of school reforms within classrooms.

Melville et al. (2012) conducted a qualitative, case study to investigate forces that promote school reform from varying perspectives. They investigated

change forces from the perspective of a school administrator, department

chairperson, and teacher within an Ontario secondary school (Melville et al.,

2012). Melville et al. uncovered the importance of the department chair role

within a change initiative and the need to create a trusting environment within a

school community. Department chairs, as found by Bruce et al. (2011), act as

immediate supervisors to those in their department. Therefore, collegiality must

be fostered within departments as well as within entire school communities.

Educators need their supervisors to be open and trusting so that when educators

attempt to implement innovative ideas within their classrooms, they have

someone whom they trust to offer constructive feedback in a fashion that

promotes further learning. Melville et al.'s conclusions support the need for

trusting environments. They concluded that positive social change initiatives may

likely succeed in trusting school communities (Melville et al., 2012). Therefore,

department chairs need to build a trusting community within their departments.

However, school administrators may need to offer professional

development opportunities geared towards department chairs and their middle

management role in order for them to be effective as community builders,

educational leaders, and change agents. Feeney (2009) investigated the role of

high school department chairs as school leaders and change agents. Feeney's

study revealed that data driven decision making and collaboration appeared to be

lacking in departments. Analysis of research data indicated that department

leaders spend the majority of their time managing departments in lieu of leading

departmental members to improved teaching and learning (Feeney, 2009). Feeney concluded that department chairs need to foster a community of learning within and among departments in order for schools to increase student achievement. Working with local education preparation programs to provide professional development that assists department chairs in their leadership endeavors may be a worthy goal for school administrators who aimed to create a positive school climate based on trust and collegiality.

As Sahin (2011) and Carmeli and Spreitzer (2009) concluded, school climate may influence the implementation of change initiatives. Within secondary schools, department chairs may influence the overall collegiality within a school by the climate created within their departments (Bruce et al., 2011; Feeney, 2009; Melville et al., 2012). The trust and collegiality found necessary to create an atmosphere conducive to innovative behavior may begin with department chairs (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). Department chairs could begin the process by informally assessing student achievement during department meetings and discussing teaching methodologies. For example, as educators learn technology's capabilities, sharing tips for integrating technology during department meetings may create a forum for teachers to collaborate and learn. However, department chairs may need to be trained in creating an atmosphere open to honest discussions regarding innovative teaching methodologies.

Department members need to trust that their immediate supervisor will support endeavors to learn and take calculated risks in the classroom. Innovative teaching

methodologies require both emotional and developmental support. Department chairs need to know how to assume a role grander than that of manager and mediator. They need to be trained in offering feedback continuously that may assist educators in developing their gifts to their fullest potential and encourage innovations. For example, as today's children use technology for a variety of purposes, department chairs need to encourage and support teachers who aimed to use technology as a teaching tool. Additionally, department chairs themselves should model innovative behavior for their department members. If department chairs feel safe enough to take calculated risks and share their results, then their department members may feel encouraged to do the same. As Melville et al. (2012) found, the department chair's relationship with teachers influences the success of an initiative's implementation. Therefore, if high school teachers aimed to incorporate technology to increase critical thinking, lateral thinking, originality, and creativity, then department chairs need to model the use of technology, support teachers' needs, and trust teachers. Hence, high school department chairs may need training in a variety of leadership styles that encourage collegial discourse and strive to create atmospheres based on trust and respect.

Key Components of the Department Chair Position

In order for leadership training opportunities to address the needs of local school systems, school systems may need to explicitly express the duties of the department chair role. Although researchers found a lack of clear standards for the department chair role, researchers also indicated the existence of key components to this middle manager position within schools (Inman, 2009). As middle managers, department chairs tend to

serve administrators, faculty members, parents, and students (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Feeney, 2009; Inman, 2009; Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011; Melville et al., 2012; Nguyen, 2012; Thompson et al., 2008). Serving multiple constituencies may require department chairs to both manage and lead at any time.

Reform implementation. As middle level leaders and managers, researchers identified that a primary role for department chairs is reform implementation (Conway & Monks, 2011; Hanuscin et al., 2012; Hope, 2010; Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011; Mantere, 2008; Raes et al., 2011; Wang, 2010). According to Conway and Monks (2011), Kuyvenhoven and Buss (2011), and Mantere (2008), upper managers expect middle managers to implement their initiatives. However, researchers found that although upper management expected middle managers to implement top down initiatives, they routinely excluded middle managers from the creation of initiatives (Conway & Monks, 2011; Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011; Mantere, 2008). The exclusion of middle managers from discussions regarding potential needs and possible initiatives to address needs may leave middle managers left to interpret initiatives (Hope, 2010; Thompson et al., 2008; Wang, 2010). Hence, upper managers may increase, unintentionally, the probability of middle managers not implementing change initiatives as intended when they exclude middle managers from the reform creation process.

When middle managers interpret initiatives and identify potential implementation strategies within their departments, middle managers' implementation of an initiative may not align with upper management's ideal vision. Upper managers may need to be proactive and seek participation from middle managers, and middle managers may need

to advocate for the needs of their department. If both parties intentionally aimed to increase communication with one another, then they may create long lasting initiatives in workplace climates that embrace open communication amongst various stakeholders.

Serving multiple stakeholders. As the middle managers of high schools, department chairs serve various stakeholders. Each stakeholder influences the organization uniquely. Hence, department chairs need to encourage communication amongst stakeholder groups in an effort to serve them by addressing their needs (Conway & Monks, 2011; Eager Sirkis, 2011; Feeney, 2009; Kaufman et al., 2003; Kuyvenhoven, & Buss, 2011; Nguyen, 2012; Thompson et al., 2008). Engaging stakeholders in collegial discourse may create trusting and respectful relationships amongst stakeholder groups. As department chairs, creating trusting relationships may improve the identification of needs and implementation of reforms (Melville et al., 2012; Spillane & Kim, 2012; Thompson et al., 2008). Department chairs need to know how to broker relationships amongst various constituencies in an effort to serve multiple stakeholders well.

Using research. While serving multiple stakeholders, high school department chairs need to remain focused on the ideal vision of the school and student learning. Thus, to increase the value of collegial exchanges regarding student learning, department chairs need to keep abreast of current research and educational trends (Conway & Monks, 2011). Department chairs may use research when serving faculty members within their department as well as other stakeholders. Within their departments, department chairs may use their knowledge of educational trends to assist educators in creating classrooms that promote student learning. Researchers found that part-time leaders, such as

department chairs, tend to be more attuned to faculty needs than full-time leaders, such as

school principals (Spillane & Kim, 2012). Spillane and Kim (2012) cited part-time

leaders' teaching responsibilities as what enables them to assist faculty members

collegially. However, to assist faculty members in reaching their potential, department

chairs should remain knowledgeable of current educational trends (Conway & Monks,

2011).

Initializing reforms. While assisting in the creation of a community of learners

and implementing top-down school reforms, department chairs may enlist the expertise of

teachers to identify needs from within classrooms and initialize bottom-up initiatives

(Hanuscin et al., 2012; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Department chairs, therefore, should aim

to create atmospheres within their departments that encourage collegial discourse,

identification of needs, and research. If department chairs can lead faculty members in

meaningful, research based discussions regarding student learning, then potential needs

that surface may warrant a schoolwide needs assessment. Department chairs may need to

be trained in recognizing needs within departments, connecting needs to the ideal vision

of the school, and communicating needs to administration (Conway & Monks, 2011).

Prior to engaging school administrators, though, department chairs may also find

it valuable to gain momentum for potential needs from other department chairs.

Department chairs not only serve administration, faculty members, parents, and students,

but they also serve one another (Thompson et al., 2008). Department chairs need to work

with one another in an effort to identify impending needs and create potential initiatives

to address those needs. Department chairs have access to multiple constituencies that they

may communicate with to vet budding needs prior to approaching administration. This may lead to department chairs gaining preliminary support for an initiative prior to approaching administration with impending needs and solutions. Thus, department chairs need learn how to use leadership skills that encourage collegial discourse, value coworkers' expertise, and build trusting school climates.

Managing departments. In addition to leadership skills, department chairs also may need to learn how to manage departments (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Feeney, 2009; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011). Department chairs tend to take on the responsibility of mundane tasks such as ordering supplies, maintaining daily relationships, and completing requisite paperwork. However, the high school department chairs in Feeney's (2009) research felt overwhelmed by managerial tasks and did not recognize the leadership aspect of their position. They felt as if their managerial duties left little time to work with department members collegially (Feeney, 2009). Thus, department chairs need to balance leadership and managerial tasks. As Floyd and Dimmock (2011) noted, department chairs take on multiple identities. Department chairs research, manage, and lead (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011). Department chairs need to learn how to balance all aspects of their positions so as not to neglect their obligations as researcher, manager, or leader.

Empowering others. As department chairs create balance in their positions, they need to empower department members (Thompson et al., 2008). By empowering department members to share their unique skills, department chairs may find faculty members open to creating collegial relationships and discussing student learning. Through collegial discussions, department chairs may be able to encourage department

members to share best practices and enhance the overall quality of learning with classrooms without formal school reforms.

Reform occurs daily in classrooms (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Department chairs may create leaders in every classroom. As Inman (2009) noted, leadership is not for only those at the top; leadership must be embraced by all at every level for success. Department chairs may not only play a crucial role during implementation of top-down reforms, but they may also play a crucial role in empowering others to reform their own classrooms to improve learning on a continuous basis.

Department chairs work to improve student learning by serving multiple stakeholders in various fashions. They serve administration, faculty members, other department chairs, parents, and students. Overall, department chairs need to keep all stakeholders focused on the ideal vision of increased student learning. Therefore, department chairs need not only manage the daily happenings within their department, but they need to lead their department to engage in schoolwide, departmental, and personal initiatives to improve student learning all while working with administrators, parents, and students to enhance educational experiences.

Department Chair's Primary Role: Reform Implementer

Middle managers in business and education alike serve multiple stakeholder groups. They serve those in upper management, those within their departments, as well as external stakeholders, such as customers in business and parents in education (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011). Middle managers need to learn to employ a variety of communication skills in order to connect with stakeholders of various constituencies

effectively. Middle managers need to establish relationships that engage stakeholders in appropriate fashions relative to their relationship with the institution. Positive engagement of stakeholders may increase the effectiveness of those in the middle manager role. For example, if a high school engages in an initiative to increase student learning by adjusting teaching methodologies, high school department chairs may need to communicate with various stakeholders throughout the implementation. They may need to assist the parent population in understanding teaching methodologies employed to facilitate learning. In addition to exploring teaching methodologies with the parent population, department chairs may find it beneficial to discuss methodologies and student achievement with classroom teachers. However, with classroom teachers, department chairs may also need to relay parental perceptions, listen to the concerns of teachers, and engage department members in discussions of best practices, in lieu of explaining connections between methodologies and learning as with the parent population. The same topic may also need to be addressed by department chairs with administrators. Department chairs should aimed to report both best practices and concerns to administrators in such a way that administration does not view concerns as complaints, but rather daily realities of classroom teachers that could provide insights to revise reforms if necessary. If department chairs can communicate openly with multiple stakeholders, then those in this middle management position may be able to inform and facilitate long lasting change.

Mantere (2008), similar to Tyack and Cuban (1995) and Hall and Hord (2011) who identified classroom teachers as primary implementers of reforms, found

implementing change to be one of the primary roles of middle managers. Middle managers receive information regarding policy reform from those in upper management and then must communicate the reform to those in their department (Mantere, 2008). In order to communicate a reform to department members, middle managers must understand the reform completely. In other words, middle managers need to know the reform, as well as the background of the reform. Optimally, upper management and policymakers would include middle managers in reform creation. However, researchers concluded that upper management does not include middle managers in many policy formations yet still expect middle managers to implement reforms successfully (Mantere, 2008).

Kuyvenhoven and Buss (2011) investigated how middle managers implement top-down change initiatives. The researchers concluded that upper level managers must make communication a priority with middle managers to assist in creating a collegial atmosphere conducive to change (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011). Johnson and Uline (2005) as well as Martin and Coleman (2011) also recognized the importance of educational leaders creating collegial atmospheres that empower middle level administrators and classroom teachers. It is not enough for upper managers or school principals to create policies. Those in positions that encompass policy writing need to engage the middle management team. Policymakers have the opportunity to access vital information regarding reforms' possible success or failure by creating an atmosphere of respect and trust. Through such relationships, middle managers may be empowered to share the needs of those who will implement reforms in an effort to assist in the creation

of reforms. The relationships middle managers develop during times of change may affect the fashion in which they manipulate strategic initiatives for the benefits of the department (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011). School principals may need to incorporate the ability to work collegially during times of reform to the role description of department chairs in an effort to create a department chair team that may work well together and with various stakeholders.

Through an analysis of various researchers' definitions of middle managers, Kuyvenhoven and Buss (2011) concluded that middle managers head the implementation of change initiatives by communicating with various stakeholders. Middle managers explain change initiatives' nuances to stakeholders within the middle manager's team and those they serve outside the company (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011). Middle managers may experience an increase in workload when policymakers create reforms for middle managers to implement (Reeves, 2009).

Conway and Monks (2011) found that when upper management imposed change initiatives for middle managers to implement, middle managers not only experienced an increase in workload, but middle managers became frustrated by the lack of clarity within the initiative, delayed decision making from policymakers, and overall confusion. Conway and Monks also alluded to communication, or lack of, as an impetus to frustrations experienced by middle managers during the implementation of reforms. Researchers found that the lack of communication, however, was not isolated to the implementation process, but stemmed from upper management's lack of regard for the potential value of middle managers' input during policy formation (Conway & Monks,

2011). Upper management's apparent disregard for middle managers' input, as found by Conway and Monks, not only may increase frustration when middle managers attempt to implement reformations, but also may dilute middle managers' sense of ownership with the reform. Tyack and Cuban (1995) noted similar reactions to top-down initiatives by classroom teachers whom policy writers did not involve in the creation of school reforms. The lack of ownership with a mandated reform may decrease the probability of sustained implementation (Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

Sustained implementation of reform movements depends on implementers understanding and embracing reforms (Hope, 2010). Raes et al. (2011) found that interactions between middle managers and upper managers may either empower or discourage middle managers during strategic formulation and implementation. Lindahl and Beach (2009), in their review of the ISLLC school administrator licensing standards, highlighted the importance of school leaders to work collaboratively with stakeholders in an effort to create meaningful change aligned with the school's mission, vision, and overall climate. Hence, authoritative leadership styles may not benefit reform movements. Although at times mandates may be necessary, those to whom the mandates are bequeathed upon may not readily accept the mandate, especially if the underlying impetus for the mandate is unknown. For example, in Conway and Monks' (2011) research, upper managers indicated that middle managers resisted change initiatives because of lack of ownership even though upper managers thought they involved middle managers. Upper managers in this study acknowledged that they attempted to include middle managers but not collaborate with them (Conway & Monks, 2011). Middle

managers may have not experienced ownership of proposed reforms because upper

managers did not seek their input explicitly (Conway & Monks, 2011). Although

knowledge of the reasons behind reforms may increase the likelihood of implementers'

acceptance of reforms, collaboration amongst stakeholders may increase the

sustainability of reforms (Kaufman et al., 2003). Researchers found that one of the best

ways to increase the probability of sustained change is to include stakeholders in the

entire change process, not just the implementation (Conway & Monks, 2011; Kaufman et

al., 2003; Machado, 2012). Department chairs may need to demonstrate their ability to

work collegially on school reformations during the hiring process. One potential piece of

evidence may be the licensing of department chairs as supervisors. The licensing agency

may assist schools by endorsing middle managers within school districts once potential

department chairs demonstrate proficient leadership skills.

Licensing agencies may assist high schools by certifying that potential department

chairs proficiently demonstrated their ability to work collegially with various

stakeholders (Johnson & Uline, 2005; Lindahl & Beach, 2009). Raes et al. (2011),

Reeves (2009), and Hall and Hord (2011) suggested a participatory leadership style by

upper managers to encourage collegial discourse amongst stakeholders. A participatory

leadership style may inspire and empower various stakeholders to become involved in the

decision making process. Change affects stakeholders in a variety of fashions.

Involvement of multiple stakeholders may increase the probability of representation by

the micro, macro, and mega stakeholders (Kaufman et al., 2003). The inclusion of various

stakeholders may inform change initiatives in unforeseen ways. This information may

assist reform teams in creating stronger reforms and lessening the probability of unforeseen negative consequences. A singular stakeholder group may not have the knowledge of other stakeholders' experiences and perceptions. Administrators and policy makers may not only need to involve stakeholders from various constituencies, but they may also need to ensure that department chairs, who most likely may be responsible for reform implementation, are trained to work collegially on reform teams.

Involving stakeholders, particularly department chairs, may increase communication during the change process and throughout an enterprise even after reform implementation. As communication increases, trust and respect may begin to permeate the work environment. As trusting relationships develop, stakeholders may feel empowered to engage in collegial discourse. Through collegial discourse, trust and respect between stakeholders may continue to develop (Raes et al., 2011). Policymakers may find that department chairs' position affords them the opportunity to carry on the cyclical relationship between trust and collegial discourse, therefore, creating atmospheres open to change (Roby, 2011; Spillane & Kim, 2012). Additionally, workplace environments based on trust and open, respectful communication may be more likely to review and revise strategic plans continuously than workplace environments in which upper managers simply expect middle managers to implement policies blindly (Raes et al., 2011). Workplace environments, including schools, may be more likely to view strategic plans as living documents that are subject to constant review through formative and summative assessments if relational trust is part of the workplace culture.

Employers, who adopt the notion of living documents, may be more likely to experience successful reform implementations than managers who prefer to create policies expecting successful implementation without revision. As living documents, change agents should expect discussions to prompt reform revisions and reform revisions to ignite discussions. Department chairs should be included in reform discussions given their unique middle management roles (Hope, 2010).

Mantere (2008) concluded that middle managers have distinctive insights to various stakeholders, which may enlighten strategic plans. Middle managers may offer information that may increase the probability of successful and sustained implementation. Middle managers should be viewed as partners in strategic changes, not just implementers or information disseminators (Mantere, 2008). Upper managers should invest time to hire individuals trained in leadership and management skills with whom they envision the ability to create relationships. Upper managers investing in relationship building with middle managers may use middle managers' skills and unique positions to capacity (Mantere, 2008). For example, school principals may need to engage potential department chairs in professional development opportunities to strengthen their leadership skills. As potential department chairs become trained school leaders, school principals may be in a position to hire department chairs who understand the position prior to taking on the responsibilities. It may be easier for principals to engage trained department chairs in discussions regarding their insights to various stakeholders. Principals need to understand the concerns of teachers, students, and parents. As the middle manager who is a part-time teacher and part-time administrator, the department

chair can use professional connections to support and mentor faculty, encourage students, assist parents, and inform school administrators. Trained department chairs may be in the position to offer principals insights regarding stakeholder groups' successes and frustrations.

In addition to informing administrators, Wang (2010) emphasized the importance of policy makers informing middle managers. Open communication between administrators and department chairs is crucial for middle level administrators to understand the underpinnings of policy makers' decisions (Wang, 2010). Understanding of administrators' decisions may increase the probability of successful implementation. Not only may department chairs be more open to policy makers' decisions by understanding the rationale behind decisions, it may also make it easier for department chairs to explain policy makers' decisions to faculty members in their department (Hope, 2010). Overall if, through open communication, trust and respect develop, then Raes et al. (2011) surmised that upper managers may be better equipped to create strategic plans and middle managers may be better equipped to implement such plans. The ISLLC acknowledged the importance of school leaders creating trusting school environment in which collegiality and discourse permeate in an effort to increase student learning by incorporating these skills in their education administrative licensing guidelines (Johnson & Uline, 2005; Lindahl & Beach, 2009). Hence, school environments in which school leaders create relationships based trust and respect may increase the probability of successful school reformation.

However, upper managers and administrators are not the only stakeholder group to initiate change. Middle managers and classroom teachers also initiate reforms (Conway & Monks, 2011; Martin & Coleman, 2011). Conway and Monks (2011) found that when middle managers initiated change, middle managers accepted an increased workload with less frustration than found with top-down reforms. Additionally, middle managers identified their reforms as change initiatives that fulfilled recognized needs (Conway & Monks, 2011). Conway and Monks found that, in many instances, the need addressed by a middle manager's change initiative directly correlated with an overarching need identified by upper management. Not surprisingly, researchers found middle managers who initiated reforms to be more passionate about the need than when implementing top-down reforms (Conway & Monks, 2011). Changes initiated by middle managers may have been easier to accept and implement because middle managers addressed a need they recognized in their department. They understood the need as it pertained to their daily work. Middle managers, therefore, may have been better able to explain the initiative to those who would implement the change than when given a reform from upper management to implement.

Conway and Monks (2011) found additional perceptual differences between top-down reforms and departmental reforms. Middle managers identified their initiatives' as pilot programs that used the enthusiasm of a select few department members unlike top-down reforms that middle managers perceived as all encompassing (Conway & Monks, 2011). The intimacy of departmental reforms enabled middle managers to engage enthusiastic departmental members when addressing a need in an effort to gain initiative

momentum (Conway & Monks, 2011). Melville et al. (2012) corroborated this finding in their case study. The math department chair enlisted an enthusiastic math teacher to pilot a single gender classroom in an effort to increase student learning (Melville et al., 2012). The researchers found that the collegial relationship between the department chair and classroom teacher played an important role in the success of the initiative (Melville et al., 2012). Melville et al. concluded that the value of the relationships department chairs may create with departmental members may be under-recognized.

In addition to enlisting departmental members, middle managers noted the value of professional organizations. Professional organizations kept department chairs abreast of best practices in their field, which they used when identifying, communicating, and addressing needs (Conway & Monks, 2011). Middle managers may create momentum and increase ownership of the initiative within their department by explaining initiatives using subject specific research (Conway & Monks, 2011). However, middle managers did not identify the engagement of multiple stakeholders when discussing pilot programs. Therefore, although bottom-up reforms may assist in creating an atmosphere conducive to change, middle managers may need to training in engaging stakeholders from various constituencies within and outside the institution in an effort to ensure that their pilot programs serve the needs of the entire community.

Within schools, the department chair may be able to implement initiatives on the small scale Conway and Monks (2011) found to be successful in their research. Department chairs, as part-time classroom teachers, have ample opportunity to discuss issues that arise and brainstorm possible solutions with classroom teachers. As Melville

et al. (2012) uncovered, the department chair role within a change initiative is of great importance. The relationships developed by department chairs with those in their departments assist in the creation of a trusting environment within a school community (Melville et al., 2012). According to Melville et al., the department chair's relationships with teachers influence the success of an initiative's implementation regardless of the initiator.

Department chairs may create relationships and use their position to maintain connections with classroom teachers, which may create camaraderie amongst employees. Camaraderie within a department may allow classroom teachers to speak openly about classroom experiences and seek help from their department chair. Although the mentoring may not be formalized, mentoring faculty members and creating relationships may create opportunities for department chairs to gain insights. Such insights may then be discussed with principals and other policymakers at the onset and throughout the implementation of any change initiatives. Department chairs should know how to use their position to create communication links amongst various stakeholders within a school community.

Open communication between policy writers and policy implementers may also increase stakeholders' ownership of reform efforts, which may increase the probability of successful implementation (Hope, 2010; Wang, 2010). Hope (2010) and Wang (2010) concluded that middle level administrators play a crucial role in reform implementation. Middle level administrators tend to be responsible for the daily routines within their departments. Therefore, middle level administrators need to understand reforms, create

meaning of reforms within themselves, and communicate their interpretations of reform initiatives. Middle managers will most likely implement reforms according to their interpretations. Hope found that middle managers' interpretations of reforms influence the level of success for an initiative. If middle managers interpret reforms positively, then departmental members may more readily implement reforms when compared to departments in which middle managers convey negative interpretations (Hope, 2010). Therefore, if middle managers cannot be part of the decision making process, then they should at least be privy to information regarding reform creation, implementation, and projected duration to decrease the probability of discrepancies between policymakers' intentions and middle level administrators' interpretation and implementation (Wang, 2010). For example, department chairs need to understand the impetus of the reform, the rationale used to create the reform, the expected outcomes of the reform, the anticipated timeframe of the reform, as well as resources allocated for the reform. This information may enable department chairs to ask questions of policy writers prior to explaining reforms to faculty members, who will be implementing the reforms in classrooms. Therefore, educational leaders may need to engage in professional development opportunities to assist them in creating collaborative strategic plans (Lindahl & Beach, 2009).

Collaborative strategic planning may increase the information flow amidst various stakeholders. With respect to the department chair, information rich department chairs may be better suited to assist classroom teachers with reform implementation. During implementation, department chairs may be able to assist the reform team by

communicating the expected goals and outcomes to classroom teachers. Department

chairs may assist classroom teachers by rallying behind successes and assisting during

times of hardship. As department chairs assist classroom teachers with reform

implementation, relationships between these middle managers and those in their

departments may continue to develop. Spillane and Kim's (2012) research highlighted the

importance of part-time leaders such as department chairs and lead teachers. Their

research suggested that part-time, formal leaders play an important role in creating a

collegial school atmosphere based on trusting relationships because of their dual role as

classroom teacher and administrator (Spillane & Kim, 2012). Spillane and Kim noted the

importance of such relationships during school reform initiatives. Relationships between

middle managers and those within departments are central to create collegial work

environments. Collegial work environments tend to be more open to change than work

environments in which members feel isolated (Spillane & Kim, 2012). Roby (2011)

found that teacher isolation was a great concern amongst teachers who participated in his

quantitative school culture survey. The teachers also indicated that teacher isolation

impacted the level of trust they felt for school administrators (Roby, 2011). Department

chairs need to know how to create environments within their departments that promote

collegiality and trust. The trusting relationships between department chairs and classroom

teachers may assist in the ongoing development of reforms and their implementation

(Melville, et al. 2012). Additionally, relationships between department chairs and

teaching faculty may empower teachers to become change facilitators and school leaders.

Hanuscin et al. (2012) found, in their mixed methods study, that, although teacher leaders play a key role in school reform, teachers almost always associated leadership with a formal position within the school. Hanuscin et al. and Martin and Coleman (2011) indicated that teachers are vital for successful school reforms due to their expertise. Administrators need to acknowledge teacher leadership within schools and empower teachers to recognize their actions as leadership actions (Hanuscin et al., 2012; Martin & Coleman, 2011).

Training Department Chairs to Implement Change

Empowering teachers and middle level administrators, such as department chairs, to lead may require formal initiatives by school administrators and policymakers. For example, Martin and Coleman (2011) investigated how one state initiated a licensing protocol for lead teachers. The state allowed qualified teachers, who demonstrated leadership actions within their role as classroom teacher, to take the state's lead teacher assessment without enrolling in a formal academic program (Martin & Coleman, 2011). In essence, the state offering the lead teacher license suggested that lead teachers may be able to learn the job on the job. This assertion aligns with Nguyen's (2012) findings that middle level managers in academia received little or no training for their role. However, the state in which Martin and Coleman investigated the lead teacher licensure will require novice teachers to participate in formal professional leadership training programs as part of the licensing process in the future.

Machado (2012) however found that university programs may not be aligned with school needs. Higher level academic institutions may need to invite stakeholders from

neighboring school districts to identify their needs in an effort to create programs that not only teach collaborative leadership styles but engage in them as well (Machado, 2012). For example, Nguyen (2012) concluded that training for department heads should be both contextual and competencies based. The researcher found a great need for department heads to be trained in the managerial and leadership components of the position in order to implement change, define visions, and create collegial work environments effectively (Nguyen, 2012). For department chairs, the middle managers in schools, to be effective change initiators, change implementers, managers, leaders, and mentors, schools may need to invest in training promising teachers to become such leaders. In an effort to train potential leaders well, school officials may need to collaborate with university leaders to create programs that address regional issues (Bathon & Black, 2011).

Potential Needs of Department Chairs

Eager Sirkis (2011), Inman (2009), and Nguyen (2012) identified the lack of managerial and leadership training opportunities for department chairs in community colleges and universities as problematic. Inman's research also identified the paradox between educators training middle managers in business but not middle managers in education. Research shows that there exists a need for department chairs to be trained, in lieu of learning the job on the job (Inman, 2009).

As Eager Sirkis (2011), Inman (2009), and Thompson et al. (2008) found, many middle level administrators in education and business earned their promotions by performing the duties of their job well. Although it may be helpful for middle level administrators to be viewed by department members as a colleague who can perform the

daily duties of the front line well, those technical skills may not translate into managerial and leadership skills. For example, school administrators may promote educators to department chairs because of their successful teaching record. As part-time administrators, department chairs may need classroom teachers to recognize their qualifications as a classroom teacher in order to create relationships that enable and support difficult discussions (Spillane & Kim, 2012). However, Feeney (2009) concluded that department chairs need to foster a community of learning, not just relationships, within and among departments in order for schools to increase student achievement. The ISLLC also highlighted the importance of the need for school leaders to create communities of learning within their suggested administrative licensing standards (Johnson & Uline, 2005; Lindahl & Beach, 2009). Training middle level administrators, such as department chairs, may need to encompass how middle level administrators can use their skills as researcher and educator to develop essential relationships aimed at increasing student learning.

Relational skills. Developing relationships amongst faculty members within a department may assist department chairs in creating collegial work environments based on trust. Melville et al. (2012) found that in order for department chairs to perform duties associated with change initiatives, they need to create trusting environments. Trust between department members and their chairs may empower department chairs to individualize change initiatives to coincide with the needs and talents of department members. Such individualizations may assist classroom teachers' ability and desire to incorporate initiatives, which then may affect the probability of sustained change. As

Tyack and Cuban (1995) indicated, when policymakers expect classroom teachers to implement reforms blindly, the probability of the initiative being successful diminishes. However, Hope (2010) concluded that middle managers interpretation of change initiatives may also impact successful implementation negatively. Policy makers, while encouraging department chairs to incorporate meaningful change, may need to create trusting relationships with department chairs since department chairs may be able to affect initiatives' potential success both positively and negatively.

The relationship between a department chair and department members is only one of the many relationships a department chair must foster. Department chairs must also make an effort to create collegial relationships with policy writers and full-time administrators, such as principals. However, creating collegial relationships with upper managers, such as principals, may require a different set of skills than those used to create open environments within departments. Upper managers, policymakers, and other full-time administrators may expect middle managers and department chairs to implement their policies without much interaction. Upper managers, however, need to interact as much as possible with middle managers to increase the probability of successful interpretation and implementation of initiatives. Hope (2010) highlighted the importance of middle managers' interpretations of change initiatives in relation to successful implementations. Successful implementations may hinge on middle managers' abilities to interpret, explain, and encourage others throughout implementation processes (Hope, 2010). Mantere (2008) found that upper managers can encourage middle managers' role of implementer by communicating implementation strategies,

backgrounds of strategies, and available resources for initiatives openly and clearly. Upper managers, policymakers, and school principals may be able to create collegial relationships with middle managers and department chairs by demonstrating the value they place on open communication.

Kuyvenhoven and Buss (2011) concluded that upper level managers must make communication a priority with middle managers in order to assist in creating a collegial atmosphere conducive to change. The development of collegial relationships between upper and middle managers may increase the levels of trust and respect between the parties. Mantere (2008) found that middle managers may be empowered by collegial relationships with upper management based on trust and respect. Additionally, the ISLLC indicated in its suggested administrative licensing guidelines that educational leaders should promote a school culture based on trust, respect and promote collegiality (Johnson & Uline, 2005; Lindahl & Beach, 2009). For example, school principals who create environments based on trust and respect may empower department chairs to implement reforms well, offer constructive feedback, and engage in problem solving activities during implementation (Mantere, 2008). Upper managers and principals may need to create, purposely, relationships and atmospheres that empower middle managers to take ownership of reforms (Mantere, 2008). Such relational leadership may serve as an example for middle level administrators to use within their own departments. Upper management may empower middle managers to engage in leadership styles that encourage trust, respect, and open communication.

Empowering middle managers may include training middle managers in reform implementation, as well as communication skills. The art of communicating with various stakeholders in an effort to create collegial relationships may require training for some middle managers. Higher education institutions, however, may be unaware of the needs within local school districts (Machado, 2012). School districts may want to reach out to higher education institutions and explain that department chairs need to understand how to communicate effectively with faculty, staff, administration, students, and parents (Eager Sirkis, 2011). Department chairs must understand that each stakeholder views school events and initiatives differently. The varying perspectives may assist department chairs while working with administrators and classroom teachers during change initiatives. As department chairs gain information regarding possible effects of an initiative on various stakeholder groups, that information can be used while formatively assessing and revising initiatives. Consequently, department chairs may need to be trained how to communicate with various stakeholders and how to use the information garnered from those stakeholders. Those who tend to train educational leaders, higher education institutions, may need to engage school districts in their creation of leadership programs (Machado, 2012).

Using data. Higher education institutions may find it beneficial to communicate with local schools districts in an effort to determine training needs for department chairs. For example, higher education institutions may find it useful to understand the types of data school administrators expect department chairs to use during decision making processes. Department chairs may need to analyze, interpret, and explain data driven

decisions to various stakeholders. However, using data to make decisions, in general, may be new to some department chairs. Feeney (2009) found data driven decision making and collaboration lacking in high school departments. The process of using data to make informed decisions may empower department chairs to identify needs, communicate with administrators, and initiate reforms as noted in the ISLLC administrative licensing standards (Johnson & Uline, 2005; Lindahl & Beach, 2009). Department chairs need to understand where to attain good data, how to interpret data, and how to share findings with others. Department chair candidates may need training on exactly what their school district expects of them with regards to data driven decision making, as well as professional development on research techniques and interpreting data (Eager Sirkis, 2011). Hence, leadership training programs and school districts may find it beneficial to collaborate when creating curriculum for such programs (Machado, 2012).

Site specific culture. Training department chairs in competencies such as data driven decision making may also involve training middle level managers in plausible contextual experiences pertaining to school culture (Nguyen, 2012). For example, department chairs may need to be trained in presenting research findings to administration. Department chairs may need to know when the best time during the school year is to present initiatives that may involve extraordinary expenditures. Department chairs may need to learn how to create a collegial atmosphere, in which they encourage both department members and administrators to discuss data and propose various solutions to alleviate an identified need. Department chairs may need training on becoming a participatory leader within their school (Zulu, 2011).

Leadership skills. Department chairs may need training on various leadership styles in addition to research techniques. For example, those who employ participatory leadership engage others in the decision making process. Zulu (2011) concluded that participatory leadership styles involving listening, empathizing, empowering, and collaborating may be well suited for middle level administrative positions in schools. However, researchers have found that some department chairs lack leadership skills, most notably delegation skills (Zulu, 2011). Department chairs need to delegate tasks in order to implement initiatives. Department chairs may need training regarding how to evaluate employees' talents and employ their talents for the benefit of the institution. Department chairs may need to learn that the act of delegating to faculty members may empower them, increase levels of trust, and increase communication. Hence, department chairs may need to learn how to create teacher leaders within their departments (Hanuscin et al., 2012).

As department chairs learn how to recognize teacher leaders, classroom teachers may feel valued (Martin & Coleman, 2011; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Classroom teachers who feel valued may be more collegial and open to discuss reforms. Creating open lines of communication may increase stakeholders' ownership of reforms and thus increase their probability of success (Wang, 2010). Hence, department chairs may need leadership training in order to learn how to engage classroom teachers with reforms to create collegial atmospheres that encourage discourse.

Researchers identified leadership skills, such as developing collegial atmospheres, as lacking with department chairs, who, as middle managers, lead reform implementation

efforts (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Nguyen, 2012; Raes et al., 2011; Zulu, 2011). In order to optimize the role of department chair, administrators may need to create learning opportunities for those aspiring to become department chairs and for those already in the position. To begin, researchers suggested administrators create detailed job descriptions (Eager Sirkis, 2011). Department chairs may be recognized as reform implementers, but they must also conduct other duties while implementing policies. Floyd and Dimmock (2011) found that many department chairs did not understand the job description fully when accepting their post. As a result, many department chairs related that the role of department chair did not align with their expectations or career ambitions (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011). Therefore, to increase the appeal of the job and awareness of the increased workload with the position, administrators should make an effort to create detailed job descriptions.

With detailed job descriptions, administrators may be able to offer leadership and managerial training opportunities to prospective candidates as well as communicate their training needs to higher education institutions (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Machado, 2012; Nguyen, 2012; Zulu, 2011). Eager Sirkis (2011) concluded that such training may not only serve the institutions better than simply promoting faculty members who may be willing to perform the tasks of department chair, but may also increase overall perceptions of the position. If the position of department chair gains an overall perception of prestige, then institutions may be able to employ department chairs as educational leaders, in lieu of managers. To assist in this endeavor, educational institutions may want

to create training opportunities for both potential and current educational leaders that allow many to participate and gain an understanding of the department chair's role.

Regardless of whether participants in leadership and managerial training courses become department chairs, they can use the leadership and managerial skills within their departments and classrooms. Although department chairs may be responsible for leading implementation efforts, classroom teachers tend to be the ultimate implementers (Hall & Hord, 2011; Reeves, 2009; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). In an effort to empower teachers further, Hanuscin et al. (2012) suggested that administrators recognize teacher leadership actions and potential opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles, whether in an official role such as department chair or not. As faculty members feel empowered by formal recognition, departments chairs may be able to create collegial work environments easier than if administrators neglected to recognize classroom teachers' achievements.

Mentoring. Fostering collegial work environments necessitates constant attention from department chairs. Department chairs may need ongoing professional development to empower them as they aimed to engage faculty members in discussions centered about student learning. Thompson et al. (2008) suggested ongoing coaching or mentoring. The researchers suggested that coaching middle managers may increase middle managers' effectiveness as implementers, informers, and collaborators (Thompson et al., 2008). Typically, school administrators aim mentoring programs towards new teachers. However, a mentoring program for new department chairs may assist department chairs in successfully navigating their duties. If department chairs can perform their jobs with greater confidence and ease, they may be happier in the position. Floyd and Dimmock

(2011) concluded that those unhappy as department chairs found it difficult to negotiate the demands of the job. The unhappy participants indicated their intentions to leave the post by retiring or reverting back to a faculty member (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011). Consistency in a post as demanding as department chair, which researchers have shown to be instrumental in initiative implementations, may increase overall school climate (Mantere, 2008).

School administrators' role. Raes et al. (2011) found that a trusting and respectful school climate encourages department chairs to engage in schoolwide reforms, not just departmental issues. The openness of communication between principals and department chairs may carry over to the relationships within a department. Not only do principals and department chairs need to create collegial relationships with one another, but department chairs and faculty members also need to develop such relationships. Therefore, training department chairs in leadership styles such as participatory, servant, and transformational, as suggested by Zulu (2011) and Inman (2009), may create departments within schools that engage in discussions using data to identify needs. As department chairs and classroom teachers identify needs, department chairs may then bring issues to policy makers and administrators. Such communication may lead to the creation of school reforms that reflect the needs of classroom teachers. If reforms directly reflect the needs of teachers, then policy writers and administrators may increase the probability of long lasting change (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). However, identification and communication of needs may only increase if schools and higher education institutions work with one another to offer department chairs training in leadership skills that

promote shared decision making, needs assessments, and collegiality, and if administrators also employ such leadership styles. Thus, school administrators may need to identify skill sets for the department chair role and share the role descriptions with higher education institutions in an effort to create training opportunities for those in the department chair role and for those aspiring to be department chairs.

Summary and Conclusion

Creating trust-based school climates, collaborating with others, and empowering classroom teachers to take calculated risks all in an effort to increase student learning implies that department chairs need to lead, not just manage, departments. However, researchers found that schools tend to promote faculty members to department chair positions because they perform their teaching duties well, not because they exemplify leadership skills that may propel schools forward (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Inman, 2009; Nguyen, 2012). Additionally, researchers found that schools provided little or no training for those promoted (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Inman, 2009; Nguyen, 2012). Faculty members who may be experts in their field of study may need training in the fields of leadership and management.

Eager Sirkis (2011) and Nguyen (2012) concluded that department chairs may lack training in both the managerial and leadership aspects of the position. The researchers found a great need for department chairs to be trained in the managerial and leadership components of the position in order to implement change, define visions, and create collegial work environments effectively (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Nguyen, 2012). The ISLLC support these findings within their standards for licensing educational leaders

(Johnson & Uline, 2005; Lindahl & Beach, 2009). Hence, department chairs may need both contextual and competencies based training (Nguyen, 2012). Training for department chairs may need to include both theory as well as practical applications. For example, department chairs may need to learn how to empower those with whom they work. Hanuscin et al. (2012) concluded that because classroom teachers play a significant role in implementing school reforms, department chairs should empower classroom teachers to use their expertise and view their own actions as leadership actions. In this role, department chairs empower others to grow and learn as they develop to their fullest potential. Department chairs should aim to encourage classroom teachers to develop their craft continually.

Encouraging teachers to develop their craft continually may be difficult. For example, researchers found that high stakes testing affects educators' teaching methodologies (Longo, 2010; Mora, 2011). Educators tend to teach to the test using a teacher centered approach in an effort to demonstrate increased student achievement on high stakes tests (Longo, 2010; Mora, 2011). Teacher centered lessons may inadvertently affect educators' use of methodologies and tools that may increase critical thinking and excite today's learners. The lack of student centered, social constructivist methodologies may affect the development of students becoming lifelong learners. As Dewey (1938) indicated, educators should aim to create lifelong learners who can think critically and work collaboratively. Bevins (2011) and Parette, Quesenberry, and Blum (2010) found that technology needs to be integrated in student centered classrooms to teach today's learners how to use technology in relevant ways that extend their critical and lateral

thinking skills as well as excite them about learning. However, some educators may not know how to integrate technology and create curriculum based learning experiences. School leaders need to create a trusting community in which opportunities to continue learning and create innovative learning experiences based on students' backgrounds are the norm (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009; Melville et al., 2012; Powell & Kalina, 2009; Sahin, 2011). Department chairs within the high school setting have been found to be an integral part of creating a school climate that promotes lifelong learning for every community member, including teachers (Bruce, Jarvis, Flynn, & Brock, 2011, Melville et al., 2012).

Department chairs need to create a climate of collegiality and trust within departments for teachers to feel safe taking calculated risks to enhance student learning as well as their own learning (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). The relationship between trust and collegiality may be cyclical. The creation of trust within departments may stem from working collegially with one another, and trusting relationships may foster collegial discourse. Trusting relationships and collegial discourse may be dependent on one another and foster growth in each other. Therefore, department chairs may need to learn how to create collegial work environments in which discourse is welcome (Feeney, 2009). Additionally, leadership training may need to incorporate how middle level administrators create trusting relationships within departments because trust and collegiality may be interdependent (Spillane & Kim, 2012). For example, Melville et al. (2012) concluded that trusting and collegial relationships between department chairs' and classroom teachers may influence the success of initiatives' implementations positively.

Therefore, training department chairs to create such climates may lead to increased professional growth and student learning.

However, Feeney (2009) uncovered that department chairs spend the majority of their time managing departments in lieu of leading departments to improved teaching and learning. This may imply that, in addition to training department chairs in creating collegial relationships based on trust, department chairs may also need time management training. For example, department chairs may need to learn how to balance discussions about teaching and learning with discussions centered about managerial tasks such as supply ordering. Supply ordering is necessary for any line of work, but department chairs may need to learn techniques that enable them to engage others in discussions centered about student learning.

Although department chairs may be considered expert teachers, they may not know how to engage others in collegial discussions about teaching and learning (Inman, 2009). For example, Feeney (2009) observed that data driven decision making and collaboration appeared to be lacking in departmental meetings. Department chairs may need to learn how to read and interpret data in order to discuss the implications of data and make data driven decisions within their departments. Data driven decisions may not only assist department members to engage in collegial discussions that may improve student learning, but learning how to read and interpret data may assist department chairs when attempting to identify needs with their departments.

Identifying needs within a department may assist department chairs in proposing bottom-up initiatives and implementing top-down initiatives. Conway and Monks (2011)

found that when upper management imposed initiatives, middle managers experienced frustration due to increased workloads, minimum communication, lack of clarity, and delayed decision making. Additionally, middle managers expressed a lack of ownership in top-down initiatives (Conway & Monks, 2011). Therefore, as middle managers, department chairs may need training to assist them in implementing top-down school reforms (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011). Within such training, they may need to learn how to ask clarifying questions and engage with upper management in order to communicate the initiative clearly to department members and other stakeholders (Conway & Monks, 2011; Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011). Engaging principals and other policymakers in collegial discussions regarding school reforms may also assist department chairs in interpreting reforms for their departments and streamlining departmental needs within top-down reforms. Department chairs may need to learn how to make top-down reforms meaningful for those in their department (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011). However, in order to examine school reforms closely, department chairs may also need to learn how to manage their workload and delegate (Conway & Monks, 2011).

Zulu (2011) found in her study of female department chairs that department chairs need training not only in ways to optimize results but also in role expectations in general. Inman (2009) found that many department chairs at the university level learned the job while on the job. She noted a need for the creation of detailed job descriptions (Inman, 2009). Detailed job descriptions would not only allow prospective department chairs to identify their own suitability for the role, but such job descriptions may assist upper level managers, such as principals, in communicating needs to education leadership programs.

Department chairs need to possess leadership skills to serve administration, faculty, parents, and students. Within the leadership training, participants may need to learn how to create relationships with multiple stakeholders. Therefore, department chairs and prospective department chairs may need to participate in leadership training courses that examine various leadership styles. Department chairs may need to be trained in participatory leadership styles such as servant leadership, instructional leadership, and invitational leadership (Zulu, 2011). Additionally, school leaders may need to contextualize leadership and management training to address individual school nuances (Nguyen, 2012). Training professionals to perform department chair duties well may need to include general leadership and management training as well as site specific training.

Overall, department chairs serve multiple stakeholders in a variety of ways within the school environment that they work. Preparation for department chairs to perform their duties well may need to include practical leadership theory, management skills, and communication skills for department chairs to use to build relationships with various stakeholders within their communities (Spillane & Kim, 2012; Wang, 2010). Preparing department chairs to serve multiple stakeholders may require administrators to create detailed job descriptions from which training opportunities may be developed (Eager Sirkis, 2001; Inman, 2009). Administrators should offer training opportunities for current and prospective department chairs to enhance how they implement school reform, inform stakeholders, and collaborate with stakeholders as they serve administrators, faculty members, parents, and students (Eager Sirkis, 2011; Thompson et al., 2008). Such

training programs may not only enhance the work of department chairs, but may also help identify faculty members who may be well suited for this middle level leadership position.

Research indicates a need to investigate the training and licensing of middle level school administrators. Investigating current training and licensing practices of high school department chairs may increase communication between the state departments of education, college of education programs, and school districts. Communication amongst these stakeholders may influence training programs for the middle management role of department chair. This middle management role is unique, and a new department chair should not be expected to learn the job on the job as Inman (2009) found at the university level. Hence, I aimed to inform state departments of education, accredited universities, and school districts as to the alignment of licensing criteria, leadership development courses, and role descriptions for high school department chairs with this study. Data consisted of interview and artifact data from the three aforementioned stakeholders. Data collection varied and was triangulated during analysis. I performed a content analysis to identify prominent themes and patterns within and amongst units of analysis (Patton, 2002). The creation of a reliable and valid qualitative case study of high school departments chairs may not only inform stakeholders but also influence others to further research this middle management role in high schools.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine expectations of a state department of education's licensing division, higher education institutions' leadership training opportunities, and role descriptions for high school department chairs as change agents, leaders, and managers. I collected artifact data regarding expectations of a state department of education's licensing division. I also collected interview data concerning higher education institutions' leadership training opportunities. Additionally, I collected interview data from high school department chairs regarding their perception of their role as well as actual role descriptions. I engaged in a content analysis of data to identify common patterns and themes (Patton, 2002). Additionally, I engaged in comparative analysis and data triangulation within and amongst the units of analysis to determine the degree to which department chair role descriptions, preparation coursework, and licensing align.

Determining alignment amongst the aforementioned units of analysis may inform stakeholders about current perceptions, both congruent as well as disparate, regarding department chairs' role, preparation, and licensing. For example, research findings may assist school administrators in identifying teachers who demonstrate leadership and managerial potential well suited for the middle management position of department chair. Creating department chair teams with educators who exhibit leadership and management skills may assist schools in fostering trusting climates, open to change. Additionally, research findings may encourage local universities to review current leadership program

offerings to ensure that programs meet the needs of school districts as well as licensing requirements. My research findings may encourage stakeholders to dialog about observed characteristics of successful middle managers and the needs of prospective department chairs.

Research Design and Rationale

I investigated the role of the department chair with a conceptually framed, qualitative, comparative case study design. Using the comparative case study design, I executed an in-depth study of the high school department chair role's contextual intelligences from three perspectives by analyzing textual data for repetitive ideas and statements that developed into patterns and themes (Patton, 2002). I defined the units of analysis with the three perspectives I examined. The three units of analysis were a state's department of education, education professors from accredited higher education institutions, and school districts. With the aforementioned units of analysis, I determined alignment between the expectations of a state's education licensing department, accredited higher education institutions' leadership programs, and school districts' role descriptions for high school department chairs as change agents, leaders, and managers. Given the existence of a supervisor/director license for middle level administrators in the state of this study, leadership programs, and high school department chair role descriptions, it was assumed that there is a cyclical relationship amongst the units of analysis in which they support the goals of one another. For example, the department of education's supervisor/director license should provide information for local school districts regarding the skill set licensed professionals have prior to assuming the

department chair role. The department of education's supervisor/director license should also provide directions for higher education institutions when creating leadership programs for those pursuing middle level administrative positions. Additionally, local universities and colleges should provide leadership coursework that assists educators in licensure attainment while preparing educators to succeed in the position of department chair at local schools. Finally, local school districts should be able to use department of education licenses and higher education transcripts to vet potential department chair candidates. However, local school districts should not only use the information provided from the state department of education and higher education institutions, but they also should inform other stakeholders of their needs with respect to the department chair role. With this design and these assumptions in mind, I addressed research questions regarding the alignment of the units of analysis.

Research Questions

In this case study, I responded to a primary research question which was supported by secondary research questions. The primary research question asked if there is conceptual similarity among these units of analysis: job descriptions of high school department chairpersons, department of education expectations of these chairpersons, and coursework undertaken at accredited universities that prepare these chairpersons to be successful. The results of this research informed school districts, state department of education licensure entities, and education leadership programs in helping these chairpersons succeed. The following secondary research questions guided investigations into each unit of analysis to identify themes that answered the primary research question:

1. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are present in the high school department chairperson job description?

2. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do high school department chairpersons frequently use?

3. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are considered in department of education procedures for licensing high school department chairpersons?

4. How does the department of elementary and secondary education perceive the role of department chairs in high schools?

5. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do university faculty incorporate into coursework that prepares future high school department chairpersons to be successful?

6. Is there alignment between what university faculty believe is the role of a high school department chairperson and the chairperson's job description?

Research Design

The research questions, along with Sternberg's (1984, 1997) concept of contextual intelligence, previous researchers' findings, and my experiences, lend themselves to a conceptually framed, qualitative, comparative case study. I defined the case for this study as the role of the high school department chair. Using the case study design, I compared data regarding various perspectives on the high school department chair role comprehensively with greater ease than with an alternative research design (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). I compared perspectives of the high school department chair position from the state department of education licensing division, higher education

institutions that offer leadership programs, and school districts by performing a content analysis on collected textual data (Patton, 2002). I limited the case to perspectives of a small sample, which enabled me to present a more comprehensive analysis of interview and artifact data gathered from participants than if I would have broadened my participation pool (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002).

The units of analysis I engaged in this case study represented three perspectives regarding the high school department chair role. I sought local school districts' perspectives by collecting department chair job descriptions via email as well as potentially using role descriptions posted on public domains. I also collected interview data from those working as high school department chairs. Additionally, I collected interview data from education professors involved with leadership programs at local accredited higher education institutions. With respect to the department of education, I used artifact data publicly available on the department of education's websites regarding the supervisor/director license. According to Creswell (2013) and Patton (2002), by collecting detailed data from multiple sources regarding the same topic, I created a layered case study which assisted me in gaining an in-depth understanding of the case. The layered case study approach enabled me, during content analysis, to triangulate data in an effort to identify recurrent patterns and themes (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Additionally, while triangulating data, I uncovered novel associations amongst the units of analysis (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). I used the identified patterns, themes, and associations from data analysis while answering the primary research question.

The primary research question addressed the purpose of the comparative case study, which was to determine alignment between licensure expectations of the state education department, accredited higher education institutions' leadership programs, and role descriptions for high school department chairs as change agents, leaders, and managers. After analyzing data from all three units of analysis, I wrote a narrative description of each unit's perspective, a thematic analysis amongst the units, and a report of my interpretation of identified perspectives and themes. With the results of this study, I endeavored to add to the limited body of research available. Additionally, I aimed to inform the state department of education's licensing division, education professors involved in leadership programs geared toward preparing middle level education administrators, and school districts of each stakeholder's perception of the high school department chair role by highlighting similarities and differences of the units' perspectives. The comprehensive, layered investigation into the role of department chair was served best by the case study approach. Overall, the study aimed to inform the state department of education, local universities, and school districts about each stakeholder's perception of the department chair role in an effort to increase communication amongst stakeholders.

Role of Researcher

As the researcher of the high school department chair role, I recognized my own role within the study. My participation in the research as a high school department chair, for example, informed both the purpose and conceptual framework of this case study. In addition to holding the position of high school department chair, my involvement with

local higher education institutions' leadership courses informed me of the case I researched.

As a member of the case, I informed participants of my roles as researcher, student, and high school department chair. However, I anticipated that my membership in the case may assist me in garnering data. For example, I intended to use my position as a local department chair to gain school districts' trust when requesting interviews and their high school department chair role descriptions via email. Additionally, I used my knowledge of the state's education websites when searching for artifact data regarding the supervisor/director license. When requesting interviews with local education leadership professors, I first contacted education department chairs at institutions in which I am an alumna. I then requested an interview from an institution with a reciprocal relationship to the college from which I earned my masters. I used my alumna status at one institution to assist me in garnering data from another. If needed, I would have employed a chain sampling technique to gather additional interview data. I acknowledged to all potential participants my current position as a high school department chair and alumna status at local colleges and universities.

In addition to being a member of the study by virtue of my role as high school department chair, I conducted the interviews. I conducted semistructured interviews to garner data regarding perceptions of the high school department chair from local higher education professors and high school department chairs. I created both the interview questions and protocol. However, I ensured that my membership in this case did not influence interviews. I kept the primary focus of each interview on the interviewee and

refrained from sharing my experiences. I aimed to understand the units of analysis'

perspective in lieu of ensuring the units of analysis understand my experiences as a case

member.

As Janesick (2011) suggested, I reflected on each interview and added relevant

observations and insights to interview notes. Once interviews were transcribed with my

reflections, I requested that each interviewee read their transcribed interview with my

reflections for accuracy. According to Creswell (2013), I may have increased the validity

of interview data by engaging in member checking. I acknowledged my role as a high

school department chair to prospective participants, used professional connections to

garner both interview and artifact data, and engaged participants in member checking.

Methodology

I conducted a qualitative, comparative study using an applied research approach

to investigate the alignment amongst a state's department of education supervisor/director

license, local higher education institutions' leadership programs, and local high schools'

role descriptions for high school department chairs. According to Patton (2002), applied

research endeavors to inform stakeholders of program concerns and empower

stakeholders to make informed decisions about possible interventions. I aimed to inform

a state's department of education licensing division, local universities and colleges, and

local high schools of congruent and divergent perceptions regarding the high school

department chair role with this research. The stakeholders who informed the study will

also be informed by the study.

Participant Selection

Units of analysis. Diverse stakeholders, according to Patton (2002), involved with a common issue may offer various perspectives and insights when questioned about the issue. Therefore, I engaged three distinct groups of stakeholders in an effort to attain various perspectives. I treated each group as an individual unit of analysis (Creswell, 2013). Each unit of analysis represented a group of stakeholders uniquely and intimately involved with high school department chairs. I enlisted an eastern seaboard's state department of education as one unit of analysis. The personnel in this office issue a supervisor/director license to qualified education professionals interested in department chair and lead teacher roles. I engaged education professors from local, accredited colleges and universities for a second unit of analysis. I engaged professors who work with educator leadership programs aimed at assisting educators in attaining the supervisor/director license from the department of education. For the third unit of analysis, I involved local school districts. In the eastern seaboard state the research was conducted, local school districts pen the job descriptions for their department chairs. I engaged local school districts to garner their perspective on the department chair role. Hence, I layered the case study by collecting various perspectives regarding the high school department chair role and potentially create a meaningful overview of this middle management role.

Purposeful sampling. In an effort to create a meaningful overview of the high school department chair role, I selected participants who have intimate knowledge of their unit of analysis' perspective regarding the role. In other words, I aimed to invite

participants according to the depth of information they may have been able to provide regarding the high school department chair. The purposeful sampling technique aligns with Patton's (2002) suggestion that qualitative researchers should engage participants who may be able to offer in-depth information regarding the research question.

In an effort to garner in-depth data, I left open the potential to use the chain sampling technique to identify participants. When I used the chain sampling method, I asked potential and actual participants if they knew of additional people who may be able to provide information-rich data (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). For example, I used my alumna status to contact education department chairs from two institutions of higher education that I attended. First, I contacted the university from which I earned my certificate of advanced graduate studies in education leadership. Next, I contacted the college from which I earned my master's degree in the art of teaching. Finally, I used the reciprocal relationships the college from which I earned my master's degree to engage a third education department chair. Similarly, I used my professional connections as a department chair to request interview data from colleagues at various high schools. I gauged potential participant's interest by emailing each potential participant a brief description of myself, Walden University, and the study (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix D). Hence, I used my experiences as an education leadership student and professional to increase the probability of engaging participants at local higher education institutions and high schools.

Prior to contacting interested participants, I emailed all potential cooperating places of business because I could not guarantee that interviews would take place in a

location other than participants' places of business (see Appendix A). In the email, I explained who I am, debriefed them on Walden University, and attached my research proposal for their review (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix A). I requested that each business leader sign a letter of cooperation electronically if they anticipated engaging in the research (see Appendices B and G). After receiving the letter of cooperation, I emailed potential interviewees to gauge their level of interest (see Appendix D). However, if I was unable to attain letters of cooperation, then I contacted potential interviewees directly using publicly listed email addresses. If I found the need to contact potential interviewees directly, then I ensured that interviews did not occur in the schools at which participants work (see Appendix D).

In the email to potential interviewees, I explained who I am, debriefed them on Walden University, and attached my research proposal for their review (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix D). I asked each potential participant if they would not only be comfortable engaging in an interview, but anticipated being able to offer information-rich data. Additionally, I began chain sampling by asking if they know of someone within their unit of analysis from whom I could also gather information-rich data. Therefore, I left the possibility for an increase in the number of participants by chain sampling if the initial contacts' response warranted me to request additional contacts.

Unlike potential interview participants within higher education institutions and high schools, I did not engage in chain sampling while gathering artifact data from school districts. Instead, I used stratified purposeful sampling techniques when requesting school districts' involvement via email. I used stratified purposeful sampling to gather

department chair role descriptions because the strategy potentially increased the probability that school district data collected would vary and enable comparative data analysis (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). To identify potential school district participants, I used the state department of education's online database. I emailed potential cooperating school districts to gather artifact data in a consistent manner because school districts' role descriptions are not available in a public domain unfailingly (see Appendix A). As with requesting interview data, I explained who I am, debriefed them on Walden University, and attached my research proposal for their review (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix A). I requested each superintendent, president, or head of school to sign a letter of cooperation electronically (see Appendices C and G). Once I received the letter of cooperation and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, approval number 04-27-15-0324092, I collected role descriptions from each school district electronically.

I attempted to gather role descriptions from a variety of school districts. I contacted school district leaders from various suburban towns and schools in the southern end of the state's capital city. I aimed to incorporate a variety of school districts including public, public vocational, private non-denominational, and private Christian schools. The variety may not only be reflected in their funding but also in their department chair role descriptions. From personal experiences, I anticipated that the amount of responsibility each participating school district bestows on their department chairs would vary. However, I also left open the possibility of searching the world wide web for publicly published role descriptions if only a small number of school districts agreed to participate

in the research. Therefore, I aligned the role description sampling techniques with the purpose of gathering a variety of data from local high schools.

Overall, I used more than one sampling technique. I tailored sampling techniques for each unit of analysis. By using a combined strategy, I endeavored to align the research purpose with the primary and secondary research questions (Patton, 2002). Additionally, individualizing the sampling strategy for each unit of analysis assisted in creating meaningful sample sizes within each unit for this study.

Sample size. According to Patton (2002), researchers should determine sample size in light of their research purpose and primary question, in conjunction with their time and resource constraints. Additionally, researchers should be open to sample sizes changing as research projects progress (Patton, 2002). Researchers should also expect the possibility that sample size may vary amongst different units of analysis within one project. Therefore, as suggested by Patton, I estimated minimum sample sizes primarily for my units of analysis.

For the state department of education, I collected artifact data published on the state's websites. The state department of education offers licensing to high school department chairs as supervisors/directors. The amount of artifact data was unknown. I collected enough data to answer the research questions thoroughly. I aimed to gather information-rich data that answered the secondary research questions:

1. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are considered in department of education procedures for licensing high school department chairpersons?

2. How does the department of elementary and secondary education perceive the role of department chairs in high schools?

To answer secondary research questions regarding education professors' perceptions, I had a small sample size. I anticipated a minimum sample size for this unit of analysis of three. However, if I deemed that I need more data, then I could have increased the sample size. With this unit of analysis, I endeavored to answer the following secondary research questions:

1. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do university faculty incorporate into coursework that prepares future high school department chairpersons to be successful?

2. Is there alignment between what university faculty believe is the role of a high school department chairperson and the chairperson's job description?

As previously stated, I interviewed at least three education professors in an effort to gather information-rich data to answer the aforementioned secondary research questions. I emailed education professors to gauge their interest in participating (see Appendix D). In the email, I determined if they could offer information-rich data regarding the secondary questions by offering information regarding myself, Walden University, and the research project (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix D). If any of the education professors determined they could not participate in the research project, I asked them to assist me in identifying additional potential participants.

I also had a small sample size for high school department chair interviewees. I anticipated a minimum sample size for this unit of analysis of three. However, as with the

department of education, if I deemed that I need more data, then I would have increased

the sample size. With this unit of analysis, I endeavored to answer the following

secondary research questions:

1. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are present in the high school

   department chairperson job description?

2. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do high school department

   chairpersons frequently use?

As previously stated, I interviewed at least three high school department chairs in

an effort to gather information-rich data to answer the aforementioned secondary research

questions. I emailed high school department chairs to gauge their interest in participating

(see Appendix D). In the email, I determined if they could offer information-rich data

regarding the secondary questions by offering information regarding myself, Walden

University, and the research project (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix D). If any

of the high school department chairs determined they could not participate in the research

project, I asked them to assist me in identifying additional potential participants.

I used chain sampling, as necessary, to identify at least three participants from the

education professors' unit of analysis and high school department chairs' when garnering

interview data. A sample size of at least three enabled triangulation of data. By

employing data triangulation techniques with participants' responses, I was able to

investigate, compare, and contrast various perspectives of the case within a single unit of

analysis and identify emergent themes (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). As stated, the

number of interview participants could have increased. I inquired at the end of each

interview if participants could suggest additional participants who may be able to inform the study further (Patton, 2002). Hence, although the case study was bounded by time constraints, I left the option open to interview additional participants for either preceding unit of analysis if deemed necessary.

Unlike the garnering of interview data, the accumulation of artifact data from local high schools had a stated maximum of 40. I requested the participation of approximately 40 school districts in the southeastern area of the state. The 40 school districts consisted of both public and private schools. Therefore, I anticipated differences amongst the department chair role descriptions. However, I also expected that some school districts may not wish to participate in the research study. I was prepared to search the world wide web for publicly published role descriptions if the need arose.

In an effort to assist data analysis, I organized department chair role descriptions according to school type as I received them. I sought to engage public, public vocational, private nonsecular, and private secular schools. As I collected data, I sent an email reminder about the study to schools district leaders who did not respond either positively or negatively to my participation request. Unlike the interview data collection sample sizes, the artifact data collection sample size had a stated maximum of 40 participants.

Overall, I used three units of analysis for this qualitative case study. I used the three units of analysis to create a layered case study (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, I triangulated data within and amongst the three units of analysis in an effort to determine the alignment of the department chair role amongst the state department of education, education leadership professors, and school districts (Creswell, 2013). I anticipated the

triangulation of data assisting me in the identification of themes and patterns (Creswell, 2013).

To assist in garnering information-rich data to triangulate, I employed both chain sampling and stratified sampling techniques. However, I varied sample sizes accordingly for each unit of analysis. As suggested by Patton (2002), I determined each unit of analysis' sample size by aligning the research purpose, secondary research questions, time constraints, and the apparent saturation point of each unit of analysis. I anticipated the previously stated sample size minimums and maximum to provide me with rich data. However, I left to possibility open to identify the need to increase the minimum sample sizes if I required additional data to answer the secondary research questions (Patton, 2002). I contacted the IRB if sample sizes changed. According to Patton (2002), some IRB's may review research projects in stages if research components are subject to change. Therefore, although I aligned the sampling strategies well with the research purpose and questions, my sampling strategies may have influenced the IRB's approval process (Patton, 2002).

Instrumentation

In this layered case study, I collected two types of data from three units of analysis. I collected interview data from two units of analysis and artifact data from two units of analysis. I collected published licensure information from the state's education websites and high school department chair role descriptions from local school districts for artifact data. Initially, I requested the cooperation of 40 school districts located in the southeastern portion of the state. I emailed the request to each school district's

superintendent, head of school, or president. In the email, I introduced myself, Walden University, and the research project (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix A). I attached my research proposal to the emailed letter of cooperation I sent to each school leader (see Appendices C and G). Once I obtained IRB approval, I requested a copy of each school district's department chair role description via email. However, if the need arose to increase the sample size due to schools not wanting to participate, I would have searched the world wide web for publicly published role descriptions. From experience, my perception was that each school district creates department chair role descriptions individually. This data had the potential to represent various perceptions of the high school department chair role and may have lent itself to comparative analysis and triangulation nicely.

I also investigated the high school department chair role by gathering interview data from two of the three units of analysis. I used researcher created tools to garner interview data (see Appendices E and F). With the education professors' interviews, I aimed to answer the following secondary research questions:

1. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do university faculty incorporate into coursework that prepares future high school department chairpersons to be successful?

2. Is there alignment between what university faculty believe is the role of a high school department chairperson and the chairperson's job description?

With the interview data I gathered from the high school department chairs, I aimed to answer the secondary research questions:

1. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are present in the high school department chairperson job description?

2. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do high school department chairpersons frequently use?

I aligned interview questions with the secondary research questions to obtain information-rich data from these groups of stakeholders (see Appendices E and F).

To engage interview participants, I first emailed each potential participant's institutional leader. I emailed a request for cooperation to the institutional leaders of potential participants because I could not guarantee that interviews would take place in a location other than the participant's place of business. In the email, I introduced myself, Walden University, and my research while requesting their cooperation (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix A). I attached my research proposal and letter of cooperation to the email (see Appendices B and G). Once I received IRB approval, I emailed potential interviewees. I introduced myself, Walden University, and the research project (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix D). However, if I was unable to receive letters of cooperation from local institutions, I emailed potential interviewees directly using publicly published email addresses (see Appendix D). If I contacted potential interviewees directly, I ensured that interviews occur at a location other than interviewees' workplaces. Regardless, to the email, I attached the research proposal and consent form. When I received the consent form electronically, I emailed the consenting participant and arrange an interview time, date, and place.

I arrived early to each interview (Janesick, 2011). I brought a digital recorder, extra batteries, and a notepad (Creswell, 2013; Janesick, 2011). During each interview, I used both my notepad and the digital recorder to capture the interview. I demonstrated respect towards participants by ending interviews in a timely fashion according to a previously agreed upon time (Janesick, 2011). I engaged participants in a respectful manner that highlights my appreciation for their assistance in this research project.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I collected data from various units of analysis in this layered case study. According to Patton (2002), researchers conducting layered case studies tend to begin at the lowest level and move outward. Therefore, I began my data collection by collecting artifact data from the state's education websites. Next, I collected data from the 40 school districts. I requested their department chair role descriptions via email. I began the recruitment of the school districts by emailing each school district's leader. Once I obtained IRB approval, I emailed each school district again. I then requested a copy of their department chair role description electronically. Upon receipt of the role descriptions, I sent a thank you note to each participant. However, I determined that if I was unable to secure letters of cooperation from at least five school districts, I would search the world wide web for publicly published role descriptions. I downloaded role descriptions as I received them. I saved them on the computer. I also saved each role description on a flash drive as a backup (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, I created a paper file for each participating school. In each paper file, I placed the school's letter of cooperation and department chair role description.

I also investigated the high school department chair role by interviewing at least three high school department chairs and at least three education leadership professors (see Appendices E and F). Once I received IRB approval, I emailed potential interviewees to introduce myself, Walden University, and the research project to gauge their interest in participating (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002; see Appendix D). However, if I was unable to obtain letters of cooperation from educational institutions, then I emailed potential interviewees directly using publicly published email addresses (see Appendix D). If I found a need to contact potential interviewees directly, I ensured that interviews occur at a location other than interviewees' work places. Regardless, I attached a copy of the research proposal and consent form to the email. When I received the consent form electronically, I emailed the consenting participant to arrange an interview at a time and place convenient to the participant.

I arrived early to each interview with a digital recorder, extra batteries, and a note pad (Creswell, 2013; Janesick, 2011). During each interview, I took copious notes as well as used the digital recorder to audio tape the discussion. I demonstrated respect for each interviewee by ending interviews according to the previously agreed upon time. I memorized interview questions and protocol which assisted me in ending interviews in a timely fashion. Not only was it be important to memorize interview protocol in addition to interview questions in an effort to end interviews in a timely manner, but also to utilize the organizational tools of NVivo during data analysis (QSR International, 2013). Prior to uploading interview data to NVivo, I reviewed my interview notes and add any missing information, observations, or perceptions. Additionally, I sent the interviewee a thank

you note. I then used electronic transcription tools to assist in transcribing recordings (Janesick, 2011). As I completed each transcription, I added important observations from my notes to the transcribed interviews.

Once I finished transcribing each interview, I rearranged the interview into a question answer format. Once again, this may have assisted me in using the organizational tools NVivo offers during data analysis (QSR International, 2013). While rearranging each transcription, I reviewed my field notes again. I included my observations and perceptions in the transcribed interviews using my field notes (Patton, 2002). Similar to the department chair role descriptions, I saved both original interview transcriptions and altered interview transcriptions on the computer and a flash drive (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, I scanned the field notes into the computer for easy access and storage. I also stored field notes along with audio tapes and flash drive in a padded envelope in a home safe.

Once I transcribed and stored all interview data, I emailed each interviewee. I attached a copy of the transcribed interview to the email and request that they proofread the transcribed interview. If interviewees did not reply to my request, then I followed up with them 10 days after the initial email request. Once interviewees offered their insights with respect to the transcribed interview data, I sent another thank you note.

Data Analysis Plan

I organized and saved all data on the computer to enable me to utilize NVivo's data analysis tools. When I began to organize data in Nvivo, I created a new project entitled "The High School Department Chairs." I then created a folder in "Sources" for

my literature and research. The sources folder was an internal folder to which I imported journal articles previously saved on my computer as personal document formats (pdf). I used key words from the titles of the journal articles in the description when saving them to NVivo. Importing journal articles to NVivo allowed me to use NVivo's word frequency query feature bridging research data to literature (QSR International, 2013).

I also imported research data, interview and artifact data, to NVivo using the external tab. I created three folders in "Sources," one for interview data, one for role descriptions, and a third for licensure information. Once I finished importing data to NVivo, all documents, literature, and interview data were together and available under NVivo's internal sources tab.

To begin organizing interview data in NVivo, I created nodes for each interview question. I used NVivo's drag and drop feature to copy participants' responses to each interview question to its correlating node. Hence, I organized all responses to similar questions in one node. Since I used the same protocol for each interview within the same unit of analysis, I was able to use NVivo's autocoding feature. When I used autocode, I autocoded interviews by selecting all education leadership professor interviews or all high school department chair interviews. I created a new node called interview questions for each stakeholder group. I then used the autocoding feature which automatically organized material according to interview question (QSR International, 2013).

In addition to using NVivo's autocoding feature, I also used NVivo's word frequency query feature. I could use the word frequency query feature on all interview data, licensure data, and department chair role descriptions. NVivo's word frequency

query highlighted the number of times individual words appeared in selected documents (QSR International, 2013).The repetition of words and phrases assisted me during content analysis to identify patterns and themes (Patton, 2002). As I identified themes, I created new nodes. Thus, I engaged in inductive content analysis (Patton, 2002). Once I created new nodes, I reviewed data again. I reviewed data for information correlating with the new nodes. Hence, I also engaged in deductive content analysis (Patton, 2002). As I identified pertinent data, I dragged and dropped the data into corresponding nodes. New themes emerged while reviewing data. When this occurred, I highlighted the text and created a new node using the quick coding bar (QSR International, 2013). I then reread all data for the new theme. Once again, as applicable data text is identified, I dragged and dropped the text into the corresponding node.

In addition to the thematic nodes, it may have proven worthy to add a node classification called person. Under this classification, I would be able to use NVivo's capabilities to describe main attributes of interviewees such as age, gender, and ethnicity (QSR International, 2013). They could be added to each participant's classification by highlighting the classification, moving to the classification tab on the ribbon, and clicking "Attribute" (QSR International, 2013). Once I defined each personal attribute, I copied the interview source data to the "person" node classification. This node classification may have helped me determine if personal attributes may have influenced interview responses (QSR International, 2013).

Coding Structure

Patton (2002) suggested researchers gain intimate knowledge of their data prior to and during analysis. Research methodologists suggest that researchers read data numerous times (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). I followed their advice and read interview data first without coding; then I reread interviews with the intent of creating codes (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). After the first reading, I named each interviewee with a letter to protect participants' confidentiality. During the second reading, I began looking for patterns, themes, or words that could serve as codes (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). I engaged in open coding while performing an inductive content analysis (Patton, 2002). However, I anticipated that I may use interview questions as a priori categories to assist in organizing data (Creswell, 2013). I engaged in inductive and deductive content analysis because organizing data by interview questions alone may not have been sufficient. Additionally, organization of data by hand coding may be quite cumbersome given that each interview may produce multiple pages of data. Therefore, I used NVivo to assist in organizing data beyond interview questions. Researchers have found computer programs such as NVivo helpful in the organization of data, not the analysis of data (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002).

As suggested by Patton (2002), I did not rely on a computer program to gain intimate knowledge of my data, but rather I read my data numerous times. I used the knowledge gained from reading data numerous times to assist me while coding and analyzing data. I used a strategy similar to hand coding when I created NVivo nodes. During the first reading of interview data, I did not worry about coding (Creswell, 2013;

Patton, 2002). During the second reading, I began identify categories that I may have been able to use as nodes in NVivo (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). I used interview questions as a priori categories to begin my data organization. I then read data completely numerous times to ensure the coding structure was sensible for the data, identify potential themes, and move data into nodes.

Using Nodes

Once I created nodes, I returned to the source data and reviewed data numerous times again in NVivo. While I read data, I identified relevant text for each node. I used NVivo's drag and drop feature to copy the text into its corresponding node. I anticipated that organizing interview data by interview questions may assist in identifying relevant text for thematic nodes. Not only did I anticipate some data to pertain to more than one node, I also anticipated data outliers. Although outliers did not represent the majority, I included outliers in the data analysis because outliers may provide insights that could inspire future research projects.

<div align="center">

Issues of Trustworthiness

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Validity and Reliability

I included external audits while conducting this case study. I emailed interview participants transcribed interviews, initial data analysis, as well as a dissertation draft as suggested by Creswell (2013) and Patton (2002). I anticipated that the audits may offer supplementary information and clarification which may improve the research project (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Additionally, I used my dissertation team as external auditors (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). My dissertation committee offered unbiased

feedback regarding all aspects of the research project. I anticipated the assistance I received from others may identify areas in which my personal experiences may have inadvertently biased my research or areas that needed strengthening. I enlisted external auditors to ensure that I did not devalue case study with my own preconceived notions and experiences.

I also triangulated data within and amongst units of analysis in an attempt to validate findings (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). For example, I triangulated interview data from the education leadership professors and high school department chairs to identify patterns and themes within and amongst the units of analysis. To assist in the triangulation of interview data, I used identical interview questions and protocol. Additionally, I triangulated data amongst local school districts' department chair role descriptions. I triangulated data amongst the layers of the case study as suggested by Patton (2002). I compared and contrasted school districts' high school department role descriptions with all interview data and licensure data. While triangulating data, I looked for obvious and subtle themes (Patton, 2002). I not only looked for themes that suggested all three entities align, but I also looked for themes that suggested the entities misalign. To add credibility to the research results, I presented evidence that indicates both alignment and misalignment in my dissertation (Patton, 2002). Overall, I engaged in external audits, member checking, and data triangulation to add validity to my dissertation.

In addition to writing a valid research report, I described the process by which I performed the research. I described how I collected, stored, reviewed, analyzed, and

synthesized data. I aimed to enable others to replicate my research through a detailed description. I also wrote the description so that others can compare and contrast my methodologies to those used by other researchers. Hence, although this research project may be novel in some regards, I aimed to create reliability through the creation of a detailed methodological description.

Ethical Procedures

I collected data from various stakeholders during this layered case study. Thus, I ensured that I respected all participants and treated them ethically. I began treating participants ethically before they even agreed to participate. When I requested a stakeholder's participation, I introduced myself and Walden University as well as explained the research project, purpose, procedure, and possible uses of the research (Meho, 2006; Patton, 2002). I ensured potential participants know that their identities would remain confidential during the reporting process (Meho, 2006; National Institute of Health, 2011). Additionally, I invited participants to engage in transcription and member checking. This invitation may not have only increased the ethical treatment of participants but may also have assisted me in ensuring that I represented participants accurately, thus increase the study's overall validity (Creswell, 2013). Not only did I invite participants engage in transcription and member checking during the research process, but I also sent each participant an executive summary and a copy of the final report. I aimed to be honest and open with all potential and actual participants. I aimed to be inclusive and caring with research participants throughout the process of determining alignment between stakeholders.

In addition to respecting participants throughout the research process, I also respected data. I saved raw data on my computer, a flash drive, and in my home safe. In my home safe, I saved printed copies of interview and artifact data. I will keep all data for the required 5 years. After 5 years, I will shred all paper copies of data. Additionally, I will destroy all electronic copies of data. Thus, not only did I treat participants ethically, but I will also respect data. To ensure I prioritized ethical considerations throughout the research process, I worked to adhere to all IRB guidelines (National Institute of Health, 2011).

In addition to treating all participants and gathered data ethically, I also treated potential participants who chose to not partake or withdraw during the research process ethically. If potential interviewees chose not to participate, I respected their choice and, if the opportunity arose, engaged them in chain sampling to identify alternative potential participants. With respect to school districts, I anticipated some schools declining my invitation to participate in the research project. I respected their decision. Given the stated maximum sample size of 40 school districts, I anticipated having enough schools engage in the research project to engage in meaningful data analysis and triangulation. Overall, I respected all potential participants, participants, and data by keeping data safe for 5 years and participants' identities confidential.

Summary

I aimed to inform stakeholders of the alignment of perceived contextual intelligence necessary for the high school department chair role between the state department of education's licensing division, local higher education institutions, and local

school districts with this qualitative, comparative case study. I collected interview and artifact data from the three aforementioned stakeholders. I varied data collection techniques amongst stakeholders to ensure alignment between research purpose, research questions, and data. I engaged in a content analysis and triangulate data to answer research questions. I actively sought input from outside sources to validate findings. Throughout the process, I treated both participants and data ethically, respectfully, and with great care. I respected participants' decisions to participate or not. I will keep all participants identities confidential. I will respect all data and keep data safe for 5 years. I conducted an ethical, reliable, and valid qualitative case study of high school department chairs which may inform current stakeholders and influence others to conduct additional research on this middle management role in high schools.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative, comparative case study was to examine the alignment of the high school department chair role, contextual preparation for the role, and middle level leadership licensure practices through content analysis (Patton, 2002). My primary research question asked if there was conceptual similarity among these units of analysis: job descriptions of high school department chairpersons, department of education expectations of these chairpersons, and coursework undertaken at accredited universities that prepare these chairpersons to be successful. Data were collected from the department of education, education professors, and school districts. The department of education published artifact data on their website. I interviewed three local education professors and four local high school department chairs. I gathered high school department chair role descriptions from local school districts. Participating school districts included public and private, secular and nonsecular, coeducational and single gender, as well as traditional and vocational technical schools. A variety of school districts participated enabling rich content analysis. After triangulating data, it appeared that the high school department chair position was not well defined enough to create coursework aimed at preparing these middle managers for their duties. Coursework at higher education institutions follow department of education guidelines. However, the only licensure requirement that directly addressed contextual intelligence for high school department chairs were the practicums and graduate coursework in the content area. Although the department of education requires these for the supervisor/director license,

not all schools required the supervisor/director license to become a department chair. Congruencies and disparities existed amongst the units of analysis.

I analyzed each unit of analysis' data individually. I examined data from the state department of education, higher education professors, high school department chairs, and high school department chair role descriptions. Each group provided a layer for this case study that served to answer the research question regarding alignment amongst the units of analysis. Additionally, high school department chairs' interview data and role descriptions provided information regarding required qualifications and duties. Data from this unit of analysis, although recorded separately, overlapped. Overall, three units of analysis offered four samples to analyze and from which to create a layered case study.

Setting

The collection of interview data occurred at times and at places convenient to each interviewee. Interviews either took place at a coffee shop local to the interviewee or at their places of work. All but one interview occurred during the summer months, while schools were on hiatus or offering abbreviated summer courses. There were no setting issues that I am aware of that may have influenced participants' experiences when the study occurred. Therefore, it could be assumed that setting issues did not impact the collection or interpretation of data.

Table 1

Participants

Participant	Role	Gender
Anne	Department Chair	Female
Betty	Department Chair	Female
Carol	Department Chair	Female
David	Department Chair	Male
Professor Xyla	Education Professor	Female
Professor Yasmine	Education Professor	Female
Professor Zadie	Education Professor	Female

Demographics

The study was conducted in an area local to an eastern seaboard city. Participants in this study were local to the area. I gave participants and participating schools pseudonyms. Education professors and three of the four high school department chairs interviewed were women (see Table 1). Two of the three education professors were similar in age, older than 50. High school department chairs varied in age from mid-20s to middle-aged. Additionally, experience varied amongst interviewees. Of the education professors, two of the three have been in education for decades. The third interviewee was newer to the field. Of the high school department chairs, experience varied from just a few years as a teacher to over 20 years. Although participants varied in experience and were employed at different institutions, all participants were employed in the same general geographic area.

Data Collection

Data included both artifact and interview data. I collected artifact data from two

units of analysis, the department of education and local school districts. I collected

interview data from two units of analysis, local universities and local school districts.

State Department of Education

I collected department of education artifact data from the Internet. The department

of education maintains a website. I searched the website thoroughly to collect data

pertinent to the supervisor/director license and the principal/assistant principal license. I

searched both licenses to compare and contrast preferred skills and potential positions

each license indicates the holder may possess.

Education Professors

I began the recruitment process for education professor interview candidates by

requesting, from four institutional leaders, cooperation for me to conduct interviews

within their community. Of the four higher education institutions, only one institutional

leader responded affirmatively. This result led me to change recruitment tactics.

I then investigated education professors involved in leadership programs within

institutions that published email addresses of faculty members online. Over the course of

a month, I emailed eight additional education professors from local higher education

institutions, and two of those responded affirmatively. I, therefore, interviewed three

education professors total.

I conducted two of the three interviews in the education professor's place of

business, the most convenient location for two of the participants. I received letters of

cooperation for all interviews conducted at a higher education institution. I conducted the third interview at a coffee shop convenient to the interviewee. I arrived early for each interview and took out my note taking sheet and recorder. I recorded each interview and ended in a timely fashion. Once completed, I copied the recording onto a flash drive, saved the recording to my computer, and transcribed each interview. By the following day, I thanked each participant and requested that the participant read their transcription for accuracy via email.

High School Department Chairs

I began the recruitment process for high school department chair interview candidates while requesting department chair role descriptions. Of the 40 school districts I emailed to request role descriptions, I included an invitation for three of the school districts to also participate in the interview process. None of the three schools responded to my request or my follow-up email, which led me to change recruitment tactics.

I then investigated school districts that published email addresses of faculty members online. Over the course of a month, I emailed 22 local high school department chairs. Of those emailed, I interviewed four responding high school department chairs. One department chair worked in a public, coeducational, vocational technical high school serving grades 9 through 12, with a population of approximately 600 (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014a). Another department chair worked in a public, coeducational high school serving grades 9 through 12, with a population of approximately 1,000 (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014a). A different department chair worked in a private, single gender, secular high school serving

grades 7 through 12, with a population of approximately 300 (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2013). The final department chair worked in a private, coeducational, nonsecular high school serving grades 9 through 12, with a population of approximately 250 (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2013). The department chairs I interviewed were from a variety of institutions and backgrounds.

I conducted each of the four interviews in a coffee shop convenient to the interviewee. As with the education professors, I arrived early, recorded each interview, and ended in a timely fashion. Once completed, I copied the recording onto a flash drive, saved the recording to my computer, and transcribed each interview. By the following day, I thanked each participant and requested the participant read their transcription for accuracy via email.

High School Department Chair Role Descriptions

I began the high school department chair role description collection process by emailing 40 school district leaders. The schools were identified on the state's department of education website and email addresses were obtained on individual school websites. The email requested that each school leader electronically sign a letter of cooperation allowing for the collection of high school department role descriptions once I received IRB approval. Many school districts did not reply. To those districts, I emailed a reminder. The reminder yielded few additional replies. Overall, seven school districts, five public and two private, signed a letter of cooperation. Once I received full IRB approval, I emailed the cooperating schools again. In the email, I reminded the districts of the research project and requested a copy of their role description. Six out of the seven

schools supplied role descriptions. Four schools were public schools and two private. Of

the two private schools, one was a single gender, nonsecular school serving grades 7

through 12, with a population of approximately 550 (Eastern Seaboard's State

Department of Education, 2013). The other private school was an independent,

coeducational, secular school serving grades 6 through 12, with a population of

approximately 700 (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2013). Schools

Pierce, Adams, Polk, and Taft were public, coeducational schools. The participating

public school systems served grades kindergarten through 12. Their high school

enrollments, grades 9 through 12, in school year 2014-2015 were approximately 500,

700, 900, and 1,300 (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014a).

Data Analysis and Findings

Coding Process

In an effort to know data intimately, I read over data numerous times prior to

coding. For interview data, I initially grouped responses according to the semistructured

interview questions after listening to recorded interviews and reading transcriptions

multiple times (See Appendices E and F). As I continued to reread data, artifact and

interview, codes emerged intrinsically. As I recognized codes, I reviewed collected data

again. I read data numerous times while coding to ensure that emergent codes represented

themes present within collected data and I integrated collected data within codes. For

codes in which limited data existed, I reviewed the coding to ensure the code was unique.

If the code was unique, I reviewed the code to ensure it pertained to a research question.

If the code pertained to a research question, then I retained the code. Some codes have

numerous data points and others have limited data points. Both scenarios benefited the overall data analysis and interpretation.

State Department of Education

I collected data regarding both the state's supervisor/director license and the principal/assistant principal license from the world wide web. Although requirements to obtain each license varied, tremendous overlap existed as well. The certification of supervisor/director appeared to be more content area oriented than the principal/assistant principal license (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). The principal/assistant principal required more practicum hours than the supervisor/director license (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). However, both licenses required the same prerequisite experience and testing (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b).

Prerequisites. Both the supervisor/director license and the principal/assistant principal license required prerequisite experience (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). For both licenses, the department of education required at least 3 years of employment (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). For both licenses, candidates should have held positions in a leadership, supervisory, administrative, or teacher role in an educational setting as described by the department of education (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). The department of education would also accept executive management experience towards the 3 year requirement for the principal/assistant principal position (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). In addition to years' experience, the department of

education required those wishing to be licensed as a supervisor/director to also possess a prerequisite license as an educator in the curriculum field the supervisor/director license is sought (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). For example, if Jane Doe applied for the supervisor/director license to secure a position as a mathematics department chair, Jane must hold a teaching certificate as a mathematics teacher. The acquisition of a supervisor/director license required more prerequisites than the principal/assistant principal license.

Proficiencies. The department of education required those seeking either the supervisor/director license or the principal/assistant principal license to demonstrate administrative proficiencies in addition to performing practicum hours or a panel review (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). The administrative competencies demonstrated through a performance assessment for either license were identical (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). The department of education required applicants to demonstrate proficiency in "instructional leadership," "management and operations," "family and community engagement," and "professional culture" (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). In addition to demonstrating administrative competencies, applicants for both licenses must either perform practicum or internship hours in the field the license is sought or request a panel review (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). The practicum or internship for the principal/assistant principal license required 500 hours (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). The practicum or internship for the supervisor/director license required 300 hours (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of

Education, 2014b). Either practicum may be substituted for a panel review if the candidate completed a management or administration program beyond their bachelor's degree or completed three years of employment in a managerial or administrative role (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). Candidates for either license must also pass the department of education's "Communication and Literacy Skills" test (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). Additionally, if the candidate for the supervisor/director license or principal/assistant principal license will be evaluating or supervising core academic faculty members with English-language learners, then the candidate must obtain the department's "Sheltered English Immersion Administrator Endorsement" (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). In addition to the aforementioned credentials, candidates for the supervisor/director license must either hold a master's degree or18 advanced graduate studies credits in their curriculum area (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). If a candidate expects to supervise more than one curriculum area, the candidate needed only obtain the advanced coursework in one of the curricula areas (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). Overall, the department of education licensing for the supervisor/director differed from the principal/assistant principal in the number of practicum hours and advanced graduate studies. The principal/assistant principal candidates must perform 200 more practicum hours than candidates for the supervisor/director license while candidates for the supervisor/director license must have a teacher license and graduate coursework in their curriculum area.

Professional readiness. The supervisor/director license and the principal/assistant principal license offered by the department of education imply that each license prepares candidates for different roles within a school. For example, the additional 200 practicum hours that candidates for the principal/assistant principal license perform implies that these candidates delve deeper into the administrative proficiency strands than candidates for the supervisor/director license. This may better prepare them for their dual role as building leader and manager. The supervisor/director license prepares candidates to serve school communities as a curriculum director, specialist, or department chair for a specific content area at least half-time (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). For the supervisor/director license, the prerequisite subject area license and graduate studies requirement in the subject area may enhance a department chair's ability to supervise and mentor departmental faculty. For example, department chairs licensed as supervisor/directors may be able to assist with instructional techniques given their deep knowledge of the content area. Additionally, the 300 practicum hours may indicate candidates' preparation to perform the professional standards for administrators within academic disciplines. Department chairs with the supervisor/director license may be well equipped to lead and manage curriculum departments.

Education Professors

As indicated by collected data, interviewed education professors appeared to perceive that more candidates may pursue a principal/assistant principal license than a supervisor/director license. Two of the three interviewed education professors indicated that their institutions currently do not differentiate coursework for those seeking a

supervisor/director license from those seeking a principal/assistant principal license. Two of the three interviewed education professors did not realize supervisor/director license candidates need a master's degree or 18 advanced graduate credits in the their content area. The third institution offered a separate pathway for those seeking the supervisor/director license and was well versed in the additional requirements for the supervisor/director license. However, all interviewed education professors noted that differentiation may happen during the practicum if a candidate seeks the supervisor/director license. Overall, education departments appeared to focus on the principal/assistant principal licensure more than the supervisor/director license.

Licensure. Interviewed education professors shared that their experiences highlighted the principal/assistant principal licensure rather than the supervisor/director license. Professor Yasmine stated, "I can't think of a student who specifically come to our program and asked for that [supervisor/director] license." Professor Yasmine continued and shared:

> The main distinction in our program is students who are working in the private sector and those who are interested in the public, and the ones who are interested in, at any point, having a career in public education, we encourage them to do the licensure requirements and get their principal license; but I don't, we definitely haven't, I don't think we're very aware of, or pushing people towards this director license in general.

Professor Zadie stated:

…some of those students, who think that they're in the supervisor/director path, find out from me that they have not been properly advised to understand that they need 18 graduate credits in their discipline; therefore, those students, who have been advised by other folks, take the path of getting principal and assistant principal and then try to get the position and get dc to give them a, not a waiver, but a letter after they've completed x number of hours in the position.

Although Professor Zadie knew of the additional graduate credits, professors Xyla and Yasmine did not realize the need for those seeking a supervisor/director license to hold a master's degree or 18 additional graduate credits in their content area. For example, Professor Yasmine stated, "I didn't really know there was a big difference between those two licenses. Within our program, almost everyone, who goes through state licensure, does the principal license." Professor Xyla said, "I wasn't fully aware of that [the additional graduate credits]." Professor Zadie, however, not only knew of the additional content area requirements for the supervisor/director license, but ensured that candidates for this license understand the requirement. Professor Zadie shared:

I try to advise my own advisees, when they come to see me, if they say they want to be department chairs, "Do you have 18 graduate credits?" and they say to me, some say "Yes" and I say, "Okay". The ones who say, "No," I say, "Well, then you have to take principal/assistant principal."

If the need for additional graduate credits is not known by some education professors, prospective department chairs may not be well advised.

Overall, two of the three interviewed education professors were not aware fully of differences between the supervisor/director license and the principal/assistant principal license. Hence, some education professors do not appear to be well versed in the supervisor/director license and, therefore, do not promote the licensure; while other education professors may promote the principal/assistant principal licensure as a means to assist prospective leaders in completing coursework in a timely fashion.

Leadership coursework. Within leadership programs, interviewed education professors noted the lack of differentiation between leadership coursework for those seeking the supervisor/director license with those seeking the principal/assistant principal license. Professor Yasmine shared:

Right now it's not differentiated. … so, our new track right now is that students who are PhD candidates in the curriculum department are eligible to pursue the licensure requirements through our department, … so, they do the same coursework, the same kind of practicum.

However, Professor Yasmine also shared

I know that we've talked in our school about trying to develop some kind of separate path with separate coursework for people who will be in more of an instructional leadership role versus more of a management role; but we haven't really.

Professor Xyla shared:

What we do is we take each of the standards that are required and break it down and this is where the new format is coming in. So, for a candidate assessment …

it's basically the same. You have to make sure that each of the specific

regulations have been met proficient or exemplary.

Only one institution, Professor Zadie's, offered a separate pathway for the

supervisor/director license that includes one curriculum course. Professor Zadie shared:

I try to tailor what is required, and I don't have too much flexibility. I'll tell you

why: department of elementary and secondary ed licensure requirements. So, for

the non-licensure students, I can do anything; but not for those who need

licensure. I have to stay within certain bounds.

Overall, Professors Xyla and Zadie indicated that one reason for the lack of

differentiation may be that the state department of education guides the curriculum set

forth in leadership programs. Interview data yields the conclusion that higher educational

institutions appear to align coursework purposefully with the state department of

education's requirements.

Candidates for administrative licenses must demonstrate competencies set by the

state. Educational leadership programs, according to Professors Xyla and Zadie, need to

ensure that they offer students opportunities to meet those competencies to attain

licensure. Professor Xyla said, "We had to make sure that our future superintendents and

principals met those areas and these courses fit." Professor Zadie noted that the state

department of education's requirements not only shape course content, but they influence

assignments within the licensure courses. As noted above, Professor Zadie shared that she

does not have much room to be creative when teaching licensure candidates. Professor

Zadie noted she is conscious of remaining within the state department of education's

parameters when working with licensure candidates. Overall, Professors Xyla and Zadie recognized the need to assist students in their licensure endeavors by aligning coursework with state licensure requirements. It appears, then, that higher education leadership programs, through their institutions, work to ensure licensure candidates meet the state department of education's requisites.

Education professors Xyla and Zadie noted the state department of education's administrative leadership competencies act as a guiding document when preparing coursework. Professor Xyla stated:

What we do is we take each of the standards that are required and break it down and this is where the new format is coming in. So, for a candidate assessment, … it's basically the same. You have to make sure that each of the specific regulations have been met proficient or exemplary.

Professor Zadie shared:

I don't have too much flexibility. I'll tell you why: department of elementary and secondary ed licensure requirements. So, for the nonlicensure students, I can do anything; but not for those who need licensure. I have to stay within certain bounds.

Education professors Xyla and Zadie continued to note that education leadership coursework, then, would be the same for those seeking the principal/assistant principal license as for those seeking the supervisor/director license. Professor Xyla shared, "The specialization will happen with the practicum." Professor Xyla explained:

> They [licensure candidates] take courses in ethical and professional leadership, community relations, meeting the needs of diverse learners, technology, leadership, testing and assessment, and now we're coming up to 36 credits, … strategic planning and management for effective school operations, curriculum and instructional leadership, human resources in schools, and big, big one is your budgeting in schools. We had to make sure that our future superintendents and principals met those areas and these courses fit with that.

Professor Yasmine supported this notion when she noted that leadership coursework was not differentiated at her institution currently. Professor Zadie's institution differentiated coursework slightly by requiring one specialized course for supervisor/director candidates that is not required of principal/assistant principal candidates. However, all other leadership courses are the same regardless of the licensure sought. Upon reflection, Professor Zadie shared, "I think what they have is excellent and all, because … leadership no matter what the size, the number of people you're trying to lead, is the same." Professor Zadie shared her own experience to support her claim:

> I remember when I was a department head myself of only nine people then I became principal of a school of 600 people everything really was the same. It was just a matter of how many people that I was supervising. I still had parents as stakeholders. I still had students as stakeholders. I still had teachers as stakeholders. I still had the community at large. Whether I was the department chair or a principal, it was just a matter of how many of each.

Therefore, the overlap of competencies amongst licensures offered by the state department of education does not appear to hinder education professors' programs because of the recognized department chairs' need for leadership skills. As Professor Zadie said, "Administrative skills, even Carly Fiorina, who is running for president, okay, are kind of the same for almost any organization, institution, or whatever."

Although stakeholder groups may be the same, education professors Xyla and Yasmine indicated that their departments were investigating additional leadership courses for prospective students to provide licensure candidates with appropriate training. Professor Yasmine shared:

> I think we would like to have people in director roles who have some deep expertise in the content that they're supervising… I think that's a really important part of being a good supervisor, knowing the content, but I think practically speaking, we're far from that.

Professor Yasmine said, "We have just started to collaborate with our curriculum department to try to set up some pathways for advanced students…to open up that director or principal opportunities."

Professor Yasmine further added:

> We're in the baby stages of thinking about it and I know our curriculum department has thought about it … like this idea of developing some kind of coaching certificate or a way to develop some coursework around the particular skills of instructional coaching, which is a piece that we have in our program, but it's not the, it's minimal. So, we would amplify, or spend more time on that, to

create some kind of coaching certificate or we haven't really figured out what that
would look like, but we find that a lot of the PhD candidates in the curriculum
department are interested in sort of district level, instructional leadership/coaching
roles and aren't quite sure how to get there; and so, we're wondering if there's a
way to provide some kind of skills based training in that, which we don't
currently really do. We do have instructional supervision. I teach it an
instructional leadership class. So, that's the one class that kind of does take that
on.

However, while a need for a separate supervisor/director pathway was recognized, they
were unable to forecast if a large enough population exists to create a cohort for only
those seeking the middle level management position of curriculum specialist within a
content area. Professor Xyla said, "What drives that decision is numbers."

Even without a separate cohort, Professor Yasmine could imagine that some of
the traditional leadership coursework geared towards principal/assistant principal could
be tailored for a supervisor/director candidate given their limited responsibility and
increased content area expertise. For example, Professor Yasmine questioned "whether
they need to understand the same kinds of like budgeting processes, probably not, but I
think that some of the leadership and management pieces would be really important
because they're going to be in supervising roles as well." Professor Zadie, however,
highlighted the different pathways her institution created for various administrative
licenses. Specifically, supervisor/director candidates take a curriculum course while
principal/assistant principal candidates take an additional school administration course at

Professor Zadie's institution. Hence, coursework for supervisor/director candidates did not appear to vary greatly from coursework for principal/assistant principal candidates, but higher education institutions may be open to investigate additional course offerings, or assignments within courses, to create meaningful learning experiences for supervisor/director licensure candidate within the confines of state requirements. As shared by Professor Zadie:

> I try to customize and personalize the assignments to make them meaningful for every student… so, when I find out what their aspirations are, I try to tailor what is required, and I don't have too much flexibility. I'll tell you why: department of elementary and secondary ed licensure requirements. So, for the nonlicensure students, I can do anything; but not for those who need licensure. I have to stay within certain bounds. However, I try very hard to customize their assignments, to make it meaningful and helpful to their aspirations.

Practicum. All three education professors noted that the required practicum hours for supervisor/director licensure candidates may serve as a differentiating piece amongst students and licenses sought. When discussing her institution's investigation into a possible instructional coaching certificate, Professor Yasmine shared, "I think that the idea of having some kind of structured practicum around that would be awesome." Education professor Xyla indicated that she perceives the difference between the principal/assistant principal license and supervisor/director license may be most pronounced during the practicum and the manner in which college supervisors and mentors evaluate candidates' practicums. Professor Xyla stated:

It should look different because you're measuring different ways. For example, with the director your measuring how that director works within the department and how that director she, he or her, how she is evaluating her own teachers within the department.

She suggested that college supervisors assess how supervisor/director candidates apply leadership skills at the departmental level while principal/assistant principal candidates should be evaluated given their experiences within the practicum of leading a school community. Although Professor Yasmine did not oversee practicums and did not know of a student pursuing the director/supervisor license, she shared:

I would say the majority of our students are doing, are shadowing or working with principals, and often those are principals in their own schools. So, especially for our high school cohort, they are often in or close to that department chair role. Some of them are already in that role. Others are sort of being primed for that role. So, sometimes the work that they do in their practicum really is to that, it might be content area projects that they are working on as part of those hours to the practicum.

In other words, Professor Yasmine indicated that some evaluation criteria used to fulfill practicum hours for principal/assistant principal may be departmental, not school wide, initiatives. Professor Zadie indicated that she had yet to come across a supervisor/director practicum as well when she stated, "They either do the practicum as a principal or a department chair, but there is no practicum, to my knowledge, that I've seen as a department chair. I've never seen one." However, she viewed leadership skills as

transferable given her own experience as both department chair and principal. Professor Zadie said that as a supervisor/director or principal assistant/principal candidate, a leader is someone who can "one – … solve problems; two – … be a person who can develop relationships with others." Professor Zadie accentuated her point when she shared:

> They are the same because I remember when I was a department head myself of only nine people then I became principal of a school of 600 people everything really was the same. It was just a matter of how many people that I was supervising. I still had parents as stakeholders. I still had students as stakeholders. I still had teachers as stakeholders. I still had the community at large. Whether I was the department chair or a principal, it was just a matter of how many of each.

The practicum evaluation for supervisor/director candidates' leadership skills may not differ substantially from principal/assistant principal candidates. Overall, the practicum appears to afford supervisor/director licensure candidates an opportunity to develop skills directly related to the position of department chair, a content area specialist, unlike many available courses.

The department chair role. Education professors acknowledged the need for schools to have content area specialists. Professor Yasmine shared:

> I think we would like to have people in director roles who have some deep expertise in the content that they're supervising.… I think that's a really important part of being a good supervisor is knowing the content, but I think practically speaking, we're far from that.

In support of Professor Yasmine observations for schools' need to hire content area specialists, Professor Zadie said, "It is possible to be a curriculum director, in certain districts, with a master's degree in something and no administrative license of any kind directly out of the classroom because in certain districts that person doesn't evaluate." In other words, according to Professor Zadie, some districts hire content area specialists who do not supervise, thus may not need leadership coursework. Professor Yasmine noted similar observations when she shared, from her experiences:

> Districts are constantly looking for and hiring people into these director and coaching types of roles and usually they end up with people who are not explicitly trained in that… Hopefully they end up with great people who learn it on the ground and do a great job… but I think there's a need, for sure, out in the field for that, to fill that role and I think teachers who are interested in moving out of the classroom and into these roles often don't know how to do it. So, we've had a lot of, I've had a lot of conversations with colleagues and teachers out in the field where they say, "I want a job like that, but I don't know." You know there's not an explicit career path the way there is for like the principalship.

Professor Xyla supported the need for content area specialists when she shared how she counsels young graduates:

> For example, … a secondary ed teacher [might ask], "When I get my master's what should I do?" And we'll often say, "Get it in your content area. So, strengthen your content area and then you've already have that license and if you

wanted to add on you'll already be a teacher of record so you can have all of

that."

Overall, education professors agree that content area specialists may be needed in

schools.

Leadership coursework geared towards educators pursuing a middle management

position may benefit prospective department chairs as they develop contextual

intelligence to lead as content area specialists. Professor Zadie's institution offered

different pathways for educators seeking various licenses. Her institution attempted to

develop skill sets geared towards students' aspirations. However, similar to Professor

Yasmine, Professor Zadie noted that some candidates appeared unaware of differing

licensure requirements set for by the department of education for various leadership

positions. For example, if candidates for the supervisor/director license indicate that they

do not hold the required 18 advanced graduate credits in their content area, then Professor

Zadie shared that she has recommended supervisor/director candidates "take the credits

here [at her institution], if possible, or somewhere that meets their needs" while

continuing with her school's licensure program. To thwart this potential doubling of

efforts by licensure candidates, Professor Xyla shared that when students ask in what

field they should pursue their master's degree, she has told students, "Get it in your

content area. So, strengthen your content area." Overall, educators who may want to

pursue the middle management position of department chair may not realize the state

department of education's licensure components fully. Additionally, education professors

understood the benefit of having curriculum area specialists that are trained leaders and

coaches; however, two of the three education professors indicated that their schools have yet to create such a pathway.

High School Department Chairs and their Role Descriptions

Interview and artifact data gathered from high school department chairs and school districts provided much insight to the qualifications, contracts, and daily duties of those who take on the role of high school department chair. Interview and artifact data regarding duties included information about departmental meetings, professional development, personnel, student placements, communication, curriculum, using data, budgets, and instruction. Overall, high school department chairs indicated that they perform implicit duties not explicitly written in their role descriptions.

High school department chairs. I interviewed four department chairs from various institutions. I interviewed a department chair from a coeducational, public high school; a department chair from a coeducational, public, vocational technical high school; a department chair from a single gender, private, secular high school; and a department chair from a coeducational, private, nonsecular high school. The experiences of interviewed department chairs varied. Although they all liaised between administration and faculty, led department meetings, managed budgets, and interviewed teacher candidates, their supervisory and mentoring responsibilities varied greatly. They all appeared to be their school's curriculum leader within their content area, but not instructional leaders. Additionally, although they led their school's curriculum within their content area, data indicated that they continued to carry a teaching load greater than half-time. Interviewed department chairs were teachers first, then administrators.

Accepting the role of department chair. The interviewed department chairs came about holding their current position differently. Anne indicated that she was appointed department chair by "default". Anne shared:

> We had a lot of retirements kind of all at once and the person, I think he has one more year to do full time, maybe two, I don't remember, several more years I guess. Anyway, he would have been the logical choice for department chair just by seniority, but he's the athletic director and they did not want him to do both. So, I actually had only been teaching full time there for two years. I had been an aide there. I had taught full time at a school for children with learning disabilities. I didn't even have tenure. They gave me tenure early.

Similarly, Betty was not the most senior person within her department when accepting the department chair role. Betty shared, "It was recommended to apply when the position was open." Betty and a senior member of the department applied for the position of department chair. Betty shared:

> I think they thought someone new might be best and I don't think it was … I don't think it was necessarily something specific about me. I think part of it was that they thought that someone new would be best for the department.

Carol accepted the department chair role after minimum teaching experience. She shared:

> They just needed that person; and so, the department's small, so I'm not a department chair in terms of like what it would be in a large school. So, I think that was why it was okay that I hadn't been a teacher for very long to put me in

that role; and we have a teacher that's been teaching 40 years, but he's just not

interested in the responsibilities

Carol did not need to apply for the position, she was asked to take on the role. Although

Anne, Betty, and Carol were relatively new to their departments, under three years

employed in the school, they came about taking on the department chair role differently.

David, however, applied for the position, after teaching many years in his school, when

the position became available. David shared:

I told the headmaster that I would like to do it and they interviewed some other

people from outside as well because somebody was leaving. You know,

somebody was leaving. They were going to be hiring a new math, they actually

were hiring, we had to, they had to hire three new math people that year. It was

just one of those years. So, as they were bringing people in, some of the people

were possible candidates to be department chair; but eventually they decided that

I could do it, that I would do it.

David shared that he thought his school administrators "were happy that someone who

knew the kids … wanted to do it." Since the path to department chair varied amongst the

interviewees, there does not appear any one route for a prospective department chair to

follow.

    Grade level responsibilities. Interviewed department chairs were responsible for

the grade levels in their building. Therefore, three out of four department chairs were

responsible for grades 9 through 12, and one department chair was responsible for grades

7 through 12. Interviewed department chairs were not responsible for grades outside of

their building. Hence, department chairs appear to focus on grade levels with whom they have daily contact.

Qualifications. Required qualifications for interviewed department chairs to work in their system varied. Overall, interviewed public school department chairs needed only to be licensed to teach in their content area, while interviewed private school department chairs indicated that their schools required no state licenses. For example, David said, "I don't have any sort of teacher's license or anything like that." Carol's school also does not require a teacher's license, however, she shared, "That was just something I sought out myself." None of the interviewees held a supervisor/director license or a principal/assistant principal license. None of the interviewees indicated that their school required advanced graduate coursework in leadership or an administrative license. Anne indicated the reasoning behind this is that "department chairs … don't do any of the supervisory stuff" in her district. Additionally, according to interviewed department chairs, none of the schools offered professional development opportunities in leadership for department chairs. For example, Betty shared:

> The only formal training I had was at my last job. I actually did take a course in eval, observing teachers, which was very, very good and it helped me, I felt, write those reports on observations very objectively (and) in doing a preconference and post-conference.

Carol shared that at her school "professional development, that sort of thing, it's not required." Anne expounded by saying, "I do my own professional development." Neither

leadership coursework nor supervisor/director licensure appears to be required for department chairs supervising a curriculum area in their own building.

Although not leadership coursework, Carol's school offered her in-house professional development. She was afforded the opportunity to take on the role of department chair over the course of two years. Carol's role came into existence when her school determined that one person could not be department chair of two content areas. Carol explained:

> So, I was department head last year and somewhat the year before that. I was like trans, the current department head was math and science and they decided they needed just math and just science. So, I kind of transitioned in my second year. Third year, which was last year, I totally took over as department chair and now I'm going into my 4th year.

Although outside training or coursework was not provided for Carol, her school afforded her the opportunity to take advantage of professional development offered by a colleague. The in-house training may have provided Carol with many of the same benefits a formal practicum would have provided with an educational leadership program.

Interviewed department chairs lead and manage departments without administrative licensure or advanced coursework in educational leadership. One department chair, Carol, was mentored and trained prior to assuming all responsibilities of department chair; however, the other three interviewed department chairs have not been offered such training. The schools of interviewed department chairs do not require

the supervisor/director license for this position or advanced graduate coursework in leadership.

Contract. Similarities exist amongst interviewed department chairs' contractual agreements. All interviewed department chairs worked under a teacher's contract. For example, Anne explicitly stated, "I'm a teacher." Anne, Betty, and Carol received a stipend for the extra work associated with the department chair role. When asked if she received a stipend, Carol replied. "Yes, it's small, but I do." David did not receive a separate stipend for assuming the role. When asked if he received a stipend, David replied, "We have one salary. I mean, it covers everything: coaching, you know, extra-curriculars, things like that." Interviewed department chairs did not hold administrative positions contractually. They remained under the teacher's contract in their schools.

Duties. Duties for department chairs varied (see Table 2). Although all four department chairs liaised between administration and faculty, led department meetings, managed budgets, and interviewed teacher candidates, their supervisory and mentoring responsibilities varied greatly. Additionally, not all interviewed department chairs received a stipend or were relieved of teaching duties in exchange for taking on this middle management position. Overall, interviewed department chairs agreed that they do not feel as if they have enough time during the school day to perform all teaching duties and department chair duties well.

Table 2

Department Chair Duties of Interviewed High School Department Chairs

Duty	Anne	Betty	Carol	David
Budget	Yes	Yes	No	Some
Communication: In-school liaison	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Communication: Parent liaison	No	Yes	No	Yes
Curriculum	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Departmental Meetings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Instruction	No	Some	No	Some
Personnel: New Hires	Some	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personnel: Veterans	No	Some	No	Some
Professional Development	Some	Some	Some	Some
Student Placements	No	Yes	Some	Yes
Teacher Assignments	Yes	Yes	Some	Some
Teaching Load	Less 1	Less 1	Full	Full
Using Data	No	No	No	No

Departmental meetings. Interviewed department chairs noted that they were

responsible for conducting departmental meetings. For example, Anne said, "I run the

department meetings." Carol shared, "The school schedule is an 8 day cycle, and we have

a meeting, a department meeting, once every 8 days. So, I run those meetings and I'm in

charge of that."

Within departmental meetings, Anne, Betty, and David noted that they worked

towards common goals, during department meeting times, such as curriculum alignment.

Anne shared, "I am the one who is suppose to make sure that we have up-to-date

curriculum maps. I do a lot of work on that or I help oversee it, split it up amongst us."

Betty shared:

Most recently, also making sure curriculum's aligned to the common core and to

the PARCC exams and that's huge since we still don't know exactly what role

those exams are going to play in terms of students' graduation or competency

determination.

David shared, "I mean, the big responsibilities are going to be overseeing the

curriculum." He also said, "Some of it's just keeping everybody in the loop. You know,

we've put a few new things into the curriculum, letting everybody know where we're at

in our sequencing."

All department chairs also indicated that they liaised between administration and

faculty. Carol said, "I'm really … just a liaison… I would say that's the main one (duty).

I get a lot of emails and then I put together an agenda and I run a meeting for my school."

Betty shared:

There's an expectation that you're the eyes and ears of your department: what are

people griping about, what went well at parent open house night, any concerns,

what went well with this new change in people's schedule, that kind of thing…

more of a liaison role plus disseminating information.

John said:

I'm little bit liaison. You know, we have a curriculum committee meeting in the

beginning of the year and then we have department meetings during open faculty

days, so there might be some things to communicate about general policies, like

homework and test calendars, those type of nuts and bolts type things.

When asked, "Do you find yourself as a liaison between administration and faculty?" Anne responded, "Yeah. Definitely." Overall, liaising between administration and faculty appears consistent between public and private school department chairs.

Based on participant responses during interviews, Anne, Betty, Carol, and David remarked that they liaised between administration and faculty during departmental meetings. Interviewed department chairs organized and led departmental meetings. They indicated that during departmental meetings they may address curriculum needs, deliver information, and receive feedback for administrators. Hence, department chairs appear to be responsible for gathering content area departments together to discuss departmental specific issues as well as administrative requests.

Professional development. Although similarities existed regarding departmental meetings, duties surrounding professional development amongst interviewed department chairs varied. In Betty's district, professional development is "run by the STEM [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] director and it comes out of the STEM director's budget." Betty said:

> It's their [STEM director's] responsibility for organizing that initially and getting it approved by the town, by the school district, by the administration; but I am often asked for feedback. I often give ideas about what that professional development needs to look like.

Betty continued, "I'm trying to make sure our professional development is what it needs to be, looking for resources, … reaching out to other schools to see what they're doing." Overall, Betty concluded:

> I'm suppose to be responsible for sort of carrying it [professional development] forward, making sure people move forward with it once the outside person has left; but often times we do some sort of in-house professional development. So, we might be sort of left on our own.

Betty also indicated that she investigated potential resources when her school allots professional development for in-house opportunities, such as ensuring curriculum alignment with standardized tests and the common core. Similarly, though not as involved, Anne indicated that she assisted in bringing professional development opportunities to her school approximately every other year when she shared, "I do help create professional development opportunities for my staff. Generally, every other year or every 3 years, I bring a two or three credit course to [the school] and open it to all local high school teachers." Betty and Anne assisted in providing in-house professional development opportunities for faculty.

Department chairs Betty, Carol, and David indicated that they have presented outside professional development opportunities to faculty members when they arise and advocate for funds if necessary. For example, Betty shared:

> We have a STEM person and we have a humanities person. They kind of oversee the professional development and have control of that budget. So, I don't really have a professional development budget. That person or an administrator or another teacher might pass along a professional development opportunity, so, like maybe a one day workshop and sometimes I have a role in making sure that the

right person gets to it or putting it out to the people I think might be interested or

advocating for money so that someone can go to it.

Similarly, David shared:

We have plenty of money available for professional development. …We have a

dean of faculty who I can ask if we can go to NCTM [National Council of

Teachers of Mathematics] and he's like, "Sure, of course."… I can suggest things

like AP [Advanced Placement] workshops. You know, we have a new teacher and

he's going to teach Calc BC. So, you know, I helped him find… helped

coordinate with him, where he would go for that. So, if somebody is going to

teach an AP course … those are really the big things with professional

development, I think that some of those AP trainings, if they're going to teach

calculus, that's really helpful.

Carol stated:

Like NCTM was here this year and I sent that out to them and was like,

"Anybody interested? Just let me know. I'm sure they'd be happy for you to go."

So like, if I hear of things, but not really, that's more the academic principal,

again. Anything he gets his way, he kind of sends to us or he'll send it to me and

say, "Is there anyone you think could really benefit from this professional

development?"

Overall, responsibilities regarding professional development for departmental

faculty varied from passing along outside opportunities to advocating for in-house

training. It could be surmised from interviewees' replies that department chairs do not

appear to be solely responsible for creating professional development opportunities for departmental members.

Personnel. All interviewed department chairs participated in the hiring of departmental faculty. Anne and Carol shared that they have participated in the interviewing of candidates. For example, when asked about the hiring process, public school department chair Anne stated, "I'll be in on the interviews." Anne's school did not involve her further in the process. Similarly, private school department chair Carol said, "I've just sat in on the interviews, gave my input, that kind of thing." Private school department chair David indicated more involvement when he shared:

> I'd be helping coordinate them (interviewees) coming in, them teaching a lesson. So, I would be involved in that, seeing them teach and having some opinions. So, I get input on who we hire. Like if I really didn't want somebody, I think that I could say, "No. What are we doing? I don't think that this person would work." I'm not the only opinion …When they come to interview for a day, they usually interview with a bunch of people, like they have a whole schedule …So, I have a chance to sit down with them during that.

Public school department chair Betty shared:

> Everything except the final stamp. So, I'm screening the candidates' applications to setting up the interviews, calling candidates, bringing them in, scheduling model lessons; then that's where I kind of hand it off. So, whatever the interview committee is, that makes candidates, then that gets forwarded to the

administration, and the candidate has a final interview with the superintendent and then, at that point, it's sort of out of my hands.

Overall, department chairs Betty and David appeared more involved in the hiring process than department chairs Anne and Carol. Although involvement was evenly split, the split was not indicative of differences between public and private schools. Within the split, one department chair was from a public school and one from a private school. The involvement within the hiring process variation did not correlate with public school or private schools within this data set.

Student placements. The amount of responsibility regarding student placement issues varied amongst interviewed department chairs. When asked about her role as department chair, Anne did not include student placements into courses as part of her role. Carol placed incoming students into appropriate courses with faculty input. Carol said:

> I did get handed that duty last year. And I, I kind of pulled in one of the other math teachers to help me. I, because I don't teach any freshmen and since our department is so small, we kind of got a person who teaches a lot of the 9th graders. I teach the 11th and 12th graders. So, I wanted to pull in that person and say, you know, "These are the kids. These are the entrance exams. What do you think?" And so, she helped me a lot with that. So, I like, I graded them; I put them in order; and then she and I kind of sat and did that.

However, regarding the placement of current students, Carol stated, "That's just up to the individual teachers. We just have a Google doc and you put in what class you think they

should be in and that's it." Anne did not indicate direct responsibility for student placements and Carol directed incoming student placements only.

Department chairs Betty and David indicated that they are responsible for all student placements. Betty indicated that she is responsible for "making sure the whole department is consistent about how to recommend kids from one course to the next." To this end, Betty shared:

> Student placement is a huge, huge, huge topic; from like students new to the
>
> system in the middle of the year to, throughout the year, finding students who are
>
> maybe misplaced to course recommendation time, deciding how to place students.

Similar to Betty, David noted that he was responsible for all incoming student placements as well as in-house placements from course to course. However, unlike Betty, David stated, "That's not too time consuming during the year. That's more end of the year."

Overall, department chairs Betty and David were responsible for student placements throughout their department; whereas, Carol was only responsible for incoming students' placements and Anne did not allude to placing students in courses while describing her duties. Therefore, department chairs' involvement with students' course placements appears to be individualized by school district.

In addition to student placements, Betty shared that she was responsible for "deciding what the section numbers are going to be and how to allot the teachers that we have and soliciting teacher feedback about what courses they want to teach and then trying to create teaching sections according to that." Anne, Carol, and David did not have direct involvement in determining course sections. David stated:

> We're pretty controlled, unlike a public school I imagine, you know, we can
>
> control our numbers a little better. So, we're pretty consistent … and it's just a
>
> matter of sometimes deciding, you know, if there's four sections, will two of them
>
> be regular sections? Will two of them be advance sections?

While Carol said:

> Guidance does all that. So, guidance does anything involving scheduling.
>
> …We've had a little bit of communication in terms of, "Okay, we have 30 of this
>
> many, should that be two sections or one?" But, they really know. I mean our
>
> classes are small. So, they have an idea.
>
> Hence, according to department chairs Anne, Betty, Carol, and David, the amount

of responsibility with respect to student placement issues varied greatly. Again, public

school department chair Betty and private school department chair David appeared to

have more responsibility than public school department chair Anne and private school

department chair Carol. Within this data set, there exists no pattern when comparing

public school to private school. The public school department chairs did not have more or

less responsibilities for student placement consistently when compared to their private

school counterparts. Overall, department chair duties regarding placements and course

section numbers appear to be based on individual school needs.

Communication. The expectations regarding communication for department

chairs varied amongst the interviewed department chairs, as well. All interviewed

department chairs liaised between administration and departmental faculty. Anne and

Betty indicated that they mostly relayed information to administration and received

information from administration at department chair meetings. For example, Betty described her department chair meetings when she shared:

> Those meetings are more, sometimes we get a preview of what new things are going to be happening in the school, sometimes we're asked to sort of give feedback, you know, … there's an expectation that you're the eyes and ears of your department: what are people griping about, what went well at parent open house night, any concerns, what went well with this new change in people's schedule, that kind of thing.

Anne said, when discussing department chair meetings:

> We haven't had them as regularly as we should. It started out regular but then as the year progressed and [the assistant principal] got busier, of course the assistant principal runs them, there were fewer of them. It's more like he runs stuff past us, but I think more he disseminates information to us in order for us to take it back to the departments.

David noted that his department chair meetings are not regular when he shared, "There's one in the beginning of the year, one at the end, and probably two or three in the middle." When asked about the information from the meetings and his responsibility to relay information, David responded, "I mean where it's relevant. Yes, where it's relevant to them." Carol echoed David's sentiment regarding the disbursement of relevant information when she shared that she asks herself:

> "Okay, you've told me all of this information, what do teachers really need to know?" condensing that down, getting that out to them in 10 minutes. So that's a

big part, is just pulling out what's actually necessary and making my own judgement.

Overall, according to Anne, Betty, Carol, and David, department chairs appeared to accept responsible for relaying information to and from school administrators. Additionally, private school department chairs David and Carol specifically indicated that they only relay relevant information to their department members; while public school department chairs Anne and Betty did not mention filtering information before presenting communications from department chair meetings. A primary role for department chairs appears to be liaising between faculty and administration given the interview data.

In addition to liaising, Betty indicated that she was also responsible for collaborating with the STEM director for professional development opportunities, as well. Betty said:

> We also have professional development that's provided by the school … that is also run by the STEM director and it comes out of the STEM director's budget …It's their responsibility for organizing that initially and getting it approved by the town, by the school district, by the administration, but I am often asked for feedback. I often give ideas about what that professional development needs to look like.

Additionally, Betty indicated that she liaised with the guidance department when she shared that she was responsible for "overseeing selection of students for different awards … I don't choose kids, but making sure teachers have time to talk about it and acting as a liaison with guidance, who kind of oversees that."

Betty also indicated that she oversaw the implementations of individualized education programs (IEP's). Betty shared:

> The main thing that's been coming up this year is to make sure students' IEP's are followed making sure accommodations are followed, IEP's are adhered to, making sure there's good communication between [her] department and the special ed department at the school; making sure there are good relationships between the teachers, the regular ed teacher, and the special ed teachers; and that they are professionals. That has become a bigger part of my job in the past year or two.

Betty appeared to act as a liaison between her department and various departments, not just administration.

Department chairs Betty and David appeared to also assume additional communication responsibilities with respect to the parent population. Although none of the interviewed department chairs had supervisory responsibilities formally, Betty and David attended to parental concerns when they were brought to their attention. Betty said, "There is an unwritten expectation that I do something about it….It's not really spelled out what my role is supposed to be in terms of that and I'm not an evaluator." David said, "They [administrators] just expect that if you hear something, that you'll deal with it and …that you'll get back to the parents… That's the vague part of things" Anne and Carol, however, did not field teacher complaints. When discussing parental concerns, Anne explained, "After the teacher, it will generally go to guidance. Because I don't have a supervisory position, I'm not really the next person in line." Carol stated, when

discussing parental concerns, "Our academic principal is really hands on; and, so, he deals with most of that." Variation exists regarding expectations around addressing parental concerns.

Overall, public school department chair Betty and private school department chair David indicated more responsible for teacher performances within their departments than public school department chair Anne and private school department chair Carol, even though none of the department chair roles were supervisory roles. Generally, the public school teachers appeared no more or less likely to assume additional communication responsibilities. It appears that department chair role expectations regarding communication, explicit and implicit, vary from school district to school district.

Curriculum. Interviewed department chairs remarked that they were responsible for the curriculum within their departments. Department chairs ensured curriculum alignment within the department. Anne, Betty, and Carol cited the importance of updated curriculum maps. For example, Betty shared:

> Most recently, also making sure curriculum's aligned to the common core and to the PARCC exams and that's huge since we still don't know exactly what role those exams are going to play in terms of students' graduation or competency determination.

Anne said, "I am the one who is suppose to make sure that we have up-to-date curriculum maps. I'm in charge of making sure the benchmark tests are up-to-date" Supporting this contention Carol stated:

> We have a curriculum committee that's like in charge of all that sort of academic

stuff and I was like the math representative on that. We met once a week for a

couple of hours and we talked about things going on in the school such as like a

late policy or like how to develop curriculum maps for the year for each course.

So, I kind of took that information to my department and said, "Okay, this is what

you're going to be responsible for by May 1st. Please get this done."

Private school department chair David indicated the importance of ensuring relevant

curriculum for the students they serve over ensuring alignment with state standards.

David said, "I guess that's been my biggest goal, has been like redesigning the

curriculum." For example, David shared, "We have a new 9th grade course that we're

trying to integrate some STEM stuff in." David also shared by way of example:

So, we started, last year for the first time. … Basically there were like three boys

who had finished the topics class the year before and three 10th graders who had

just finished calculus, who were looking at 2 years of math, and we put them all

together in a multi-variable calculus class.

While David ensured curriculum alignment within his department, David's focus was on

his current student body and their needs.

Overall, Anne, Betty, Carol, and David addressed the importance of ensuring

current, aligned curricula within their departments. However, public school department

chairs Anne and Betty indicated more of a need to be aligned with the state's standards

than private school department chairs Carol and David. Therefore, school funding, public

or private, does not appear to impact department chairs' level of responsibility towards

curriculum, but it appears to impact the focus on alignment with state standards.

Using data. Interviewed department chairs had similar duties regarding the collection, analysis, and use of data. None of the department chairs interviewed, Anne, Betty, Carol, or David, indicated that their school required them to gather, analyze, and use data to make decisions while discussing their department chair duties. School funding, public or private, does not appear to impact department chairs' responsibilities regarding data.

Budget. Interviewed public school department chairs Anne and Betty indicated that they assisted in creating their departmental budget and managing the spending of their approved budget. Anne stated, "I help put together the budget for the department with the superintendent." When discussing spending budgeted funds, Anne said, "I'm the one who initiates the textbook stuff." Betty shared, "I create the budget and I bring it to the principal and we kind of go over it together and then the principal is responsible for putting it forward." When asked, Betty indicated that she was responsible for textbook and supply ordering. Public school department chairs Anne and Betty assisted in the creation of the budget as well as the spending.

One of the two private school department chairs managed the departmental budget with respect to textbooks and professional development expenditures, while the other private school department chair had no involvement with the budget. For example, David said, "We get a certain amount of money and if somebody needs books or if somebody wants books, I can okay that or conferences or things like that, I can ask for money." However, Carol shared, "I don't even know what the budget is truthfully."

Hence, private school department chairs David and Carol did not appear to participate in the creation of the budget, but David was privy to departmental budget details.

Overall, interviewed public school department chairs Anne and Betty appeared to have more responsibilities and input with respect to the creation and management of their departmental budgets than private school department chairs David and Carol. Neither David nor Carol assisted in the creation of their departmental budget. David, however, managed the budget once created. Therefore, public school department chairs appear to have more responsibility regarding budgets than private school department chairs.

Instruction. In addition to other responsibilities, department chairs Betty and David assumed the role of instructional leader within their departments. Although none of the department chairs had explicit supervisory and evaluation responsibilities, Betty and David indicated that there existed an unwritten sentiment that they supervise instruction and mentor those in need. Betty said:

> I think it's expected that I am in control of my department and helping to mentor teachers who need support and fielding complaints and making sure people are toeing the company line, but that was never really spelled out. Since I'm not their evaluator, I find that difficult sometimes. … So, I would say not so much mentoring as more of like coach/facilitator.

However, Betty shared, with regards to observing teaching and learning, "It's very hard for me to notice firsthand because I teach 80%." Therefore, Betty attempted to work with each teacher's personality to assist them in the development of their craft. She noted, "Some people aren't threatened when they hear about a complaint, or a question, or a

concern and some are and some are very open to feedback and some are less open to feedback." When Betty coached faculty members, she aimed to ensure that she works with teachers as individuals. Betty appeared to differentiate her leadership just as she expected department members to differentiate instruction and use best practices promoted by the common core. Betty shared:

> The curriculum's aligned on paper. You know the topics are there, but I'm not sure that we're aligned to the spirit of the common core and the way the teaching is suppose to be changing. The teaching and learning is suppose to be changing so, a lot of my time is directed towards to make sure we're in step with that and trying to figure out how use our collaboration times to address those things.

Betty attempted to coach departmental members in instructional techniques and address concerns during the course of the day between her teaching assignments.

Similarly, when asked if David mentored, he replied, "Yes. I mean not. I mean not, I guess, officially, but yes. I mean, I'm in charge of helping them, talking to them, seeing how things are going more informally, getting a sense of how the classes are going." David shared, when speaking of how his master's program affected his instructional leadership, "I think it made me worry less about covering certain things, worry about like if we, more about how we teach rather than like covering every little single thing. That's more about the spirit of getting them to think and learn." To that end, David promoted creativity within the teaching craft to his departmental faculty. He shared, "I want them to try things, not be afraid to just do everything the same way every year." However, David said:

Because we're very limited in our schedule because we, the way our schedule

works, you really, it's almost impossible for anybody to teach multiple sections of

the same class. Like our teachers who teach four classes generally have 4 preps

because the way our schedule works…That's been a very big limitation, I think,

in our teachers being able to prepare very creatively and how are you going to

prepare four classes, you know, on a daily basis creatively? You just kind of have

to go by rote and follow the textbook.

David understood that teacher creativity may be difficult due to scheduling constraints at

his school. However, David believed that it was his responsible to mentor and encourage

growth in departmental faculty.

Overall, David and Betty accepted unwritten mentoring duties. The accepted the

role of instructional leader within their departments. As instructional leaders, Betty and

David both expressed growth in faculty members' craft as a goal of their mentoring.

Anne and Carol indicated that the administration supervised instruction within

their schools. Anne shared, "Because I'm a teacher, I don't do any of the, I don't sit in on

classes. I don't do any of the observations. I don't do any of that that." Carol shared,

"They haven't even really asked me to do observations. I, none of the department chairs

do." Mentoring differed slightly between Anne and Carol. Anne shared, "They

[administration] never ask me to mentor." Any mentoring Anne has done in the past has

been peer to peer, not supervisor to faculty member. For example, Anne recently offered

to mentor a peer, but prefaced her offer by stating:

This is what I will do, if you want me to. I'm running this past you first because I don't want to put it out to administration if you don't want it; but this is how I would do it. And I would say that I would be your mentor, but really it wouldn't be a mentor.

However, Carol's school expected her to mentor new hires. Carol did not have a written role description and learned of this expectation while interviewing candidates recently. Carol shared that during a recent interview a candidate said, "I've never taught before. Who's going to mentor me?" Carol's administrator said, "Oh, that would be Carol." This was when Carol learned of the expectation. Anne and Carol did not observe faculty members and thus did not have instructional mentoring responsibilities formally. However, Carol was expected to mentor new hires.

Overall, public school department chair Betty and private school department chair David abided by unwritten expectations to ensure that their departments ran smoothly and teachers taught well; whereas, in Anne's public school and Carol's private school, those responsibilities fell onto administration. Hence, instructional mentoring within departments varied amongst schools, but a correlation with this data set amongst public or private schools and department chair mentoring expectations did not appear. Within this data set, one public school and one private school department chairperson fulfilled unwritten expectations of instructional leader.

Although instructional and mentoring responsibilities differed amongst participating department chairs, both public school department chairs indicated that they assigned course loads to departmental members. The public school department chairs

consulted with departmental members prior to submitting their teaching assignments to ensure the presence of teacher input in the scheduling process. For example, Betty explained how she attempts to ensure teachers in her department teach courses they prefer to teach when she shared:

> Teachers will tell you what they want, then, when they see their schedule, this year, in particular, I had a lot of teachers see their assignment and say, "I'm not sure about this anymore." I want to keep people happy; so, I'm tweaking a few things and being back in touch with the administration.

Anne shared that she also tries to work with department members. Anne said:

> A lot of it has been, "What has this person always taught?" and that's usually because that person likes teaching that. So, yes. And then there have been some jiggled around because people say, "Well, you know, I haven't taught an honors class in a really long time." "Okay fine. So, whose willing to give it up for a little while?" So that kind of stuff, and then we'll jiggle it back and say, "Okay, so and so really wants that back. You've taught it for a couple of years, …" But I've always tried to make sure that people only have two preps per cycle. It just always doesn't work out that way.

Given the data provided by Betty and Anne, public school department chairs appeared to be quite involved in the teacher assignment process.

Private school department chairs noted that they did not have much input into teaching assignments given the constraints within their school schedules, teacher strengths, and school size. David shared, "We're pretty controlled, unlike a public school

I imagine, you know, we can control our numbers a little better. So, we're pretty consistent." Carol shared information regarding the constraints the number of faculty in her department. She said:

> So, the long-time teacher has what he has. I have what I have. The 3rd teacher, full-time, kind of got a mix of classes that didn't give her too many preps. And then this new person gets the other two classes that are left.

According to the data provided by Carol and David, it appears the private school constraints may leave less room for manipulation of teacher assignments than their public school counterparts

Overall, data provided by Betty and David indicated that unwritten expectations regarding instructional leadership and mentoring appear to be dependent on individual school districts rather than type of school; whereas, data provided from Anne, Betty, Carol, and David indicated that school funding, public versus private, may impact the need for department chairs to be involved in teacher assignments. Public school department chairs, as noted by Anne and Betty's interview data, may have more input regarding teacher assignments than private school department chairs because public school districts cannot control their schools' enrollments the same way private schools control enrollment, as noted in data provided by David.

Teaching load. In addition to duties, explicit and otherwise, differing amongst interviewed department chairs, interview data indicates teaching loads differ as well. Although none of the interviewed department chairs were given release of teaching assignments that equate to half-time, interviewed public school department chairs Anne

and Betty had a reduced teaching load. Both public school department chairs were
relieved of one teaching assignment. The reduced teaching load lessened their teaching
assignments to allow time for departmental duties. Anne said, "I teach five courses
…most teach six." Betty shared, "I teach 80%. So, I teach four classes instead of five."
Both public school department chairs were relieved of one teaching assignment to
perform department chair duties.

Neither interviewed private school department chair, Carol nor David, taught a
lighter load than the rest of their departmental members. Both private school department
chairs taught a full load while performing department chair duties. David shared:

Our teachers, who teach four classes, generally have four preps because the way
our schedule works… We have a new 9th grade course that we're trying to
integrate some STEM stuff in and we did get that one to meet at four separate
times and I'm teaching two of those this year and somebody else is teaching two.
So, I only have three preps now.

David taught four classes with three preparations. He had relief because he only had three
preparations, but he taught the same number of total classes as his departmental faculty.
Although Carol also taught a full load, Carol shared that she may be relieved of
nonteaching duties the upcoming year. Carol shared that she approached administration
to advocate for herself. She said:

So I actually asked this year, after I saw how much work it was last year, I said,
"Is there anything you can do for me? I know in terms of teaching, you can't,
there's nothing, there's nowhere those classes could go. I have to take on a full

teaching load, but in terms of my extra stuff? So like lunch duty, café duty in the mornings, my study that I have to, you know, proctor, that kind of stuff, could you help me out, especially if I'm going to be mentoring this new teacher this year?" And they were like, "Yes, we'll see what we can do." But I' don't know if that's going to happen.

Although Carol's school may not have had enough faculty to reduce Carol's teaching load, she identified that department chairs need time during their workday to perform department chair duties well.

Overall, according to interview data provided by Anne, Betty, Carol, and David, private school department chairs appear less likely to have a reduced teaching load to perform department chair duties than their public school counterparts even though they perform similar duties. Anne and Betty both had their teaching load reduced by one class. However, Carol and David's private schools did not reduce their teaching loads. Thus, public schools may be more likely to reduce the teaching load of a department chair than private schools.

Public schools, in which interviewed department chairs Anne and Betty worked, appeared to recognize the need for additional planning time for department chairs. However, their teaching loads were not reduced to half-time. The public schools lessened the department chairs teaching load by 20% at most.

All four department chairs, Anne, Betty, Carol, and David, indicated a need for additional time during the school day to better perform both department chair and teaching duties. For example, when discussing Anne's teaching assignments along with

department chair duties, Anne said, "It's insane. It's crazy. That's why I said I'm more of a teacher than anything else." Betty shared, "It's very hard for me … because I teach 80%." David said, "There's really no relief… it's a little unrealistic." Carol shared, "After I saw how much work it was last year, I said [to administration], 'Is there anything you can do for me?'" Thus, interviewed department chairs expressed a need for more time during the work day to perform their department chair duties. Overall, if school districts expect department chairs to perform additional duties, both implicit and explicit, well, then department chairs need time during the school day to do so.

High school department chair role descriptions. The collected high school department chair role descriptions identified both congruencies and differences. Overall, data suggest that high school department chairs assist in the hiring of new faculty members, plan and lead departmental meetings, and are the curriculum leaders of their content areas. However, data also suggest that additional responsibilities such as planning budgets, evaluating faculty members, and mentoring faculty members vary depending on the school system. Hence, although some commonalities exist amongst the role descriptions, many variances also exist.

Grade level responsibilities. Just as the grades serviced by participating schools varied, grade levels high school department chairs oversaw also varied. Department chairs in the Washington, Madison, and Taft Schools oversaw curriculum specific departments spanning grades 7 through 12. Department chairs in the Adams and Grant Schools were responsible for grades 9 through 12. Department chairs in the Polk School oversaw grades 6 through 12. There was no pattern for the department chair role

responsibility with regards to grade level, even within the private schools, Madison and Grant. However, there was one commonality. None of the participating districts had department chairs oversee elementary grades. All participating school districts' department chairs oversaw grade levels in which subjects are typically taught by curriculum specific faculty members. Hence, school districts appear to recognize value in having content area specialists in the upper grades.

Qualifications. Not all participating schools indicated desired qualifications for those seeking the position of department chairs. Participating private schools, Madison and Grant, did not specify desired qualifications on their role descriptions. All participating public schools indicated a preference for candidates with licensing credentials higher than subject area teacher. Pierce and Taft Schools indicated that department chairs and prospective department chairs possess either an administrative license or a supervisor/director license. Specifically, Pierce's description read, "certification in the field of administration and/or supervision". Taft's description read, "Educator License as Supervisor/Director or Principal/Asst Principal 5-8 or 9-12". Adams School indicated that department chairs and prospective department chairs possess a "supervisor/director" license. Polk School indicated that "additional licensure as Director/Supervisor desired". Interestingly, only Adams School specified the supervisor/director license as a stand-alone credential for department chairs. Pierce, Polk, and Taft Schools implied that one could be employed as a department chair without the supervisor/director license. In addition to the supervisor/director license, Adams, Polk,

and Taft Schools required department chairs hold a current license as teacher in their

content area. Licensing credentials appear to vary depending on the school system.

Above and beyond licensing credentials, Pierce, Polk, and Taft Schools also noted

master's degrees and teaching experience as concrete credentials for the department chair

position. Pierce School was the only school to require a master's degree in the curriculum

area of the department chair's expertise. Polk and Taft Schools required candidates to

either have higher education or hold a master's degree, but the advanced schooling could

be in administration, the content area, or a related field. For example, the Taft School

indicated that candidates must hold a "master's degree" without any further comment.

Pierce, Polk, and Taft Schools also required minimum years of teaching experience. The

minimum varied. Pierce School required 4 years of classroom experience. Taft School

required 3 years of classroom experience. Polk School required 5 years of teaching and/or

administrative experience. Although Polk School had the highest minimum years'

experience, it was the only school district to accept administrative experience when

reviewing years of service in education. Adams School did not include any qualifications

explicitly requiring higher education or years' experience as an educator. However, given

the specification for an applicant to hold a supervisor/director license, which required

advanced graduate work in one's discipline as well as a minimum of 3 years' experience,

Adams School implicitly required similar qualifications as Pierce, Polk, and Taft (Eastern

Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). Overall, the participating private

schools did not publish qualifications on the role descriptions and participating public

schools qualifications varied. Hence, qualifications to assume the department chair role appear to depend on individual school districts rather than an agreed upon standard.

Contract. Five out of six participating schools' department chairs worked under a teacher's contract explicitly. Madison School's role description did not explicitly indicate if those undertaking the role of department chair remained under the teacher contract. Polk School's role description included an additional stipend for those taking on the role of department chair. Grant School did not indicate an additional stipend and schools Pierce, Adams, and Taft indicated that salaries would be "in accordance" with "collective bargaining agreements" and "teacher contracts." Five out of the six participating schools did not offer explicitly additional pay for assuming the position of department chair. Additionally, role descriptions indicated that five out of six participating schools did not include department chairs in their administrative payroll but rather in the teachers' payroll.

Although most of the participating schools explicitly paid department chairs according to teachers' pay scales, some districts included additional duties that some may consider administrative. For example, Pierce School's department chair role description indicated that department chairs must "report student assessment results and analysis to district administration and School Committee." Adams School instructed department chairs to "assist in conducting student/parent orientations." Polk School indicated that department chairs "serve as a member of the building-based administrative team." Madison School explicitly indicated that department chairs must attend a specific senior activity not required of nondepartment chairs. Schools Pierce, Taft and Grant included

department chairs in a system wide curriculum committee. Schools Polk and Madison indicated that department chairs attend department chair meetings to discuss and collaborate on curriculum and instructional issues. Although most participating schools paid department chairs according to teachers' scales, department chairs served administratively as well. It appears, then, that department chairs are teachers first administrators second since they appear to be most likely paid using a district's teachers' pay scale.

Although department chairs appeared to assume administrative duties while remaining part of the teaching faculty, to whom each department chair directly reports varied. Department chairs in Pierce School reported to the superintendent of schools. Department chairs in schools Adams and Madison reported to building principals. Department chairs in Polk School reported to the executive director for instruction. Department chairs in Taft School reported to the assistant superintendent. While department chairs in Grant School reported to their division director. Grant School had two divisions. The middle school division serviced grade 6 through 8 and the upper school serviced grades 9 through 12. Overall, there does not appear to be a pattern regarding to whom department chairs report within their school districts.

Duties. The specificity of duties outlined within chair role descriptions varied. Some role descriptions explicitly indicated with whom department chairs should work and exactly what is expected of them. Other department chair role descriptions were vague when compared to the detail some school districts put into their descriptions. Thus, duties for department chairs on paper varied (see Table 3).

Table 3

Department Chair Duties from High School Department Chair Role Descriptions

Duty	Pierce School	Adams School	Polk School	Madison School	Taft School	Grant School
Budget	Some	Yes	Some	Yes	Some	Yes
Communication: In-school liaison	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Communication: Parent liaison	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Curriculum	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department Meetings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Instruction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Personnel: New Hires	Yes	Yes	Yes	Some	Yes	Yes
Personnel: Veterans	Some	Some	Some	Some	Some	Some
Professional Development	Yes	Yes	No	Some	Yes	Some
Student Placements	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Teacher Assignments	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Teaching Load	TBD	Unnoted	Less 1	Unnoted	TBD	Full
Using Data	Yes	No	Yes	No	Some	No

Note. TBD means "to be determined".

Departmental meetings. Although department chairs of participating schools worked with building administrators but may have reported to someone other than the building administrator, all six department chair role descriptions indicated that department chairs call and lead regular departmental meetings. However, only schools Polk and Madison explicitly indicated that department chairs keep meeting minutes. For example, the Madison role description read, "To call and plan department meetings, keeping accurate minutes of the meetings that are shared with the Principal." Polk's role description read, "Convene and chair meetings of 6-12 content area faculty and staff, establish agenda, maintain records, and address middle to high school curriculum and

student transition issues." Hence, variation existed amongst the role descriptions regarding the expected record keeping for departmental meetings which indicates that there does not exist a standard for department chairs amongst school districts.

Professional development. In addition to leading departmental meetings, five out of six department chair role descriptions indicated some form of responsibility for the professional development of faculty members within their departments. Schools Pierce and Taft indicated that department chairs plan in-service professional development only. For example, according to Taft's description department chairs will "plan in-service workshops and demonstrations for department." Adams School indicated the need for department chairs to "plan staff professional development with (the) assistant superintendent." The private schools, schools Madison and Grant, indicated that department chairs need only "encourage" professional development, not plan professional development; and Polk School did not indicate any professional development responsibility for department chairs. No pattern existed amongst participating schools for department chairs' responsibility towards engaging faculty members in professional development opportunities. Department chairs responsibilities vary according to the school district in which they work.

Personnel. Although participating schools' data did not reveal a pattern regarding professional development, all six role descriptions indicated that department chairs will participate in the hiring of departmental personnel. In addition to participating in the hiring process, schools Pierce, Polk, and Grant explicitly indicated that department chairs train new departmental personnel. For example, Grant's description read that department

chairs will "orientate new department members." Schools Pierce, Adams, Polk, Taft, and Grant indicated that department chairs mentor and support all departmental personnel, not just new hires. For example, Adam's description reads that department chairs will "mentor and support all assigned staff members." However, Madison School did not indicate explicitly any responsibilities regarding mentoring or assisting personnel or training new departmental members. Six out of six role descriptions indicated involvement of department chairs during the hiring process and five out of the six participating schools indicated that department chairs mentor departmental members in some fashion.

In addition to mentoring, department chair role descriptions also highlighted evaluation responsibilities for department chairs. All six participating schools required some oversight of classrooms by department chairs. All schools indicated that their department chairs supervise and observe faculty members within their department. Schools Pierce, Adams, Madison, Taft, and Grant included that department chairs evaluate departmental members' performance. For example, Madison's role description read, "To supervise and evaluate the members of the department annually." Additionally, role descriptions for department chairs in schools Pierce and Madison explicitly stated that department chairs share observation findings with building principals. Only Polk School indicated department chairs perform "non-evaluative classroom observation(s)." All participating schools indicated that department chairs visit classrooms. However, none of the six department chair role descriptions indicated explicitly that department chairs write remediation plans, evaluate remediation plans, or recommend teacher

dismissal. Therefore, although department chairs of participating schools were required to keep abreast of classroom experiences, none of the participating schools indicated authority bestowed upon department chairs to reprimand teachers for poor performance. Consequently, department chairs appear to need experience in evaluating teacher performance, but not in creating or overseeing performance improvement plans which stem from evaluating teacher performance.

Student Placements. In addition to teacher performance, student performance was mentioned on two of the collected role descriptions. Only the private schools, schools Madison and Grant, explicitly indicated that the department chair is responsible for coordinating proper course placements for students within curriculum guidelines. For example, Madison School's role description included, "To conduct parent meetings when necessary regarding course selection and placements." Grant School's description read, "…arrange appropriate academic placement for students." Adams School's role description indicated that department chairs have an advisory role towards students and parents but the description did not expound. Private school department chairs may be required to engage more than public school department chairs with course placements of students.

Communication. Schools Adams and Madison clearly indicated the need for department chairs to communicate with parents as needed. For example, Adams' role description indicated that department chairs will "guide and/or advise parents." Schools Pierce, Adams, Polk, and Madison explicitly indicated the requirement for communication between department chairs and administration to assist in each school's

communications with outside stakeholders and parents. For example, Pierce's role description read that department chairs will "assist 7-12 Principals in interpreting grading policies, promotional policies, testing data and district's instructional program to parents and the community." Assisting school leaders in their efforts to communicate with outside stakeholders appears to be a necessary skill for department chairs.

In addition to assisting school leaders with communicating to outside stakeholders, all six role descriptions indicated that department chairs work collaboratively with colleagues within the school system. For example, Madison's role description indicated that department chairs will "work interdepartmentally in collaboration with other department chairs and faculty to reinforce skills and concepts needed most by student." All indicated the need to work with building administrators and communicate about curriculum, instruction, assessment, and needs within departments. All indicated that department chairs should liaise between administration and departmental faculty. For example, Adams' role description indicated that department chairs will "liaison between department members" and "liaison with administration and staff." Adams School alone also indicated that department chairs may need to "attend IEP/504 meetings as requested." Only schools Adams and Madison explicitly indicated the need for department chairs to participate directly in the creation of updates to be shared with outside stakeholders. For example, Madison's role description indicated that department chairs will "inform the Director of Communications of any pertinent stories for publication." Also, Madison School was the only school that required the presence of department chairs at a senior class function for the purpose of communicating academic

achievement. Overall, schools Adams and Madison required the most communication
with outside stakeholders explicitly. However, all schools required that department chairs
collaborate with various school staff and create open lines of communication within each
school system, particularly with regards to curriculum. It appears that department chairs
need strong communication skills in order to engage multiple stakeholders within and
outside their school buildings.

Curriculum. The primary focus of all six role descriptions was curriculum:
curriculum development, implementation, and review. For example, Taft's role
description stated that department chairs will "develop, coordinate, implement and
evaluate designated curriculum areas." Additionally, schools Pierce and Adams explicitly
indicated that department chairs communicate curriculum alignment to outside
stakeholders and maintain accurate records regarding curriculum. For example, Pierce's
role description indicated that department chairs will work collaboratively "to affect
horizontal and vertical continuity and articulation of the instructional program throughout
the district." In addition to working with departmental members and administration, all
six collected role descriptions indicated that department chairs work interdepartmentally
within the school and with various committees to address curriculum issues. Madison
School, a private school, also indicated the need for department chairs to be
knowledgeable about "feeder school" curricula and "college expectations." Overall,
department chairs appear to be considered curriculum leaders in their content area by
school districts.

Using data. Although schools indicated that department chairs are curriculum leaders, not all schools explicitly indicated the need for department chairs to collect and use data. Only Pierce, Polk, and Taft Schools indicated the need for department chairs to lead their departments in data gathering. Additionally, schools Pierce and Polk explicitly indicated that department chairs analyze data and make recommendations based on data. For example, Polk's role description specified that department chairs will "lead department in the gathering, analyzing, and interpreting of assessment data and subsequently plan appropriate responses." Although all participating schools deemed department chairs to be curriculum leaders, only three out of six schools required the collection of data and two out of six schools the analysis of collected data. Hence, using data to make informed decisions and develop contextual intelligence does not appear to be a consistent priority amongst school districts for the department chair role.

Budget. Although collecting and analyzing data did not appear on the majority of collected role descriptions, all six schools indicated some responsibility for the creation of the departmental budget and managing the budget. However, the level of involvement varied. Schools Pierce and Taft indicated that department chairs do not write the departmental budget but rather put forth departmental requests to be budgeted. For example, department chairs at Pierce are directed to "submit required requests to the business office." Department chairs in schools Adams, Madison, and Grant create their own budgets for approval. For example, Grant's role description reads that department chairs "prepare and manage department's budget." Department chairs in Polk School assisted with the budget process. Additionally, schools Pierce, Adams, Polk, Madison,

and Taft explicitly indicated that department chairs manage their supplies and text adoptions. For example, Taft's role description read that department chairs will "manage the department supplies, textbooks, equipment and supplementary materials." Pierce School's role description also indicated that department chairs "may be asked to write discipline specific grants." Polk School's role description implied the writing of grants by indicating that department chairs must find alternative ways to fund budgetary needs when applicable. Hence, although all participating schools involved department chairs with the budget process, the noted involvement in the role descriptions varied. It may then be surmised that the amount of involvement department chairs have with budgets is dependent on individual school districts.

Instruction. In addition to budgetary needs, instructional needs appeared in all but one collected role description. All participating schools, except Grant School, explicitly indicated department chair role responsibilities regarding instruction. Schools Pierce, Adams, and Madison expected department chairs to assign course loads to departmental members. For example, Adams' role description states that department chairs will "schedule and direct staff member assignments with principal." Schools Pierce, Polk, and Taft indicated the need for department chairs to remain current with "best practices." Schools Pierce, Adams, and Madison clearly indicated that department chairs will assist instruction and model lessons. Madison School's role description required department chairs "to model and encourage various teaching methods." Schools Pierce, Adams, and Polk stated that department chairs will work collaboratively with other department chairs and groups to review instruction. For example, Adams' role description indicated that

department chairs will "coordinate programs, activities, instruction with other departments." Adams School also indicated that department chairs will work with guidance to "coordinate student tutoring material requests" and "attend IPE/504 meetings."

Although other schools did not mention working with guidance, schools Adams, Madison, and Taft required department chairs to work interdepartmentally. Additionally, Madison School explicitly indicated that department chairs encourage the use of technology and differentiation. Hence, the majority of participating schools required department chairs to be involved with instructional practices. The degree to which involvement was required varied depending on the school district. The role descriptions varied greatly with regards to the detail offered to department chairs regarding their role as instructional leaders. It appears that school districts define the parameters for their department chairs as instructional leaders based on their own needs.

Teaching load. Additionally, teaching loads for department chairs also appeared to vary. Pierce School indicated that department chairs "carry a teaching load necessary to assure that adequate instruction is provided to all students; (but) has no other teacher-related duties beyond those in the classroom." In Polk School, department chairs have "a Reduced [four period] teaching load." Taft School's role description stated, "This position will have a supervisory and teaching component. Percentage of split will be identified in the contract." Grant School indicated that department chair positions are "in addition to their normal teaching load." Schools Adams and Madison did not indicate the impact department chair duties have on one's teaching load within the role description.

Overall, three out of the six participating schools explicitly gave consideration to department chairs regarding their teaching load. School districts appear to ask department chairs to take on additional duties without time to perform those duties during the work day.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

In an effort to increase credibility, I engaged in multiple audits. Interviewees reviewed transcriptions, data analysis, as well as the dissertation draft. In addition to engaging participants as external auditors, my dissertation committee reviewed my data collection strategy and data analysis. Additionally, given the number of participants from higher education institutions and local school districts, I triangulated interview data as well as high school department chair role descriptions. Data were reviewed by participants, read by my dissertation team, and triangulated.

Transferability

Although I collected limited data for this layered case study, results regarding the high school department chair role may be transferable to school districts nationally. Various local school districts participated: public and private, secular and nonsecular, co-educational and single gender, vocation technical and traditional, large and small. Additionally, data from higher education institutions and the state department of education offer different perspectives. Perhaps various stakeholders can resonate with one of the three perspectives presented in this research. Analysis of collected data from

various perspectives may assist education stakeholders nationally in discussing the middle management position of department chair.

Dependability

To increase the dependability of data analysis, I conducted each interview and collected artifact data in similar fashions. I collected artifact data from school districts using identical emails. I also used identical emails when reaching out to potential interviewees. Potential participants were treated equitably. Additionally, I memorized interview questions and ensured that interviewees were asked the same questions during their recorded, semi-structured interviews. After each interview, I transcribed the interview and requested transcription checking by each participant prior to designating an anonymous label to the data. Once I collected data, I gave data names to create anonymity for participants.

As I collected data, I analyzed data. I triangulated data within each unit of analysis. When completed, I triangulated data amongst the units of analysis. I treated data and participants with utmost respect while collecting, transcribing, and analyzing.

Confirmability

Data collection varied. I collected the department of education artifact data from the world wide web. Although researchers may not be able to confirm my findings directly, researchers may seek confirmation by using their state's department of education website to view similar information. Although I will uphold the confidentiality of interviewees and participating school districts, researchers may confirm my findings by replicating this study. The study may be replicated by additional researchers in the same

part of the country to confirm findings or in different parts of the country to expand findings. Researchers may replicate this study to confirm and expand the results.

Results

The primary research question asked if there is conceptual similarity among these units of analysis: job descriptions of high school department chairpersons, department of education expectations of these chairpersons, and coursework undertaken at accredited universities that prepare these chairpersons to be successful. The following secondary research questions guided investigations into each unit of analysis to identify themes that may answer the primary research question:

1. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are present in the high school department chairperson job description?

2. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do high school department chairpersons frequently use?

3. Which aspects of contextual intelligences are considered in department of education procedures for licensing high school department chairpersons?

4. How does the department of elementary and secondary education perceive the role of department chairs in high schools?

5. Which aspects of contextual intelligences do university faculty incorporate into coursework that prepares future high school department chairpersons to be successful?

6. Is there alignment between what university faculty believe is the role of a high school department chairperson and the chairperson's job description?

State Department of Education

Findings from analyzing artifact data garnered from the department of education's website addressed the third and fourth secondary research questions. Overall, findings indicated that the department of education implied that a high school department chair is a content area specialist who can manage and lead departmental faculty. The supervisor/director license prepared candidates to serve school communities as a curriculum director or specialist or department head for a specific content area at least half-time (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). For the supervisor/director license, the prerequisite subject area license and graduate studies requirement in the subject area may enhance a department chair's ability to supervise and mentor departmental faculty (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). For example, department chairs licensed as supervisor/directors may be able to assist with instructional techniques given their deep knowledge of the content area. Additionally, the 300 practicum hours may indicate that candidates are prepared to perform the professional standards for administrators within academic disciplines (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). The Department of Education required applicants to demonstrate proficiency in "instructional leadership," "management and operations," "family and community engagement," and "professional culture" (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). Findings indicated that department chairs with the supervisor/director license may be well equipped to lead and manage curriculum departments.

Education Professors

The education professor interviews addressed the fifth and sixth secondary research questions. Overall, findings through interview data analysis indicated the department of education appeared to influence higher education institutions' curriculum for licensure candidates. Two of the three education professors interviewed indicated that their schools did not offer specific courses for prospective high school department chairs seeking the supervisor/director license currently. As Professor Yasmine shared, "Right now it's not differentiated." The leadership coursework for those seeking the supervisor/director license was the same as for those seeking the principal/assistant principal license. Professor Zadie indicated that leadership coursework was the same in her department except for one course, a curriculum course. All interviewed education professors noted that the practicum may provide necessary differentiation between the training for the middle management role of high school department chair and principal/assistant principal candidates. Therefore, the practicum may be the more beneficial to prospective department chairs developing contextual intelligence for the middle management role when compared to general leadership coursework.

Findings revealed that education professors agreed that department chairs should be content area specialist, education leaders, and instructional coaches. As Professor Yasmine said, "I think we would like to have people in director roles who have some deep expertise in the content that they're supervising." Prospective department chairs may need to request that education leadership coursework assignments align to their

department chair duties as they take courses with educators seeking various leadership licenses.

High School Department Chairs

The high school department chair interviewees answered the second secondary research question. Findings indicated that, although some similarities existed amongst the department chairs, department chair roles varied from school to school (see Table 2). Findings showed that there did not exist, in the collected data, a distinct difference between public schools and private schools. Interviewed department chairs worked under teacher contracts, not administrator contracts. All interviewed department chairs noted the lack of time they had during the school day to perform expected duties, implicitly and explicitly, of them. As David said, "It's a little unrealistic."

Findings indicated that interviewed department chairs all liaised between administration and faculty, led department meetings, managed budgets, and interviewed teacher candidates. Findings also indicated that their supervisory and mentoring responsibilities varied. For example, Betty and David felt that they were expected to supervise and address departmental issues even though it is not part of their job description explicitly. However, Betty indicated that she did not feel that it was her place to mentor faculty which is why she defined her role as "coach/facilitator." Anne and Carol indicated that a person from their administration supervises all teaching faculty. As Carol said, when speaking of creating supervisory relationships with veteran faculty, "That's a difficult relationship for me to establish." Since role descriptions and expectations appear to vary with respect to supervising and mentoring, necessary

contextual intelligence that may assist department chairs in making supervisory decisions may also vary amongst department chairs dependent upon where they work.

Although supervisory duties varied, findings showed that they appeared to all be their school's curriculum leader within their content area, but not instructional leader. For example, all interviewed department chairs indicated that they ensured curriculum alignment. As Anne stated, "I am the one who is suppose to make sure that we have up-to-date curriculum maps." Department chairs may need training regarding curriculum alignment and assessment to develop contextual intelligence in the area of curriculum development.

Even though department chairs appeared to be their school's curriculum leader within their content area, findings showed that all four interviewed department chairs continued to carry a teaching load greater than half-time. While duties and responsibilities may have varied from school to school, findings indicated that department chairs may need additional time during the school day to perform their role well and develop contextual intelligences within their duties in lieu of simply performing duties.

High School Department Chair Role Descriptions

The high school department chair role descriptions answered the first secondary research question. Findings showed that participating schools' department chair role descriptions indicated variation (see Table 3). Findings indicated that role descriptions varied according to school district. A recurring pattern did not emerge regarding role descriptions for public school department chairs versus private school department chairs.

However, findings demonstrated that public school role descriptions clearly stated qualifications for potential applicants while the private school role descriptions did not. For example, Pierce's role description read, "Master's degree from an accredited college or university with concentration in the specific area of curriculum involved and with certification in the field of administration and/or supervision." Findings also indicated that private school role descriptions designated involvement with student placements explicitly whereas the public school descriptions did not. For example, Madison's role description read that department chairs will "coordinate student course placement." Other than these instances, findings indicated that duties of a department chair appeared to include: lead departmental meetings; work collaboratively within the school system; curriculum creation, implementation, and evaluation; work with departmental budgets; assist in the hiring of faculty; and oversee instruction. However, findings also revealed that the level of responsibility within each of the aforementioned categories varied from school to school. Additionally, according to the findings, participating schools' role descriptions varied with duties outside the aforementioned. Some congruencies existed amongst general duties for department chairs within role descriptions; however, specifics varied. Since variations exist amongst school districts' role descriptions, developing contextual intelligences for department chairs in educational leadership courses may be difficult.

Summary

Overall, alignment amongst participants' perceptions of the high school department chair role varied. Some congruencies existed amongst department chair role

descriptions. However, department chair role descriptions varied as well. Additionally, collected data indicated that high school department chairs do not work as half-time administrators as implied by the department of education. Overall, the time commitment needed to perform all department chair duties and teach well caused some stress amongst interviewed department chairs.

Although not all department chair roles required administrative licensure, all department chair roles indicated that department chairs were curriculum leaders within their discipline. This aligned with the department of education's requirement for supervisor/director candidates to have graduate coursework in their content area, which was provided by higher education institutions. However, administrative competencies varied amongst role descriptions, higher education institutions, and the department of education. Higher education institutions aimed to ensure that administrative licensure candidates engage in coursework that encompasses the administrative competencies set forth by the department of education. Yet, not all schools required an administrative license to be a high school department chair and not all high school department chairs performed the same administrative duties. Hence, unified department chair role descriptions, as suggest by Inman (2009), may inform higher education institutions' coursework and the department of education administrative competencies. The collaboration amongst stakeholders may create stronger licensure credentials, meaningful coursework, and prepared department chairs.

Collaboration amongst the units of analysis in this study may increase the alignment of high school department chairs' role descriptions, preparation, and licensure.

Findings in this study indicated alignment between the state department of education and higher education institutions. Coursework offered in higher education institutions appeared to be fashioned to meet the department of education's criteria for administrative licensure. However, practicing department chairs, as well as artifact data gathered from participating schools, did not appear to align with coursework and the department of education well. Communication with school districts regarding role descriptions and relief from teaching assignments to perform duties may benefit all stakeholders.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

I engaged in a conceptually framed qualitative case study based on Sternberg's (1984, 1997) idea of contextual intelligence, the ability to make decisions based on the past, present, and envisioned future within a cultural setting. I researched the alignment of the high school department chairs' contextual intelligences within role descriptions, leadership training opportunities, and licensure in an eastern seaboard community. I collected interview and artifact data. With this research, I addressed a gap in existing research regarding the high school department chairs' role, decision making within the role, and contextual intelligence training for the role. My findings indicated that consistency within high school department chair role descriptions may assist higher education institutions in developing programs that meet state requirements and preparing high school department chairs for their unique middle management role in lieu of depending on practicum hours primarily. Although duties for high school department chairs varied from school to school along with qualifications, a constant theme amongst interviewed department chairs was that they were not afforded enough time during the school day to perform all duties well. Schools may want to adopt the department of education's implied suggestion that the department chair is a half-time administrator and align qualifications with the department of education as well. This research may increase communication amongst stakeholders regarding middle level administrators, their role descriptions, and their professional development needs. Although the study was limited,

future researchers may be able to further the findings of this study in their own geographic area.

Interpretation of Findings

Overall, there appears to be a lack of alignment amongst school districts, higher education institutions, and the department of education regarding the high school department chair role. This finding supported previous researchers' results. Researchers who investigated the role described the position of department chair as a part-time administrator serving school administrators and departmental faculty members (Feeney, 2009; Spillane & Kim, 2012). All interview and artifact data collected from school districts indicated that department chairs serve both administration and departmental faculty, albeit to varying degrees (see Tables 2 and 3). The state's department of education indicated, on their website, that those pursuing a department chair position that was at least half-time should obtain a supervisor/director license (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). However, none of the interviewed department chairs nor collected role descriptions indicated that the position of department chair was at least half-time. Collected data indicated that high school department chairs may be relieved one teaching class, but no interviewee or role description indicated that high school department chair duties would consume at least half of their time while at work. The department of education appeared to identify the need for substantial time within the confines of the school day for department chairs to perform duties well, but participating schools appear to have department chairs teaching more than half-time. Interviewed department chairs indicated that this caused stress in their jobs because they did not feel

as if they had enough time to complete all that was asked of them well. Anne went so far as to say:

> It's insane. It's crazy. That's why I said I'm more of a teacher than anything else. Every other week, the week I have sophomores and seniors, I have one extra period off. So, that's that the week I have two preps, two prep periods. One is my prep period and one is suppose to be my admin. And that happens every other week.

Participants' feelings of stress supported the findings of Conway and Monks (2011), who concluded that some middle managers experience stress triggered by the additional duties required of a middle management role and the lack of time to perform said duties.

Department chairs may also experience stress given the fashion in which they garner their position. Of the interviewed department chairs, two took the role on because there was no one else in the department who could or would take on the role. Two of the interviewed department chairs applied for the position and received the appointment over other applicants. All four interviewed department chairs were promoted from within their buildings with three out of four being relatively new to their department when accepting the department chair position. Two of those department chairs expressed difficulty in mentoring and leading some veteran department members. As Carol said, when speaking of creating supervisory relationships with veteran faculty, "That's a difficult relationship for me to establish." It moved to question if administrators observed administrative leadership skills that enable department chairs to adjust and make decisions based on the past, present, and ideal future of their school community for at least three out of the four

interviewed department chairs. The question supported researchers who established that employees promoted to middle management, whether education or business, tend to be promoted because of their skills in their current post, not because they demonstrate leadership skills that may propel departments forward (Inman, 2009; Thompson et al., 2008).

Leadership skills and contextual intelligence can be learned according to Brown (2002), Kutz (2008), and Sternberg (1997). Data in this study highlighted a need for higher education institutions to gain a deeper understanding of the high school department chair role in order to fashion leadership coursework to assist potential department chairs in their development of role specific leadership skills and contextual intelligence as suggested by Machado (2012). Overall, the higher education institutions that participated in this study did not vary leadership coursework greatly for high school department chair candidates. Higher education institutions appeared to offer core administrative courses that fulfilled the state department of education requirements to all administrative license candidates. Data indicated that the primary training in contextual intelligence for high school department chairs offered by higher education institutions occurs during a candidate's practicum or internship. This research data supported the findings of Inman (2009) and Anderson and Nixon (2010), who concluded that a need exists for higher education institutions to use department chair role descriptions in an effort to create meaningful learning opportunities for department chairs. The data also supported Nguyen (2012), who concluded that training for department heads should be both contextual and competencies based. Although the coursework may not be geared

towards department chairs specifically, higher education institutions and the department of education aimed to prepare department chairs by using standard administrative competency strands in conjunction with practicums or internships to address competencies and contextual training, as suggested by Nguyen.

High school department chairs used contextual intelligence while serving the needs of upper administration, departmental faculty, students, and parents. Interviewed department chairs indicated that they make a range of decisions that may rely on contextual intelligence. Decision making in the role regarding departmental meetings, textbook adoptions, budgetary expenditures, supervising departmental faculty, mentoring departmental faculty, aligning curriculum, managing teaching assignments, hiring new departmental faculty, and liaising between administration and departmental faculty members occurred frequently. However, according to interviewees, not all of the expectations for high school department chairs were written explicitly in a department chair role description. As previous researchers found, data from this study indicated that department chairs appear to accept the role of department chair without schools fully disclosing unwritten, implicit expectations (Anderson & Nixon, 2010; Feeney, 2009).

Data collected in this study also supported Inman's (2009) findings that department chairs tend to learn department chair role duties on the job, in lieu of engaging in formal training opportunities geared to prepare prospective department chairs for the role. Interview data from current high school department chairs highlighted that formal training and professional development geared towards the development of leadership skills, including contextual decision making, was not a priority in the schools

participants worked. High school department chair interviewees indicated that they learned the job of high school department chair on the job, as Inman previously reported.

Professional development aimed at training prospective department chairs may require clear and concise role descriptions agreed upon by local schools. For example, part of the high school department chair role, as indicated on three of the collected role descriptions, was to work with data (see Table 3). Although not all role descriptions required department chairs to gather, analyze, and use data, Conway and Monks (2011) concluded that department chairs need to keep abreast of current research and educational trends to increase the probability of meaningful discourse when discussing student learning. Interestingly, none of the interviewed department chairs indicated that their schools required them to gather, analyze, or use data (see Table 2). As Feeney (2009), Inman (2009), and Anderson and Nixon (2010) noted, there appears to be a lack of congruency amongst role descriptions for the department chair.

The lack of congruency may influence higher education institutions' ability to provide pertinent coursework for those pursuing a department chair position (Inman, 2009). Education professors' interview data indicated that local higher education institutions do not, as yet, offer a preponderance of specialized coursework for those pursuing a department chair position. Those interviewed noted that the specialization occurs primarily during the 300 hour practicum or internship, which the state department of education requires for supervisor/director candidates (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b).

The lack of congruency amongst school districts' department chair role descriptions may also influence the administrative standards required by the department of education for principal/assistant principal candidates and supervisor/director candidates. Although the state's department of education website did not imply that the lack of role descriptions in any way influenced the lack of differentiation in the administrative competency strands for various administrative licenses, it moved to question that if clear role descriptions existed and were somewhat consistent amongst schools, would the state differentiate required administrative strands between supervisor/director candidates and principal/assistant principal candidates? The differentiation within administrative competencies between administrative licenses may create meaningful licenses that directly reflect the preparedness for aspiring department chairs, as indicated by Davis et al. (2010).

Although the department of education may not differentiate administrative competency strands for various administrative licenses, the department of education does require a supervisor/director candidate to possess additional graduate coursework in their content area (Eastern Seaboard's State Department of Education, 2014b). The additional coursework may assist supervisor/director candidates in becoming curriculum leaders. Leading content area curriculum was a noted skill in artifact and interview data gathered from local schools (see Tables 2 and 3). Required content area training for those pursuing the supervisor/director license may assist school districts in identifying department chair candidates who are knowledgeable in their content area. As Hanuscin et al. (2012) and Martin and Coleman (2011) indicated, school administrators need to recognize teachers'

expertise, which may increase with additional graduate work in the content area, in order for school reforms to succeed. The required graduate coursework in the content area supported previous researchers who concluded that licenses should reflect candidates' preparedness for the role they pursue (Davis et al., 2010).

Overall, research findings in this study supported previous researchers' claims that the department chair role may be under recognized, and therefore, lack congruency amongst school districts. Higher education institutions may find it difficult to tailor leadership coursework aimed at developing contextual skills for department chairs without some congruencies within the role. Higher education institutions and the department of education appear to rely on practicums, internships, and graduate coursework within a content area to set department chairs apart from other administrative licenses. As Machado (2012) concluded, higher education institutions may be unaware of the needs within local school districts. Although contextual intelligence may be learned, higher education institutions and the department of education may need schools districts to share their needs regarding high school department chairs' decision making and leadership duties to create meaningful coursework that supports practicum and internship experiences (Eager Sirkis, 2011).

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by time and geography primarily. I conducted the study in an area surrounding a major eastern seaboard city in the United States within the time constraints of the dissertation process. Additionally, interviewees offered their perceptions regarding the role of high school department chair and the preparation

offered to high school department chair candidates. I did not report causal relationships; instead I aimed to identify commonalities and differences amongst participants' perceptions and collected artifact data. While identifying congruencies and disparities amongst data points, my perception of the high school department chair role, training, and licensure may have influenced the results section. Therefore, although the study may be replicated to substantiate or further the findings, the findings of this study have limited generalizability given the confines in which I conducted the study.

Recommendations

Given the limited generalizability of this study as well as the scant research, I recommend further research regarding the department chair role, training for the role, and licensing of the role. Additional research could extend to other parts of the state in which the study was conducted to further inform higher education institutions and the department of education. This study could also be conducted in various parts of the United States in an effort to inform, compare, and contrast schools across the nation and how they use department chairs as schools implement the Common Core. Finally, the study could be replicated with elementary lead teachers to investigate congruencies and disparities with those taking on a middle management role within the confines of an elementary school. Overall, the lack of research regarding the middle management position of high school department chair along with the geographic limitations of this study indicate that more research is warranted to garner a better understanding of the high school department chair role, training needs, and licensure.

Implications

The high school department chair role, training needs, and licensure appear to garner less attention than other administrative roles. To that end, this study may create positive social change by stimulating continued recognition and development of high school department chairs' contextual intelligence through increased collaboration by school districts, higher education institutions, and a state's department of education. Through collaboration, high school department chairs' role descriptions may become somewhat standardized which may then enable higher education institutions to create coursework aimed at developing prospective department chairs' decision making, leadership, and managing skills. Additionally, some standardization amongst department chair role descriptions may inform the department of education's administrative competencies, required of all administrative licensure candidates, as to some differences that may exist within the middle management role. Overall, this study informed stakeholders of the various duties high school department chairs perform and may assist stakeholders in viewing the role as a middle management role in lieu of a teacher with administrative duties. If stakeholders view the high school department chair as a middle manager, perhaps stakeholders will increase time allowed to perform explicit and implicit expectations, increase contextual training, focus competency based training, and align licensure competency requirements with the role.

Conclusions

The high school department chair position is akin to a middle manager in business. However, unlike management training that is varied in higher education

institutions, higher education institutions appear to primarily train high school department chairs with all other administrative candidates until the practicum or internship. Unified role descriptions may assist higher education institutions in developing programs aimed at preparing high school department chairs for their unique middle management role in schools. Additionally, unified role descriptions may support the department of education in creating administrative competencies geared toward these middle managers. Overall, duties for high school department chairs vary from school to school along with qualifications. However, a constant theme amongst interviewed department chairs was that they were not afforded enough time during the school day to perform all duties well. Schools may want to adopt the department of education's implied suggestion that the department chair is a half-time administrator and align qualifications with the department of education as well.

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Appendix A: Email Cover Letter Template for Letters of Cooperation

Dear <mark>name</mark> ,

My name is Gina Mathews. I am the math department chair at <mark>school district name</mark> and a Ph.D. candidate at Walden University. Walden University is an online university accredited by the Higher Learning Commission as well as NCATE. Walden is a member of the North Central Association, which is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

My concentration in Walden's program is curriculum, instruction, and assessment. I am investigating the high school department chair role for my dissertation. I am interested in the alignment of perceived contextual intelligence necessary for the high school department chair role between the state department of education's licensing division, local higher education institutions, and local school districts. Thus, prior to the collection of data, I would like to receive permission from you to collect data from your community.

In an effort to help you make an informed decision, I attached my research proposal to this email. Should you be able to assist me in my research, I also attached a letter of cooperation for you to sign electronically and return.

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to consider allowing your community to partake in my research. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Gina Mathews

Phone: xxx-xxx-xxx

Email: xxx@waldenu.edu

Appendix B: Letters of Cooperation for Interview Sites

Site Address
Phone:
Email:

Date

Dear Mrs. Gina Mathews,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled *The Licensing, Preparation, and Role of High School Department Chairs* within name of site. As part of this study, I authorize you to collect interview data regarding the licensing of supervisors/directors and perspectives on the role of high school department chairs for research purposes.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: providing perspectives regarding the high school department chair role. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Position
Phone:
Email:

Walden University policy on electronic signatures: An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically. Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Electronic signatures are only valid when the signer is either (a) the sender of the email, or (b) copied on the email containing the signed document. Legally an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. Walden University staff verify any electronic signatures that do not originate from a password-protected source (i.e., an email address officially on file with Walden).

Appendix C: Letters of Cooperation for School Districts

Site Address
Phone:
Email:

Date

Dear Mrs. Gina Mathews,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled *The Licensing, Preparation, and Role of High School Department Chairs* within the school district name. As part of this study, I authorize you to collect and use our district's high school department chair role description for research purposes.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: providing the most recent role description for the district's high school department chairs. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Superintendent of Schools
Phone:
Email:

Walden University policy on electronic signatures: An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically. Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Electronic signatures are only valid when the signer is either (a) the sender of the email, or (b) copied on the email containing the signed document. Legally an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. Walden University staff verify any electronic signatures that do not originate from a password-protected source (i.e., an email address officially on file with Walden).

Appendix D: Email Cover Letter Template for Letters of Consent

Dear ==name== ,

My name is Gina Mathews. I am the math department chair at ==school district name== and a Ph.D. candidate at Walden University. Walden University is an online university accredited by the Higher Learning Commission as well as NCATE. Walden is a member of the North Central Association, which is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

My concentration in Walden's program is curriculum, instruction, and assessment. I am investigating the high school department chair role for my dissertation. I am interested in the alignment of perceived contextual intelligence necessary for the high school department chair role between the state department of education's licensing division, local higher education institutions, and local school districts. I would like to interview you, at a time and place convenient to you, regarding your perspective of the high school department chair role.

In an effort to help you make an informed decision, I attached my research proposal to this email. Should you be able to assist me in my research, I also attached a letter of consent for you to sign electronically and return.

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to consider partaking in my research. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Gina Mathews

Phone: xxx-xxx-xxx

Email: xxx@waldenu.edu

Appendix E: Interview Questions for Education Professors

1. How are the needs different for an educator pursuing a principal/assistant principal license with an educator pursuing a supervisor/director license from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education?

2. How do you align leadership curriculum with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requirements for the supervisor/director license?

3. How do you align leadership curriculum at the graduate level with the role of high school department chair?

4. From your experience with educators performing preservice training hours for the supervisor/director license, how are the licensing requirements aligned with the roles?

5. How should the preparation for high school department chairs differ from preparation for other leadership roles?

6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix F: Interview Questions for High School Department Chairs

1.   How did you become a high school department chair?

2.   Describe your duties as high school department chair?

3.   Describe any formal training relative to your role as high school department

      chair?

4.   How do you perceive the alignment of leadership curriculum at the graduate

      level with the role of high school department chair?

5.   Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix G: Letters of Cooperation for School Districts from which interviews will also be requested

==Site Address==
==Phone:==
==Email:==

==Date==

Dear Mrs. Gina Mathews,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled *The Licensing, Preparation, and Role of High School Department Chairs* within the ==school district name==. As part of this study, I authorize you to collect and use our district's high school department chair role description for research purposes and collect interview data from a department chairperson in this district.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: providing the most recent role description for the district's high school department chairs and interview data regarding the high school department chair role. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Superintendent of Schools
==Phone:==
==Email:==

Walden University policy on electronic signatures: An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically. Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Electronic signatures are only valid when the signer is either (a) the sender of the email, or (b) copied on the email containing the signed document. Legally an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. Walden University staff verify any electronic signatures that do not originate from a password-protected source (i.e., an email address officially on file with Walden).