

2009

## Configurations of site-based financial leadership practice within school contexts

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CONFIGURATIONS OF SITE-BASED FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICE  
WITHIN SCHOOL CONTEXTS

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the

**Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership**  
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**December 2009**

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**THE GRADUATE COLLEGE**

We recommend that the dissertation prepared under our supervision by

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**Configurations of Site-Based Financial Leadership Practice within  
School Contexts**

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

**Configurations of Site-Based Financial Leadership Practice  
Within School Contexts**

by

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Professor of Educational Leadership  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

This study employed an ethnographic perspective to generate a grounded theory that contributes to the understanding of financial leadership practice in four elementary school contexts: Non Title I School, Title I School, Empowerment School and Charter School. The literature, interviews, observations, document analysis, and review of relevant financial artifacts at each site were used to form an Innovation Configuration Map, which represented financial leadership practice.

Results showed that financial leadership practices are rooted in targeted resource tools, mindful internal accountability routines, and collaborative, inquiry based mindsets of school practitioners. Moreover, variations emerged such that financial leadership practices adapted to the unique context of the site.

This study found that explaining, analyzing, and documenting the configurations that exist with recognized financial leadership practices helps to illuminate the connection between spending practices and school improvement efforts in different school contexts.

## DEDICATION

Life is about choices. For those of us who choose to reflect on our choices we may be spared from repeating the inevitable regression of learning - failure; yet simultaneously experiencing the inevitable joy of learning - growth. Like the many paradoxes in life, leadership involves both learning and failing.

Life is also about expectations. For those of us who have been the recipients of expectations beyond our own beliefs, we know the angst of continuously rediscovering ourselves while simultaneously becoming stronger in our belief of ourselves.

I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to reflect on my choices, to fail, to learn, and to grow throughout the doctoral course of study largely due to the expectations of significant leaders in my life.

To Joe, Jeanine, and Christina.

To Mom, Dad, Paula, Michael and Gene.

To Dr. Teresa Jordan, my esteemed dissertation chair, and dissertation committee:

Dr. Gene Hall, Dr. LeAnn Putney, and Dr. James Crawford.

To Dr. Eva White and Dr. Sue DeFrancesco.

To my Doctoral Cohort.

To Dr. Sue Moulden, Cheryl Pullen, Susan Masters, Debbie Blado, Karen

Florence-Hopkins, and Samantha Silvia Schuetze.

Continue to learn. Continue to grow. I will do the same.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Issues of capacity and accountability abound at all levels of today's educational system. After policymakers craft, approve, and place into law the mandates and policies that are intended to improve the quality of schools, educational practitioners must then begin to make meaning of them in the context of their school community (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). The expectation of the federal No Child Left Behind law as well as state specific accountability targets hold principals, as the instructional leader of the school, directly accountable for each student's success as a learner. Likewise, as managers of the structures delivering education to students, principals are responsible for allocating school resources in such a way as they result in favorable student outcomes. Additionally, principals are expected to build collaborative cultures that forge powerful school visions for their schools and, in certain contexts, lead significant organizational change (Elmore, 2005; Fullan, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1992, Senge, 1990).

While recent studies acknowledge the heightened expectations for principals to be effective as both instructional leaders and managers, findings reveal unsettling insights regarding the relevance of the content presented in principal preparation programs to meet the contemporary demands of the position (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005; Farkas, Johnson, Duffett, Syat, & Vine, 2003) and the bureaucratic constraints placed on the principal's decision-making authority specifically in the areas of

resource allocation, personnel, and the instructional program (Adamowski, Therriault, & Cavanna, 2007).

In both the School Leadership Study: Developing Successful Principals (Davis, et al., 2005) and Rolling Up Their Sleeves: Superintendents and Principals Talk About What's Needed to Fix Public Schools (Farkas, et al., 2003), findings point to a lack of understanding about... "how to help principals develop the capacities that make a difference in how schools function and what students learn" (Davis, et al., p. 4, 2005). In The Autonomy Gap study, Adamowski et al. (2007), found the same bureaucracy that holds principals accountable prevents them from making major decisions in their schools. Indeed, the principal's role and the leadership capacity needed in the No Child Left Behind era may have been taken for granted.

The principle of reciprocity states: "For each unit of performance I demand of you, I have an equal and reciprocal responsibility to provide you with a unit of capacity to produce that performance, if you do not already have that capacity" (Elmore, 2005, p. 244). With increased responsibilities, the role of the principal has changed in both complexity and the number of tasks at hand (Portin, 2000). Rather than empathizing with principals, policymakers should take steps to ensure principals receive the training they need to increase their adaptive capacity – "...their ability to clarify values and make progress on the problems those values define" (Heifetz, 1994, p. 5).

The management of educational resources has significantly changed in America due to various fiscal, political, and economic factors (Willis, Durante, & Gazzo, 2007). Fuhrman and Elmore (1990) contend the policymakers in the 1980's did not envision the implications of educational reforms on school finance. Therefore, in the 1990's, school

finance reform was often initiated by state legislatures in response to school finance litigation or to thwart potential litigation (Berne, Stiefel, & Wagner, 1992). The challenge for educators and finance experts was to construct the links between legislated targets for academic achievement and available financial resources. However, the process through which new practices can be identified, introduced, and institutionalized points out the need to achieve congruency among a variety of system characteristics in order to generate desired practices and outcomes (Mohrman, Mohrman, & Ledford, 1991, Beer, 1980, Nadler & Tushman, 1977). By examining how successful school leaders operate and what actually makes them “tick” can serve as models for others (Bandura, 1997; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006). However the challenge of linking finance directly to educating all students to high standards is unprecedented (Ladd & Hansen, 1999).

Lacking financial models, which teach educational leaders, how to use budgets and resources as instruments of change prevents study of a consistent and systematic relationship between school resources and student performance (Hanusheck, 1995). Reviewing the effect of resources on student achievement in the literature suggests that researchers may be asking the wrong question. Rather than considering whether additional resources will improve student achievement, it may be more fundamentally relevant to ask how resources could be directed to improve student achievement so that resources are spent more efficiently (Picus, 1995). Unfortunately the needs and experiences of principals regarding financial leadership practices may have been overlooked during the shift to a standards based accountability system.

Shipman, Queen, and Peel (2007) acknowledge that sound fiscal practices and understanding will have a direct impact on student achievement, “Every business has a chief financial officer (CFO) – and the school’s is the principal” (p.61). Yet they also concur that principal preparation programs unfortunately offer few classes to help in this area.

Innovative and adaptive principal training is needed to elevate administrator thinking and practice to address the financial challenges faced by school principals today. As school leaders seek solutions to financial challenges, they must be wary of falling prey to what Ronald Heifetz describes as seeking a mechanical answer to an adaptive problem. Instead, school leaders must be aware that adaptive problems call for leadership that induces learning, both to define problems and implement solutions (Heifetz, 1994).

Relying on the tools and routines of the past to solve contemporary problems does not promote public confidence in the financial decision making ability of our school leaders. With new expectations should come new thinking and preparation for principals. While improving instruction requires both adequate resources and the wise use of them (Fuhrman & Odden, 2001) targeted research is needed to understand the configurations between spending and student achievement in the differing school contexts. So the question to be asked is: “What are the configurations of financial leadership practices being utilized by principals in the different school contexts?”

#### Statement of the Problem

Conventional resource allocation patterns and monitoring practices continue to yield results that cause the public and policymakers to scrutinize how the nation’s public schools spend money, and whether the expenditures enable students to successfully meet

accountability goals (Olson, 2005). Frameworks for studying financial leadership practice as an instrument for change are limited in the literature (Frank & Miles, 2007; Barton, 2006) yet there is a pressing expectation to link spending to student achievement. For the purpose of this study *financial leadership practice* will be defined as the *tools and routines used by the governing body of a school to allocate resources to achieve school improvement goals and support instructional programming for students*. This definition attempts to bridge the sharp separation between fiscal practices and curricular practices in-use within a school.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand and describe elementary school principals' financial leadership practices in-use relative to the school's context (Title I, Non-Title I, Charter, Empowerment School). Site-based financial leadership practices were conceptualized within an Innovation Configuration Map (IC Map) documenting the variations of this leadership practice.

### Research Questions

The research questions for this study were:

1. How do principals' experiences to date with financial leadership shape their current practice?
2. What are the configurations of financial leadership used by principals in the four school contexts?
3. What are the differences/similarities in financial leadership practice in the four school contexts?

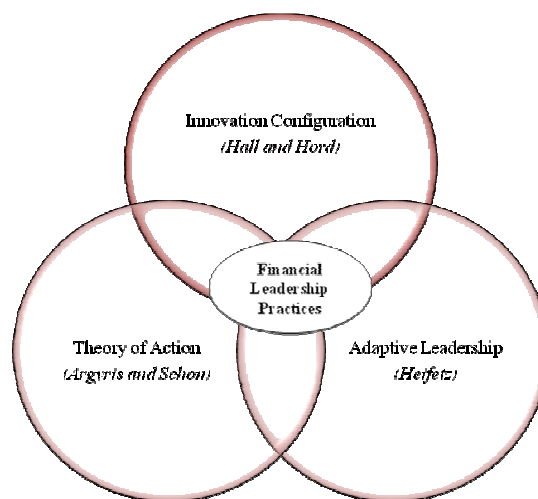


4. How do the financial leadership practices support/constrain the attainment of the school improvement goals in the four school contexts?

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was situated in the literature of adaptive leadership, organizational learning, and educational change. Taken together, organizational learning theory of Argyris and Schon (1974), the adaptive leadership perspective of Heifetz (1994), and the educational change model of Hall and Louckes (1977) framed this study's focus on identifying the configurations of financial leadership practices being used in different school contexts. These constructs served as the scaffolding to build the narratives that dealt with the leadership challenges, bureaucratic influences, and connections between organizational goals and the financial leadership practices leading to desired student outcomes. (See Figure 1.1 Theoretical Framework)

Figure 1.1 Theoretical Framework



Adapted from Dr. LeAnn Putney's Theoretical Framework: A Multifaceted Approach, Fall 2006, UNLV.

## *Theories of Action*

Theories of action are the mechanisms by which we link our thoughts with our actions (Argyris, 1999). Espoused theories represent our ideas about effective action. An espoused theory of action is how one believes s/he would behave under certain circumstances. However the theory that actually governs ones actions is the theory-in-use. Theories in-use are what produce real, concrete actions.

Argyris's findings show that productive work and management came only when the espoused theory and the theory-in-use were aligned (1993). Yet, there is a relationship gap between what we think we believe, and the values implied by our behavior. When a gap exists between an organization's goals and the understanding of the goals by those working within the organization, the need to develop greater clarity and consistency becomes critical for productive work to occur (Argyris and Schon, 1974).

The theory of action framework described by Argyris and Schon (1974) suggests, "The actual theory of practice that one uses in deciding what to do is not always explicit, clear, and well reasoned" (Owens, p. 303). Argyris and Schon found that while managers typically see themselves as rational, open, concerned for others, and democratic, their actions are competitive, controlling, and defensive. The mismatch or inconsistency between a leader's explicit beliefs about leading and the practices in which a leader engage is often not realized by leaders and has important consequences. "It was baffling to find that individuals develop designs to keep them unaware of the mismatch. And they do all this when the issues are embarrassing or threatening, the precise time when effective learning is crucial" (Argyris, 1993, p. 51).

Such blindness is pervasive because most managers employ a self-protective model

of interpersonal behavior, particularly in dealing with issues that are embarrassing or threatening (Argyris & Schon, 1974). This is referred to as Model I theory-in-use behaviors.

A core assumption in Model I thinking is that the organization is a dangerous place where you have to look out for yourself. This assumption leads to unproductive and defensive reasoning routines that harm not only individual relationships but also the organization as a whole (Argyris, 1999). If entrenched in Model I behaviors and a defensive reasoning mindset, leaders find themselves in a “fix-it” mode known as single-loop learning. This occurs when errors are detected and corrected without questioning or altering the present policies and goals (Argyris, 1999). “Single –loop learning is appropriate for the routine, repetitive issue - it helps get the everyday job done” (Argyris, p. 68).

However, school contexts today require the organization to be stretched to incorporate new policies and practices or the altering of existing policies and practices to accommodate the new programs and strategies that meet the varied needs of the student population. Argyris and Schon refer to this as Model II theory-in-use, which requires an organization to engage in double-loop learning.

Double-loop learning occurs when, in addition to detection and correction of errors, the organization is involved in the questioning and modification of existing norms, procedures, policies, and objectives. Double-loop learning involves changing or altering the organization's governing variables (Argyris, 1999). While leaders may espouse double-loop learning occurs in their organization, governing variables can be inferred by observing individual’s actions to determine if a mismatch in the espoused theory and the

theory in-use are present. Characterized by productive reasoning and transparency in decision-making, Model II "...outcomes are crafted in ways that can be tested by logic that is independent of the actor" (Argyris, p.60).

In order to develop a greater harmony between explicit beliefs and practices, an appreciation of the ways in which the tensions and stresses of everyday practice inform leaders about leading is necessary. Leaders who acknowledge the mismatches and inconsistencies within the culture and confront them take the first step toward making their decisions transparent. The question is, do leader's recognize this disconnect in their espoused actions versus their actual actions? If they do, will they, and can they do anything to about it?

### *Adaptive Leadership*

Mobilizing schools, families, and communities to deal with difficult issues and helping them to face frustrating realities, are the challenges of today's leaders according to Harvard professor Ronald A. Heifetz (1994). Often leadership requires orchestrating the conflicts among and within the interested parties of these entities. Acknowledging the changing role of the leader, Heifetz's theory of adaptive leadership, "... is organized around two key distinctions: between technical and adaptive problems, and between leadership and authority" (Heifetz, p. 8). While a technical problem and its solution lie within the systems repertoire; such as adjusting a student's bus or class schedule or finding time to collaborate, an adaptive problem has no ready solution to apply from the system's repertoire to solve the problem; such as poverty or changed roles.

Essentially, Heifetz (1994) views leadership as an activity and posits that leaders of the future will need to engage in adaptive work, which requires a reconceptualization of

their problem-solving practices.

Adaptive work consists of the learning required to address conflicts in the values people hold, or to diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face. Adaptive work requires a change in values, beliefs, or behavior. The exposure and orchestration of conflict- internal contradictions-within individuals and constituencies provide the leverage for mobilizing people to learn new ways (Heifetz, 1994, p.22).

Additionally, adaptive work involves the accurate assessment of reality and the clarification of values (Heifetz, 1994). “Leadership often involves challenging people to live up to their words and to close the gap between their espoused values and their actual behavior”(Heifetz & Linsky, 2004, p. 33).

Assessing whether a problem is technical or adaptive is a complex process because problems may be diagnosed in light of currently held values. “With different values, we screen reality for different information and put the facts together into a different picture” (Heifetz, p. 31). “Getting people to clarify what matters most, in what balance, with what trade-offs, becomes a central task of leadership” (p. 22).

Finance researchers have developed technical models (Stiefel, Amor, and Schwartz, 2004; Odden, 2003) in an effort to document a school’s resource allocation patterns in hope of determining a link between spending and student achievement. However due to limitations beyond researchers’ control (such as inadequate data collection systems within a school or school district) these models have failed to conclusively link spending to student achievement. Social systems, such as schools, may encounter problems that cannot be fixed with the application of known methods and

procedures. A technical response to an adaptive problem may provide an immediate fix to the problem but it may not solve it in the long-term (See Figure 1 which outlines the shifts that adaptive situations require of authorities).

An adaptive leadership perspective addresses a leadership challenge where no adequate organizational response has yet been developed (Heifetz, 1994). For purposes of this study, explaining and displaying the financial leadership practices used by principals in different school contexts, will promote greater understanding of how financial leadership practices are being used to link spending with student achievement for the purpose of informing the cycle of continuous school learning and improvement. Heifetz warns that, "...educators often fail to appreciate how dangerous and difficult it can be to

Table 1.1. Leadership with Authority in Adaptive Situations, (Heifetz, p. 127).

Social function	Situation type	
	Technical	Adaptive
Direction	Authority provides problem definition and solution	Authority identifies the adaptive challenge, provides diagnosis of condition, and produces questions about problem definitions and solutions
Protection	Authority protects from external threat	Authority discloses external threat
Role orientation	Authority orients	Authority disorients current roles, or resists pressure to orient people in new roles too quickly
Controlling conflict	Authority restores order	Authority exposes conflict, or lets it emerge
Norm maintenance	Authority maintains norms	Authority challenges norms, or allows them to be challenged

lead on behalf of what they care about” (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004, p. 33). He continues to caution leaders that exercising leadership from a position of authority in adaptive situations means “going against the grain” (p. 126). This means leaders faced with an adaptive challenge and choosing to approach work with an adaptive mindset will be asking questions, rather than providing answers; allowing people to feel the threat to stimulate adaptation rather than protecting people from outside threat; disorienting people so that new role relationships develop rather than orienting people to their current roles; generating conflict rather than quelling conflict; and finally challenging norms rather than maintaining norms (Heifetz, 1994). (See Table 1.1)

Consequently, it becomes critical for leaders to have a strategic understanding of the specific tools and constraints that come with their authority. Examining principal’s financial leadership practices will reveal their understanding, disposition, and ability to use their authority to meet the challenge of resource allocation leadership within their school.

#### *Concerns-Based Adoption Model: Innovation Configuration Mapping*

Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) developed by Hall, Wallace and Dossett in 1973, measures and quantifies the change process as organizations move forward with a change. Evolved from educational research and tested in the educational setting, it represents a common way of thinking about change (Hall & Hord, 2006, 2001). CBAM’s focus is on the individuals who are most affected by change and on the leaders who are facilitating change. A powerful message behind this model is that change is a process rather than an event and examines the various motivations, perceptions, attitudes, and feelings experienced by individuals in relation to change (Hall et al., 1973).

There are three diagnostic dimensions to the CBAM: Stages of Concern, Levels of Use, and Innovation Configuration. This study will focus on the dimension of Innovation Configuration to represent the financial leadership practices in-use at four elementary schools. Innovation Configurations deal directly with the characteristics of the innovation or practice (Hall & Hord, 1987).

In 1981 Hall and Loucks proposed the Innovation Configuration construct as a result of their findings while conducting a study on innovation implementation use. Innovation Configurations are the different ways in which educators adapt innovations or practices to their unique situations (Hall & Hord, 2006). Research team members testing for elements of the CBAM found study participants who "... claimed to be using the innovation, yet what some teams did was significantly different from what other teams did. The name of the innovation may have been the same, but the operational forms had different components and variations" (Hall & Hord, 1987, p.108). Uncovering the different configurations in use for an innovation was a significant finding and resulted in a multi-level interactive, consensus-building mapping process called the Innovation Configuration Mapping Process.

Once this phenomenon was recognized an important implication emerged; "Users of some configurations will be associated with higher outcomes than those using other configurations" (Hall & Hord, 2006, p.113). Where school principals have adapted their leadership practices to site-based needs, variations in how financial practices are operationalized within each school may yield different outcomes. For purposes of this study, explaining and documenting the configurations that exist in financial leadership



practices may provide a link with spending practices and school improvement efforts in certain school contexts.

Innovation Configuration Maps (IC Map) were created to clarify what an innovation or practice actually looks like along a continuum, from high-quality implementation to least desirable. IC Maps consist of components, variations, and clusters. A *component* identifies a particular operational aspect of the innovation and can be combined to form a cluster. *Clusters* are sets of components that describe a major theme or function of the innovation. A *variation* provides a description of the various ways a component may be used. “The major goal in writing each component description and each variation description is to be as visual as possible. The better the word pictures, the easier it will be for teachers, principals, and others to see what successful use of the innovation entails” (Hall & Hord, 2006, p. 117). Once completed, the IC Map serves as a detailed record of how an innovation or practice is being used.

Without current models or adaptive training to inform their financial leadership practice, a principal’s espoused theory of use regarding financial leadership practices could be mismatched with the actual theory in-use observed on a daily basis (Argyris & Schon, 1974). This study focused on the principalship and the expectation for principals to implement and manage budgets as instruments for change in various school contexts. The Innovation Configuration mapping methods identified, defined, and explained financial leadership practices in-use and their adaptations within the various school contexts.

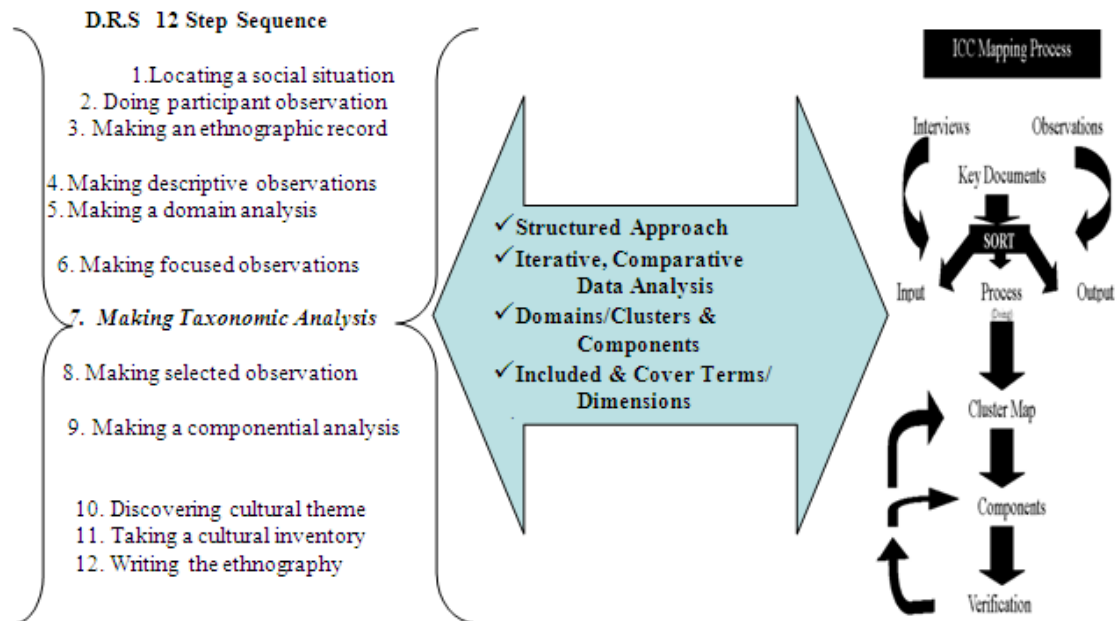
## Summary of Methodology

This naturalistic study (Merriam, 2002) employed an ethnographic perspective to generate a grounded theory to contribute to the understanding of financial leadership practice. There are many strategies researchers use in naturalistic studies that help discover meaning in settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A naturalistic paradigm has provided the foundation to uncover the financial leadership practices of school leaders in their natural, real-world setting, the school. The qualitative methods of data collection used for this study were interviews, observations, document analysis, and review of relevant financial artifacts pertaining to each site.

Spradley (1980) acknowledges, “Ethnography offers an excellent strategy for discovery of grounded theory” (p. 15). Likewise, Glesne (2006) acknowledges the researchers need to “seek out other theories to examine data from different perspectives” (p.29). Spradley’s rigorous twelve step sequence known as the Developmental Research Sequence (D.S.R.) served as an inductive analysis sequence to deconstruct and reconstruct the data into domains, taxonomies, and a componential matrix to develop cultural themes in order to make meaning of financial leadership practice in the four school contexts. An Innovation Configuration Map (Hord, Steigelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006; Hall & Hord, 2006) served as the device to display a grounded theory that emerged from this study. (See Figure 1.2 for Data Analysis. ICC Mapping Process section is reprinted with permission by Dr. Gene Hall in Appendix A , p. 210).

Figure 1.2. Data Analysis from an Ethnographic Perspective

*Ethnographic Perspective*  
 Qualitative Data Analysis Overview  
 Developmental Research Sequence (D.R.S.) (Spradley, 1980)  
 Innovation Configuration (Hord, Steigelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006; Hall & Hord, 2006)



The study consisted of two phases. The *first phase* addressed questions (1) How do principals’ experiences to date with financial leadership shape their current practice? (2) What are the configurations of financial leadership used by principals in the four school contexts? and question (3) What are the differences/similarities in financial leadership practice in the four school contexts? The *second phase* addressed question (4) How do financial leadership practices support/constrain the attainment of the school improvement goals in the four school contexts? (See Table 1.2 for an outline of the research questions addressed and methods used).

Table 1.2. Research Question Matrix for Qualitative Research Questions

Research Questions	Kind of Data Collected	Process of Analysis	Literature	Time of Collection
1. How do principals' experiences to date with financial leadership shape their current practice?	<b>Interview:</b> district/region/charter personnel, school principals, school members serving on finance/school improvement committee(s)	Use of Hall and Hord (2006) Innovation Configuration Mapping process and Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (1980).	*Hall and Hord (2006) *Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall and George (2006) *Hawley-Miles *Roza, (2005) *Bandura (1997) *ISLLC Standards *Creswell, (2005, 2003, 1994) •Spradley, (1980) *Glesne, (2006) *Merriam, (1998) *Leithwood, (2001) Harris, (2005)	Ten to sixteen weeks of collection. (February 2009 – June, 2009) Ongoing analysis (February, 2009 – June, 2009)
2. What are the configurations of financial leadership used by principals in the four school contexts?	<b>Observation:</b> site committee meetings <b>Documents:</b> school improvement plans, audio tape recordings, field notes, meeting minutes, agendas, state reports	Transcription of oral text, triangulation among data, content analysis of artifacts, grounded theory inquiry, peer debriefing, member check, purposive sampling, chain of events, reflexivity journal		
3. What are the differences/similarities in financial leadership practice in the four school contexts?	<b>Interview:</b> district/region/charter personnel, school principals, school members serving on finance/school improvement committee(s) <b>Observation:</b> site committee meetings <b>Documents:</b> school improvement plans, audio tape recordings, field notes, meeting minutes, agendas	Use of Hall and Hord (2006) Innovation Configuration Mapping process and Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (1980).  Transcription of oral text, triangulation among data, content analysis of artifacts, grounded theory inquiry, peer debriefing, member check, purposive sampling, chain of events, reflexivity journal	*Hall and Hord (2006) *Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall and George (2006) *Hawley-Miles *Roza, (2005) *Bandura (1997) *ISLLC Standards *Creswell, (2005, 2003, 1994) •Spradley, (1980) *Glesne, (2006) *Merriam, (1998) *Leithwood, (2001) Harris, (2005)	Ten to sixteen weeks of collection. (February 2009 – June, 2009) Ongoing analysis (February, 2009 – June, 2009)
4. How do the financial leadership practices support/constrain the attainment of the school improvement goals in the four school contexts?	<b>Interview:</b> principals <b>Observation:</b> at the site, committee meetings <b>Documents:</b> audio tape recordings, field notes, meeting minutes, agendas	Use of Hall and Hord (2006) Innovation Configuration Mapping process and Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (1980).  Transcription of oral text, triangulation among data, content analysis of artifacts, grounded theory inquiry, peer debriefing, member check, purposive sampling, chain of events, reflexivity journal	*Hall and Hord (2006) *Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall and George (2006) *Creswell, (2005, 2003, 1994) •Spradley, (1980) *Glesne, (2006) *Merriam, (1998) *Leithwood, (2001) Harris, (2005)	Ten to sixteen weeks of collection. (February 2009 – June, 2009) Ongoing analysis (February, 2009 – June, 2009)

### *Phase One- Steps 1, 2, 3- Questions One, Two, and Three*

Within this phase of the study there were three steps (See Figure 1.2 for an overview of the study methodology). In step one, the researcher/developer sought to identify innovation clusters and components that could be classified as “best practices” for financial leadership practices (Hord, et al. 2006). An amalgamation of the research literature outlined in Table 1.2; Hall and Hord (2006), Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall and George (2006), Leithwood (2001), Hawley-Miles, Roza (2005), Bandura (1997), and the ISLLC Standards, were necessary to devise tentative and partial components and variations for the initial IC Map. Open-ended interview questions were developed based on the current research in resource allocation and leadership practices. After the questions and initial draft of the IC Map were presented to selected educational experts, the IC Map was refined to reflect the feedback of the designated experts. Thus began the highly iterative IC Mapping process.

Step two focused on the selection of schools for the study, the scheduling of interviews with selected school principals, both public and charter, as well as district, region level administrators in the public schools and the chief financial officer and a board member in the charter school. Further refinement of the initial IC Map occurred at this step.

A purposive sampling (Creswell, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of schools was identified within four contexts; Title I, Non-Title I, Charter, Empowerment. Within each of these contexts, an elementary school was identified based on the following criteria: principal’s years of experience, size of the school, percentage of free and reduced lunch

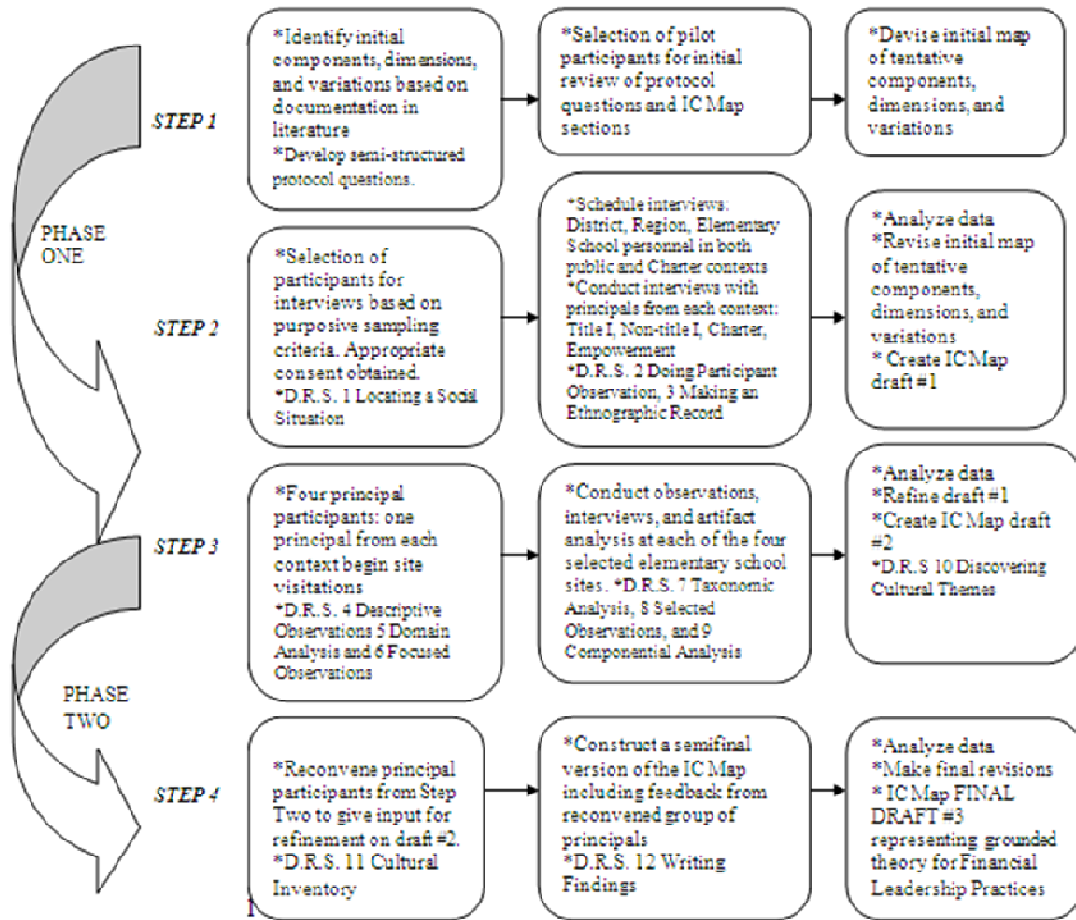
students, percentage of special education students, percentage of English language learners, and finally, transiency rates of students.

Appropriate consent was obtained so that the study was conducted within the same region of a large urban school district. All public schools selected reside within the same district. The Charter school identified for this study also resided within the same district as the public schools identified for this study.

Interviews were scheduled with the personnel identified in Figure 1.3. Questions piloted from step one were used. Public school personnel were interviewed at the district level and at the site level. Charter school personnel interviewed consisted of a board member, the principal, the office manager, and two teachers. Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (D.R.S.) steps 1-3; locating a social situation, doing participant observation, and making an ethnographic record were incorporated throughout this phase. Analysis of the interview information was ongoing as the different groupings of interviews occurred with district level and charter administrators and principals. Data analysis led to refinement of the initial IC Map allowing the first draft of the IC Map to be created.

Step three's focus consisted of beginning the site visitations of the identified principals from step two representing each of the four school contexts (Title I, Non-Title I, Charter, and Empowerment).

Figure 1.3 Summary of Methodology: Iterative Two-Phase Developmental Process



Spradley’s D.R.S. steps 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10; making descriptive observations, making a domain analysis, making focused observations, making taxonomic analysis, making selected observations, making a componential analysis, and discovering cultural themes, were incorporated into this phase of the study. Site observations and interviews were conducted with the principal, the school secretary/clerk, and a teacher on the school budget and/or school improvement committee. Additionally, collection of artifacts pertaining to school financial leadership practices was made. The collective purpose of these actions was to further identify the most important clusters, components, domains,

and themes to verify variations, clarify discrepancies between espoused practices and actual practices in-use, and conduct a cultural inventory to determine the language used when describing an activity or behavior (Hord, et al., 2006; Argyris, 1993, Spradley, 1980). Analysis of the information was ongoing in the form of a taxonomic and componential analyses leading to the refinement of draft one of the IC Map and resulting in IC Map draft two.

#### *Phase Two – Step 4 – Question Four*

The focus of step four was to search for universal cultural themes and relate these findings to address how the financial leadership practices support or constrain the attainment of the school improvement goals. This reflection also helped to verify and finalize the IC Map by “...bring out components, dimensions, and variations that were not identified earlier” (Hord, et al., p. 19). Spradley’s D.R.S. steps 11 and 12: Taking a cultural inventory and Writing the ethnography were conducted during this phase.

Principals who were interviewed in Phase One, step two were revisited to view the third draft of the IC Map and give their input for a final revision. Analysis of their feedback and the information gathered from additional observations led to refinement of draft two of the IC Map.

The final draft of the IC Map was a synthesis of common themes, clusters, domains, components, dimensions, and variations as they emerged from all data sources collected, analyzed, and interpreted for this study.

The third and final draft of the IC Map developed from this study may be used as a staff development diagnostic tool to determine the content for administrative



preparation and professional development (Hall & George, 2000) regarding financial leadership practices in various school contexts.

#### Sources of Data

Data determining school variables used to select the purposive sampling (principal's years of experience, size of the school, percentage of free and reduced lunch students, percentage of special education students, percentage of English language learners, and transiency rate) were taken from the school district's official 2007-08 accountability reports provided to the state department of education and the public. Interviews with district, region, and school level personnel were tape recorded and then transcribed for later analysis. Artifacts, such school improvement plans, meeting agendas and minutes, memos, and other customized documents relating to financial leadership practices were collected at the four selected school sites for this study.

#### Trustworthiness

Qualitative data are words rather than numbers that represent a phenomenon being studied in its real world context (Golafshani, 2003). To ensure trustworthiness of the naturalistic design, establishing the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability was necessary and desirable to further ensure rigor and quality for this study (Golafshani, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Miles & Huberman, 1984).

To confirm *credibility* of the findings, triangulation among data from interviews, observations, and artifacts occurred. Peer debriefing of observations of meetings, interview protocols, various IC Map drafts, and site visits were conducted. Member

checks of interview transcripts for accuracy by participants via email and clarification and/or additional information of IC Map drafts by participants was actively sought.

Purposive sampling is the intentional selection of participants (Creswell, 2005) for a study that ensures *transferability*. The variables used for purposive sampling in this study were; principal's years of experience, size of the school, percentage of free and reduced lunch students, percentage of special education students, percentage of English language learners, and transiency rates. Ensuring "contextual similarity" (Creswell, p. 298) "through these parameters will allow others to make ties to their own situation and reality" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 202).

*Dependability* calls upon "...the researcher to attempt to account for the changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study and changes in the design created by an increasingly refined understanding of the setting" (Marshall & Rossman, p. 203). The documenting of the highly iterative IC Mapping process for the study's phenomenon of financial leadership practices, lent itself to documenting the chain of events in the changing environments of elementary schools in various contexts. Observing the changes and collecting the data, documenting, organizing, and theorizing about it ensured the naturalist's view of external reliability, known as dependability.

*Confirmability* was achieved through the use of a reflexivity journal and triangulation among data collected from audio recordings of interviews, field notes from observations, and analysis of artifacts collected at the school sites. Transcription of oral text and field notes further confirmed the researcher's objectivity. A reflexivity journal was maintained to minimize potential bias since this researcher was the developer of the

innovation configuration and the participant observer of this process (Hord et al., 2006; Spradley, 1980; Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

#### Definition of Terms

Charter School – Charter schools are public elementary, middle or secondary schools that are relatively autonomous schools of choice. They operate under a charter, or contract, issued by a public entity such as a local school district or State Board of Education. Charter schools “Distinguish themselves by utilizing public funds in novel and creative ways” (Portin, et.al, p.53). Individual states determine in their charter school legislation which rules must be adhered to, which rules may be autonomy, charter schools are held accountable for student performance. If the goals of the school set forth in the charter are not reached, the school’s charter may be revoked or not renewed.

Configurations – The operational patterns of an innovation that result from selection and use of different innovation component variations (Heck, Stiegelbauer, Hall & Loucks, 1981, p. 19)

Concerns –Based Adoption Model (CBAM) – A model that measures and quantifies the change process as organizations move forward (Hall & Hord, 2006).

Empowerment School – “Empowerment is an innovative way to decentralize school administration and customize education to the students of an individual school. It allows the principal, teachers and parents of each school to tailor their students’ education process to their specific needs by giving them control over their own curriculum, their own budget, and even their own class schedules. The results will be evaluated through the same standardized tests administered to all public

school students, and all state and federal requirements will remain in effect. The educational goals will be the same. The best means to achieve those goals, however, will be up to each school district and each empowerment school within that district. This is innovation through common sense—allowing educators to do what works best for an individual student population” (Office of the Governor. State of Study, March, 2007).

Leadership Practice – Redirects attention from the role of the leader to the actions of the leader. The interactions of the leaders, followers, and their situation are central (Spillane, 2006, p.14).

Innovation Configuration Map (IC Map) – A word picture description of different ways components of an innovation or practice can be made operational (Hall & George, 2000). “Building and using the IC Map helps to develop consensus about what “it” looks like when implemented” (Hall & Hord, 2006, p.127).

Instructional Leadership Practices – The tools and routines used to teach the content and performance standards outlined in school district grade level curriculum guides. Alig-Mielcarek and Hoy (2005) have identified three fundamental instructional leadership functions: defining and communicating goals, monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching and learning process, and promoting and emphasizing the importance of professional development (p. 32).

School-Based Management – “...a formal alteration of governance structures, as a form of decentralization that identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the

primary means through which improvements might be stimulated and sustained”  
(Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990) in Clune and Witte, p. 290)

Tools – Externalized representations of ideas that are used by people in the practice  
(Norman, 1988). Tools mediate how people practice, shaping interactions among  
leaders and followers in particular ways. Tools include student assessment data,  
observation protocols for evaluating teachers, lesson plans, and student academic  
work. (Spillane, 2006, p. 18)

Routines – Involve two or more actors in “a repetitive, recognizable pattern of  
interdependent actions” (Feldman and Pentland, 2003, p. 96). Routines may  
include common preparation time for teachers, departmental and team meetings,  
and school improvement plan reviews.

Title I School – Part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I (part A) is  
the vehicle for directing federal aid to poor children living in concentrated  
poverty. Each state determines the distribution of funds to the eligible high-  
poverty districts and schools (Liu, 2007). Schools meeting the criteria receive a  
portion of the federal funds.

#### Assumptions

It was assumed that the data contained in the state’s accountability reports were  
accurately represented by schools in the district and were then accurately calculated by  
the department of education to arrive at the designations for the schools in this study.\

#### Limitations

The following are limitations that should be considered when reviewing the  
findings of this study. First, the findings for the IC map iterations represent only the

components, dimensions, and variations of the specific context of schools used for this study; Title I, Non-Title I, Charter and Empowerment Schools. Secondly, the study did not isolate or consider all criteria that may tend to affect perceptions of the participants. And finally, the researcher acknowledges that the past experiences of the researcher may shape the interpretation of the data.

Serving for two years as a high school dean of students, six years as a high school assistant principal, and six years as a middle school principal, the researcher had both a personal and professional concern regarding the lack of professional development for administrators in the area of financial leadership practices. At all levels of my administrative work, the use of resources was linked solely to auditor and bookkeeping measures as well as adherence to fiscal timelines for use of the funds. Budgets were merely a mechanism to document the transfer of money from one entity of the school district to another. Budgets were not represented as instruments of change to support innovation within a school.

I began to explore and experiment with a concept I called standards-based spending, which allowed for the development of a financial infrastructure to take shape within a school. This adaptive thinking promoted conversations within the established school governance committees at my school and led to formalized practices linking my financial leadership practices with my instructional leadership practices in use. The alignment of these two leadership practices in concert with the financial infrastructure framework created greater shared vision for teaching and learning, transparency in decision-making, accountability for resource allocation, and collective teacher financial-efficacy within the school.

After retiring from my administrative position, I began consulting for a school district only to find other administrators struggling with the same financial leadership dilemma. This acknowledged paradox in practice coupled with the lack of targeted professional development demonstrating how to successfully link spending with teaching and learning outcomes was the motivation for this study.

Nonetheless, this researcher's intent was to make sense of the meanings others had about their world rather than having interpretation flow from the researcher's personal, cultural, and historical experiences regarding financial leadership practices (Creswell, 2003).

#### Delimitations

This study was limited to three elementary schools within a large urban district and a charter school located within that district's boundaries.

#### Significance of the Study

Heck and Hallinger (1999) contend that in-depth analysis of leadership practice is rare but essential if we are to make progress in understanding school leadership. Moreover, matching the research approach with how the educational researcher conceptualizes leadership should not be neglected (Furman, 2007).

Gail C. Furman (2007), professor and program director of the Educational Leadership Program at Washington State University and past president of the University Council for Educational Administration, discusses the distinction between the "old" (p. 81) narrative of educational leadership and the "new" (p. 84) narrative of educational leadership. Furman explains that while the old narratives of educational leadership are embedded in "the Taylor system" (Furman, 2007, p.81) focused on efficiency,

productivity, and scientific management in organizations, the new narratives of educational leadership deal with themes in “recognition of the richness and complexity of local school contexts in which leadership is practiced...” (Furman, 2007, p.84).

Addressing the implications for planning and conducting educational leadership research, Furman finds it critical to study leadership, “...as it is actually practiced, and to concomitantly fully describe and take into account the context to which it is responding” (p. 88).

Further acknowledging the value of contextual research studies in educational leadership, Fenwick W. English (2007) states,

“What educational leadership research requires today are powerful, nuanced, contextually rich descriptions of leaders and collaborators (sometimes and erroneously called followers) conspiring and working in real schools, with names, places, smells, and noises. What we need are morally imbued portraits of the complexity and interactions that comprise the drama of leadership as opposed to the dreary depiction of generic patterns of nameless leaders in nameless schools who represent the summation of generic skills and dispositions embodied in the ISLLC standards and accreditation criteria” (p. 31).

Therefore, utilizing Spradley’s (1980) Developmental Research Sequence and the highly iterative Innovation Configuration mapping process to identify the components, themes, dimensions, and variations of financial leadership practices within different educational contexts will begin to contribute to the new educational leadership narrative posited by Furman (2007). Describing patterns and variations of spending within different educational contexts opens a dialogue for reflecting on and understanding the choices for a leader’s financial leadership practices. Development of a grounded theory in the form of an Innovation Configuration map of financial leadership practices seeks to clarify the strategic spending trends in use by educational leaders within their specific school context.



Ultimately, the continuum of financial leadership practices introduced into the repertoire of leadership skills for principals through professional development interventions will support and promote transparency in financial decision making, collective financial self-efficacy among leaders, and a financial infrastructure design which aligns resources to student achievement goals across varied school contexts for the purpose of impacting student outcomes.

### Summary

This dissertation was organized into six chapters. The first chapter is an introduction of the study. Chapter two contains a review of the literature addressing the historical background of innovation configuration, principal financial self-efficacy, resource allocation practices in context, infrastructure for interoperability of financial leadership practices, and principal preparation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the third chapter, the research design and methodology are described. Findings are discussed in both chapters four and five. Narrative portraits of each school context are described in chapter four while the development of the Innovation Configuration Map is discussed in chapter five. Chapter six includes the summary, conclusions, and recommendations from this study.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

“Researchers realize that any proposed study must be grounded in a discussion of prior, relevant work” (Johnson, 2006, p.1). Therefore the literature review for this study addressed five major areas that provide the thinking and rationale for the development of an Innovation Configuration Map (IC Map) documenting the range of financial leadership practices within four different school contexts.

In the first section, “*Historical Background of Innovation Configuration*” was established as the foundation for utilizing the IC Mapping process to document the continuum of financial leadership practices being implemented within different school contexts. The second section, “*Principal Financial Self-Efficacy*” examined mindful leadership profiles and practices and the role they play in managing finances within a school. “*Resource Allocation Practices in Context*”, the third section, established a rationale for reconceptualizing leadership practice and resource allocation while examining the challenges faced by school leaders in different accountability contexts. The convergence of leadership practices to create the mindset for developing an “*Infrastructure for Interoperability of Financial Leadership Practices*” is the focus of section four. In the fifth section, “*Principal Preparation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*” addresses the new Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008 and its impact on current educational leadership preparation initiatives.

While three perspectives make up the conceptual framework for this study in leadership practice: organizational learning; Argyris and Schon (1996), innovation configuration; Hall and Louckes (1977), and adaptive leadership; Heifetz (1994), unless all three are viewed from an integrated perspective, the true intent of the study will not be realized. For example, consider the concepts of failure, learning, and change. Viewed from an integrated perspective the concept of failure (Edmonson, 2005; Senge, 1990) is not seen in a punitive light but rather as a learning opportunity to change an unproductive practice. Learning and reconceptualization of practice would be the outcome of failure while a process of inquiry would set the stage for the next challenge encountered. Similarly, lessons encountered from previous organizational learning research (Argyris, 1999) may influence the present configurations of financial leadership practices so that future financial leadership actions will now be shaped by mindful (Weick, 2005), authentic (Dewey, 1938), and artistic (English, 2005; Block, 2002) principal preparation coursework. In summary, research findings from the past, influence present day practice while future coursework designs need to explore finding the answers to the gaps identified in the literature and within the daily paradoxes of the practitioner. (See Table 2.1)

#### “Historical Background of Innovation Configuration”

Heck and Hallinger (2005) observing the recent trends in research in educational leadership and management, implore educational researchers and policy-makers to address the important problems that concern practitioners. Furthermore, Heck and Hallinger argue, “... when they do address such problems they often frame them very

differently from practitioners. The result is that researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners often talk past each other” (p. 239). Robinson (2002) asserts there is

Table 2.1 Finding Answers in the Gaps

<b>Finding Answers in the Gaps</b>	
<b>Theorist</b>	<b>Gaps Identified in the Literature</b>
<b>Heifetz</b>	<b>Work Challenges: Adaptive – Technical</b> An adaptive challenge exists when there is a gap between a desired state (aspirations) and reality that cannot be closed by using existing approaches alone. Adaptive challenges demand learning and shift of responsibility for the change to stakeholders. Experimentation and conflict are a source of innovation. Managing the tension between creativity and efficiency becomes an ongoing part of leadership practice. (Heifetz, 2004, p. 76-83)
<b>Argyris</b>	<b>Organizational Learning: Single-loop – Double-loop Learning</b> The key to OL is in the questioning and changing of values and attitudes that are the root cause of organizational resistance to change. Only through awareness of the theories-in-use can leaders distinguished between changes of a routine nature and the deeper changes necessary for improving organizational performance. Double-loop learning is perceived as the key to deep and meaningful change for an organization that first changes their governing values and then their actions. (Argyris, 1999)
<b>Senge</b>	<b>Creative Tension Gap: Vision - Reality</b> The gap is the source of creative energy that exists between vision and current reality. Creative people use the gap to generate energy for change. (Senge, 1990, p. 142) By embracing the forces of change rather than resisting them, vision and reality can be brought closer together thereby reducing the vision- reality gap (p. 132).
<b>Dewey</b>	<b>Learning Doing Gap:</b> Dewey basically points to the work we are doing versus the work we should be doing. If we do not like what we see, it is up to us to make it better (Dewey, 1938).
<b>Sergiovanni</b>	<b>Method of Operation: Lifeworld –Systemsworld</b> Focusing heavily on the managerial aspects of an organization (systemsworld) and not on the cultural aspects of the organization (lifeworld) is harmful to the people working in the organization. Leaders need to be aware of their focus between these two worlds (Sergiovanni, 2000)
<b>Weick</b>	<b>Coupling: Loose – Tight</b> An organization’s ability to react to external conditions is contingent upon the organization’s internal structure and systems. He posits that schools are loosely coupled systems that are weakly connected. Large changes are difficult to manage and sustain in this type of a system (Weick, 1976)

currently less emphasis on knowing how to do something as opposed to knowing the interests and values that underlie why the changes should be made. Hall and Hord (2006)

acknowledge, “A frequent problem for teachers and others who are expected to implement new practices is that they are not clear about what they are being asked to do” (p. 110). This lack of clarity in practice may account for the modest change experienced in schools adopting a new reform, program, or strategy. Additionally, to change or to try something new means to risk failure, bringing possible embarrassment to one’s professional pride (Guskey, 1990).

Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2004) acknowledge, “while it is generally known that where there are good schools there are good leaders, it has been notoriously difficult to construct an account of school leadership, grounded in everyday practice...We know relatively little about the *how* of school leadership, that is knowledge of the way in which school leaders develop and sustain those conditions and processes believed necessary for innovation” (p.4). They further assert “...that understanding the *what* of leadership is essential: but that without a rich understanding of *how* leaders go about their work, and *why* leaders do and think what they do, it is difficult to help school leaders think about and revise their practice”(Spillane, et al., p.8). Therefore an examination of what leaders actually do within their school context provides a broader and more complex understanding of leadership practice (Gordon & Patterson, 2006).

#### *Concerns-Based Adoption Model*

“Capturing the dynamic reality of schools” (Gordon & Patterson, p. 226) from the principal’s perspective was documented in Hall and Hord’s (1987) salient work, *Change in Schools: Facilitating the Process*. Realizing that change is a dynamic process and innovation implementation is equally dynamic and confusing for those implementing the change, Hall and Hord focused on the principal as the unit of analysis to uncover

leadership practices of change by studying what they do, how they do it, when they do it, and to whom they do it. Conceding that “identifying the concrete concepts and techniques practicing principals use daily has been difficult” (p. 3) the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) conceptual framework emerged. Originally proposed in 1973 by Hall, Wallace, and Dossett, as a way to understand and facilitate the change process in organizational settings, CBAM researchers realized there was more to change than instructional materials in a box, there was a process involved (Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006).

“The model was built in part on adaptive systems theory and hypothesized that Change Facilitators needed to understand the culture of the User System in which the change process is unfolding” (Hall, Alquist, Hendrickson, George, Johnson, Thornton, Uchiyama, 1999, p. 1). The authors assert that adaptive systems theory addresses how the different parts of an organization must adapt and adjust as the change process unfolds. Being sensitive to the concerns of those involved in a change process, CBAM distinguished itself from other models in that it placed the clients rather than the change facilitator at the center of the change process. This paradigm shift had major implications for support activities such as staff development and coaching activities since they were directly related to the perceived needs of those implementing the change innovation or practice rather than focusing on the change facilitator (Hall & Hord, 2006).

There are seven major assumptions of CBAM that underlie this approach:

- Understanding the point of view of the participants in the change process is critical.
- Change is a process not an event.

- It is possible to anticipate much that will occur during a change process.
- Innovations come in all sizes and shapes.
- Innovation and implementation are two sided of the change process coin.
- To change something; someone has to change first.
- Everyone can be a change facilitator. (Hall & Hord, 1987, p. 8-10)

According to Hall and Hord (1987), there are three diagnostic dimensions of the CBAM that address the change continuum; Stages of Concern, Levels of Use, and Innovation Configuration. Each dimension represents a key aspect of the change process as it is experienced by the individual users (Hall & Hord, p. 13).

The Stages of Concern dimension is represented by seven different reactions educators experience when they are implementing a change. The stages range from early “self” concerns, to “task” concerns, and ultimately “impact” concerns (Hall & Hord, p. 14). The second dimension, Levels of Use are the behaviors educators develop as they become more familiar with and more skilled in using an innovation. Three different levels of nonuse and five different levels of use were identified to determine how an innovation is being used (Hall & Hord, p.14). The third diagnostic dimension in CBAM is Innovation Configuration. Innovation configurations are the different ways in which educators adapt innovations or practices to their unique situations (Hall & Hord, p. 14). While each of the three dimensions has a unique tool developed with specific traits and strengths CBAM researchers developed a methodology and measure called an Innovation Configuration Map to identify and describe different configurations in-use for an innovation or practice (Hord, et al., 2006).

### *Innovation Configuration and the Innovation Configuration Mapping Process*

An Innovation Configuration is an established and well-researched format developed by experts in a national research center studying educational change (Hall & Hord, 2001; Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987). “It identifies and describes, in operation, the major components of new practice” (Roy & Hord, 2004, p. 1) – in this case, financial leadership practices. Hall and Loucks (1978) proposed the Innovation Configuration construct as a result of their findings while conducting studies on innovation implementation use. Research team members testing for elements of the CBAM found study participants who “... claimed to be using the innovation, yet what some teams did was significantly different from what other teams did. The name of the innovation may have been the same, but the operational forms had different components and variations.” (Hall & Hord, 1987, p.108). Uncovering the different configurations and variations in use for an innovation was a significant finding. Acceptance and recognition of the phenomenon of Innovation Configuration points out “ that in most change efforts, innovation adaptation will occur; that there is a way to chart these adaptations; and that these adaptations have direct and indirect implications for facilitating and assessing change processes” (Hall & Hord, 2006, p. 113).

### *Applications of Innovation Configurations*

Original procedures and applications of the Innovation Configuration measure were researched by Susan Heck, Suzanne M Stiegelbauer, Gene E. Hall and Susan F. Loucks in the 1970's. Since then Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall, and George (2006) have refined CBAM to “ present the constructs of the model, update the knowledge base and



support appropriate applications of the CBAM through appropriate use of the CBAM tools to assess the implementation of innovations in school settings” (Hord, et al., p. viii). Additionally twelve Principles of Change were introduced to summarize the predictable aspects of the change process including the Innovation Configuration dimension (Hall & Hord, 2006, p. 4-14);

- Change Principle 1: Change Is a Process, Not an Event
- Change Principle 2: There are Significant Differences in What Is Entailed in Development and Implementation of an Innovation
- Change Principle 3: An Organization Does Not Change until the Individuals within It Change
- Change Principle 4: Innovations Come in Different Sizes
- Change Principle 5: Interventions Are the Actions and Events That Are key to the Success of the Change Process
- Change Principle 6: There Will Be No Change in Outcomes until New Practices Are Implemented
- Change Principle 7: Administrator Leadership Is Essential to Long-Term Change Success
- Change Principle 8: Mandates Can Work
- Change Principle 9: The School Is the Primary Unit for Change
- Change Principle 10: Facilitating Change Is a Team Effort
- Change Principle 11: Appropriate Interventions Reduce Resistance to Change
- Change Principle 12: The Context of the School Influences the Process of Change

While the principles of change address the predictable aspects of the change process research, evaluation, dissemination, and professional development define the four most common applications of an Innovation Configuration (Hord et. al 2006).

The IC Mapping process is an iterative, multi-level interactive, consensus-building activity resulting in a set of “word pictures” illustrating how to get from point A to point B. It portrays how the process is being put into action from both the individual and from the organizational perspective (Hord, et al., 2006). The completed IC Map serves as a record of how an innovation is being used (Hall & Hord, 2006). It is a practical, not a theoretical tool that documents how principal’s establish a school-wide financial leadership infrastructure to make decisions, allocate resources, promote a culture of inquiry, and monitor their school’s achievement.

#### *Research and Uses of Innovation Configuration and Mapping*

The professional development application context yielded many studies that grappled with the need to clearly define an innovation or practice in-use or to bridge the gap between program development and student outcomes (Calderon, 1982; Mitchell, 1988; Loucks-Horsley & Bybee, 1998; Alquist & Hendrickson, 1999; Howley-Rowe & Leopold, 2000; Roy & Hord, 2003, Donovan, 2005). The focus of these aforementioned studies dealt with clarifying topics such as bilingual education, National Science Standards implementation, a math innovation, a school reform support process, National Staff Development Council standards identification and implementation, and technology use in the classroom. (Table 2.2: Partial Summary of Innovation Configurations Literature Review, reprinted with permission by Dr. Gene Hall in Appendix A , p. 210 )

Creating a variation of the Innovation Configuration concept, Leithwood and Montgomery (1987) developed innovation profiles. Like configurations, innovation profiles are detailed descriptions of actions within a practice. Similarly applications for Leithwood and Montgomery’s innovation profiles relate to accountability and management of change and professional development designs. The immeasurable value of the innovation profiles, as well as Hall and Hord’s IC Map, center around their ability to determine “a coherent and clear definition of use” (Hord et al., 2006, p.39) of an innovation, process, or practice.

Table 2.2: Partial Summary of Innovation Configurations Literature Reviewed

Date	Author(s)	Study	Focus/Innovation	Findings
1982	Calderon	Case study of implementation	Application of IC to trainer of trainers program	IC clarifies program expectations
1988	Mitchell	Formative evaluation of implementation of 3 innovations	Application of CBAM tools for evaluation	IC helpful tool in clarifying innovation for study
1998	Loucks-Horsley & Bybee	Discussion of design and application of IC to standards	Implementing National Science Standards	IC used to describe what the standards would look like when in place
1999	Alquist & Hendrickson	Assessment of implementation of standards in math, 17 schools	Mathematics in Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS)	IC used to map use of math innovation
2000	Howley-Rowe & Leopold	Evaluation of implementation	Case study of one high school in the Quest Network, a school reform support process	IC used to describe innovation in use, found it was not part of how the school worked as a whole
2003	Roy & Hord	Application of tool	Moving NSDC’s staff development standards into practice	IC model used to describe NSDC standards in action: support for role development
2005	Donovan	Descriptions of configurations for laptop computer use and student behaviors	Mixed methods study of technology access and use at the middle school level	Three unique configurations of use and off-task behaviors were identified

(Adapted from Hord, et al., 2006, p.46-48; Donovan, 2005).

Information richness is defined as the ability of information to change understanding within a timeframe (Weick, 2001). “Communication transactions that can overcome different frames of reference or clarify ambiguous issues to change understanding in a timely manner are considered rich” (Weick, 2001, p. 10). Yet as Michael Fullan (2007) cautions educational change is technically simple and socially complex. Elmore (2000) agrees that solving problems in complex systems is not accomplished by having great standards, but has to be addressed everyday as a continuous learning activity.

Spillane and Burch (2003) contend by studying practice we can investigate how institutional structure is embodied in activity, both the medium for that activity and the outcome of it. Weick (2001) writes, “To a great extent the design of an organization determines the distribution of resources, authority, and information. As a consequence, it directly impacts the ability of individual managers to make and to implement timely, technically and economically sound, and organizationally acceptable decisions” (p. 59). Therefore examining financial leadership practices through the lens of school context is the first step to identifying and understanding the variations in actions in which leaders engage to arrive at economically sound and organizationally acceptable decisions for their school.

#### “Principal Financial Self-Efficacy”

While educational researchers have utilized the self-efficacy theory of Albert Bandura to study its influence on students and teachers, its use has been limited when applied to the study of school principals (Hamblett, 2005, Tschannen-Mora & Gareis, 2005, Wiig, 2004, Brama, 2004, presently being translated, Smith et al., 2003, Lyons &

Murphy, 94). Understanding how the construct of self-efficacy relates to school leaders' perceptions of their management of resources in the teaching and learning environment is limited in the literature. The minimal amount of research focusing on the relationship between principal self-efficacy and resource management is curious given the intense interest by the courts, legislators, and bureaucrats for educational spending and accountability for those dollars.

Prior to NCLB being signed into law, a principal's concept of the school budget may have been primarily as a taxonomic tool for the purpose of documenting school spending. However, today's school leaders find it increasingly critical to take a data-driven approach to the myriad of tasks expected of them. For example, as the instructional leader of the school, the principal must translate complex testing data into clear and understandable statements that allow stakeholders to participate in making informed decisions about designing school improvement goals (Stiegelbauer et. al, 2004; Reeves, 2002). Considered a critical competency for instructional leadership collecting, interpreting, and using data within the financial leadership practice perspective may invite refined knowledge and skill competencies into the leadership practice repertoire.

Self-efficacy is a cognitive construct that is both task and context specific (Bandura, 1977). For a principal to enact both roles of leader and manager successfully requires a careful balancing act. Resource management has always been important. Meeting the goals of NCLB requires deliberate and sustained action to align resources to school improvement needs. Defining specific responsibilities required to perform a job may be easier than defining the level of a person's efficacy (belief in one's capabilities to successfully complete a task) about performing tasks associated with that job.

Bandura's belief that an individual's self-efficacy has a strong impact on the level of performance of a given task suggests that the self-efficacy of a principal is an important variable in considering leadership effectiveness. The increased pressure to use resources efficiently and effectively roots self-efficacy as a compelling factor for potential principal success. Efficacy, according to Bandura (1997), influences how people think, feel motivate themselves, and act. Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 1994).

Understanding the sources of self-efficacy provides a framework for realizing how strength of self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies interact to produce behavioral outcomes. Expectations of personal efficacy are derived from four principal sources of information: performance accomplishment, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states (Bandura, 1977 p. 191) (See Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 Efficacy Expectations

<b>Source</b>	<b>Mode of Induction</b>
PERFORMANCE ACCOMPLISHMENT	-Participant Modeling -Performance Desensitization -Performance Exposure -Self-Instructed Performance
VICARIOUS EXPERIENCE	-Live Modeling -Symbolic Modeling
VERBAL PERSUASION	-Suggestion-Exhortation -Self-Instruction -Interpretive Treatments
EMOTIONAL AROUSAL	-Attribution -Relaxation, Biofeedback -Symbolic Desensitization -Symbolic Exposure

Major sources of efficacy information and the principle sources through which different modes of treatment operate (Bandura, 1977, p. 195)

Performance accomplishment is especially influential because it is based on personal mastery experiences (Bandura, 1977, p.195). Outcomes interpreted as successful raise self-efficacy and those that are interpreted as failures lower it. Vicarious experience although a weaker source of information than the interpreted results of mastery experiences, involves seeing the effects produced by the actions of others in threatening activities without adverse consequences. This can generate expectations in observers that they too will improve if they persist in their efforts (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy beliefs are also created and developed as a result of verbal persuasions received from others. “Verbal persuasion is widely used because of its ease and ready availability” (Bandura, p. 198). And finally, because people have the ability to alter their own thinking, stress, anxiety, fatigue, and taxing situations generally elicit emotional arousal that, depending on the circumstances, might have value concerning personal competency (Bandura, p. 198).

Brazier and Keller (2006) put forth a conceptual framework of educational decision making that account for critical factors in decision processes. Specifically, they looked at the following variables to construct a framework to investigate decision making: surveys, interviews, observations focused on multiple objectives held by multiple stakeholders, types of collaboration, degrees of tight and loose coupling, and feedback that alters the nature of decisions as they evolve. School systems are likely to have linkages, or couplings, to one another that are said to be loosely coupled because authority is not particularly strong and the technical core is not very clear (Weick, 1976). They assert that the extent to which principals act independently of central authority is

“uncertain and requires an analytical tool to describe the connection between what the superintendent intends and what others do” (Brazier & Keller, 2006, p.8).

### *Mindful Management and Leadership*

How a leader deals with the ambiguity of the position in today’s educational landscape is both a skill and a choice (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Educational leadership and management conundrums abound in a complex, albeit compliant, accountability policy climate. Without models to teach existing or future leaders how the tools and routines of financial leadership unfold within their context, leaders must resort to learning while implementing. A familiar analogy suggesting the circumstance of someone flying a plane while they are simultaneously trying to fix it serves as an explanation for the management-leadership conundrum faced by educational leaders.

When we rely on routines and standard practices of the past it is difficult to change our patterns of behavior especially if the routines have been successful (Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006). “Mindful behavior of individuals and organizations is more than simply being alert; it is a habit of mind that scans for subtle changes that cause trouble” (Hoy, et al., p. 237). The authors further contend;

We expect that rigid bureaucracies are not conducive to mindfulness; in fact, they may produce mindless standardization. To develop habits of mindfulness, individuals need situations where they are not afraid to make mistakes and feel free to experiment. A culture of trust should provide a setting in which people are not afraid of breaking new ground, taking risks, and making errors. (Hoy, et al, p. 237)

Heifetz (2004)) posits that “leadership takes place in the context of problems and challenges”, specifically adaptive challenges (p. 75). Leadership becomes necessary when people have tough challenges to tackle, when they have to change their ways in order to thrive or survive, when continuing to operate according to current structures,



procedures, and processes no longer will suffice. While technical problems are addressed with traditional responses from authority or managerial expertise, adaptive challenges require leadership that engages people in facing challenging realities and then changing to thrive in a changing world (Heifetz, 2004). While adaptive challenges require the involvement of the stakeholders within the organization to take responsibility to redefine practice within their organization, learning becomes the critical action to rally participants' in order to address adaptive challenges. This shift requires the leader to mobilize followers to now assume new roles and to co-produce leadership practice by interacting with formal leadership tasks and decisions (Spillane, 2006).

Organizational mindfulness as discussed by Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) outlines five processes that promote mindfulness in organizations; preoccupation with failure, reluctance to simplify, sensitivity to operations, commitment to resilience, and deference to expertise. Mindful schools develop the ability to anticipate surprise by focusing on failure, avoid simplification, and remain sensitive to operations. Organizations with mindful infrastructures rebound with persistence, resilience, and expertise when the unexpected happens (Hoy, et al., 2006). An important characteristic of the mindless organization involves not managing the unexpected in its earliest stages, when the signals of trouble are subtle and weak. "Managers in mindful organizations cultivate an atmosphere of openness and teamwork and encourage each other to challenge each other's thought and behavior "(Hoy et al., p. 242). However, Argyris and Schon (1974) discuss the pitfalls of organizations demonstrating defensive routines.

Dickmann and Stanford-Blair (2002) in their paradigm shifting perspective of linking leadership and the brain posit mindful leadership principles and practices which

“provide structure and support for the alignment of leadership behavior to the nature of the human capacity to achieve” (p. 193). They identify four mindful leadership principles a mindful leader attends to in order to negotiate the contexts in which they work; attend to the potential of mindful leadership practice, acquire knowledge about the nature and nurture of intelligence, apply knowledge about intelligence to self, systems, and situations, adjust leadership knowledge in response to experience. Additionally they outline six mindful leadership practices to support the mindful principles. The mindful leadership practices are; nurture the physiological platform that enables intelligence, promote social relationships, harness the power of emotion, facilitate the construction of meaning, build a culture of reflection, and cultivate mindful dispositions.

#### *Organizational Defensive Routines*

In his theory of action perspective Argyris (2002) defines organizational defensive routines as, “any action, policy, or practice that prevents organizational participants from experiencing embarrassment or threat and, at the same time, prevents them from discovering the causes of the embarrassment or threat” (p. 214). If learning is defined as “the detection and correction of error” (Argyris, 2002 p. 206), organizations embedded in a culture of defensive routines are said to exist in an “antilearning” pattern (Argyris, 1993, Argyris & Schon, 1996). In other words, these organizations are blind to their incompetencies, and are unaware that they are blind. Hence the paradoxical term coined by Argyris (1999) “blind awareness”.

Detecting errors and making corrections quickly without an understanding of how the errors were made or learning why the errors occurred in the first place is a symptom of mindless not mindful organizational efficacy (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). Yet, “most

organizations have powerful defensive routines, even though, to our knowledge, they do not formally reward or teach them” (Argyris & Schon, 1974, p.xxii). This may explain how leaders find themselves engaged in practices that they do not believe in (Argyris and Schon, 1974).

Weick and Sutcliffe (2007) further elaborate on their definition of mindfulness – “as a rich awareness of discriminatory detail” (p. 32) - to include the concept of mindful engagement which builds around five principles that have been inducted from observations of high reliability functioning. Principles of anticipation (failure, simplification, operations) and principles of containment (resilience, expertise) make up the two dimensions of mindful engagement. Because mindful organizations think differently about success, simplification, strategy, plans, and authority, “they devote more time to examining failure as a window on the health of the systems, resisting the urge to simplify assumptions about the world, observing operations and their effects, developing resilience to manage unexpected events, and identify local experts and creating a climate of deference to them” (p. 32).

Mindfulness is about the quality of attention. Schools in need of improvement become more vulnerable to error when their attention is distracted, unstable and dominated by abstractions (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007). Mindfulness focuses on the factors that draw attention away from the present and from an awareness of change. Leaders who manage mindfully see the big picture, but it is a big picture of the moment. School leaders with financial efficacy mindfully manage the system so that it concentrates resources on the reality of the current moment. Designers of financial leadership infrastructures embody the mindful engagement principles of anticipation and

containment to make necessary adjustments within their school context in light of the big picture of the moment.

Plecki, Alejano, Knapp, and Lochmiller, (2006) advance the notion of learning-focused leadership for resource allocation. Their theory of action places greater emphasis on evidence; “by seeking information about learning needs, current programs, emerging conditions, and the effects of prior investments, leaders seek more fully informed ways of developing and appraising allocation options” (p. 17). The authors claim that an allocation “cycle” may appear, “in which equity and effectiveness of resource allocations are continuously assessed, relevant resources for furthering improvement priorities are identified and acquired, and these resources are distributed according to need” (p. 17).

#### *Context and Leadership Profiles*

Different contexts also create different motivational conditions for decision makers to construct their environments in a particular way (Daft & Weick, 1984). McCabe and Dutton (1993) question “how organizational context influences the way individuals think and act in an organization”(p. 640). They studied the connection between perceived environmental uncertainty and effectiveness as being dependent on “the interpretive or sense-making activities of organizational members. In particular, it is argued that one critical cue for these sense-making activities is a decision maker’s perception of how well their unit or organization is performing” (p. 624). McCabe and Dutton (1993) found when a decision maker’s organization seems to be doing well, individuals assume they and those around them know what they are doing. In this sense, the environment is said to be “predictable and stable” (p. 626). In contrast, if decision makers perceive their organization is doing poorly, “ they may become more tentative

about how to deal with problems, how to discriminate good from bad decisions, and how changing conditions will affect their decisions and those of others” (p. 626). In order to maintain a positive self-image the decision maker in an uncertain or volatile environment may employ defensive thinking routines (Argyris, 1974) to explain less than an ideal situation.

In a qualitative study by Gordon and Patterson (2006), principal profiles of leadership in different contexts of reform were explored. Their analysis suggests that many different arrangements of leadership are considered effective in different settings. An array of five leadership types were identified; Top-down Overt, Top-down Covert, Vanguard leadership, Network leadership, and Network Wannabe leadership. The first leadership type were the Overt Top-down leaders who are decisive, quick to size up a situation and moves the school in the direction they believe is best. The second leadership type identified were the Covert Top-down leaders who espoused their belief in empowering teachers and shared decision-making yet they are still the primary decision makers. Next, Vanguard leadership types acknowledge that leadership can be shared and does share decision-making and leadership tasks with those in other than formal leadership positions. Fourth, are the Network leaders who evenly spread leadership throughout the school acknowledging that expertise is diffuse throughout the school and does not reside within any one person. The last type of leadership type to be identified by Gordon and Patterson’s study was the Network Wannabe. Leadership is not yet shared in this leadership type but leaders attempt to establish a network where collaborative decision-making can take place.

These five leadership types refer to the observed “arrangements negotiated by teachers and principals in particular settings” (Gordon & Patterson, p 212). Gordon and Patterson contend, “leadership is a negotiation between a principal and her constituents” (p. 225) and is demonstrated differently in different contexts. For example, in some schools curriculum and instruction was the focus while in other schools facets of the school’s operation were the focus. School leadership was viewed “...as a relational, context-specific process that considers the culture, norms, values, and beliefs of the individuals involved with the school and community” (p. 206). This perspective of school leadership and the study findings allowed for the notion of fit between a principal and the community to be reinterpreted (Ogawa, 1995). While a “good fit” is desirable, a “bad fit” was not necessarily bad for a school. Interestingly, findings revealed that “profound and lasting effects” on a school community were realized by leaders who were initially considered not to be effective by their constituents (Gordon & Patterson, p. 225).

School leadership is essential to school improvement (Marzano, Waters, McNulty, 2005; Leithwood et al. 2003, 2006; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). There were recurring themes in the educational leadership literature portraying the complexity of principal leadership. Boris-Schacter and Langer (2006) refer to them as the three principal tensions. These tensions are: instructional and management, work and personal lives, and societal/community expectations and individual priorities (p. 3). Blending the competing conceptions of leadership such as the technical with the symbolic (Deal & Peterson, 1994), lifeworld with the systemsworld (Sergiovanni, 2000), and tight and loose coupling (Weick, 1978, DuFour and Eaker, 1992) with the three tensions creates the conditions for leaders to demonstrate their ability to make mindful decisions.

According to Owens (2004), leadership and decision-making are inseparable. “Leadership cannot be a solo performance: by definition, the only way that leaders can exercise leadership is by working with and through other people, the followers” (p. 257).

Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001) discuss a transformational perspective of leadership known as distributed leadership which advocates for school leadership to be stretched over the school’s social and situational context. Distributed leadership is best understood as distributed practice where the ability to empower others is emphasized. Using teacher expertise as a resource to influence student learning is key to the distributed leadership perspective. A distributed view of leadership focuses on the interactions rather than the actions of leadership practice. Spillane (2006) states, “Actions are still important, but they must be understood as part of interactions” (p. 8). With this perspective of leadership we begin to look at how formal leaders interact with the other members of the school community and examine the relationships that exist within a school culture. A leader with a distributed leadership perspective focus places leadership practice at the center of leadership actions rather than the formal role of the leader within the organization. However, Spillane contends distribution of responsibility is context specific.

The distribution of responsibility for leadership among formal leaders and teachers differs according to the type of school- public, private, charter, Catholic or magnet school (Spillane, 2006). Additionally, the governance or policy system in which a school exists does matter in relation to school leadership arrangements (Spillane, 2006).

The connection between high performance business models as the answer for turning around school’s designated as “needs improvement” is recommended by John

Simmons. Simmons (2005), president of Strategic Learning Initiatives and author of *Breaking Through: Transforming Urban School Districts* encourages school leaders to learn from the best. He contended that school transformation efforts could be aided by integrating the knowledge about high-performance organizations, including large businesses (Simmons, p. 55). From his research, Simmons lists four strategies that have accelerated student learning in the Chicago, Boston, and Brazosport, Texas school districts: create leaders at every level, transform the structure and culture of the district, improve instruction, and engage parents and make funding adequate and equitable. Yet as Michael Fullan (2001) asserts in *Leading in a Culture of Change*, “The litmus test of all leadership is whether it mobilizes people’s commitment to putting their energy into actions designed to improve things. It is individual commitment, but above all it is collective mobilization”(p. 9).

Addressing this assertion, a recent study conducted by Harvard Business School researchers Fredberg, Beer, Eisenstat, Foote, Norrgren (2008), *Embracing Commitment and Performance: CEO’s and Practice Used to Manage Paradox*, focus on “how CEO’s establish strategic practices around their visions and intents, and how such practices make it possible to create high commitment and high performance” (p. 3). Acknowledging the lack of definition of how management facilitates the process where people become engaged in strategic work and implementation within the research, they set out to identify the actions by those in charge to build commitment and performance.

Interviews with twenty-six CEO’s from major North American and European companies were conducted. Sets of practices were identified aimed to leverage commitment for sustainable success and to improve how the whole organizational system



works by focusing on principles, values and attitudes. The five groups of managerial practices identified are; Confronting Reality - both external and internal; Releasing Energy - empowering managers with important decisions; Creating a Community of Purpose – building a strong culture, norms, and traditions; Amplifying Leadership Impact – Presence, Predictability, Persistence; and Shaping the Leadership Context – creating a system of multiple leaders at various levels to send and enact the strategic message themselves.

Findings of these CEO’s leadership practices reveal they embrace paradox on their job to achieve the conflicting goals they face. The five groups of managerial practices listed above are key to the management of paradox and “central for creating broad strategic action and create sustained performance by both caring for commitment and performance” (p. 31). Fredberg and colleagues conclude from their study that a skill of top management in these organizations is “to be able to not only acknowledge the presence of paradoxes, but to create practices that resolve them” (p. 31).

#### “Resource Allocation Practices in Context”

Educational systems have yet to be successful in linking spending with the desired achievement outcomes (Ladd & Hansen, 1999). However, school leaders who engage in analyzing and monitoring spending data to inform their financial decisions and to meet their school goals begin to address this conundrum (Norton & Kelly, 1997; Gazzo & Laird, 2008). With this perspective, detection of hidden patterns may emerge thereby informing a school’s financial leadership practice and linking deliberate allocation actions with targeted outcomes.

McREL (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning) uses the term fractal improvement experience to describe a small, systemic improvement experience. “Encapsulated within this experience are all the required procedural parts of a major school improvement initiative”(Parsley & Galvin, 2008, p. 4). This use of the term fractal suggests an understanding that school improvement efforts are nested and occur at many levels within an organization. Parsley and Galvin assert that the focus of a fractal experience “should have broad impact and require wide participation by staff members, yet be narrow enough to implement and see results in a short period of time (e.g., 4-6 weeks)” (p. 5). Feedback loops can be systematically constructed to link the fractal experience with the resources allocated allowing monitoring and midcourse corrections to be more mindful. Design of a financial infrastructure for a school will begin to take shape as the fractal experience analysis unfolds.

While it is crucial to seek ways to gather data to arrive at informed decisions, the cognitive sciences teach us that if information is to become knowledge a social process is required (Fullan, 2003). Parsley and Galvin explain that while “fractals are limited in scope and completed in a relatively short period of time, they offer the potential for the designer of the experience and those involved in the improvement effort to “connect the dots” between the steps of initial assessment, planning for and taking collective action, posting-testing, and attribution of ultimate success” (p. 5). The importance of small but real changes that result from fractal finance experiences will build the collective efficacy that is, “the perception of teachers in a school that the faculty as a whole can execute the courses of action necessary to have positive effects on students” (Goddard, 2001, p.468). Mastery experiences that result in fractal improvements in one part of the system can

facilitate change in other parts of the system and “can act in concert at both the individual and organizational level” (Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy, 2004, p. 9). Anticipating potential barriers and unintended consequences of a team’s actions and decisions will allow feedback loops to be constructed for ongoing and timely corrections to be made (Argyris, 1974, Parsley & Galvin, 2008) thereby increasing the overall collective financial efficacy of a school system.

*Fix-it or Create it Mindset*

In an interview with Peter Senge (2001) the Journal of Staff Development reporter Dennis Sparks discusses conditions that nurture genuine desire for continuous improvement on the part of principals. He states, “When people come together to deal with practical problems, it’s important for them to consider what they want to create, not just what they want to fix. This approach fosters shared aspirations” (p. 3). Noting the organizations obsession with solving problems and “fixing things that are broken” (Sparks, p. 3) Senge argues that this diverts attention from a far more important activity, which is creating the new. Senge defines this shift in thinking by acknowledging its “...not just a semantic difference. What I mean by creating is directing our energies into bringing things into reality that we really care about. When we’re solving problems, we’re trying to get rid of things we don’t want. When we are creating, we are bringing into reality things that are valued by us” (p. 3).

Budgeting is a formal technical process that coordinates resources to priority goals and activities thus ensuring fiscal accountability to constituencies. Lawler and Worley (2006) argue that when budgets are built around categories of spending, such as salaries and travel, rather than processes, such as hiring new employees and developing

new products, the “organization gains no understanding of the relationship between money spent and the outcomes produced”(p. 144). Yet, Deal and Peterson (1994) assert that spending practices also communicate values, beliefs, and expectations of an organization.

Harnessing the educational finance system to raise achievement for all students will focus on the spending choices and decisions made at each school site to improve the performance of the students. For example, findings from Making Good Choices: Districts Taking the Lead, a 2000 study by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory showed large scale reform is more likely to succeed in schools when districts support school-level change over time; by allocating new resources and reallocating existing ones, and by building each school’s capacity to budget for school improvement. Concluding that districts must do more than espouse support for change, they challenge districts to “back up their words by allocating sufficient resources and by reorganizing their own operations to become more focused on serving schools and raising student achievement”(p. 7).

Additionally the NCREL 2000 study identified the priorities and action steps for a school district to support the implementation of a large-scale Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) effort. Findings reveal, “districts that developed their assets of human and social capital (while dedicating adequate financial resources) achieved better results” (p. 28). Human Capital criteria included district leaders and staff that are committed to; supporting the change over time by allocating money to fund operating costs; keeping current with developments by instituting annual training sessions to support the change; and learning about effective, research-based practices in the classroom and regularly

survey to discover how well specific practices are working. Social Capital criteria include district leaders and staff that are committed to; building a trusting and collaborative relationship with all schools by establishing weekly office hours for principal discussions and the creation of support teams for technical assistance with the change; facilitation of networks to share ideas, resources, and experiences with other schools and districts; building collaborative relationships with external agencies (e.g. universities, research institutes) as a means of bridging the gap between educational research and educational practice; communicating with the community regarding school improvement process; building relationships with area businesses and community organizations as a means of gaining support and soliciting input; and building an open and ongoing dialogue with the media.

Additionally, in it's role of building capacity for leadership with resources and budgeting, district's should ask themselves; "Have we structured funding for CSR in a way that defines it as a new way of doing things, not as another specialized program? Have we given schools the support and information they need to make good budgeting decisions? and Have we given schools the budget autonomy that matches their need to support their CSR strategy both at the program and organizational level?" (p. 7).

Key to the readings in school finance was the underlying question: how are educational resources allocated at the school level and what is their impact on student achievement (Odden & Picus, 2000)? Inherent in the readings was the consistent plea from school finance researchers and school reformers to conduct studies linking cost in the educational setting with its affect on student improvement. However, preparation for the demands of the changing role of the principal in this regard was ambiguous,

especially dealing with financial leadership practices. Missing in the literature was in depth discussion about actual leadership practices focusing on viewing budgets as instruments of change. Clearly research studies to understand the connection between spending and student achievement in different school contexts would be beneficial.

To this end Paul T. Hill from The School Finance Redesign Project (SFRP) at the University of Washington's Center on Reinventing Public Education recently released a synthesis of their work to date titled "Interim Summary Report". Examining how K-12 finance can be redesigned to better support student performance as its goal, the project initiated in 2002 is supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. A select Working Group of finance scholars in both school and related fields met seven times since May 2006 to review preliminary results and advise on the drafting of a summary report.

Selected findings by researcher, study name and results were reported around the five research questions identified for the project. A brief synopsis of selected SFRP selected study findings is displayed in Table 2.4. Only those studies with direct application to this dissertation were included.

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) conducted a study in 2003 with the research team of Pan, Rudo. Schneider, and Smith-Hansen. They examined district level patterns of resource allocation, district and school resource practices implemented to improve student performance, and barriers and challenges faced by districts and schools to efficient resource allocations. "Their findings demonstrated a strong relationship between resources and student success. Furthermore, the results indicated that allocating resources within selected areas and for certain practices might

Table 2.4: Selected SFRP Studies and their Results

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Question 1: Are funds now used efficiently? What stands in the way?

\*Hansen & DeWys - *School Finance Systems and Their Responsiveness to Performance Pressure: A Case Study of Texas* – Finding- Educators have difficulty changing how they spend money, time, and how to select and train staff. Current funding mechanisms are barriers to increase academic performance. (p.10 and p. 13)

\*Rosa – *Allocation Autonomy: How District Policies That Deploy Resources Can Support (or Undermine ) District Reform Strategies* - Finding - Districts are unaware of the costs of different schools and programs, unaware of the cost of educating particular pupils or whether policymakers’ priorities have any link to spending patterns. Chaotic spending patterns by districts and central office units reveal a school’s priorities are not the main consideration for resource allocation. (p.10)

\*Rosa – *What Is the Sum of the Parts?*-Finding – Rules for use of funds on one level of government conflict with the rules and priorities established by other levels. Federal government assumes that states and localities fund basic school programs but states and localities spend less of their own money on schools that receive federal funds. Thus, schools serving the most disadvantaged student often have less money, and are more constrained about how they use it, than schools serving the advantaged. (p.11)

\*Koppich – *Resource allocation in Traditional and Reform – Oriented Collective Bargaining Agreements* – Finding – Collective bargaining agreements force a sharp division between people who should work closely together. Discussions should be structured so that student performance is a priority. (p.12)

\*Cross & \*Rosa – *How the Federal Government Shapes and Distorts the Financing of K-12 Schools* - Finding – System funding strategy make it difficult for teachers and principals to adapt funds to the needs of their most challenging students. (p.12)

Question 2: Are there good ideas about how to focus money on instruction?

\*Odden, Goetz, & Picus – *Paying for School Finance Adequacy with the National Average Expenditure Per Pupil* – Finding – Reallocating current spending pays for changes within a district. (p. 13)

\*Sharp & Bransford - *Learning Science Meets School Finance: The How People learn Framework as a Tool for Resource Decision* – Finding – “Future research is needed to support, extend, and refine this process for matching general resources to specific contexts” (p. 13) They demonstrate how learning science can be applied to school finance; focus resources on student assessment, instruction adapted to individual learning styles, greater attention to complex reading materials, group discussion, and teacher training in comprehension-based instruction. (p. 13)

\*Hanushek – *Incentive-Based Financing of Schools* – Finding – Suggests that performance-based accountability would build the link between funding and student learning. (p.14)

\*Rosa, Davis, & Guinn – *Spending Choices and School Autonomy: Lessons From Ohio Elementary Schools* – Finding- Schools that have more autonomy and whose funds depend on performance spend money differently. (p.14)

\*Willis, Durante, & Gazzo – *Toward Effective Resource Use: Assessing How Education Dollars Are Spent* – Finding-Compare similar district resource use to suggest greater efficiency of their own resources. Baseline and productivity analysis are suggested to spend money differently. (p.14)

\*Liu – *Improving Title I Funding Equity Across States, Districts, and Schools* – Finding – Promising

alternative ways to allocate and use funds under Title I, the federal government's largest K-12 funding program. Ways of increasing the share of Title I funds allocated to schools and districts and ensuring schools receiving federal funds experience real increases in total funding are suggested. (p. 14)

\*Kirst – *Two Alternative Yet Complementary Conceptual Frameworks for Financing American Education* – Finding – Suggests spending resources on out-of-school interventions for the most disadvantaged children, helping teachers and students focus on instruction and increase student learning. (p.14)

Question 3: Are there good ideas about attracting and rewarding educators?

Five studies were released under this question.

Question 4: Do we know enough to make prescriptions now?

\*Guthrie & Hill – *Making Resource Decisions Amidst Technical Uncertainty*- Finding – Suggest an educational system designed to be in constant search for better options. New options, new methods, more experimentation with design, all mean new learning resulting in greater knowledge for communities about how to effectively spend money. (p. 18)

\*Weiss – *Conditions for Student Success: The Cycle of Continuous Instructional Improvement* - Finding – A combination of strong performance pressure, flexible control over the money available for instruction, and close attention to evidence about student growth allows a school to continuously improve. She emphasizes the importance of rich information about school context, resource use, and student performance and of technology that enables educators and administrators to observe and analyze the sources of performance variations. With rich information and a determination to use it to drive resource allocation decisions, “the knowledge base in education will grow astronomically”. School and district leaders can know what different programs or teacher investments cost and whether or not they are working. They will also have access to comparable evidence from other schools and from research and can therefore find promising methods to replace unproductive ones. (p. 19)  
Three other studies were released under this question.

Question 5: How can policymakers ensure that funds are spent effectively?

\*McDonnell – *Creating the Political Conditions for Major Changes in School Finance Policy* – Finding – Acknowledging that some public policy changes are more viable than others, she insists that alternative systems especially those that credibly promise higher performance, are feasible. (p.20 )

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make a significant impact on student performance” (p. vi). Essentially, this study showed “both the level of resources and their explicit allocation seem to affect educational outcomes” (p. vi). Pan et al. suggested that “districts ensure administrative staff develop of financial management skills or use the services of accountants or financial analysts so they can better understand the limits and flexibility of fund sources, examine information on spending patterns, determine whether spending supports district priorities, and reallocate funds as needs arise from year to year or within a school year” (p. ix). On the



issue of school context, findings revealed that districts must realize that one size does not fit all regarding approaches to effective resource allocation. Districts must support opportunities for administrators to share successful resource allocation practices or seek guidance on barriers or challenges they face.

Both the current School Finance Redesign Project interim summary and the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's findings make it clear that while there is no silver bullet to remedy the challenges that exist in the resource allocation process, a "clear, focused and efficient use of public funds is a necessary element of any strategy for increasing student learning" (Hill, 2008, p. 15). Yet "ambitious student achievement goals will be difficult to accomplish without a deeper understanding of effective resource allocation" (Pan, et al., 2003). Justifiably, professional practices are one of the key elements being studied to shed light on this challenge.

#### *School Accountability Measures In a Time of Reform*

As schools strive to meet the higher academic requirements of state and federal laws, policymakers and researchers are taking a closer look at how the nation's public schools spend money, and whether the expenditures are connected to their goals. The importance of the principal and the quality of leadership provided in order to meet school goals is crucial to ensure proper implementation and monitoring of the school improvement plan (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005, Leithwood & Riehl, 2003).

Studies by Odden and Wohlstetter (1995) revealed the importance of the role of the principal in promoting the climate for reform. They write, "Successful principals play a key role in several areas; dispersing power, promoting a school-wide commitment to growth in skills and knowledge, getting all teachers to participate in the work of the

school, collecting information about student learning, and distributing rewards”(p. 35)

Essentially, these principals introduced innovations and moved reform agendas forward.

Among the many duties of a principal the management of the financial resources allocated to the school and the monitoring of their use to meet school improvement goals is a responsibility (Norton & Kelly, 1997). School leaders must ensure the resource allocation and reallocation process is driven by the goals that the school planning team established to meet the learning needs of the students and the degree to which those goals are met each year (Norton & Kelly, 1997). A leader’s ability to establish the links between their instructional leadership practices and their financial leadership practices will allow for fractal and sustainable improvements.

Awareness of the overlapping process of developing a school-wide budget and implementing a school improvement plan is an ongoing leadership responsibility.

The school planning team may be in the process of finalizing allocations to divisions and departments for the next school year while at the same time analyzing data, identifying needs, and beginning to determine school-wide financial needs for the year after next. In other words, the budgeting process is cyclical and includes planning, budgeting, and evaluation, all of which take place within a given time period (Norton & Kelly, p. 74).

LaCost and Grady (1995) noted that “the importance of administrator expertise at the site level is supported by Odden’s (1992) conclusion that...accomplishing high levels of student achievement, [as indicated in the national goals], is quintessentially a school, not a district, function” (p. 327-328), supports the current thrust to increase principal responsibility for allocating and monitoring resources (Norton & Kelly, p. 85).

As Reeves (2005) notes in his analysis of school improvement plans for the Clark County School District, “As complex as the planning process is, the present research and a healthy dose of common sense make one thing clear: Planning without effective

implementation is without value to the district's goals of achievement and equity " (p. 19). Yet implementation without periodic monitoring of the implementation of building plans is also without value. Clearly, just as the frequent monitoring of student assessment results is related to improvements in achievement, there should be similar monitoring practices for the improvement supports (Reeves, 2005).

Odden (2000) recommends schools ask many questions before selecting a specific strategy for school reform. "They must ensure above all that the design they select is both affordable and appropriate to their own local needs" (Odden, p.439).

He further cautions school leaders to research the impacts of the programs or strategies selected to determine the effectiveness of the design (Odden, 2000).

Decisions' concerning the selection of a program or intervention strategy related to achieving the school goal is also unique to each school. Although a site-based management approach seems to be a technique mentioned frequently in the literature, this approach usually involves collaboration from teachers, parents, and community members (Norton & Kelly, 1997). Questions such as, "Were the purposes for which the funds were allocated achieved?", "Did the investment of funds to support the strategies in the school improvement plan achieve the desired result?" are important for the school improvement team to analyze during a review process (Norton & Kelly, 1997).

A starting point for measurement and evaluation is to have clearly defined goals and objectives (Hanushek, 1994). Monitoring the use of resources is crucial to affirm the proper allocation of funds, guard against ineffective allocation, and intervene by providing appropriate resources when faced with unforeseen emergencies (Norton & Kelly, 1997). Conducting frequent needs assessments determines if a discrepancy

between what is and what should be exists (Herman & Herman, 1997). Synthesis and analysis of this kind is particularly useful when it becomes necessary to reallocate resources during the school year (Norton & Kelly, 1997).

Picus (2000) indicated that little is known about how funds are utilized at the individual student or school-level and contended that if existing or additional revenues were spent in the same ways as current education revenues, improved student achievement is unlikely to emerge. It remains to be proven conclusively if variations in school-level spending influences student achievement.

The research revealed that states struggle to determine if educational finance systems can be designed to assure that all students achieve high levels of learning while ensuring funds are used in the most productive manner (Hanushek, 1996). If reform efforts are going to be successful and result in improved student outcomes, establishing a relationship between systemic reforms with school finance reform is essential (Hirth, 1996). Hirth contends that in order for reform initiatives to be effective, coordination of initiatives is necessary so that what is mandated is sufficiently funded. “Lack of adequate funding results in only partial implementation of new policies designed to foster success for all students” (Hirth, p. 474).

The No Child Left Behind Act holds districts, individual schools, and teachers accountable for student performance. The attention that No Child Left Behind has brought to educational accountability has been unprecedented. “Researchers have only a cursory understanding of educators’ existing practices, and they know little about how these practices are informed by the influx of data-driven tools” (Brunner, p. 242). However, standards, assessments, and accountability are the basis of today’s national

education reform movement and are clearly embraced by the education policy community (Brunner, 2005).

At a time when school leaders are redesigning and refocusing policies and practices to ensure all students reach the AYP targets at the same time, site administrators have a dual concern when it comes to program selection: fiscal responsibility and program effectiveness (Ashdown and Hummel-Rossi, 2002). Bringing these two perspectives together into a resource allocation decision-making framework can be difficult.

### *Accountability Contexts*

Hanushek (1995) asserts that money is presently not used well within schools. “The nation will not, indeed cannot, continue to spend more and more on education to achieve flat or falling performance” (Hanushek, p.62). Hanushek (1994) believes the highest priority for America’s schools is to use existing resources more efficiently. School funds should be devoted to the programs that get the best possible results. He states, “ If a program does not improve student performance, do not fund it” (p. 11). School finance researcher Allen Odden (2000) urges school leaders to determine the effectiveness of a reform design and to research the impact it will have prior to its purchase. Indeed, “access to a full picture of a program’s costs relative to the total scope of its outcomes would provide a stronger basis for decision making” (p. 439).

However as school finance researcher Karen Hawley Miles asserts, “schools have limited ability to change their use of resources to meet higher standards-making school control of resources an important “missing piece” in creating meaningful accountability” (Hawley Miles, nd., p. 1). Additionally she identified typical barriers school leaders

confront in trying to use resources in different ways to meet standards; flexibility and autonomy. While outlining the benefits of greater flexibility and freedom for schools to organize staff, time, and dollars to support their improvement strategies, Hawley Miles acknowledges that there is no guarantee for greater student achievement with greater autonomy automatically. By combining standards with the factors of staff commitment, high-quality teaching, and incentives, the power to organize and use resources to create responsive, coherent school organizations makes accountability for improvement possible (Hawley Miles, n.d.).

Elmore (2002) explains that accountability must be a reciprocal process. An expectation to ensure continuous improvement means school leaders must receive the appropriate training to provide the requisite knowledge and skills to do the job well. The notion of “reciprocity for capacity” is the glue that holds accountability systems together” (p. 6). Elmore posits that if people in schools are to respond to external pressure for accountability, they have to learn to do their work differently and rebuild the organization of schooling around a different way of doing work.

Leithwood, Steinbach and Jantzi (2002) indicate that the prevailing dominance of accountability on the agenda of educational reformers might cause one to assume that a lot is known of the effects of increased school accountability. Current policy assumes a great deal about how the strategies actually work and what the responses will be (Fuhrman, 1994; McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). While educators respond in diverse ways to the same accountability initiative depending on how much sense they make of it (Elmore, 2005, Hall & Hord, 2006). Approaches to increasing accountability in schools make one of four different sets of assumptions about the status of schools and what is

required to improve them (Leithwood, 2001). Although some leadership practices are useful in almost all organizational circumstances, Leithwood (2001) identified specific leadership practices suitable for a specific policy context. He outlined a four-fold classification of government approaches to educational accountability as a framework to ground leadership practice. The four approaches are referred to as market, decentralization, professional, and management approaches. Within each unique approach, Leithwood notes, school leaders are required additional responses to be effective yet “responses are not well codified and so not easily available for purposes of leadership development” (p. 227).

Market approaches increase competition among schools for students while providing greater choice for parents. In this quasi-market approach to accountability schools are encouraged to become more responsive to their clients and the leader operates as a salesperson. Charter schools, magnet schools, academies or other specialized educational facilities are examples of the market approach. Advocates for the adoption of this approach see schools as unresponsive, bureaucratic and monopolistic and base their views on assumptions about how greater competition will improve student achievement. The expectation is that school leaders must constantly “redesign their organization” (p. 227) in this approach. It is also assumed that leader must develop good customer relations and respond quickly to market demands.

Decentralization approaches to accountability assume that school leaders will become teachers of those with newly found voices – usually parents or staff. “To create an effective decentralized school system, research shows that the district must place in the hands of each school four key resources: power, professional development,

information, and an accountability system with clear rewards and sanctions” (Odden, 1997, p. 11). Studies of decentralization in the private sector indicate the decentralization of power is most likely to lead to performance improvement if accompanied by organizational changes that enhance the information, knowledge and skills of local participants and align the reward system with clearly articulated outcomes (Wohlstetter & Mohrman, 1993). School-based management (SBM) offers a way to encourage improvement by decentralizing control from central offices to individual school sites. “It attempts to give school constituents—administrators, teachers, parents and other community members—more control over what happens in schools”(Wohlstetter & Mohrman, p. 1). Managing the change to SBM requires that systems and processes be redesigned and change management strategies are addressed; vision, change structures and roles, and resources. Definition of the role and responsibilities for school-level governance must take place. “Principals in a system where schools act as independently managed entities need different skills from principals in school that are traditionally organized and managed” (Odden, 1997, p. 14).

Advocates of the decentralized approach believe that their involvement and voice will ensure that resources are maximized in the best interest of the student. The assumption here is that schools and professionals are not as responsive to local values and preferences as they should be. Often, site councils are established to advise the principal.

The professional approach to accountability includes two dimensions; the implementation of a professional control model of site-based management and the professional standards approach. The goal for the professional site-based management dimension “increases the power of teachers in school decision making while holding



teachers more directly accountable for the school's effects on students" (p.224). The professional standards dimension focuses on classroom instructional practices and school leadership practices. Working collectively to reflect on practice, examine evidence about the relationship between practice and performance, and make targeted changes that improve teaching and learning are the foundations of a learning community (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Leader's in this accountability context function as a chairperson for attaining the desired goals of a professional learning community. A major implication in this approach is that leaders have an increased need to stay abreast of best professional practices and to assist staff in the identification of professional standards in their work. Essentially, principals in this accountability approach "...manage from the middle to connect teacher's efforts with the larger system context in ways that are both effective and efficient" (McLaughlin & Talbert, p. 4).

The management approach to accountability sees school leaders functioning as a strategic manager – includes "systematic efforts to create goal-oriented, efficient and effective schools by introducing more rational procedures" (Leithwood, 2001, p.227). While this approach assumes there is not much wrong with the current structure there is a belief that effectiveness will improve with a greater emphasis on strategic, data-driven goals. Leithwood explains that management approaches to accountability assume that effective leadership conforms to what is sometimes referred to as "strategic management" (2001, p.226). Building good working relations with their district colleagues and collecting and interpreting data systematically are characteristics of good leaders within this context. Leithwood further identifies unintended consequences of this approach for both leaders and teachers, cautioning leaders to become aware of strategies to minimize

or eliminate any negative consequences. Consequences result is leaders do not work with their staff and others to “set clear priorities, to design explicit strategies for their accomplishment and to engage in continuous cycles of monitoring and strategy refinement” (p. 228).

Leithwood contends that it is the unique demands of these changing policy contexts that have important implications for the leadership role because, “as the policy contexts change, so do the demands on school leaders” (p. 230). Productive leaders “improve education for their students at the same time as they acknowledge the legitimate demands of policy makers to have their initiatives authentically reflected in the work of the school” (p. 230)

#### *Governance Structure for Resource Allocation - A State Perspective*

The concept of using freedom, funds, and flexibility to improve performance is at the center of the “empowerment schools” plan that one state’s Governor championed (Jacobson, 2008). While the governor’s plan is modeled in part on a program that started in fall 2006 in one of the large urban school districts (Jacobson, 2008, p.1), Michael Strembinsky, former superintendent and initiator of the decentralized system within the Edmonton Public School System in Canada, served as an advisor to the governor to inform him on this restructuring effort. With over five empowerment schools functioning under this governance structure, the school leaders and faculties were given more time and money to use as they decided as long as increased autonomy focused on improved student achievement and school climate. A pay-for-performance program also was added at the empowerment schools. Clearly, allocating and aligning resources to support teaching and learning is a fundamental leadership challenge for these empowered school

leaders (Plecki, Alejano, Knapp, & Lochmiller, 2006). Similarly, “education policymakers must be informed about emerging resource practices and cognizant of the ways incentives can be used to create conditions that support teaching and learning” (p. 6).

#### *Empowerment Autonomies and Accountability Expectations*

The empowerment schools were granted flexibility in five areas; governance, budget, staffing, instruction, and time. Focusing specifically on the autonomy of budget in combination with the school’s mission and “with the goal of creating high performing schools that successfully educate the diverse students they serve” (General Information: Empowerment Schools 2008-09, p.1) school leaders must “develop their design plans using the school district’s budget allocated to them and any other funds that the school was able to raise. Every effort was made to link each of the new schools with a community business partner who provided additional support” (p. 2).

Additionally, four accountability expectations were outlined for empowerment school schools. The empowerment accountability expectations were:

- Schools are expected to show annual progress over their prior year’s performance on test scores and attendance of all students in all groups.
- Schools are expected to serve a population that reflects the full range of students throughout the district, including a similar mix of student by achievement and special needs as in all district schools. Therefore, schools must follow district guidelines with regard to student enrollment and zoning, as well as placement of Special Education students.

- Schools are accountable for expending resources in accordance with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and within approved budget levels. Schools must comply with all district rules and regulations, all state and federal requirements, as well as all contractual and legal mandates, unless specific waivers have been granted.
- Schools will follow and *Accountability Document* which outlines the targeted expectations for the school in student achievement, school environment, and fiscal integrity, as well as the incentives to be gained by meeting targets and the consequences that will apply if targets are not met.

Clearly, empowerment within the large urban district was not “simply turning people loose and hoping for the best” (DuFour & Eaker, 1992, p. 55). As Kanter (1983) states, “Freedom is not the absence of structure, letting employees go off and do whatever they want, but rather a clear structure which enables people to work within established boundaries in a creative and autonomous way” (p. 248). The “directed autonomy” (Waterman, 1987, p. 82) concept when applied identifies a few central values that will give direction to the activities and decisions of all its members and then demands rigid adherence to these few non-negotiable values on the part of its members.

From a cultural perspective, “Schools following the dictates of directed autonomy have been characterized as both tightly and loosely coupled” (DuFour & Eaker, 1992, p. 51). While strong core values exist that define behaviors and are vigilantly protected, teachers are given freedom as to how these values are to be realized (Sergiovanni, 1984).

The loose-tight dynamic is applied to school implementation and design in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded study, *The Turnaround Challenge* (2007). In the report, “loose” refers to latitude in management or design, with decisions being made

out in the field; “tight” in this context means more centralized control” (p. 58). The authors suggest the loose/tight dynamic deserves deeper study, “as it is a linchpin of reform across clusters of schools” (p. 58) they have studied. However, they do acknowledge that “effective turnaround at scale requires a transparent, deliberate blending of “loose” and “tight” in implementation and design” (p. 56).

#### “Infrastructures for Interoperability of Financial Leadership Practices”

As the management and leadership roles of the principal overlap, (Fullan, 2004) leadership emerges as the function needed to address problems that do not have easy answers (Heifetz, 1994). According to Heifetz, mobilizing others to confront problems that have not yet been addressed successfully is the adaptive challenge for leaders. Yet he accuses us of looking for the wrong kind of leadership when the going gets tough, stating, “... in a crisis... we call for someone with answers, decision, strength, and a map of the future, someone who knows where we ought to be going-in short someone who can make hard problems simple...Instead of looking for saviors, we should be calling for leadership that will challenge us in new ways” (p. 21). Therefore leadership is not mobilizing others to solve problems we already know how to solve, but helping them to confront problems that have not yet been addressed successfully. Inorder to mobilize, people must have information to make informed decisions. Openness and availability of information for a wide range of users within an organization will lead to changes in the way the organization operates (Miller, 2000).

As demands to meet the needs of students increase without a corresponding increase in funding, leaders need to rethink their use of school-level resources to support student achievement (Odden & Archibald, 2000). “Most analysts predict that resources

will rise by only 25 percent in real per-pupil terms over the next 10 years, the period of time in which we want to double or triple the portion of students now achieving at performance standards” (Odden & Archibald, 2000, p. 2) Acknowledging this adaptive challenge requires a creative problem solving leadership mindset rather than a quick-fix mentality to prevail for the short, medium, and long term. School finance researchers suggest leaders look to the reallocation of existing resources to meet the standards-based expectations of having all students learn the same information by the 2013-2014 school year (Odden, 2000 Picus, 2000 Hanusheck, 1996). How do school leaders achieve an efficient allocation and reallocation mechanism within their school?

### *Mobilizing Toward Interoperability*

Creating an environment within a school that seamlessly exchanges information with little or no additional effort serves as the underpinning argument for the need to establish financial leadership infrastructures. The systemic thinking lens focuses on the relationship between the organization (school) and its environment (Senge, 1990; Murphy, 1992). Aligning the tools, routines, and resources within the many sub-units of the overarching school’s system will allow for greater transparency and clarity in financial decision making. However the governance architecture of a school may hinder the financial flow and openness of information from one sub-unit to another. Leadership that seeks to develop a financial infrastructure, which serves as a catalyst for greater interoperability among organizational components of a school, may realize the same improvements private-sector businesses realized a decade ago (Collins, Fruth, Sessa, & Laird, 2007). “By looking at their management and operational systems from a data perspective, businesses were able to implement technology to increase efficiency and

productivity and improve their operations. Interoperable systems offer the same opportunity in education today” (Collins, et al., p.3).

Creating interoperable systems and practices within a school can begin with developing a financial infrastructure designed with the stakeholders of the school. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2004) write, ”While new organizational structures and new leadership roles matter to instructional innovation, what seems most critical is how leadership practice is undertaken. Yet, the practice of school leadership has received limited attention in the research literature” (p.3).

A change of the internal systems and practices within a school will be “ able to maximize the value and reuse potential of information under its control. It is also able to exchange this information effectively with other equally interoperable bodies, allowing new knowledge to be generated from the identification of relationships between previously unrelated sets of data” (Miller, 2000, p. 6).

#### *Interoperability in Education Today*

Multiple uncoordinated efforts to collect data coupled with technological incompatibility to access the information to make better decisions (Collins, et al., 2007) may explain the lack of linkages that exist between different sub-units ( ie. instruction, technology, professional development) within a school. For example, schools, as well as districts, have been challenged to answer the question; what is the relationship between fiscal resources and school performance? Lack of understanding and analysis of the relationship between fiscal resources and how they contribute to student performance hinder timely reallocation actions and frame a leader’s fiscal decisions to be inefficient due to lack of interoperability of internal systems. “For timely and efficient access to

these data, the systems within which they are stored must be capable of exchanging data quickly and easily with the systems that need the information: This is the definition of interoperability" (Collins, p. 2).

Collins et al. assert that creating interoperable systems to share data offers tremendous cost and time savings by having each subunit of the organization coordinating with other units rather than focusing on its immediate needs. They cite financial networks such as the ATM network in all banks, the motor vehicle registration and driver's licenses system, the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council as agencies that have been challenged to achieve compatible and portable data systems.

#### *School Finance and Interoperable Infrastructures*

Acknowledging that "education is not alone in its struggle to create compatible and portable data systems" (Collins et al, p. 4), once achieved a savings in time, cost, staff capacity, and "most importantly, timely and useful information to inform and improve educational processes" (Collins et al., p. 11) can be realized. However as with most change, "apprehension may preclude interoperability from becoming a reality in education" (Collins, p. 6) although pockets of interoperability do exist in certain states and regions.

The relationship between spending money and student achievement is the focus of many school finance experts. Eric A. Hanushek's message has consistently been that we have dramatically increased our investments, yet they have not yielded high returns (Hanushek, 1995). In his words, "There is no consistent, systematic relationship between school resources and student performance (Hanushek, p. 62). Furthermore, Hanushek



(1995) asserts that money is presently not used well within schools but if used differently, money could become a potent policy instrument. He contends; “The nation will not, indeed cannot, continue to spend more and more on education to achieve flat or falling performance”(Hanushek, 1994).

Another view that addresses the issue of how educational leaders determine the connection between funding levels and student outcomes is posited by Lawrence Picus. As a school finance researcher he strongly advocates for collecting data at the student level to best understand linkages between resource spending and student outcomes (Picus, 2000). Although he acknowledges that gathering this type of data is expensive and difficult, this effort, he explains is in response to the growing trend toward more school-site decision making and the growing demand for accountability for student performance (Picus, p.75). Picus (2000) suggests that it would be most cost effective for the federal government to support the collection of data at the student level since he believes it has the greatest potential for improving the understanding of student learning.

Roza (2005) reports on the spending differences among schools within the same district “driven by the antiquated, often haphazard, budgeting practices typical in large urban school districts” (p. 1). The results of her work in several major urban districts reveal, “that spending among schools varies substantially and often indiscriminately within districts and that district leaders are largely unaware of where their dollars are going” (p. 2). Without spending data, district leaders are making decisions about where to place, or eliminate, programs. Roza asserts, “current budgeting practices that yield erratic spending differences among schools certainly undermine efforts to hold all schools to the

same standard” (p.9). The study’s findings call for spending transparency into district allocations through the use of on-line tools to collect fiscal data down to the school level.

Clear and coherent fiscal spending and collection practices will be a start to dispel the defensive spending routines that may define the current status of financial leadership practices. Plausibly, the need to systematically assess performance and identify needs more precisely in order to allocate resources may partially rest on the notion that the various subsystems within a district and school could lack the interoperable means for sharing information about infrastructure performance.

#### “Principal Preparation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”

Establishing rigorous standards and performance goals for school leaders and defining the responsibilities of effective school leadership in 21<sup>st</sup> century schools was the purpose of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) created in 1994 (Murphy, 2002, 2003). The ISLLC standards represent a comprehensive set of guiding principles committed to raising performance standards for school leaders, identified knowledge, disposition, and performance indicators to assist in defining each standard.

Understanding and interpreting the work and motives of ISLLC was not without controversy however. Fenwick English, a University of North Carolina Educational Leadership Professor, refers to the standards as “an example of an ideology parading as a science”. One of the hallmarks of an ideology is not what it reveals, but what it conceals” (English, no date, p. 82). He contends the standards are “rooted in cultural forms and perspectives that are themselves barriers to the very agendas (such as social justice) we say we support” (p. 82). Furthermore, he highlights unintended consequences of the national standards for educational leaders. First he argues the standards have lowered the

bar for leader preparation by limiting the set of responsibilities of school leaders.

Secondly, he asserts that by linking the standards to a static knowledge base, ISLLC has inferred schools are static social systems, the hallmark of a dead field of study (English, 2008).

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of seventy studies, both published and unpublished, that examine the effects of leadership practices on student achievement and which should take primacy. Sixty-six leadership practices were found to have statistically significant relationships with student achievement. However, “some of the most important principal practices were not specified in the ISLLC standards” (Gaudreau, Kufel, & Parks, 2006, p. 28).

*Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008*

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration in December 2007 approved revised ISLLC standards now renamed the Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008. Knowledge and behavior indicators of the old ISLLC standards have been “replaced with a list of “functions” whose purpose is to clarify the standards based on the research” (Olson, 2008, p. 14). Individual states now need to prioritize the functions inside the standards to drive change relevant for their state’s educational environment. For example, Georgia utilizes ISLLC as the basis for state certification while the impact of the standards in Iowa is reflected in administrator state licensure procedures and serves as the basis for the principal-leadership academy. Frederick M. Hess, the director of education-policy studies for the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington think tank, who has written several studies critical of principal preparation programs asserts that the skills principals need might vary by context. Hess comments,

“The idea that we can come up, bureaucratically, with a laundry list that’s going to fit small schools and big schools is the problem” (Olson, 2008, p. 14). Moreover, Schaech (2002) cautions, “For standards to motivate, they must have meaning and perceived value to those to whom they are being applied” (p. 86).

ISLLC Standard Three, in the pre-revised version states; “ An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment” (National Association of Secondary School Principals, August 10, 2007). Interestingly, ISLLC 2008 Standard Three verbiage has remained the same as the version written and approved in 2002 yet the focus on educational accountability and school contexts have changed significantly (Shipman, Queen, & Peel, 2007). One might conclude that reconceptualization of the role and practices of educational leaders in the areas of organizational, operational, and resource management have remained static in this unquestionably dynamic educational landscape. However under the Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008 functions for Standard Three have been revised to include; monitor and evaluate the management and operational systems, obtain, allocate, align, and efficiently utilize human, fiscal, and technological resources; promote and protect the welfare and safety of students and staff; develop the capacity for distributed leadership; ensure teacher and organizational time is focused to support quality instruction and student learning.

English (2008) contends the “concept of a knowledge base be replaced by the idea of a knowledge dynamic” (p. 69). “A knowledge dynamic acknowledges that defining the borders between an applied field and a “nonfield’ is not the central issue, because the

growth of knowledge is not about privilege and power, exclusivity and elitism, but about truthfulness and problem solving, and rests on theoretical pluralism and creating competing research programs” (Lakatos, 1999 in English, 2008 p. 70).

Sherman, Sherman, and Gill (2007) concur with English (2008) by stating, “The key to preparing administrators is not “HOW” we choose to prepare future leaders but “WHAT” constitutes the preparation they receive”. They propose a four strand model to include the strands of; knowledge, skills, educational values/beliefs, and processes held together with the underlying commitment to have educational leaders engage in “reflective analysis through metacognition and introspection throughout the program” (Sherman, et al., p. 9). The authors contend, “The future of educational leadership lies in the ability to teach the next generation of leaders how to use their conceptual and intellectual skills; in essence, how to think critically, solve problems appropriately, make decisions cogently and provide leadership to the enterprise”(p. 9).

Within the skill component strand of Sherman’s et al. model are the technical competencies that an educational leader must possess to be successful (Sherman et al, 2007). While the authors identify the need for leaders to possess finance skills, they omit to outline what the technical components of this skill set include. Having agreement on what specifically is trying to be learned is lacking in the technical competency area of finance. The question remains, what kind of financial leadership knowledge and skills do school leaders need when responding to the demands of accountability for student performance?

While ISLLC Standard Three espouses what principals can and should do, an IC Map of principal financial leadership practices in-use may reveal whether they are

moving the ISLLC standard into practice. Embracing the gap between the vision of the standards and the reality of the standards (Senge, 1990) will depend on the strategies and practices leaders utilize daily to bridge the theory- practice gap within their unique context. But without sustained commitment and dramatically different strategies to obtain, allocate, align and efficiently utilize human, fiscal and technological resources (ISSLC 2008, edweek.org) the future will look like the past (Elmore, 2005). Identifying how financial leadership practice takes form between the interactions of the leader and followers in a school (Spillane, 2006) will contribute to defining the technical competencies necessary to efficiently and effectively managing school resources.

Shipman, Queen, and Peel (2007) acknowledge that sound fiscal practices and understanding will have a direct impact on student achievement, “Every business has a chief financial officer (CFO) – and the school’s is the principal” (p.61). Yet they also acknowledge that principal preparation programs unfortunately offer few classes to help in this area.

### *Leadership Capacity*

Acknowledging the differences in school leader capacity to engage in continuous improvement, if the system is to change, support for capacity development for their leaders must be in place (Fullan, 2005). Understanding, not merely acknowledging the diverse needs of principals relating to financial leadership practices will allow for the offering of ongoing context specific and meaningful professional development. Leadership preparation and professional development programs thought of as a continuum of experiences rather than a single event will not only address principal

efficacy, but also will match the demands of the job at any point in time (Glassman & Glassman, 1997).

Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000) suggest that collective efficacy can be developed by providing authentic mastery experiences. “As the school leaders defined it, effective training provides technical assistance such as learning about budgeting and compliance issues; it offers counsel on how to handle conflict and other challenges, and it gives principals and superintendents the opportunity to network and learn from each other” (Johnson, Public Agenda, p. 6)

Over two hundred practicing and aspiring principals in Missouri asserted their likes, dislikes, and recommended changes concerning preparation programs in the study by Edmonds, Waddle, Murphy, Ozturgut, and Caruthers (2007), *Leading the Learning: What Missouri Principals Say About Their Preparation Programs*. Respondents identified the following changes for preparation programs: more hands-on internships, more relevant curriculum, a balance between theory and practice, more mentoring, and more information on evaluation and coaching (Edmonds, et al, 2007). The authors encouraged the universities, state departments, professional organizations, and school leaders “to join hands to make the changes necessary to provide relevant preparation programs and meaningful professional development for educational leaders” (p. 19) in that state.

The investigation of causal relationship between leader and school improvement has been problematic (Reeves, 2006; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Clarity regarding the performance standards of educational leaders and a one-size-fits-all mentality of an external accountability system may account for some of the ambiguity in evaluating leadership efficiency. As English (2008) points out, “Performance as an educational

leader is dependent on how the leader “sees” events, situations, and challenges. The core values of a leader help him or her know how to respond, which challenges to accept or to ignore, and how to shape the practice of leadership in schools” (p. 53). English further asserts that the discrepancy between the core values of a leader and his or her role demands make up the agenda for action. Bridging the gap between reality and vision is the “space where any leader decides what to do and how to respond to circumstances” (English, 2008, p.53).

In a 2003 report, *Rolling Up Their Sleeves: Superintendents and Principals Talk About What’s Needed to Fix Public Schools*, conducted by Public Agenda for the Wallace Foundation sought to deepen understanding about the principalship. School leaders felt their biggest challenges were funding and compliance with local, state and federal mandates;

...even as leaders report that they are focusing as never before on curriculum, instruction, mentoring, and professional development – all designed to improve classroom teaching – they are hamstrung by red tape, competing laws and regulations, and inadequate resources to meet increased requirements and mandates (p. 7).

Additionally, findings reveal, from the superintendent’s perspective, a good principal is key to a successful school. However principals themselves don’t think they are equipped with the skills to fix a troubled school. Both groups give unenthusiastic reviews to formal administrator training programs, and few view principal certification as proof of high-quality skills (Farkas, Johnson, Duffett, Syat, & Vine, 2003). Ninety-six percent of practicing principals say that colleagues were more helpful than graduate studies in preparing them for the job and two-thirds of the principals polled reported that leadership programs in graduate schools of education are out of touch with what



principals need to know. The report concludes with an acknowledgement from both superintendents and principals about the realities of the job:

...we feel that today's superintendents and principals are clearly aware of the serious consequences of their work, and most are not afraid to be held accountable, even in the face of tough odds. (p. 46).

*Trends of the future, the future is now: School Administrative Manager (SAM) Initiative*

Historically, the overall responsibility for the school's operation has been the responsibility of the principal (Portin, 2006). Balancing the managerial need with the instructional classroom needs adds to the complexity of the role of the principal given the current context of high expectations and accountability. Reconceptualizing the management role of the principal has begun by reassigning operational responsibilities (ie. budget, bus schedules, cafeteria duty, recess monitoring) to a School Administrative Manager (SAM) thus allowing the principal to focus on improving instruction. The goal of this approach, pioneered by the Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools with the Wallace Foundations support, is to hire a SAM to assume operational functions thus allowing the principal more time to focus on instruction. Presently eleven states or districts are piloting the SAM program; Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Kentucky, New York City, Atlanta, Chicago, Louisville, Portland, OR, and Springfield, IL. (DeVita, 2007, p.6). "The SAM's strategy is that the principal has too much to do and they can't be an effective instructional leader" (Holland, p. 3).

By minimizing the operational duties of the principal, instruction and learning will become the first priority (DeVita, 2007, p.4). Initial research findings show that principals spend thirty percent of their time on activities directly related to learning while the majority of their time is spent on school operations (Holland, p.2). A process is in

place for daily debriefings between the principal and the SAM to ensure each other knows what the other person is doing.

### *Bursars*

Unlike SAM's in the United States, Bursar's in the United Kingdom can serve as a full member of the school's management team or leadership group. However, like the SAM's in the United States, the role of Bursar emerged in January 2003 in response to remodeling reforms to remove some of the management load from headteachers or principals. The Bursar Development Program (BDP) provides training and support to head teachers defining the role and responsibilities of the bursar position. The core functions of a bursar depend on a school's needs and circumstances. "At the primary level the bursar may be heavily involved with seeking sponsorship or promoting the school locally while at the secondary level tasks include; strategic planning, finance, human resource management, estate management, whole school administration, marketing and liaison" (TDA, p. 6-9). The National College for School Leadership trains and certifies candidates for the bursar's position. A certificate of school business management (CSBM) or a diploma of school business management (DSBM) is awarded at the completion of the resource management training.

The CSBM is externally accredited by the Institute of Administrative Management at the international diploma level and is made up of eight modules:

- School business management
- Financial management
- Human resource management
- Information and communication technology, management information systems
- Facilities management
- Risk management
- Administrative and support services management
- Sustainable development

The DSBM, which is also externally accredited by Institute of Administrative

Management at the international and advanced levels, focuses on:

- Change management
- Managing school improvement
- Strategic management

Both of these courses of study are fully funded for all maintained schools and open to suitable candidates with the support of their head teacher and chair of governors (school board).

Essentially, the rationale for training and recruiting bursars is to “lever more productivity from all resources through better management” and to allow head teachers greater opportunities to implement reforms (p. 4).

#### *Formative Leadership*

Ash and Persil (2000) describe Formative Leadership Theory, which is based on the belief that there are numerous leadership possibilities within the school. The leadership is not role specific, but rather is based on the concept of the teacher as leader and the principal as the leader of leaders. “The school’s orientation to change is embedded in its culture and is reflected in the collective mindset of the faculty” (p. 22). Formative leadership requires the development of a different set of skills; listening, asking questions, engaging faculty and staff members in conversation about teaching and learning, collecting and analyzing data, and benchmarking promising practices. These skills replace top-down directives, traditional models of supervision, and the expectation that the leader has all the answers. “These new role expectations provide new opportunities for leadership to emerge from the teaching ranks” (p. 22). Formative leadership behaviors involve a high level of facilitation skills, team inquiry, learning, and

collaborative problem solving form the basis of “a new paradigm for quality leadership” (p. 16). Ash and Persall (2000) contend however that existing administrative structures and professional training programs are “often in conflict with the kind of change that the times demand” (p. 15).

“Recognizing the challenges of leadership, along with the pains of change, shouldn't diminish anyone's eagerness to reap the rewards of creating value and meaning in other people's lives” (Heifetz Interview with Taylor, 1999). Instead by respecting the changing reality educational leaders face daily, preparation program developers and professional development designers must accept the challenge of identifying current trends and issues in the field, simulate conditions for the aspiring or current leader to rehearse decisions to address real-life leadership challenges in a safe environment, and allocate time to reflect and dialogue on leadership problems of practice within a problem-based learning or case study methodology environment (Lyons, Schumacher, & Cameron, 2008).

Borrowing from Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) distinction about the types of knowledge that inform practice, designing modules for instruction focusing on knowledge of financial leadership practices and knowledge for financial leadership practices can begin to clarify the links for school leaders between practices and outcomes using formal pedagogy as the basis to inform their financial leadership practice. Furthermore, mindfully translating knowledge from the environment in terms specific for their context, leaders can model an increased awareness of purposeful actions (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007) that add to the knowledge base for financial leadership practices at their site.

The twelve “Principles of Change” (Hall & Hord, 2006), the “Theories of Action” (Argyris & Schon, 1974), the concept of “Adaptive Leadership” (Heifetz, 1994), the dimensions of “Mindfulness” (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007) and the principles and practices of mindful leadership outlined by Dickmann and Stanford-Blair (2002), the five leadership profiles of Gordon and Patterson (2006), Brazer and Keller’s (2006) decision making model, and the preliminary findings of the School Finance Redesign Project, can serve as the lenses through which data can be analyzed to construct an IC Map describing the financial leadership practices of elementary school principals in different school contexts.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

Educational and economic jargon has constructed academic walls that have obscured the financial leadership practices utilized by our school leaders (Krugman, 1994; Miller & Crabtree, 2000). Consciously or unconsciously voices and evidence are missing in the literature regarding this important leadership practice (Miller & Crabtree, p. 608). This study seeks to address this critical gap in the school finance literature by examining configurations of principals' financial leadership practices in-use within varying school accountability contexts. Data from four elementary schools was collected, interpreted, and analyzed for this naturalistic study to capture the actions and unique interactions of school leaders regarding the phenomenon of financial leadership practices.

#### Problem Statement

Conventional resource allocation patterns and monitoring practices continue to yield results that cause the public and policymakers to scrutinize how the nation's public schools spend money, and whether the expenditures enable students to successfully meet accountability goals (Olson, 2005). Frameworks for studying financial leadership practice as an instrument for change are limited in the literature (Frank & Miles, 2007; Barton, 2006) yet pressing expectations continue to link spending to student achievement. For the purpose of this study and at this stage of the research, *financial leadership practice* is defined as *the tools and routines used by the governing body of a school to allocate*

*resources to achieve school improvement goals and support instructional programming for students.* This definition attempts to bridge the sharp separation between fiscal practices and curricular practices in-use within a school.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand and describe elementary school principals' financial leadership practices in-use relative to the school's context (Title I, Non-Title I, Charter, Empowerment School). Site-based financial leadership practices were conceptualized within an Innovation Configuration Map (IC Map) documenting the variations of this leadership practice.

### Research Questions

The four research questions guiding this study are:

1. How do principals' experiences to date with financial leadership shape their current practice?
2. What are the configurations of financial leadership used by principals in the four school contexts?
3. What are the differences/similarities in financial leadership practices in the four school contexts?
4. How do the financial leadership practices support/constrain the attainment of the school improvement goals in the four school contexts?

## Methodology

### *Design*

This study implemented an ethnographic perspective nested in the naturalistic method of inquiry to generate a grounded theory. Qualitative methods provided the foundation to uncover the financial leadership practices in-use within different school contexts. Qualitative data collection occurs in the setting where the event or human action takes place (Creswell, 2003). The natural setting provides an environment where the meanings individuals bring to a situation occur (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, Creswell, 2003). In this study, the setting involved four elementary schools within a large urban urban school district.

Employing an ethnographic perspective to generate a grounded theory for financial leadership practice enabled the researcher to study aspects of what principal's do (behavior), what principal's know (knowledge), and the things principal's make and use (artifacts) in their practice of financial leadership thus illuminating the meaning of systems within their school (Spradley, 1980). In characterizing the work of grounded theory ethnographers, Charmaz (2006) contends they are "likely to move across settings to gain more knowledge of the studied process" (p. 22). She further states that grounded theory ethnographers "can go deep into experiences to make an interpretive rendering" (Charmaz, p. 25).

Smith (1987) categorized four different approaches to qualitative research; interpretive, artistic, systematic, and theory-driven . According to Smith (1987) analysis of the data collected from the qualitative researcher using this design favors greater "...credibility and accessibility of their findings" (p. 179). The systematic ethnographic



method developed by Spradley (1980) called the Developmental Research Sequence (D.R.S.) emphasizes the use of twelve data analysis steps to discover meaning, or as Spradley refers to them - tasks: Step One Locating an informant, Step Two Interviewing an informant, Step Three Making an ethnographic record, Step Four Making descriptive observations, Step Five Making a domain analysis, Step Six Making focused observations, Step Seven Making Taxonomic Analysis, Step Eight Making selected observation, Step Nine Making a componential analysis, Step Ten Discovering cultural themes, Step Eleven Taking a cultural inventory, and Step Twelve Writing the ethnography. When carried out, two things occur; “First, one learns the basic skills of participant observation and writing a cultural description. Second, one carries out original research on a particular cultural scene” (Spradely, 1980, p. 177).

Spradley (1980) states, “My interest in this approach began from a rather simple observation: *some tasks are best accomplished before other tasks when doing ethnography*” (p.vii). Additionally, an Innovation Configuration Map (IC Map) served as the data collection display for a grounded theory generated from this study: an IC Map “is durable because it accounts for variation; it is flexible because researchers can modify their emerging or established analyses as conditions change or further data are gathered” (Charmaz, p.51).

### *Purposive Sampling*

A purposive sampling (Creswell, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of schools was identified within the following accountability contexts; Title I, Non-Title I, Charter, and Empowerment. Within each of these contexts, one elementary school was identified based on the following criteria: principal’s years of experience, size of the school,

percentage of free and reduced lunch students, percentage of special education students, percentage of English language learners, and finally, transiency rates of students. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe different approaches to sampling and identify criterion sampling as “cases that meet some criterion useful for quality assurance” (p. 28). A purposeful selection of sites and individuals for a study assists the researcher to better understand both the problem and the research questions (Creswell, 2003). Selecting four elementary schools with the six criteria listed above ensured “contextual similarity” (Creswell, p. 298) for this study.

The first criteria, principal’s years of experience, identified principals with a minimum of two years experience in that position. Within the large urban school district under study, formalized principal mentoring was offered for the first two years of the principalship. However, this formalized principal mentor program was cancelled for the 2008-09 school year. Principals now must rely on informal mentoring networks and self select the professional development areas of concentration in which to invest their time. Additionally, permission and recommendations for participating principals for this study were obtained from the appropriate area superintendent.

The remaining criterion included in the purposive sampling for this study; size of the school, percentage of free and reduced lunch students, percentage of special education students, percentage of English language learners, and finally, transiency rates of students were selected because these data are reliably and consistently reported by the state department of education for school accountability reports. Additionally, since a Title I school context was included for this study, regard for somewhat similar demographic

characteristics for the other school contexts was considered necessary in the site selection process. Thus the purposive sample ensured contexts served similar student populations.

### *Interview Protocol*

Maxwell (1996) states, “Your research questions formulate what you want to understand; your interview questions are what you ask people in order to gain that understanding” (p.74). Characterizing the interview process as “ a conversation with a purpose” (Kahn and Cannell, 1957, p. 149), the semi-structured, open-ended interviews for this study were mainly conducted at the offices of the participating school leaders and on the school campus for teacher and support staff interviews. Interview protocols were designed for each group of participants involved in this study (see Appendix for protocols).

Based on the review of the literature and the research questions guiding this study, a semi-structured, open-ended interview protocol was developed for the various groupings of participants at various stages of the study. Interview data were transcribed and analyzed and served as an important source of data collection for construction of the IC Map. The texts of all interviews were subjected to the following kinds of ethnographic analysis: domain analysis (Step Six), taxonomic analysis (Step Eight), componential analysis (Step Ten), and/or theme analysis (Step Eleven) analysis as outlined by the D.R.S. Method. “Participant observation and recording fieldnotes, then, are always followed by data analysis, which leads to finding new ethnographic questions, more data collection, more fieldnotes, and more analysis. And so the cycle continues until your project nears completion” (Spradley, p. 34). Additionally, questions were used that were

consistent with D.R.S. Method Steps Four, Six, and Eight: descriptive, structural and contrast questions (Spradley, 1980).

Descriptive questions in Step Four were used to illicit a large sample of terms used by the principals. Structural questions in Step Six test tentative domains and discover terms to include in the domains. Finally, contrast questions in Step Eight seek to uncover relationships between symbols similarities and differences. Spradley notes that these questions will guide the researcher to make more “focused observations” (p. 33).

Marshall and Rossman (2006) contend that “pilot interviews help in understanding oneself as a researcher” (p. 57) and can assist in highlighting gaps in data collection. Prior to actual use of the interview protocols, an expert panel of educators piloted the questions so that the researcher could gain greater clarity and focus with each interview question. Revisions were made to the interview protocols based on the expert panel’s feedback. The intention of the interview process was to learn and understand how financial leadership practices were utilized to create actions and interactions at their school.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed in a timely manner. The transcripts were shared with the interviewed participant(s) for accuracy and/or revisions. The material was then systematically analyzed and reviewed by a peer. Both the aforementioned constructs of member checking and peer debriefing ensured the trustworthiness of the researcher’s actions and added to the credibility of this study.

#### *Observational Protocol*

To record information during an observation for financial leadership practices in-use at the various school sites, fieldnotes were recorded on a template constructed prior to

all observations to ensure an organized means for recording and keeping observational field notes. (Creswell, 2005). Spradley notes that during the course of fieldwork the types of observations will change. Initially broad descriptive observations will be made (Step Four); then more focused observations are conducted (Step Seven) as the research narrows; and finally after “repeated observations in the field, you will be able to narrow your investigation still further to make selective observations (Step Ten)” (p. 33). An ethnographic record (Step Three) was kept to record observations and fieldnotes. “This ethnographic record builds a bridge between observation and analysis” (Spradley, p. 33)

### *Transforming Data*

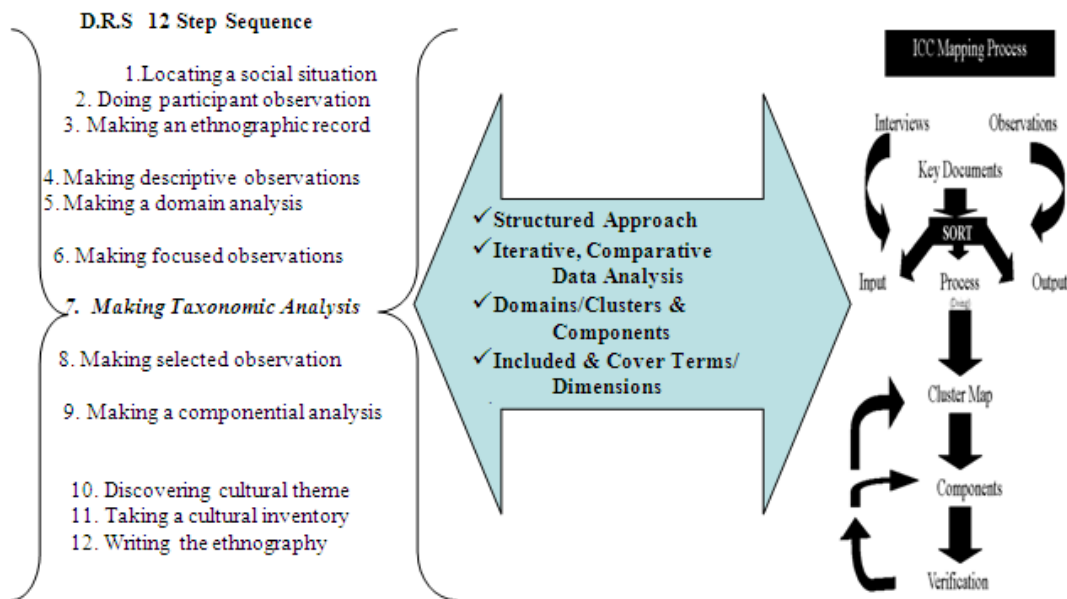
Spradley (1980) acknowledges, “Ethnography offers an excellent strategy for discovery of grounded theory” (p. 15). Likewise, Glesne (2006) acknowledges the researchers need to “seek out other theories to examine data from different perspectives” (p.29). Spradley’s rigorous twelve step sequence known as the Developmental Research Sequence (D.S.R.) served as an inductive analysis sequence to deconstruct and reconstruct the data into domains, taxonomies, and a componential matrix to develop cultural themes in order to make meaning of financial leadership practice in the four school contexts. An Innovation Configuration Map (Hord, Steigelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006; Hall & Hord, 2006) served as the device to display a grounded theory that emerged from the study.

Use of Spradley’s D.S.R. Method aligns with and compliments the procedures of the highly iterative IC Mapping process (Creswell, 2005; Hall and Hord, 2006). (See Figure 3.1 for the Qualitative Data Analysis Overview).

Innovation Configuration Mapping procedures by Hord, Steigelbauer, Hall, and George (2006), and Hall and Hord (2006) capture the experiences of the participants and document the practices of financial leadership in a “...macro-picture of educational situations rather than a detailed microanalysis” (Creswell, 2005, p. 411) (see Figure 7 for descriptions of the D.R.S. and IC Mapping process).

Figure 3.1. Qualitative Data Analysis Overview

Qualitative Data Analysis Overview  
 Developmental Research Sequence (D.R.S.) (Spradley, 1980)  
 Innovation Configuration (Hord, Steigelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006; Hall & Hord, 2006)



Throughout the study the data collection methods used were the interview, observation, documentation analysis, and review of relevant financial artifacts pertaining to each site.

Immediate transcription of recorded interviews and analysis of fieldnotes took place in order to have the material remain fresh with the researcher (Charmaz, 2006). Being mindful that “ethnographers should write for those outside the academic world” (Spradley, p. 167), the researcher’s writing style should communicate what has meaning and what has been learned by studying the selected culture.

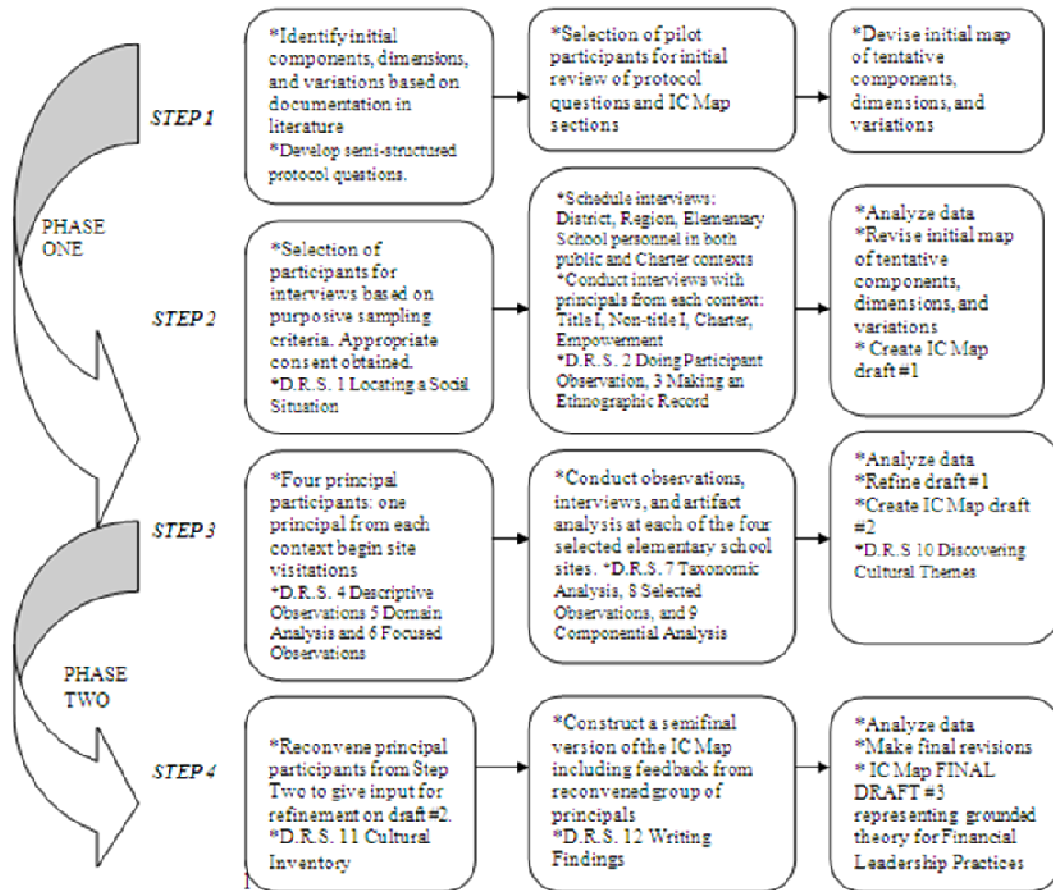
Acknowledging the cyclical nature of ethnographic research, Spradley (1980) posits the value of identifying the scope of study and the mode of inquiry for the study. Time requirements of current day researchers preclude the use of micro-ethnography which studies a single social situation (Spradley, 1980). Topic –oriented ethnography “narrows the focus to one or more aspect of life known to exist in a community” (p. 31). Therefore this study adopted a micro-ethnographic (elementary schools), topic-oriented (financial leadership practice) focus.

The texts of all interviews and observations were subjected to ethnographic analysis outlined by the DRS of Spradley (1980). The data were collected through in-depth open-ended interviews. Questions used were consistent with D.R.S. Method to collect data at the specified phase of the study.

This study consisted of two phases. The *first phase* addressed questions (1) How do principals’ experiences to date with financial leadership shape their current practice? (2) What are the configurations of financial leadership used by principals in the four school contexts? and question (3) What are the differences/similarities in financial leadership practice in the four school contexts? The *second phase* addressed question (4) How do financial leadership practices support/constrain the attainment of the school

improvement goals in the four school contexts? Figure 3.2 summarizes the methodology used for this study.

Figure 3.2. Summary of Methodology: Iterative Two-Phase Developmental Process



During both phases of the study the researcher assumed the role as participant observer. Spradley (1980) classifies this ethnographic technique as “indispensable for doing ethnography” (p. 177). Spradley states that, “Ethnography is the work of describing a culture” (p.3). He continues to posit that the purpose of ethnography is to learn from



people rather than studying people. As such, instead of the researcher telling the stories of elementary principals' experiences and viewpoints with financial leadership practice, the principals tell their own stories and describe their own experiences from their point of view. The context of the interview allows the principals to inform the ethnographer who becomes the student in the conversation.

### *Participant Observer*

The social situation in which this study took place was at the elementary school level. This level was intentionally selected due to the researcher's unfamiliarity with the daily workings of the elementary school environment. Having only worked in secondary schools the elementary school context was a new culture to learn about and study.

Spradley (1980) contrasts the ordinary participant with the participant observer in a social situation. The ordinary participant, or insider, gives little thought to the social situations they encounter due somewhat to their familiarity with the setting, while the participant observer, or outsider, in a social situation, first, "engages in activities appropriate to the situation" and second, "observes the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation" (p. 54).

While the ordinary participant comes to the same situation with only one purpose: to engage in the appropriate activities and does not want to watch and record everything else that occurs, the participant observer makes a study of the social situation and experiences "being both insider and outsider simultaneously" (p. 57). Spradley further contends, "As participant observer, you will need to increase your introspectiveness. In a real sense, you will learn to use yourself as a research instrument" (p. 57). This contrasts

sharply with the ordinary participant who has learned to take experiences for granted in a familiar situation.

Therefore, functioning in the role of participant observer for this study has allowed for both “objective observations and subjective feelings” (Spradley, 1980, p. 58) to emerge through the data. Additionally, being explicitly aware of things that others take for granted, experiencing the feeling of being both an insider and an outsider simultaneously, engaging in introspection and keeping a record of what is seen and experienced distinguishes the role of the participant observer from the ordinary observer for this study (Spradley, 1980).

From the participant observer perspective, the ethnographer systematically transforms the observational data and interview data into meanings and understandings of the social situation under study. The D.R.S. Method represented the steps in carrying out this ethnographic study. Thus, in addition to observation techniques suggested by Spradley (1980), his techniques for analysis of fieldnotes, suggestions for organizing a cultural description based on participant observation, and specific guidelines for writing the final ethnographic description were also employed.

#### *Ethical Considerations-Role of Researcher*

An assumption in naturalistic research is that the researcher may interact with what is being researched (Glesne, 2006; Creswell, 2006, 2003; Spradley, 1980; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Charmaz, 2006). Understandably appropriate permission was obtained prior to beginning the study from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas as well as permission from the school district in which this study was conducted.

To seek participation an invitation letter and the informed consent form preceded formal contact with study participants. Prior to all interviews and observations with participants, a review of the informed consent form was explained and discussed. This form identified the purpose of the study and asked the participants to review and agree to the consent items.

Considering my background as a former administrator in a large urban district for over ten years and considering that I am the developer, researcher, and innovator of the focus of this study, it is important to acknowledge the existence of biases and perspectives. For the sake of full disclosure for this study, the researcher has worked in an administrative capacity in the same large urban school district being used for this study. As a former practicing administrator from 1992 - 2005, I served in an administrative capacity in a comprehensive high school, a newly established magnet high school, and an urban middle school with an added magnet component. I have experienced the instructional and financial challenges from federal, state, and local entities during my administrative tenure.

### *Trustworthiness*

The construct of reflexivity, which means “that you are concerned with the research process all along the way, from creating your research statement to writing up your report” (Creswell, 2006, p. 125) is critical for demonstrating the trustworthiness of this study. Qualitative data are words rather than numbers that represent a phenomenon being studied in its real world context (Golafshani, 2003). While grounded theory looks for patterns (Suddaby, 2006) “ethnography means to learn from people, rather than studying people” (Spradley, 1980, p.3). To ensure trustworthiness of the qualitative

design and the ethnographic perspective establishing the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability is necessary and desirable to further ensure rigor and quality for this study (Golafshani, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Miles & Huberman, 1984).

To confirm *credibility* of the findings, triangulation among data from interviews, observations, and artifacts occurred. Peer debriefing of observations of meetings, interview protocols, various IC Map drafts, and site visits were conducted. Member checks of interview transcripts for accuracy by participants via email and clarification and/or additional information of IC Map drafts by participants were actively sought.

*Confirmability* was achieved through the use of a reflexivity journal and triangulation among data collected from audio recordings of interviews, field notes from observations, and analysis of artifacts collected at the school sites. Transcription of oral text and field notes further confirmed the researcher's objectivity. A reflexivity journal was maintained to minimize potential bias as I was the developer of the innovation configuration, researcher of the study, and participant observer of this process (Hord et al., 2006; Spradley, 1980; Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

*Dependability* calls upon... "the researcher to attempt to account for the changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study and changes in the design created by an increasingly refined understanding of the setting" (Marshall & Rossman, p. 203). Both the documenting of the highly iterative IC Mapping process and Spradely's twelve step developmental research sequence used to study the phenomenon of financial leadership practice, lend themselves to documenting the chain of events in the changing environments of elementary schools in various contexts. Through the ongoing reflection

and analysis of observations, fieldnotes, and transcription of interviews, the researcher was able to identify new patterns and changes. Observing the changes and collecting the data, documenting, organizing, and theorizing about it ensured the naturalist's view of external reliability, known as dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Purposive sampling is the intentional selection of participants (Creswell, 2005) for a study that ensure *transferability*. The variables used for purposive sampling in this study were; principal's years of experience, size of the school, percentage of free and reduced lunch students, percentage of special education students, percentage of English language learners, and transiency rates. Ensuring "contextual similarity" (Creswell, p. 298) through these parameters allows others to make ties to their own situation and reality (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 202).

### *Summary*

Naturalistic research is used to "examine questions that can best be answered by verbally describing how participants in a study perceive and interpret various aspects of their environment" (Crowl, 1996, p. 10). The purpose of this study was to generate a grounded theory by understanding and describing elementary principals' financial leadership practices relative to the school's context. An ethnographic perspective was the design approach used as the basis of this study examining configurations of site-based financial leadership practices in four school contexts. Spradely's (1980) twelve step Developmental Research Sequence allowed for a systematic and rigorous approach to the collection and collation of the research data. An IC Map, which served as a device to display the grounded theory, indicated the relevant components, dimensions, and variations of this leadership practice. The development of the final IC Map also followed

a systematic and iterative process, which was equally mindful of the constructs of trustworthiness to ensure credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

This naturalistic study employing an ethnographic perspective to generate a grounded theory of financial leadership allowed this researcher to document the variations that exist in a school leader's environment as the leader decided how to allocate precious resources and meet school improvement goals.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS: NARRATIVE PORTRAITS OF FOUR SCHOOL CONTEXTS

*“As policy contexts change, so too do the demands on school leaders”  
(Leithwood, 2001, p.230).*

*“Immersion in a particular culture still remains one of the most proven methods of  
finding themes” (Spradley, 1980, p.154)*

The journey of building narratives to gain clarity as to the financial leadership practice of principals in different accountability contexts, begins with four principals at the elementary school level in the Mountain Valley School District, a large urban school district. One principal from each accountability context – Title I, Non Title I, Charter, and Empowerment – was selected for this ethnographic study generating a grounded theory of financial leadership practice. Spradley’s (1980) rigorous twelve step Developmental Research Sequence was used to gather, analyze, confirm, and report findings within these contexts while Hall and Hord’s (2006) Innovation Configuration Map served as the grounded theory displaying the clusters, components, dimensions, and variations used by school leaders involved in the practice of financial leadership.

In this chapter each school context is discussed from four thematic perspectives identified from the analysis based on the triangulation of data from interview transcripts, site artifacts, and observational data collected for this study as outlined in Chapter Three. Themes were identified by "bringing together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when viewed alone" (Leininger, 1985, p. 60). Themes that emerged from the participants’ stories were pieced together to form a

comprehensive picture of their collective experience. The narrative portraits are a compilation of the findings that address this study's four research questions:

1. How do principals' experiences to date with financial leadership shape their current practice?
2. What are the configurations of financial leadership used by principals in the four school contexts?
3. What are the differences/similarities in financial leadership practice in the four school contexts?
4. How do the financial leadership practices support/constrain the attainment of the school improvement goals in the four school contexts?

Within each school context the principal, two teachers, and an office manager were interviewed for their perspectives and understandings regarding financial leadership practices at their site. Additionally, central office personnel were interviewed to share their expectations and perspectives about the site-based leaders financial leadership practices. Observations of meetings and site-based documents were incorporated into the narrative landscapes.

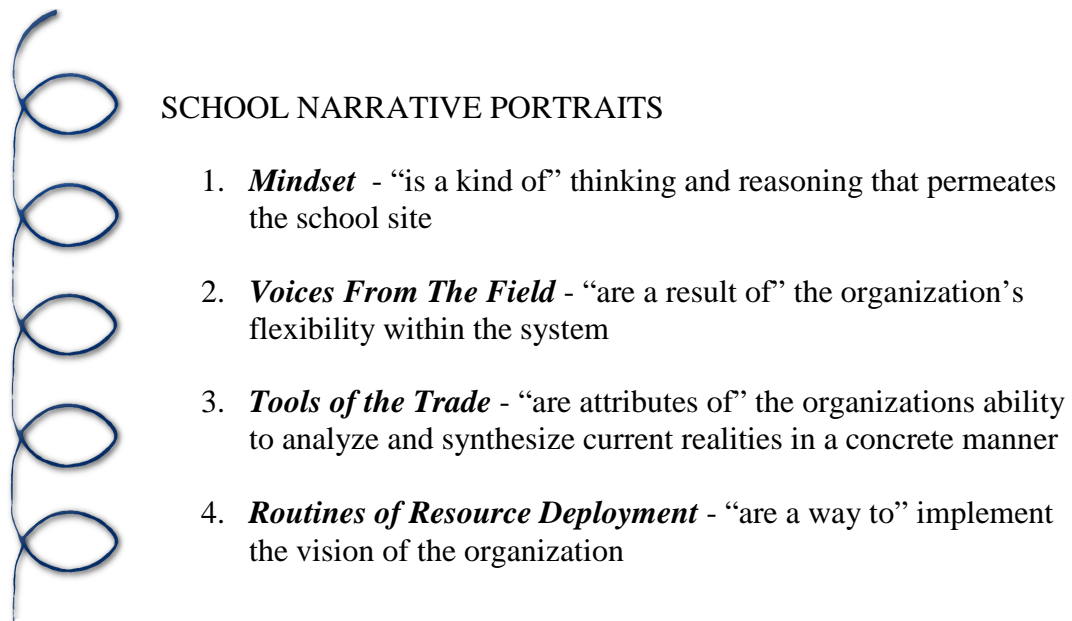
#### *Thematic Constructs of the Narrative Portraits*

To uncover themes for this chapter, Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence (D.R.S.) served as the basis to "identify the elements in the patterns that make up a culture" (p. 141). Spradley (1980) contends that "Themes not only recur again and again throughout different parts of a culture, but they also connect different subsystems of a culture. They serve as a general semantic relationship among domains" (p. 144). The four themes identified across the four contexts were: a) Mindset, b) Voices From The



Field c) Tools of the Trade, and d) Routines of Resource Deployment. The spiral in *Figure 4.1* is used to demonstrate the interrelatedness of these themes, which were used to construct the narrative for each context in this chapter.

Figure 4.1 – Thematic Spiral of School Narrative Portraits



***Mindset***, the first theme addresses the perceptual framework of operation that permeates the leadership approach toward the context. In the literature, mindset is a construct that speaks to the way people approached the work they do (Kaser & Halbert, 2009).

Mindset was the analytical term used by this researcher to represent how the principals conceptualized their work based on analyzing and coding the verbatim text from the interview transcript and conducting several site visits. However, Spradley

(1980) argues, “Immersion in a particular culture still remains one of the most proven methods of finding themes” (p. 154).

The mindset theme is situated at the tacit level of knowledge. At this level, Spradley (1980) contends;

People do not express them easily, even though they know the cultural principle and use it to organize their behavior and interpret experience. Themes come to be taken for granted, slipping into that area of knowledge where people are not quiet aware or seldom find need to express what they know. This means that the ethnographer will have to make inferences about the principles that exist (p.143).

The construct of mindset was also analyzed according to the mindset framework of Carol S. Dweck. Dweck (2006) contends;

When people change to a growth mindset, they change from a *judge-and-be-judged* framework to a *learn-and-help-learn* framework. The commitment is to growth and growth takes plenty of time, effort and mutual support (p. 238)

Dweck ‘s research (2006) identified two mindsets that shape attitudes toward work relationships: the fixed mindset and the growth mindset. She writes, “The fixed mindset stands in the way of development and change. The growth mindset is a starting point for change” (Dweck, p. 50). For example, her findings reveal that those with a growth mindset find failure and setbacks “motivating and informative” (p. 99). However, those with a fixed mindset view failure as a” setback that labels you” (p. 100).

Therefore, mindset “is a kind of” thinking and reasoning that permeates the school site (Spradley, 1980, p.102). For example, the “Watch Us Do It” mindset at the Roosevelt site epitomizes how all the stakeholders share the same concept of the work

they do, hence a similar mindset. That mindset is summed up with the principal statement, “Its all a team decision” (Principal Interview, 4/09). Whether “its as simple as buying pencils this month or do we hold off and buy a smart board...It’s all a team decision (Principal Interview, 4/09); “Everybody is included in absolutely everything” (Washington Teacher #1 Interview, 4/09); “At this school, everything here is based on everyone’s input” (Washington Teacher #2 Interview, 4/09); and “Right now we are sitting as a whole trying to decide where our priorities lie” (Office manager, Interview, 3/09).

*Voices from the field*, the second theme, illustrate the contextual norms, beliefs, or expectations that exist while dealing with the ongoing tensions in the educational environment. The word “voice” was actually a folk term (Spradley, 1980, p. 90) used by study participants to give meaning to the operational nature of their practices.

For example, a Madison teacher offers advice to other teacher’s on how to be a successful faculty member; “listen first and then go back to your grade level and talk it over and then come back with everybody’s voice into the decision (Interview, 2/09). A Jefferson teacher speaks about the school’s norms and beliefs in this way; “So it is very much a joint decision-making type of process that we go through here. If you are a member of our staff, then you have a voice, and a say in what happens here. Addressing the financial leadership practices at Roosevelt, a teacher comments, “I mean everyone has a voice in how our financial decisions are made. We ask, Is this in the best interest of the children? How will this benefit the children? Everything is for the students. It all goes back to them. If we are buying this, how is it going to directly impact learning to further

the children's education? (Teacher Interview, 4/09). Voice "is a result of" the organizations flexibility within the system (Spradley,1980, p.104).

Tools and routines, themes three and four were addressed by specific protocol questions asked of the site-based participants; What are the financial leadership tools used within your school? and What are the financial leadership tools used within your school? (Appendix A).

*Tools of the trade*, the third theme, describes the usability of external representations (Spillane, 2006) such as budgets and school improvement plans used by the site participants enabling them to practice their financial leadership. For example, Washington's Principal utilizes financial tools for essentially for oversight, "I think our tools are used basically not only to inform, but to help make decisions. So we have the budget as a tool, we have procedures in place, for instance purchasing procedures, those are budget tools we use, what do you have to do to request buying materials?" (Interview, 2/09). One of Roosevelt's teachers comments on data as a tool, "Data in this building is used for everything. If something is not working well, ok it goes into our school improvement plan to be tweaked and to be worked on (Roosevelt Teacher #1 Interview, 4/09). Tools "are attributes of" the organizations ability to analyze and synthesize current realities in a concrete manner (Spradley,1980, p.105).

*Routines of resource deployment*, the fourth and final theme identified, depicts the repetitive patterns of actions used by the participants facilitating their financial practices within the school (Spillane, 2006). For example, a Roosevelt routine was identified by a teacher in this way; "We meet the second and fourth month of every single month. We all agreed on Wednesdays so the second and fourth Wednesday of every

month. Always at the same time and we set money aside for it because we all get paid and we're always there from 4-6" (Roosevelt Teacher Interview, 4/09). A teacher from Madison characterizes financial routines as "weekly Leadership Team meetings" (Interview, 3/09). A retrospective view of routines was offered by a Washington teacher; "We take a look at you know in the past what was purchased and how effective it was like that. Yeah, just taking a look at how effective things were in the past. It plays a role in what we are going to purchase in the future" (Interview, 2/09). Routines "are ways to" implement the vision of the organization (Spradley, 1980, p. 104).

Leithwood (2001) created a classification system of approaches to educational accountability, which identifies leadership practices suitable for the policy contexts in which leaders may find themselves. Accordingly, he identified four approaches from the literature. They are the market approach, decentralized approach, professional approach, and management approach. His findings demonstrated "that each approach calls for unique responses by school leaders" (Leithwood, p. 227). Similarly, the school leaders in this study, while incorporating somewhat similar tools and routines, had distinctly different mindsets toward the work of financial leadership. Nuances in the four identified mindsets were powerful drivers of financial leadership practices. Voices in the field, tools of the trade, and routines of resource deployment are further confirmation of this mindset.

As a way of introducing each context, a quote from the principal at each site will precede the school narrative.

#### Madison Elementary School

*"Whatever is legal for us to move around in different categories to cover things, we need to do it." (Madison Principal Interview, 5/09)*

*Mindset: Must Do! Demonstrate AYP*

Madison Elementary School (MES) receives Title I funding and the yearly school district allocation. Without any other significant or consistent funding sources, Madison's Principal seeks "a lot of little grants" (Principal Interview, 4/09) in amounts ranging from twenty-five dollars to fifteen hundred dollars. The more substantial state grant money is no longer offered. A few small local businesses are known as their community partners and contribute backpacks and supplies at the beginning of the school year and food items during the holiday season.

Madison is presently on the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) Watch List, which means it needs to demonstrate the AYP participation and performance targets for two consecutive years in order to be completely removed from the In Needs Of Improvement (INOI) list. Having successfully demonstrated the AYP targets for the 2007-08 school year, meeting the AYP targets for the 2008-2009 school year would ensure Madison from being removed from the INOI status. If Madison does meet the AYP criteria, the percentage of monies within the Title I budget for staff development will be able to be reallocated to other areas and in different percentages, a policy allowance not realized by Madison with their present AYP status. Additionally, the hard work and focused intervention efforts the staff has been engaged in for the past two years would be validated.

Relying on previous teaching experiences and talks with the teachers and the Leadership Team have helped to shape the current financial leadership perspectives of Madison's principal. Practically and emphatically stated, Madison's principal attributes the current financial practice perspectives to the "Things that I have seen that worked and that don't work" (Interview, 2/09).

There is a sense of urgency that is palpable within this context. The urgency is rooted in the critically important issue of having all students demonstrate AYP for the second consecutive year. Kotter (2008) spoke of “a sense of urgency” as a trait, which is immeasurably important in moving an organization forward. His research reveals, “When people have a true sense of urgency, they think that action on critical issues is needed *now*, not eventually, not when it fits easily into a schedule. *Now* means making real progress every single day” (p. 7).

*Voices from the Field:*

Core budget considerations and concerns for this context center on their ability to purchase instructional items. Principal and teacher comments from the field align to reflect this:

*“Paying for my interventions is my biggest concern. Being able to go back and get these kids caught up on things that they need. Being able to identify that. Over half my kids need interventions. And even now, there is just not enough time to get to them all. We are not only looking at a time issue but now we are looking at a money issue. How am I going to pay for the interventions?” (Madison Principal Interview, 2/09)*

*“Where to find more funding for things that are necessary for us?” (Madison Teacher #1)*

*“How are we going to be able to supply some of the textbooks that we currently use? We are short right now and my concern is how are we going to have enough for next year? How are we going to ensure that the teachers have the materials that they need?” (Madison Teacher #2)*

Transparency in financial decision-making is a norm for this site. With similar concerns from the principal’s office to the classroom teachers, meaningful dialogue to solve budgetary challenges were first addressed by the Principal through full disclosure of the financial allocations given to the site by the district. After the status of the school accounts were enumerated, the Principal invited the teacher’s to be a part of a decision-making process to distribute the limited funds in the areas of greatest need within the

school. However, in light of the recent harsh economic times, the principal was candid and forthright in sharing the fiscal reality of the budget she was allocated to operate the school:

*“This year with the budget cuts, I just told the staff, “This is what we had last year and this is how much we have this year”. When I showed them this is the amount of money we have, this is what a case of paper costs, this is what we do, this is what it costs, they really haven’t asked for a whole lot. They didn’t ask for things this year because they know it’s [money] not there.” (Madison Principal Interview, 2/09)*

*Tools of the Trade:*

Madison’s school improvement plan serves as the roadmap for expenditure funding. Supporting the identified school-wide goals is the basis for spending. Budgets were readjusted or amended to fit the instructional strategies they deemed effective and efficient for their population. Focused conversations about student achievement are reflected in the various committee meeting agendas and minutes. The school’s office manager serves as the daily oversight manager of the school’s budget. She incorporates the school district designed tools of compliance for monetary disbursements as noted in the following passage:

*“For the finances that people may need or what they have, they have to request a check and explain what it’s for, why they need it. And if it’s going to the committees, then they have to sign it. The Principal always signs all of them and then they come to me to do the expenditure.” (Madison Office Manager, 3/09)*

Additionally, in describing her role and responsibilities within the school, she clearly reports that the essence of her job is, “To watch your budgets. That would be my main thing. Go by the rules of the banking system and watch the budget.” (Madison Office Manager, 3/09)



Reliance on technology to produce data to drive educational decisions figures prominently into the financial tool kit at Madison. Madison teachers address the use of data in their school in these ways:

*“We use a lot of data. We do a lot of data driven decision-making here. And so, for example, right now with our budget crisis, next year, we are struggling trying to find funding for a particular program that we use at our school. It’s a per student cost and the District is not going to pay for it so it’s going to be really hard on us. The data is so important to us. We get so much information from it that it’s going to be a tough decision to decide when, if, and how we are going to get funding for something like that. Yes, we do use a lot of data to say yes this is what our school needs because this is working.” (Madison Teacher #1)*

Madison teacher #2 touts the use of data as the tool they rely on to determine program effectiveness:

*“If they [the students] are not benefiting from a program then we would probably look at not purchasing that program again. But if they are benefiting we would want to have that program again and some of the programs they need to be in place for a certain amount of time too before you can determine whether they are beneficial or not.” (Madison Teacher #2)*

#### *Routines of Resource Deployment:*

While the inherent challenge today for school principals is to improve student achievement despite declining resources, Madison’s principal and the Leadership Team leverage available resources into lasting benefits for the school. The Leadership Team at Madison is comprised of a teacher from each grade level, school specialists (literacy, ELL, Special Education), and a teacher representative for other specialists, the principal and the assistant principal. Selection of Learning Improvement Team membership is not on a volunteer basis as stated by the principal, “I try to choose strong leaders. People I knew would go back and discuss and would follow through with their grade levels.”

Additionally, Madison’s Principal builds in days into the Title I budget for substitutes so

that teachers can meet all day to review the school improvement plan and other necessary data to make recommendations for the next year's plan. While the pressures of conducting team meetings, which are usually held before school on a tight timeline, the day long meeting sessions allow for more reflection and in-depth discussion.

Through consistent analysis of program effectiveness resource deployment at Madison is tightly coupled to the instructional program. In their own words;

*“We look at the cost of certain programs and a lot of times especially today with the money, a lot of it depends on what the cost is as to whether or not we can do that program. If it is a really good program, then we try to get the money for that...but we have to concentrate on the areas of greatest need.” (Madison Principal Interview, 2/09)*

*“We analyze all of the research that is out there for products and what not, that we buy for our curriculum and for our teachers. We decide which one is going to be the best for us, which is going to fit us the best and meet our needs the best for our particular student population.” (Madison Teacher #1)*

*“We used the data to find out if the students are benefiting from this program or are they not benefiting from this program.” (Madison Teacher #2)*

The Leadership Team is consulted regarding the spending of the Title I budget as well. The collaborative nature of the discussions ensures all entities of the school have a voice into resource deployment. Leadership Team members go back to their grade levels with information and return with their group's feedback. Although the principal seeks input from all school members through the Leadership Team, the Madison principal reports,

*“...we make a decision, which is normally a consensus decision that everybody can live with. We have never been all one hundred percent, but it is a decision that is one we can all live with. I have been very impressed.” (Interview, 2/09)*

Indeed, teachers and staff attest to the collaborative nature of the financial leadership at Madison:

*“The principal brings us the budget and we discuss all the items that are necessary. We talk about options for what we can do with what is remaining. We come to a consensus together as to what’s going to happen with those funds.” (Madison Teacher #1)*

*“Decisions are made as a team. A teacher from each grade level is on the Leadership Team and we determine where the needs are. The team representative goes back to their grade levels to discuss the needs with their grade level and then turns them into the Principal. The Principal decides with some other people where the money will be spent.” (Madison Teacher #2)*

*“The way it is set up here is the individual teachers at each grade, they will all get together and then decide what they need, what works, what we are suppose to have according to our Region – what works, what doesn’t work.” (Madison Office Manager)*

The programs that Madison teachers are using school-wide have been adopted for them at the District or Region level. The principal reports, “...those decisions were made prior to me that are out of my hands, that were made prior to me being Principal. And they’re working. So we’ve kept them.”

Compliance in spending is both implied and visible in this accountability context noted for its inflexibility and high regulation of funds. This tension is evidenced through the advice offered by the Madison Principal to other principals:

*“Really spend a lot of time learning the budget and how it works and what can be bought with what money.” (Madison Principal Interview, 2/09)*

Additionally, advice offered by a Madison teacher encourages other teachers to get involved with their schools financial decisions to understand the operational workings of the school:

*“I would say to new teachers “yeah”, you definitely want to be involved with the financial process of the school so that you have an idea of what’s really going on and how you can be a part of it and how you can help make it better for you, your students and school community. I feel blessed to be a part of a team that really has a positive financial impact on our students, our staff and our school.”*

#### Jefferson Elementary School

*“Whether we get money or not we still have to do the same job, absolutely. They still expect us to do the same job. We expect that of ourselves too.”*

*(Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09)*

#### *Mindset: Can Do! Keep The Upward Trend Going*

Jefferson Elementary School’s (JES) sole source of funding relies on the yearly allocation the school district provides to them. This allocation is based on the student enrollment, and this year, the district’s fiscal ability to meet that projected allocation figure was not met. Indeed, budget cuts were the norm for the entire school district. However without the availability of a Title I budget or state grants which previously augmented Jefferson’s budget, the principal preservers to provide for her students with what is allocated. The principal states;

*“I have been accused of being very creative financially. I am not sure why, but we seem to come up with the things that we need the most.”(Interview 2/09)*

Limited resources are channeled into the Jefferson incentive program for students negating the possibility of sending any member of the Jefferson faculty to an outside staff development activity. While regularly seeking resource assistance of colleagues from neighboring schools that may have an abundance of needed items, Jefferson’s principal invites others to share their wares with their neighbor, Jefferson Elementary. This practice is reciprocated to other schools when possible for Jefferson to do so. Indeed,

regarding the ability of the principal to secure necessary resources, a teacher participant asserts:

*“I feel at our school we have a very strong rapport with each other and we seem to get things that we want even when we still don’t have the money.” (Jefferson Teacher #1 Interview, 3/09)*

Jefferson teachers not only demonstrate a good rapport with each other, they deeply care about their students. This is evidenced by the fact that teachers conduct regular after school tutoring for students who need assistance with specific skills. There is no compensation for this after school tutoring. Teachers see a need and respond to it. The internal accountability the teachers and administrator’s have for meeting the school improvement goal for all their students is real. Although “It just doesn’t feel good to know that you have to work a little bit harder with less” (Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09), Jefferson teachers demonstrate a “Can Do” attitude with their students, each other, and their community.

Relaying a conversation between the teachers and the principal, Jefferson’s principal stated, *“It wasn’t that somebody else expects us to hold the kids accountable at the same level as we did when we had more money. It just doesn’t feel good to know that you have to work a little bit harder with less.”* (Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09)

Jefferson’s office manager, who oversees the daily operation of the budget, attests to the watchfulness the staff and faculty have adopted this year. Ensuring the school does not “fall short” of money “right up until the end of the year” involves conserving and not purchasing things that are not needed. (Interview, 3/09) While watching spending is a critical norm for Jefferson, regularly asking for donations for the school is the other.

Understandably, the impact of budget cuts on this school is significant.

*“[Previously] I was able to obtain quite a bit of funds through the Senate Bill grants. I am pretty skilled at grant writing and we had no choice. We had to be good at it, so we worked real hard and got a lot of money that way. I feel like I am stuck right now because they took that money away, the future is bleak financially for a lot of people.” (Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09)*

The grant money awarded over a two-year period went predominantly to purchase technology such as laptop carts, Elmos, and interactive white boards for the classrooms.

Funding to keep pressing forward with technology is uncertain for Jefferson’s program.

In fact, an unintended situation identified by the principal as a result of purchasing the white boards and laptops was the following:

*“We really focused on getting the interactive white boards, but its \$300-\$400 per light bulb and the light bulbs last for a year. So, I was spending my money on the boards themselves and not remembering the maintenance piece of that so that was kind of a little pickle we got ourselves into. We now have 5 laptop carts on our campus and the batteries are about \$68.00 a piece and we’re going to have to start replacing batteries for hundreds of laptops; well just a hundred and some laptops.”*

Additionally, apart from modest Parent Teacher Association (PTA) fundraiser contributions to the various grade levels, Jefferson does not have any sponsors or community partnerships.

Interestingly, as a form of assistance, additional program resources were forthcoming from the school’s regional administrative entities. Despite the fact that Jefferson Elementary School is a school that has demonstrated AYP, the principal was not asked if the pre purchased programs were needed. The principal was not asked if the pre purchased program aligned with the school improvement plan or if it met the needs of the students. Jefferson’s Principal comments,

*“ Sometimes just the absence of common sense is very frustrating when resources are scarce.” (Interview, 2/09)*

Acknowledging Title I colleagues face similar frustrations with the inflexibility of resources use, Jefferson's Principal states,

*"Even Title I schools have tremendous frustrations...because, although they get money, they are told how to spend it and it doesn't always make sense."(Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09)*

Having been influenced by a variety of former principal's financial leadership styles, Jefferson's principal contends that financial leadership " discussions with a larger group of people" is much preferred than with a select few.

*Voices from the Field:*

Identifying Jefferson's principal as a "role model" for financial leadership, Teacher #2 states that by "throwing it [the dilemma's] back at us and making us make the decisions" allows the teacher's to solve their own financial problems. Indeed, teachers at Jefferson have a complete sense of how the school is able to function within the economic limits that is their reality. Decisions made this year reflect this growing understanding of different funding streams that promote a collective mindfulness among the faculty and staff, which is reflected in the school's operation.

*"Recently because of the budget cuts, we did not have the money we've had in the past, so the Leadership Team agreed to the things that they could live without. They also agreed to the things that really shouldn't be purchased with school district money that it should be purchased with PTA money."(Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09)*

*"Typically, if you want or need money for your grade level, say for a field trip, you would ask the principal and the response would be, " Ok, where are you going to come up with the money?" We have done grade level fundraisers here that weren't for the whole school. It was just money for the one grade level." (Jefferson Teacher #1, 3/09)*

*"This year we had off ratio teachers. It makes you really examine if its worth taking a teacher off ratio and having higher class sizes, because then you have that teacher do small group instruction to really boost your test scores. So I don't know if that involves the budget, but I think that when you are looking at pulling a teacher from the classroom,*

*that teacher is still getting paid the same amount of money. I think you have to look at what is more valuable to the school.” (Jefferson Teacher #2, 3/09)*

Commenting on the importance and responsibility of having open and transparent financial decisions, Jefferson’s principal states:

*“As an assistant principal I just felt so much more comfortable having discussions with a larger group of people because it is their school. And although now, as principal, I shoulder the responsibility of making sure their decisions are what’s best for the school, they really have to BE THEIR DECISIONS. So it’s tough.”*

Having representation from “every stakeholder in our school on the Leadership Team”, including a parent, ensures the openness and participation desired by the Jefferson principal:

*“I feel like when we are making financial decisions, there are a lot of stakeholders that have their input. And, also on the opposite side if there is a stakeholder that really feels opposed to it or they are trying to go with the grade level, they have that opportunity to speak up.” (Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09)*

Indeed, teachers are admittedly frugal and not wasteful in their spending patterns as a result of knowing about the amounts of money available and where the money is allocated.

*“We are trying to cut back a lot on money and we have really examined our school budget here. Don’t order extra supplies that we are not going to need. Go back and check, do you already have that, ok-don’t order it, you know.” (Jefferson Teacher #1)*

Supplies for the classroom and opportunities for their students are sources of frustration for the teachers at Jefferson Elementary School. Teacher #1 laments, *“There are just so many things I feel like my students miss out on.” (Interview, 3/09)* She continues to address a request made by one of her students in reference to a taking a field



trip, “ I wish you could take us there instead of just telling us about it. I wish you could take us there.” (Interview, 3/09)

*“I would say, it’s kind of tough, right now we’re definitely in a budget crisis and our students are well aware of the budget crisis, at least my students, I have the older ones. They know we don’t have the money for extra pencils, extra paper. But their families don’t have money for it either. We do what we can.”(Jefferson Teacher #1, 3/09)*

#### *Tools of the Trade:*

The school improvement plan at Jefferson Elementary School was completely designed by the faculty. It is a user-friendly document that is a tangible representation of the academic journey the school will travel to meet the stated goals. The financial objectives align directly to the school improvement plan at Jefferson. However, how and if the school can fund the plan is uncertain when it is written. While the budget at Jefferson “is pretty simple” (Principal Interview, 6/09) they try to make sure they fund the programs that are identified in the school improvement plan.

*“We don’t stop and think about what our financial constraints are at that time. We try to do our school improvement plan first and then there might be finding money later so then the funding that we get, we look at the school improvement plan and achieve what we can and prioritize from there.”(Jefferson Principal Interview, 6/09)*

Admitting to “overseeing the big picture” yet delegating the “day-to-day” budget demands to the office manager, Jefferson’s principal’s focus is on analyzing effectiveness of the instructional intervention purchases made and learning from the data collected.

*“Everything is spent on running classrooms. Nothing in my school is used for outside things.” (Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09)*

*“We go back to our student achievement data. We are now analyzing student-by-student how many and what percentage of students at Jefferson have achieved their grade level goal for math and that helps me determine whether that money was well spent, did the incentive work, did we do what we set out to do? Same thing with our reading, writing, math. This much money was spent in this area; this is how we targeted it. How did our*

*data come out? Are we doing the right thing? Are we right with spending more money? (Jefferson Principal Interview, 5/09)*

*“I use a system to view my District budget and review spending. I use another system to track and reconcile my School Generated Funds. I also keep information on excel spreadsheets. I keep monthly folders for School Generated Funds.” (Jefferson Office Manager Interview, 3/09)*

Technology is central to supporting the communication of instructional levels of the students within the grade levels and therefore instrumental in allocating funds to areas that are proving to be successful. The principal and team focused on ongoing inquiry into the achievement of students. For example, after careful inspection of the positive research findings on a core language program “...we re-shifted our Special Education money so we could make that purchase and work with the company. They are out here coaching my teachers and working with them on the language program” (Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09).

Additionally, Jefferson’s principal utilizes the technology instructor to make graphs of pertinent data “so that we can see the data in different ways” (Jefferson Principal Interview, 5/09). Use of the school network for displaying the most recent universal screening data, can easily be accessed by faculty members by simply logging on to the network and pulling that information up from the network folders. Teachers are also in the practice of sharing their best practices with others by posting them to the shared network icon.

*Routines for Resource Deployment:*

Resource decisions are shared with the Jefferson Leadership Team. The governance structure created at Jefferson allows for teachers and parents to participate in the financial decision making process;

*“Our Leadership Team, which is made up by the grade level Chairs, department Chairs, parent representatives, support staff representatives. Primary representatives from each of the constituency groups at our school and that’s where the decisions are made. They take the responsibility of going back to their group and getting input, but decisions are made by that Team.”(Jefferson Principal Interview, 5/09)*

School members find security in the Leadership Team structure that ensured clear lines of communication, a focused purpose for meeting, and formal communication responsibilities from the team members. Teacher participants interviewed found this arrangement both open and participatory as evidenced by their comments:

*“It’s an open discussion. Anybody on that team can say whether they go along with it [a discussion item] or not. Sometimes we will table something so we can go back to our grade level and ask the teachers how they feel and then bring back what the other teachers think too. It’s a good thing.” (Jefferson Teacher #2)*

*“Everybody, even if you are not on the Leadership Committee has a say. Everyone is still on a committee. Other committees are activities, climate, and tech committee. One of those people also reports to the Leadership Committee, so everybody really can have their input too, in my opinion.” (Jefferson Teacher #1)*

*“We vote on everything, a copy of our meeting notes, bank statement and reconciliation reports are submitted to the region office and accounting. (Jefferson Office Manager Interview, 3/09)*

Jefferson’s administration and staff look at the spending trends in their budget overtime and compare them to what was purchased and then determine if those items met the goals they had intended. With such limited funds, everyone at Jefferson seems to understand the importance of meeting their goals irrespective of the economic hardships around them. Addressing spending from a historic perspective makes sense and also fosters a sense of transparency in decision making for the teachers and office staff:

*“I think that the craziest thing you can do in a school is to spend your money and then not stop and look to see if it had any benefits.” (Jefferson Principal Interview, 4/09)*

*“We go by last year, what was spent and what’s going to happen for the next year. At the end of the school year, we do sit down as a whole school and go over what we want to do*

*in the next year. Then the principal pulls out the figures for the preceding year and we go off that.” (Jefferson Teacher #2)*

*“Our budget determines what we can purchase for the school year. We have to determine which items the school MUST have. I look at the numbers, and I look at the line items, the library line item and the custodial line item, etc. and use that data basically to see what we can spend. At the beginning of the school year we meet with our Leadership Team to discuss our budget. We review what we’ve gotten in our overall budget and what we hope to purchase with this throughout the year.” (Jefferson Office Manager Interview, 3/09)*

Additionally, Jefferson’s principal shares advice on the thinking process for strategic spending practices at the school:

*“Until you’ve looked at your budget, you’ve looked at the big picture, you know where you are at, you can’t just say yes [to spending requests] at that minute. You have to take it under advisement and see if it is going to work.” (Jefferson Principal Interview, 2/09)*

#### Roosevelt Elementary School

*“Things and money don’t make a difference unless you can tie it to people and time. People and time is what you need the money for.”  
(Roosevelt Principal Interview, 2/09)*

#### *Mindset: Watch Us Do It! It’s All a Team Decision*

Operating as a decentralized system within the larger centralized school system is Roosevelt Elementary School (RES). With a tight link between accountability and authority, this school is “anchored in the belief that if schools are to be held accountable for student achievement, they should be given the freedom to determine what will best accomplish their goals and to deploy the resources that they have been allocated to implement their choices” (District Artifact, p. iii). Decisions such as governance, instruction, budget, staffing, staff incentives, and schedules are determined by

Roosevelt's parents, teachers, administrators, and community, not the school district.

These elements have the joint approval of the local teachers union and the school district.

Unique to the Roosevelt administrators, teachers, and staff is the negotiated incentive pay structure. Compensation for both a longer school day and school year at the contracted rate of pay, as well as a two percent incentive pay program is available. If the school-wide student achievement targets are attained by the end of the academic year, incentives are calculated into their retirement plans. Roosevelt's principal may earn an additional five percent in salary for which retirement contributions will be made.

Likewise, school administrators, teachers, and support staff share in the consequences if goals are not met.

Roosevelt Elementary School is a school that has demonstrated AYP in the past. This year Roosevelt is aiming for the designation of "high achieving" by the state department of education. Commenting on the alignment of financial decisions with school goals and vision, Roosevelt's principal states:

*"Our financial objectives are totally aligned with the goals and visions of this school because when we make decisions at the Leadership Team to spend money we always ask the question "Does it align with the vision, is it meeting our goals, is it something that we need in order to meet our objective?" That is ongoing and continuing. (Roosevelt Principal Interview, 5/09)*

Essentially, all members of Roosevelt Elementary School take ownership in the performance results, which are integral in determining their incentive pay, possible consequences, and overall school effectiveness. With an additional six hundred dollars per pupil and a community business partner's pledge of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars over a three-year period of time, Roosevelt's Leadership Team commands

substantial voice and authority as they jointly manage the three school budgets, with the principal, to ensure academic targets are realized.

*“We’ve set up our governing system with a Leadership Team and then each grade level or department has their team and the decisions are talked about and they have to be, everybody gets a vote in our building. So nothing here is; I would say 99% of the decisions are not administratively based. They are done with the governing structure we have in place. So be it money or curriculum or anything, it has to be a school-wide decision.” (Roosevelt Office Manager Interview, 3/09)*

*“Everybody is included in absolutely everything. The principal might make some little tiny decision if one teacher needs something for \$10 – the principal will approve that.”(Roosevelt Teacher #1, 3/09)*

*“At this school, everything here is based on everyone’s input. We have leader representatives that go to the Leadership Team from each grade level and that includes everyone in the school, including the aids, they have a representative, we have a parent representative, I mean there is everyone so everyone has a voice in how our financial decisions are made, Is this in the best interest of the children? How will this benefit the children?. Everything is for the students, it all goes back to them. If buying this, how is it going to directly impact learning to further the children’s education?” (Roosevelt Teacher #2, 3/09)*

Roosevelt’s principal has had the experience of being an administrator in a “regular school where you have all those restrictions on how much money has to be spent here and how much money has to be spent there, and what percentage can be moved”. These previous work experiences within different accountability contexts have prepared Roosevelt’s principal to focus on “meeting the needs of the kids so that you have actual outcomes that you are hoping to achieve, matched with what you are doing” (Interview, 2/09).

*Voices from the Field:*

Roosevelt’s principal is masterful at guiding financial discussions within this learning community to maximize the information flow and still working toward the organizational goals (Harris, 2005). While open discussion regarding financial issues is a

required norm at Roosevelt, effective conflict management becomes an important skill to master in order for constructive not destructive outcomes to result from Leadership Team meetings. Harris further contends, “When understood and handled properly, conflict can also be a dynamic, creative force that contributes to a healthy school” (p. 176).

*There isn't anything hidden as far as our finances go here, which is great. Everybody knows where they stand. In other buildings I have been in, it was always you never knew what was going on. Here it is definitely the group approach. (Roosevelt Office Manager, 3/09)*

Describing her principal as a “role model” for open financial leadership practices, Teacher #1 states, “...regarding finance, I really like Roosevelt’s principal. The principal gets buy-in. Not from every single person at this school, but from a majority of people because they feel they are part of the process and their voice does get heard...”.

Conceding that there will always be “people” at all schools who feel a process is flawed, Teacher #1 maintains the process is “open and everyone does have a say”.

The budget cuts are a cause of concern for the Roosevelt faculty and a necessary reprioritizing of allocations reveal their concerns:

*“Well this new budget is really tough... this coming year we’re definitely going to be understaffed so that’s frustrating right now...” (Roosevelt Teacher #1, 4/09)*

*We had to make some very difficult decisions as far as staffing and even supplies, everything, we have to look at everything. You know copy paper, crayons, pencils, everything. We had to look at and you had to be very, very, very, very frugal to make sure that we would have enough. (Roosevelt Teacher #2, 4/09)*

Acknowledging the newness of this decentralized system and its constantly evolving nature; the principal characterizes the financial leadership practices at Roosevelt in this way,

*“The financial leadership, as far as I’m concerned, is us shooting from the hip and creating it as we go. This is so brand new...there is no guideline to follow so the*

*leadership here is myself and the assistant principal working with the Leadership Team and us making decisions together based on the priorities...and what the goals are we hope to accomplish.”(Interview, 5/09)*

Sharing insights with new administrators, Roosevelt’s principal advises the following:

*“Different and new is not always better and sometimes you just need to slow down, think it through, sleep on it sometimes before you agree to do something big and change. So, if you slow down, think it through, sleep on it, sometimes you have a much better perspective.”(Roosevelt Principal Interview, 2/09)*

*Tools of the Trade:*

The school’s relationship with the school improvement plan is key to Roosevelt’s daily operational functioning. The school improvement plan is in fact this school’s business plan for success. The plan puts into play the specific research-based actions necessary to get the results identified. It reflects the convergence of all controllable and visible resources the team has access to.

*“All budget decisions are made through the filter of the our Mission, Vision, and current School Improvement Goals by the Leadership Team. They are all focused on our students learning levels and how teaching supports them.”(Roosevelt Principal Interview, 2/09)*

*We make the agreement that nothing can be spent unless it supports the school improvement plan. We all wrote the school improvement plan at the beginning of the year. Again, it was a group endeavor. (Roosevelt Office Manager, 3/09)*

Technology plays an important role at Roosevelt, a strong data driven school, by supporting the instructional and financial subsystems. The ability to immediately download student formative assessment data and summative assessment data within days is a priority for the teachers. Technology is used at Roosevelt to give:

*“...real time feedback on where our budget is, and how much money we have, and what we can spend. It really does help us to live in the present instead of waiting for things to catch up and waiting for things to come to you later.”(Roosevelt Principal Interview, 5/09)*



Additionally, an interactive budget workbook was used during a Leadership Team meeting to demonstrate the costs of positions. This software immediately calculated the overall budget cost for the various arrangements suggested by the team. This was a most important and informative technology tool as the conversation progressed during the meeting. The Leadership Team was able to emerge from the meeting with concrete options to present to their grade levels for further discussion.

Utilizing spreadsheets to document the various budget balances is time consuming yet rewarding for the school's office manager. Through meticulous record keeping and utilizing the spreadsheets as a checks and balance system, the office manager was able to prove a significant discrepancy that the district had not yet resolved. "The District said we spent "X" and we knew that we had spent "Y" and the District didn't find their mistake until the end of July. We knew we had spent the money. But, we knew that when they found the problem that they would come back and charge us, which they did."(Roosevelt Office Manager, 3/09) Comparing the work to running a business, the office manager states, *"Just like running a business is how we look at it here. You would never want to be in the hole in your business or in your home so we kept really good track of records on our own."*

#### *Routines of Resource Deployment:*

The Roosevelt Leadership Team considers all financial requests against the tenets within the school's mission and vision. Starting with the big picture in mind when creating the budget in the Spring of each school year for the following year, Roosevelt's principal works with the Leadership Team to determine the major areas to be funded.

With budget cuts affecting Roosevelt's budget for next year, having enough money for people is the biggest financial concern:

*"People is the biggest one. ...if you don't have the people to spend the time with the kids, to give the instruction one on one, or to reduce the class sizes, you are not going to make a difference." (Roosevelt Principal Interview, 2/09)*

Additionally, Roosevelt's principal is committed to capitalizing on the financial flexibility granted the school to utilize other budget lines to "pay people for the time they are putting in".

*I know one thing as far as a belief in our school goes is programs don't teach children, teachers teach children and so we are not always looking for the quick fix, but if it is something that is going to help our students... (Roosevelt Office Manager, 3/09)*

Once the school year begins,

*"...every budget item that comes up has to be proposed to the Leadership Team. They review it to see if it is working toward our mission and our vision and what we are working on or to see if there is something else in the building that will cover it to make sure we are not wasting money. If it is approved by the Team, it is signed off by me and then it is purchased. But, every penny goes through the Leadership team for approval. (Roosevelt Principal Interview, 2/09)*

The Leadership Team meets twice a month from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Teachers are paid for this valued meeting time. A standard agenda drives each of these meetings. Team members follow a set structure for making reports or requesting assistance for grade level projects.

Also true is the continuous assessment of where resources need to be shifted in order to meet the student's needs. Weekly meetings of the school improvement team consist of looking at data to determine if students are making their academic goals with the interventions they are using. The expectations for student outcomes are rooted in the school improvement plan, which is based on the data. Addressing student weaknesses and

“putting the money towards increasing student achievement to bring the data up”

(Roosevelt Principal Interview, 4/09) is the expectation for resource allocations made.

However, the Roosevelt principal states,

*“You do have to every once in a while change where you are spending your money because change happens. You can’t stop it from happening, so the reallocation is done when we find them...”*

The overwhelming value within this context is on people and the time they spend with the students. People are needed to reduce class size, people are needed to do the interventions, and people are needed to do extra instruction. Money is a resource to purchase people and their time. As Roosevelt reprioritizes their needs for the upcoming school year people, not programs are the resounding priority. As the Roosevelt principal stated, “People and time is what you need the money for.”

#### Washington Elementary School

*“Even though it was not always a pleasant conversation [restructuring], it was pivotal.”*  
(Washington Principal Interview, 5/09)

#### *Mindset:* Will Do! Restructuring for Sustained Success

Sponsored by the Mountain Valley School District and operating under a contract or charter, Washington Elementary School (WES) is considered a public school and as such receives state funds based on their student enrollment. By state law, the sponsoring district may not interfere with the operations of the school but may offer technical assistance if requested by the school. Additionally, according to state law, “if the goals of the school set forth in the charter are not reached, the school’s charter may be revoked or not renewed” (State Department of Education, 2009, website). Having the autonomy and flexibility to decide and create their own focus, design, and operational structure,

Washington Elementary School is held accountable for their student's performance. Adherence to all federal mandates pertaining to the provision of special education services for eligible students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) must also be observed.

The model adopted for the Washington School offers a "different approach to address the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners" (School Artifact). Based on the designs of smaller learning communities, project-based learning, authentic assessment, and democratic governance, teacher voice is crucial to the operation of the school. While traditional titles for the teacher and administrator positions within the school are renamed to better reflect their educational thinking, the roles and responsibilities are similar to the other sites. These titles are not revealed here as to protect the anonymity of the study site. During the time this researcher was associated with this site, the principal was also the acting interim Director of the school as the School Board for the Washington School was conducting a search for the Director's position. A lead teacher served as the liaison and quasi administrator between the elementary teachers and the multitasked principal.

The student services portion of the budget for Washington is impacted by the costs of doing the business of the school. Not dependent on the local school district budget and not supported by an external foundation, Washington Elementary School must pay for facilities, personnel, technology, and equipment all from the budget it receives from the state. The Washington Principal explains, "A large portion of our budget goes for teacher's salaries, textbooks, and learning materials. We try to allocate enough funds in those line item amounts so we can provide the most we can for our kids" (Interview 2/09). The principal also explains that although the budget process is transparent,

“explaining why we don’t have enough money to do what we want to do” is an ongoing concern. (Interview, 2/09)

Acknowledging the challenges of operating a charter school, a central office administrator offers this perspective on the differences between a charter school and a non-charter school:

*“When a window breaks you call the window shop and someone comes out to fix it. When a window breaks at a charter school, the principal has to find a glass company that will give the best price and service time. You don’t think of those kinds of challenges until you are in the midst of them. Hard decisions have to be made.” (Interview, 3/09)*

Washington’s principal reflects favorably on past experiences with financial leadership. Having had the opportunity at an early stage in this administrator’s career to work on a district level financial team, Washington’s principal states, “I was fortunate enough to have asked the right questions, because I needed help as a new principal and I was invited to participate in the Financial Committee for the district. So I gained a lot of insight there.” (Interview, 2/09)

#### *Voices in the Field:*

During this researcher’s involvement with Washington, teacher concerns were voiced regarding whether the budget priorities in place reflected the central role of the school’s mission and if they supported the structure and way of organizing staff operations. Healthy overtones of disquietness emerged from both the teacher committee the finance committee and the school council regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Director’ position. Focused conversations over the course of approximately two months led to redefining the roles and responsibilities for the following positions: Director, principal, quasi-administrative personnel, and the office manager. At the time of

this writing, position decisions are in flux. Some positions may be eliminated while the responsibilities will be either embedded into one of the aforementioned positions or assumed by the teachers. The savings realized by combining or eliminating positions were redirected toward the classroom for teaching and learning. Additionally, clarity about the purpose of governance meetings and who attends them was articulated.

Support for the restructuring plan also emanated from the Board level:

*“It’s very interesting because the school council is going to be changing the structure of the administration so that the teachers are going to have more responsibilities, they’ll get more money. They’ll have more duties and more responsibilities, but they’re going to be able to get more money. There won’t be the cuts that we would have normally had, if our Administration was the way it was. It’s very good and I’m going to support them because it came from school council. It’s very awesome.” (Washington Board Member Interview, 4/09)*

Teacher’s comments are evidence of the strong support and expectation for a site-based budget decision process:

*“We are involved down to the small stuff and I know it can get kind of piddly and kind of weird, but I would rather be involved in what I need for my classroom.” (Washington Teacher #1 Interview, 3/09)*

*“We all decide on the budget together. We see our budget plan for the year and if anyone has any additions, it first gets discussed at the teacher committee then it is brought to the community council and then it goes up from there. So we all have a say in the budget.” (Washington Teacher Interview, 3/09)*

Indeed, one of the comments made at teacher collaborative meeting summed up the restructuring effort in this way, “We are becoming more efficient by restructuring” (4/09).

*Tools of the Trade:*

Washington’s principal identifies the budget and the policies and procedures in place as tools of the school’s financial practices. Referring to Washington’s

accountability procedures and internal checks and balances, Washington's principal is confident in their use of the tracking tools to ensure compliance.

*“Our tools are used not only to inform but to help make decisions. We also have those tools that allow us to track money.” (Washington Principal Interview, 2/09)*

Ensuring the highest levels of compliance exists when allocating and reallocating funds, Washington's principal emphasizes:

*“Accountability is really important, so making sure all procedures are in place, that you clearly understand them, all the people that work with you, not for you, with you understand them, and keep an open dialogue.” (Washington Principal Interview, 2/09)*

Time is a tool that Washington utilizes to enhance the belief that teacher voice and teacher collaboration is a cornerstone to the school's success. Washington's organizational structure formally allocates one full day a week for collaborative teacher planning and discussion. Students attend school four days a week while working on their project-based assignments at home on a fifth day. Celebrating the fact that they are a site-based school, teachers at Washington acknowledge a paradigm shift from other more traditional type of school structures and concede that “being a site-based school means you need to be skilled in multiple areas” (Fieldnotes, 4/09)

Technology has a significant presence at Washington Elementary School as both a financial tool and an instructional strategy. Being rooted in a project-based philosophy, students depend on the school's technology for their research and communication of their learning. Servers must be effective and efficient for the student's learning needs.

Functioning as a separate entity but working in conjunction with the school's main budget, the principal reports, “The technology committee finds ways to consolidate and best use the technology we have. That may mean upgrading to a different version of

Microsoft or getting the latest server or whatever. So the technology component is real important..." (Interview, 5/09).

*Routines of Resource Deployment:*

Washington's principal builds a "work culture that promotes collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective responsibility for improving teaching and learning" (Salazar, 2008, p. xi). Through consistent and purposeful conversations at committee meeting, teachers share in both the authority and accountability of student and management outcomes. Washington's administrators and teachers understand that regardless of what the budget is, they must still conform to the state's requirements.

Conversations regarding resource deployment regularly begin with the issue of enrollment:

*"One of the first things we do is look at what we project to be our enrollment for the next school year. We figure out how much we will get from the State, and then we decide the areas that we will divide the money up."* (Washington Principal Interview, 2/09 p. 2)

Financial conversations within the committee structure at Washington are encouraged at the school level, while transparency of the school's budget is required by the state:

*"Anytime a budget is adopted you have to have a public meeting and that information has to be shared with the public and has to be in a previously scheduled and announced public board meeting."* (Washington Principal Interview, 5/09)

Washington's principal is highly aware of the compliance regulations dictated by the state regarding the school's budget and acknowledges that compliance with the state laws determines budgetary practices within the school. (Interview, 5/09) However, the power of the ongoing conversations with the teacher's ultimately lead to the school's restructuring actions to better align policies and practices with the school's vision;



*“Out of the Finance Committee came the idea that maybe we needed to restructure the organization as a whole and look at the job descriptions. Could we consolidate jobs so that we were more effectively using the money that we had? So we did ultimately. We have restructured. Even though it was not always a pleasant conversation, it was pivotal.” (Washington Principal Interview, 5/09)*

Washington’s office manager oversees, manages, and prepares the reports for the school’s Board of Trustees and the State Department of Education while also handling the day-to-day finances of the school. The office manager is clearly accountable to the other members of the school community and is knowledgeable of the other entities within the school structure:

*“We are actually a site-based management school. We have a committee that is called a School Council Committee. These members also server on the Finance Committee plus a finance representative from the Board.” (Washington Office Manager Interview, 3/09)*

Adhering and complying with the spending structure of the state’s budget system and also keeping true to the school’s focus the office manager states;

*“Being a project based school, a lot of our [student’s] work is done on the Internet. We use textbooks for math and English, but rely on the Internet for the other subjects that are research and project based.” (Interview, 3/09)*

Washington Elementary School has embarked on a journey to better define their definition of site-based management: what it looks like, feels like, and operates like. Washington’s principal has placed the work of the adaptive challenge of restructuring with a collective, collaborative network of committees within the school. As Heifetz (1996) contends, “By placing the work where it belongs to meet the adaptive challenges...people must change their hearts as well as their behaviors. The people with the problem must go through a process together to become the people with the solution” (p. 127).

## Summary

In this chapter findings to address the study's research questions through narrative portraits of each school's context were presented. Based on participants reflections, descriptions, and understandings of financial leadership practices within their school, four organizing themes served as the constructs to unwrap the financial story of each context: mindset, voices from the field, tools of the trade, and routines of resource deployment. The reader may recall the definition of *financial leadership practice* from chapter one as *the tools and routines used by the governing body of a school to allocate resources to achieve school improvement goals and support instructional programming for students*. At the inception of the study, this definition attempted to bridge the sharp separation between fiscal practices and curricular practices in-use within a school. However, analysis revealed the strong presence of an additional element contributing to this practice, the leadership mindset. Like tools and routines both formal leaders (e.g. principals) and informal leaders (e.g. teachers) participated in and contributed to this emerging element.

The financial leadership practices were revealed to be a convergence of the leadership's mindset toward the working relationships within the school and the mechanisms by which they linked their thoughts with their actions (Argyris, 1999). Simply put, mindset impacted the theory of action for financial leadership practices within a school context. Additionally, variation in leadership authority and autonomy within the different policy contexts revealed how leaders interpreted and conceptualized the nature of their financial leadership practices within their schools' context. Table 4.1 summarizes the variations observed across the four contexts.

For the theme of *mindset*, how each school context conceptualized the work they do was reflected in statements of action; must do, can do, will do, and watch us do it. Variations are noted within each school context based on the sense of urgency to achieve their school vision. *Voices* from the field reflected the participant's perspective regarding the norms, expectations and beliefs in-use within each context. Similar patterns were noted throughout each context for voice. For example, transparency and accountability for results were expressed as integral components of a site's culture. For the theme of *tools*, the variations spanned from the use of surveys to data walls to determine a school's current realities. Also revealed was the role of technology to support the financial infrastructure at the sites. Technology was commonly used to provide real time results for instruction. In contrast, and less common, was the site's use of technology to link results in spending with student achievement outcomes. Variations for the theme of *routines* addressed range of use for the school improvement plan and resource deployment. Variation in conversation driving spending was noted within the four contexts.

**Table 4.1 Four Theme Analysis Matrixes**  
Context vs. Mindset; Context vs. Voice; Context vs. Tools; Context vs. Routines

<b>Contexts Theme</b>	<b>Madison Title I</b>	<b>Jefferson Non Title I</b>	<b>Washington Charter</b>	<b>Roosevelt Empowerment</b>
Mindset – <i>a kind of thinking and reasoning that permeates the school site</i>	Must Do!  Focus on Growth and Learning	Can Do!  Build capacity to focus on results	Will Do!  Focus on aligning budget priorities with school’s vision	Watch Us Do It!  Learning and student achievement focus Entrepreneurial approach to operation. Align actions to goals
Voice – <i>is a result of the organizations flexibility within the system</i>	Expectation: Transparency and Accountability  Group norms established  Belief student achievement is critical	Expectation: Learning & Inquiry  Group norm of collective mindfulness  Belief student achievement is critical	Expectation: Transparency & Compliance  Collaborative Planning norm  Belief in open teacher input required and valued	Expectation on Results  Collaborative and collective responsibility, role and task clarity  Belief in being transparent and having honest conversations
Tools – <i>are attributes of the organizations ability to analyze and synthesize current realities</i>	Data Walls for AYP  SIP roadmap for spending  Focused conversations  Student achievement data  Technology for budget and instructional data	Data Charts for AYP  SIP designed by faculty  Uses Data to tell the instructional story and effectiveness of spending  Technology monitors results	Budget policies and procedures  Internal checks and balances  Tracking tools ensure compliance  Technology important for monitoring instructional delivery and budget reporting	Surveys  SIP is the school’s business plan  Responsibility Chart  Task Lists  Standardized Agenda and Protocols  Technology provides real time feedback on budget and instruction
Routines – <i>are ways to implement the vision of the organization</i>	Leadership Team and Committees Resource deployment tight with SIP  Systematically analyze test scores Mid-course budget leveraging of resources Purchase time for teacher planning	Leadership Team and Committees Resource deployment tight with SIP  Systematically analyze test scores Try to fund what is in the plan  Review spending trends	School Council and Finance Committee Public involved with budget decisions  Conversations drive restructuring actions	Leadership Team and Committees Resource deployment tight with Leadership Team and SIP  Ongoing assessment of resources  Pay people for their time

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS: DEVELOPMENT OF THE IC MAP

In this chapter the development of the Innovation Configuration (IC) Map that displays variation in financial leadership practice is presented. The IC Map served as the device to display the grounded theory that emerged from this study. Presentation of the results was divided into four sections: (a) evolution of the IC Map for financial leadership practice, (b) identifying and displaying the configurations of Financial Leadership Practice, (c) identifying the differences/similarities in Financial Leadership Practice and, (d) Financial Leadership Practice that support/inhibit the attainment of the school goals.

#### Evolution of the IC Map for Financial Leadership Practice

Innovation Configuration Maps (IC Map) were created to clarify what an innovation or practice actually looks like along a continuum, from high-quality implementation or “ideal” to least desirable or “furthest from the ideal” (Hall & Horde, 2006). However, as noted by Horde, Stiegelbauer, Hall, and George (2006) “components selected for mapping are those that are identified as part of the innovation, not necessarily those that represent best practice per se-...” (p. 6).

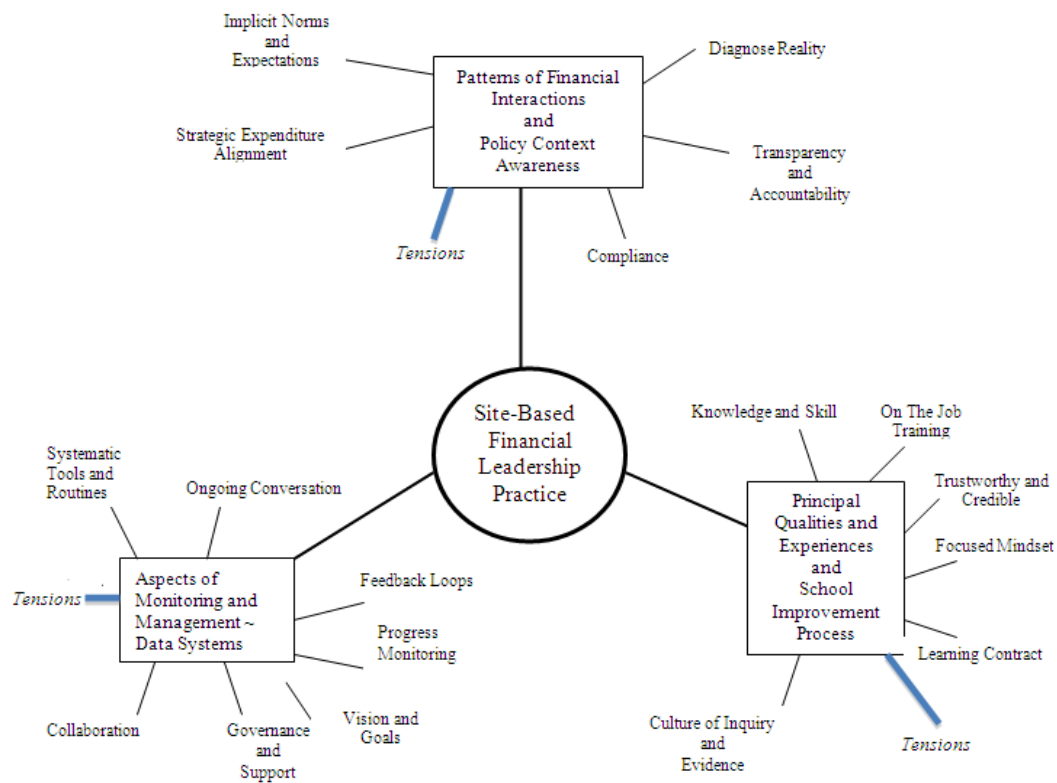
The process of developing an IC Map is a “highly iterative process” (Hall & Hord, 2006). In order to develop tentative clusters, components, and dimensions of the operational forms of financial leadership practice for the initial IC Map, triangulation of the current research literature on school finance and leadership (Hall & Hord, 2006, Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006, Hawley-Miles Roza, 2005, Hill, Roza, James,

2008, Kaser & Halbert, 2009, Bandura 1997, Creswell, 2005, 2003, 1994, Spradley, 1980, Glesne, 2006, Leithwood, 2001, Harris, 2005) was read, conversations and discussions with expert IC Map developer, author, and current practicing Educational Leadership Professor in the field, Dr. Gene Hall, and finally the use of personal reflections and experiences with school leadership and management in a school setting, lead to the development of the initial versions and drafts of the IC Map. As initial interviews with study participants were completed, this data also contributed to the emergent scheme of clusters and components developed (Figure 5.1 – Emergent Scheme of Clusters and Components).

*Clusters* include sets of components that describe a major theme or function of the innovation. Refining each of the clusters are the *components*, which further identify a particular operational aspect of the practice. Refinement in wording the clusters and components involved an iterative process that involved further review of the research (Heifetz, Grashow, Linsky, 2009, Weick, 2009, Block, 1996, Senge, 1990) and preliminary interpretation of initial participant interview data.

Tentative cluster concepts were placed in the square shapes on the cluster map: Patterns of Financial Interactions and Policy Context Awareness; Principal Qualities and Experiences and School Improvement Process; and Aspects of Monitoring and Management – Data Systems. Tentative component concepts comprising the clusters were arranged with lines attaching to the respective cluster concept.

Figure 5.1 - Emergent Scheme of Clusters and Components  
(Hall & Hord, 2006)



The Financial Leadership Practice Innovation Configuration Map (FLP-IC Map) was built on three underlying principles; that an innovation or practice “in action can take on many different operational forms or configurations” (Hall & Hord, p. 113), “outcomes from the use of different configurations of an innovation will likely vary” (Hall & Hord, p. 113), and “users of some configurations will be associated with higher outcomes than those using other configurations” (Hall & Hord, p. 113). Innovation Configuration is one diagnostic tool of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) that can be used to measure implementation of an innovation or practice, such as financial leadership practice. However the intent of this study was to create and develop an IC Map for

financial leadership practice self-reflection. Utilizing the IC Map to measure, monitor, or generate data to analyze and make modifications that support the implementation of the practice (Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006) was outside the scope of this study.

#### *Identifying Clusters, Components, Dimensions and Variations*

The iterative progression leading to the identification of the clusters and the respective components, dimensions, and variations outlined within the context of phase one and phase two and discussed in Chapter three of this study will be presented. One of the primary sources for deriving the ideals of financial leadership practice were the review of the research literature, discussions with selected professionals, and Spradley's domain analysis. Intertwining the findings from Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence while following the IC Mapping process of Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006, led to various drafts of the IC Map for this study. Table 1.5 displays the interactive path of integrating both processes to arrive at an IC Map that serves as the grounded theory for financial leadership practice for this study. The dotted line between the ethnographic perspective (D.R.S.) and the grounded theory (IC Mapping) demonstrate how the two processes interfaced to produce the various drafts of the IC Map.

#### *Study Phase One*

Narrative portrait themes of *mindset, voices from the field, tools of the trade, and routines of resource deployment* and their semantic relationships as discussed in Chapter Four served as part of the initial platform for the identification of IC Map clusters and components for financial leadership practice.



Table 5.1 Interactive Integrated Processes D.R.S. and IC Mapping

*Study Phase One – Steps 1, 2, 3*

<i>Developmental Research Sequence (D.R.S.) - Ethnographic Perspective -</i>	<i>Innovation Configuration Mapping - Grounded Theory -</i>
D.R.S. Step 2: Doing <u>Participant Observations</u> – Facilitates design of D.R.S. Step 3 Making an Ethnographic Record	Devise initial cluster map with tentative components, dimensions, and variations; ISSLC, research literature
D.R.S Step 4: <u>Descriptive Observations</u> - Facilitates design of D.R.S. Step 5 Domain Analysis	Analyze data; Revise initial cluster map of tentative components, dimensions, and variations; developing word pictures describing variations for components
D.R.S. Step 6: <u>Focused Observations</u> – Facilitates design of D.R.S. Step 7 Taxonomic Analysis	Analyze data; Revise initial map based on initial interviews and observations. Create IC Map draft #1 – (a), (c), (e) variations
D.R.S. Step 8: <u>Selected Observations</u> – Facilitates design of D.R.S. Step 9 Componential Analysis and Step 10 Discovering Cultural Themes	Analyze data; Revise draft #1 based on interviews, observations. Create IC Map draft #2

*Study Phase Two – Step 4*

<i>Developmental Research Sequence - Ethnographic Perspective -</i>	<i>Innovation Configuration Mapping - Grounded Theory -</i>
D.R.S Step 11: <u>Cultural Inventory</u> - Facilitates design of D.R.S. Step 12 Writing Findings	Analyze data; Make final revisions; IC Map FINAL draft #3 – representing grounded theory for Financial Leadership Practice – FORM A

Upon continued review of the emerging data through domain, taxonomic, componential, and thematic analysis, as well as consideration of the Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISSLC 2008 and other related research literature (Hall & Hord, 2006, Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006, Hawley-Miles Roza, 2005, Hill, Roza, James, 2008, Kaser & Halbert, 2009, Bandura 1997, Creswell, 2005, 2003, 1994, Spradley, 1980, Glesne, 2006, Leithwood, 2001, Harris, 2005), the next step in the developmental process was to review and condense an initial cluster map, refine

wording of components, and begin to develop tentative functional variations. The condensed cluster map was depicted in Figure 5.1.

While Hall and George (2000) assert the initial development and organization of concepts as a set of key components or a set of clusters typically follow one of two organizational patterns: schema mapping or linear lists or classifications both forms were used to uncover information for the IC Map.

### *Schema Mapping*

The emergent schema map (Figure 5.1) displays tentative clusters and components revealed in the data collected for this study. It was at this stage that the researcher noticed the presence of tension within all of the tentative clusters.

### *Linear List*

The linear list of tentative components (Table 5.2) in the language of the Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISSLC 2008 informed the researcher's thinking which lead to the evolutionary development of components used in the final draft of the map.

Understanding that the ISSLC provides a framework for policy creation, training program performance, life-long career development, and system support, the standards formed the basis for the IC Map components.

ISSLC (2008) Standard Three states: *An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.* In relation to financial leadership practice, this standard defined several concepts to help clarify the behaviors that would be expected of school leaders.

Table 5.2 Initial List of Component Concepts

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First Iteration: ISLLC 1996 Standards for School Leaders

1. Management of Organization (ISLLC #3)
2. Management of Operations (ISLLC #3)
3. Management of Resources (ISLLC #3)
4. Management of Learning Environment (ISLLC #3)

Second Iteration: Blend of 1996 and ISLLC 2008

1. Collaborating with Faculty and Community Members (ISLLC 2008 #4)
2. Model Self-Awareness, Reflective Practice, Transparency, and Ethical Behavior (ISLLC 2008 #5)
3. Influences Political, Social, Economic Context (ISLLC #6 – Knowledge Level)
4. Obtain, Allocate, Align Fiscal, Human and Technological Resources (ISLLC 2008 #3)
5. Promote Consensus and Stewardship of a Vision of Learning (ISSLC #1 – Knowledge Level)
6. Existing Resources Used in Support of School Vision and Goals (ISLLC #1 – Performance Level)
7. Demonstrates and Sustains a Culture of Trust (Performance Expectation ISLLC 2008 #5)

Third Iteration – ISLLC 2008 Performance Expectations and Indicators for Education Leaders

1. Develop Capacity for Distributed Leadership (ISLLC 2008 # 3)
  2. Interpret Policies to Benefit All/ Policy Engagement (Performance Expectation ISLLC 2008 #6)
  3. Establish Infrastructure Aligning Fiscal and Human Resources (Performance Expectation ISLLC #3)
  4. Collaboratively Develop and Implement a Shared Vision and Mission (ISLLC 2008 #1)
  5. Monitor and Evaluate the Management and Operational Systems (ISLLC 2008 #3)
  6. Collect and Use Data (ISSLC 2008 #1 and #4)
  7. Promote and Use Most Effective and Appropriate Technologies to Support Teaching and Learning (ISLLC 2008 #2)
  8. Adapt Leadership Strategies to Address Emerging Trends and Initiatives (ISLLC 2008 #6)
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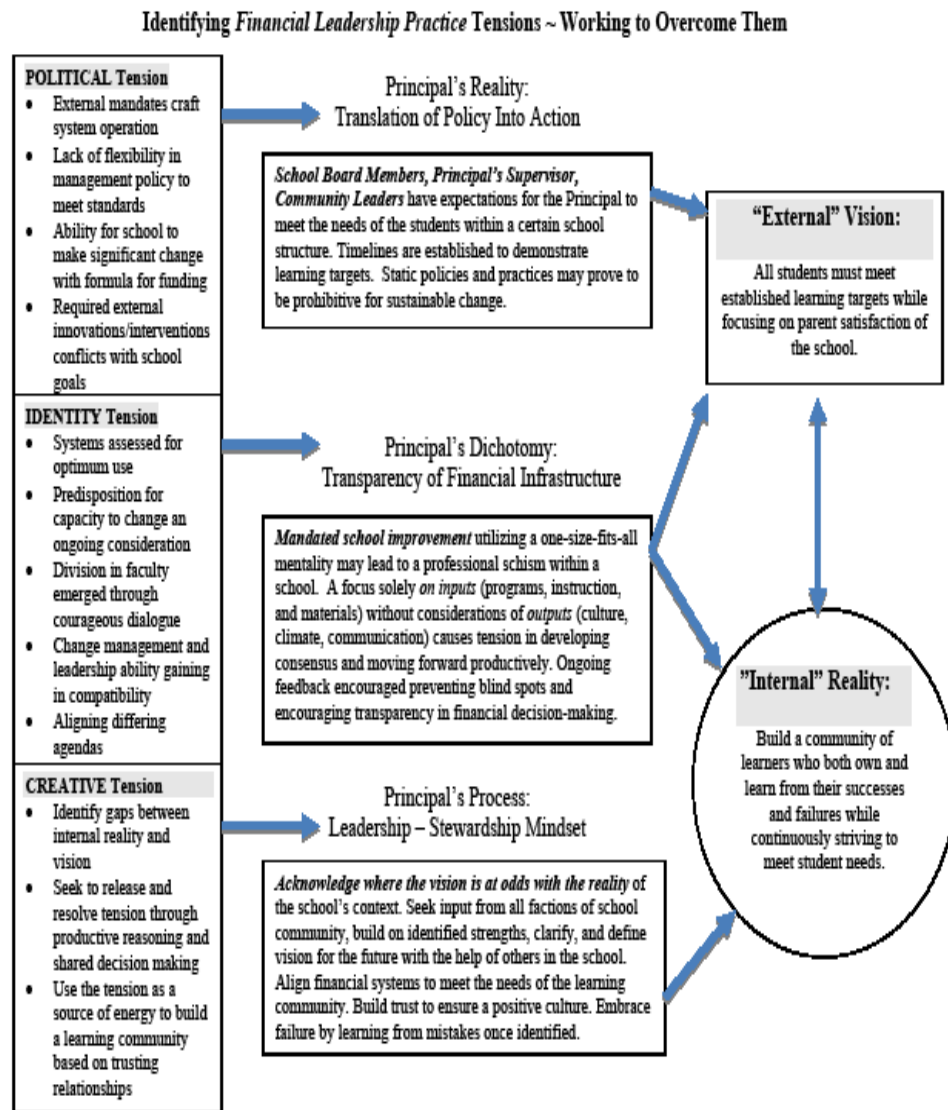
Activities such as *monitoring systems, allocating resources, building capacity for distributed leadership, and focusing instructional time to support instruction and student learning* detailed the leaders' actions for this area. Accompanying ISLLC 2008 were performance expectations and indicators that further represent current national consensus about the most important, observable aspects of educational leaders' work (ISLLC Standards 2008, CCSSO).

*Naming Clusters and Components: Identifying Tensions is a Step in Overcoming Them*

While learning about financial leadership practice within the four school contexts from study participants, the concept of tension was revealed to have a lingering yet understandable presence within all four school contexts; Title I, Non-Title I, Charter, and Empowerment. Although tensions were negotiated differently within the contexts, their presence was palpable and in fact, enabled this researcher to better identify and name the constructs for the FLP-IC Map.

Participants interpreted tensions as a positive energy: they did not view them as barriers. Barriers obstruct, whereas tensions drives the organization to “close the gap between vision and reality” (Senge, 1990, p.132). Indeed the semantic relationship that underscores the domain and taxonomic analysis states that identifying tensions is a step in overcoming them. Through this analysis further confirmation of emerging clusters were becoming evident. Three tensions that form the basis of the three main clusters for the FLP-IC Map were identified. The three tensions were political, identity, and creative. (See Figure 5.2)

Figure 5.2 Identifying Financial Leadership Practice Tensions



*Political Tension: Policy Analysis Perspective*

Tensions were created in the contexts when educational policy and practice converged in a school. A principal's reality embodies the challenges of operating a school with the presence of mandates, regulations, and policies. School leaders grapple daily with strategies to make teaching and learning both effective and sustainable with

limited funds (Central Office Interview, 5/09). “Mandates are essentially rules governing the action of individuals and agencies and are intended to produce compliance” (McDonnell & Elmore, p.134). They entail no transfer of money to comply and require enforcement by the school leader.

Successful school leaders rely on a complex blend of knowledge, skill, theory, disposition, and values in their work to improve learning conditions within a school. Being able to translate policy into action within the school context is the reality a principal encounters daily. Hence, the first cluster emerged from a policy context perspective: “Translation of Policy Into Action”.

#### *Identity Tension: Loose-Tight Dynamic*

Metaphors that exist in the literature describe the influence educational leaders have within the school. The duality of the loose – tight metaphor as described by Weick (1976) and Sergiovanni (2000) helped to link the actions of the school leaders with the financial culture shaped within each school context and explained the second cluster; Transparency of Financial Infrastructure.

Karl Weick a social psychologist wrote a seminal article for the *Administrative Science Quarterly* describing educational organizations as “loosely coupled systems.” Loose coupling examines the relationship between the technical core of the organization and the authority of the office. The technical core refers to the types of tasks to be performed in the organization. Authority elements include positions, responsibilities, opportunities, rewards, and sanctions. These coupling mechanisms help to identify the elements that are said to hold the organization together (Weick, 1974). Weick contends that in schools each of the parts that make up the whole are only loosely connected. What

happens in one place seems to have little effect on what happens somewhere else (Weick, 1974). The ability of the financial system within a school to exchange and use information became one of the identified dimensions, or aspects of component “interoperability of site-based financial and instructional systems” within this cluster. Variations (a) through (f) were identified and documented on the final IC Map. (See Appendix B) For example, as one principal commented about how the site links technology with spending, “The technology that allows us to have real time feedback on where our budget is and how much money we have and what we can spend, really does help us to live in the present instead of waiting for things to catch up and waiting for things to come to you later.” (Principal Interview, 5/09) Upon reflection, a principal using the FLP-IC Map, they may associate themselves with the “a” variation on the B.2 component which states, “School databases connect to share financial and instructional information in a timely manner...”. (Appendix B)

From a cultural point of view, Thomas J. Sergiovanni (2001) believes effective leaders have figured out how to get people connected to each other, to their work, and to their responsibilities. “Thus, they have resigned themselves to the difficult task of having to create their practice in use as they make decisions” (p. 2). For example, one principal states, “I’m telling you, we just shoot from the hip. We really have just been creating this as we go working together as a team.” (Principal Interview, 2/09). The loose-tight metaphor from Sergiovanni’s perspective, the standard theories of management and leadership assume that schools are managerially tight and culturally loose. However, Sergiovanni inverts the classic rule of how schools operate, to *culturally tight and managerially loose*. It is his belief that “The reality is teachers and other school

workers respond much more to their values and beliefs, how they are socialized, and the norms of the work group than they do to management controls” (p. 6). Inverting the rule to a culturally tight and managerially loose perspective clearly places emphasis on the school’s culture. Building the capacity for collective financial efficacy, another component within this cluster, supports Sergiovanni’s perspective in that it clearly places emphasis on the school’s culture.

Transparency of financial practices was a critical element throughout all the contexts. To ensure the school context consistently practiced transparency, systems within the sites were tied to supporting instruction. Provided services to students were monitored and reviewed. Variation in the transparency of financial infrastructures created an identity tension in regard to financial leadership practices. Transparency was tightly coupled with a school’s financial identity. For example, a formal schedule of leadership team meetings reinforced teachers’ perspectives of the principal’s commitment for financial transparency and accountability. A teacher states, “We meet as a leadership team as often as once a week, sometimes it’s every other week. Usually at least once a month something on the budget comes up...” (Teacher Interview, 3/09).

*Creative Tension :Embracing the Gap Between Vision and Reality*

The last tension identified in relation to FLP is described by Peter Senge (1990) as creative tension. Unlike political tension and identity tension, that suggests stress and anxiety, creative tension is the energy that enables people to work with the forces encountered in their environment rather than resist them. Senge (1990) suggests they are able to do this due to their high levels of personal mastery.



Personal mastery, one of Senge's five disciplines, "... goes beyond competence and skill, though it is grounded in competence and skills. It goes beyond spiritual unfolding or opening, although it requires spiritual growth. It means approaching one's life as a creative work, living life from a creative as opposed to reactive viewpoint" (Senge, p. 131). Senge contends, "The essence of personal mastery is learning how to generate and sustain creative tension in our lives" (p. 132). While the principal's previous experiences with financial leadership spanned an array of opportunities, all of them had strong tendencies to embrace the budget and the budgeting process to lead and manage their schools. This commitment is noted in principal statements addressing the greatest rewards of being a principal:

*"I think the greatest rewards are working with the kids, watching the kids."  
(Principal Interview, 4/09)*

*"Greatest rewards are seeing student progress over the year, whether that progress is academic or social."  
(Principal Interview, 5/09)*

The source of creative tension is in the gap between "...vision (what we want) and a clear picture of current reality (where we are relative to what we want)..." (Senge, p.132). People with high personal mastery continually clarify what is important and continually learn how to see current reality more clearly. Learning in this context, is the ability to produce the results we really want. One principal comments on the use of data to achieve the desired results:

*"My greatest rewards are when I see the children grow. So I am data driven and I see a lot of it on paper in our data, but also on the individual student. So, really the growth of the children and the growth of the staff has been very rewarding."  
(Principal Interview, 4/09)*

Honoring a leadership mindset that allows for distributing autonomy for financial decisions to other levels of the organization and expecting accountability for results is conceptualized in Peter Block's (1996) definition of stewardship. "Stewardship", Block writes, "requires us to systematically move choice and resources closer and closer to the bottom edges for the organization" (p. 18). In contrast, leadership gives order to the centralization of power and keeps choices and resources at the center and places power at the boundaries as an exception to be earned" (Block, 1996, p. 18). Exercising stewardship becomes a "means to impact the degree of ownership and responsibility" within an organization (Block, 1996, p. 19). "Stewardship gives us the guidance system for navigating the intersection of governance, spirituality, and the marketplace (p.19). Addressing the school's budget preparation and priorities, one principal states: "

*"I would have to say that is the process that we go through in our Leadership Team. We have the team that first of all has our mission and our values that guide the decisions and then from there they discuss it with their grade levels and their constituents and then it comes to the team." (Principal Interview, 4/09)*

The Leadership-Stewardship Mindset captures a leader's creative tension while influencing and mobilizing the financial governance structure of the school. Finding the right blend of accountability with partnership and empowerment with those doing the work describes the final cluster and characterizes the theory of action for FLP within the four school contexts.

Table 5.3 displays an example of an evolved *cluster* and its *components*. The evolved cluster is expanded to include *dimensions* of this cluster.

Table 5.3 Example of a Cluster

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Cluster A:	Translation of Policy Into Action
A.1	Assessing Contextual Reality *
A.1a	<i>Stakeholder Commitment**</i>
A.1b	<i>School Improvement Funding</i>
A.1c	<i>Principal Supervisor Involvement</i>
A.2	Review and Reflection of Resource Allocation
A.2a	<i>Utilization of Tools and Routines</i>
A.3	Adaptability in Spending
A.3a	<i>Financial Record Keeping</i>
A.3b	<i>Budget Decision Source</i>

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\* components \*\* *expanded dimensions*

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Within Cluster A, “Translation of Policy into Action” the component “assessing contextual reality” is further defined by the dimension “stakeholder commitment”. A dimension is one aspect along which a component may vary (Hall & Hord, 2006). For example, the “stakeholder commitment” (Table 5.4) dimension is used as the basis to develop the component variation descriptions from (a) to (f) variation on the final map. These variations concerning stakeholder commitment to assessing the contextual reality of the school is a critical operational dimension to financial leadership practice. Hall and Hord (2006) argue that a serious problem in research and evaluation studies has been, “Failure to document implementation before making judgments about the effects of treatments, programs, and innovations” (p. 128).

Without considering and determining stakeholder buy-in to assess the current climate of financial spending, and without the proper leadership to expedite the process, implementation may be assumed to have occurred at some other level or not at all.

Table 5.4 Variations from Dimension “Stakeholders Commitment”

- (a) Stakeholders demonstrate commitment through respectful engagement resulting in shared ownership of school outcomes.
  - (b) Stakeholders hold each other accountable for aligning actions with the school improvement plan
  - (c) Stakeholders review previous year’s data to inform development of new goals, and purchases of programs and intervention systems
  - (d) Stakeholders are rushed to dissect key strengths, priority concerns, and root causes.
  - (e) Stakeholders unclear about what information will help them determine if they have been effective with their allocations of resources.
  - (f) Stakeholders do not engage in school-wide assessment.
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Without considering and determining stakeholder buy-in to assess the current climate of financial spending, and without the proper leadership to expedite the process, implementation may be assumed to have occurred at some other level or not at all. The actual extent and quality of what financial leadership implementation looks like begins with ongoing analysis of the school’s culture and climate and the stakeholders’ commitment to engage in inquiry of the schools financial leadership practices.

The number of variation that is necessary to represent the innovation or practice is up to the map developer. An IC Map should cover the range of practices and behaviors being mapped that displayed the practice for which the map was developed (Hord, et. al, 2006). Emerging data from this study suggested six variations (i.e. a through f) to fully represent the range of practices and behaviors in the four school contexts.

#### *Study Phase Two*

Glesne (2006) writes, “Many truths live side by side. The goal is not to weed out conflicting truths, but rather to reach new, deeper, and more complex understandings of multiple truths” (p. 219). The iterative process of IC Mapping required the developer to

continually review the data to refine and critique clusters, components, dimensions, and variation descriptors. The process of verifying the variation descriptors ensures a clear understanding is communicated with regard to the intent and application of the concepts (Hall & Hord, 2006, Hall & George, 2000).

During phase two of the study, multiple review meetings were held with an expert IC Map developer and dissertation committee member Dr. Gene E. Hall, to provide verification and critiques for the different iterations of the FLP-IC Map. These ongoing reviews with Dr. Hall during this phase of the study were invaluable to the development of the IC Map structure and content. For example, during the development of the first drafting of the IC Map, Dr. Hall advised to first determine and establish the “a, c, and e” variations thus making the refinement of the other variations as more evident. Indeed, refinement in wording the components and variations involved an iterative process.

IC Map reviews helped refine specific wording of components and brought to light gaps within variations and those variations’ placements on the IC Map continuum. For example, components within cluster A originally were “contextual reality” and became “assessing contextual reality”, and “adaptability to change” became “adaptability in spending”. These component revisions strongly communicated the “major operational features” of financial leadership practices within the four school contexts (Hord, et. al, 2006, p.5). Revisions in the components were designed to better portray what principals should be doing during implementation of financial leadership practices (Hall & Hord, 2006, Hord, et. al, 2006).

Closing the gaps within the IC Map in many cases meant identifying and developing the right side of the map, or the (d), (e), (f) variations. For example, cluster

C, component C.3 was initially named, “view of failure” and had only (a) through (d) variations. Upon greater review and discussions with Dr. Hall, the component title was refined to be, “analyzing and learning from failure”. Chris Argyris (1973) states, “Learning occurs whenever errors are detected and corrected” (p. 49). Returning to the data and the readings allowed variations (d), (e), and (f) to be born. The thinking here was that the “ideal” or (a) variation for financial leadership would be to have a norm that embraced failure and viewed it as a learning opportunity. Ideally, a willingness to identify root causes of a failure and build on the organizations strengths to overcome and not repeat the failure would exist within the leadership mindset. Juxtapose the (a) variation thinking with the (e) and (f) variation thinking which portrays financial leadership practice to be furthest from the “ideal” in that a lack of willingness to diagnose and learn from the issues that prevent the school from succeeding prevail. Little or no effort to detect or acknowledge or fix errors is the norm.

This example of the flow of variations from ideal to furthest from ideal describes a critical part of financial leadership in action. The IC Map displays the variations within this financial leadership practice component “analyzing and learning from failure”. The variations provided a “set of word pictures” of how financial leadership practice is being put into action from the individual and organizational perspective (Hall, 1979).

Additionally, at the beginning of this study all four principals were solicited to provide feedback on the IC Map. By the end of the study three of the four principals provided feedback for the development of the FLP-IC Map Form A. The fourth principal was no longer at the school.

Based on the feedback of the participating principals that evaluated the final draft of the IC Map, it was determined placement of *fidelity lines* (Hall & Hord, 2006, p. 119) was not appropriate at this time. Although the IC Map for Financial Leadership Practice has been through several versions and was acknowledged by the principals as accurate to date, the IC Map has not been used yet in data collection. Therefore, empirical data to support the placement of fidelity lines has not been gathered. Future piloting of Form A of the IC Map for Financial Leadership Practice for data collection would lead to greater clarity as to fidelity line placement. “No matter who is to make the decision about the inclusion of fidelity lines, *no lines should be added until after the IC map has been through several versions and has been used in data collection.* The insertion of fidelity lines should not be arbitrary or capricious” (Hall & Hord, 2006, p. 119).

However, principals who reviewed the semi-final version, or draft three, of the FLP-IC Map commented on the many component descriptions and variations claiming, “This sounds just like my school”, referring to how specific school data is gathered and coordinated. Another principal stated, “That’s what we do”, referring to building capacity for collective financial efficacy in the school. And finally, another principal stated, “ I know some schools that do it this way”, referring to variation (e) and (f) of arbitrarily aligning resources with school vision and goals.

Knowing the IC Map was not for evaluative purposes but rather for self-reflective purposes to assist in determining targeted financial professional development, principals tendencies were to project themselves and their practices on to the continuum. In fact Principal’s commented that on some of the components they were “living in the (a) and (b) variation” but on other components they were operating in the “(c) or (d) range”.

One Principal in particular commented, “ Actually, when I begin budget discussions I am on the right side of the continuum. As the budget cycle progresses we move closer to the left side of the map” (Principal feedback, 8/09). Hall & Hord (2006) contend that this is quite normal for those reading through an IC Map for the first time to project themselves and their practices on to the map and determine where they fit on the continuum of practices. (See Appendix B for the final version of the IC Map)

#### *Logistics During IC Map Construction*

Considering how busy school leaders are and the enormity of responsibilities they shoulder scheduling interviews with the participants for this study became quite challenging. Coordinating the interview schedules for principal participants within each context was dependant on their availability. While the principal participants were professional and generous with their time, data gathering among the four school contexts remained a challenge throughout the study. Another challenge was the scheduling of various meetings for observations. Again, this was dependent on coordinating suitable times for meetings that pertained to this study’s focus. Lastly, the time of year, in which this study was conducted, was extremely advantageous for understanding principal’s financial leadership practices. There were unique opportunities to witness the actions, interactions, and reactions toward budget development and decision-making as a result of of this study having been conducted in the spring.

#### *Revisiting Theoretical Framework Roots*

Based on the study’s multidimensional theoretical framework, three mapping continuums emerged as the underpinnings for the FLP-IC Map. Brief discussions of each of the three parts of the framework are discussed with examples of how they apply to the



FLP-IC Map. Extending the notion that undergirds the IC Map beyond “ideal to “least ideal” operational practices with financial leadership, is also the thinking of Argyris and Schon (1974) and Heifetz (1994).

The (a) variation from the Innovation Configuration perspective of Hall and Hord (2006) reflects the “ideal” or “best case scenario” to the (e) variation reflecting “least ideal” or “worst case scenario” of an innovation or practice. This is the first part of the multidimensional theoretical framework.

Argyris and Schon’s (1973) theory of action perspective is the second part of the theoretical framework. They assert that double loop learning, or Model II theory in-use, is linked with productive reasoning thinking. A productive reasoning mindset is characterized by leaders who reward and encourage inquiry and reflection of practice, value learning new skills, seek to understand problems not just fix them, provide valid information to the organization, and value and encourage dialogue. Statements in the data from principals reflect this productive reasoning mindset set forth by Argyris and Schon (1974). Referring to the inquiry and reflection of practice trait within the school, a principal states:

*“As soon as we get our allocations, I meet with our Learning Improvement Team. We talk about how much we have. Then they go back to their grade levels, discuss what their grade level would like to see as our staff development training, maybe some book studies, professional books that they feel would help them in the classroom, things that would help parents... We do that three or four times before we actually do our final budget. ”*

Regarding the value of learning new skills and seeking to understand problems not just fixing them, a principal reveals an area in need of growth:

*“We need to tighten up or we are in the process of tightening up the financial infrastructure this year to monitor spending effectiveness. I think we do need to tighten up because sometimes, budgetary issues don’t need to be issues. I think if*

*we had better procedures in place, although we did adopt some new ones this year, we will have to see how they pan out next year.”*

Emphasizing data collection and analysis provides valid information to the organization while encouraging dialogue within this principal’s school context;

*“We go back to our student achievement data. We are now analyzing student-by-student how many and what percentage of students have achieved their grade level goal for math facts and that helps me determine whether that money was well spent, did that incentive work, did we do what we set out to do? Same thing with our reading, writing, and math. This much money was spent in this area this is how we targeted, how did our data come out, are we doing the right thing and are we right with spending more money?”*

These are traits that would be evident on the left side of the IC Map where the (a) and (b) variations exit. The defensive reasoning mindset, or single loop learning – Model I theory in use is characterized by a leader’s actions that seek to solve problems rather than understand them, centralize authority and decision making, maintain the status quo with learned organizational routines and existing skills to address dilemmas (Argyris, 1993).

Due to the challenging economic times, one principal seeks to solve problems rather than understand them:

*“We’re all in a recession and the money is tight. We are dealing with less money next year than we have this year so we have had to tighten up. We have had to allocate less money into supplies and materials and more into people so that we can continue to provide the services that we’ve done that has made a difference in student learning, and I have a feeling that that’s going to continue into the next year.”*

Referring to centralized authority and decision-making with finances, a principal acknowledges only sharing financial decisions with the leadership team and acknowledges:

*“...it is very, very true that my office manager literally handles the day-to-day [funds]. I oversee the big picture. She about once a month gives me an update and she’s very, very good about telling me when I have to stop spending money or when I’m not allowed to”.*

Maintaining the status quo with learned organizational routines and existing skills to address dilemmas means reallocating funds for this principal:

*“Reallocating funds is a “common financial practice when we determine what our grade’s needs are. We constantly shift, legally that is, from various line items.*

Clearly, depending on the context and the leader, some situations may call for and be totally appropriate for a Model I theory in-use such as paying bills on time or following a process for reallocating funds. How the principal diagnoses the needs of the school at a point in time will determine the theory in-use. Stretching our thinking beyond the “ideal or furthest from the ideal” to include naming a leader’s theory of action – espoused and/or theory in-use involving financial leadership practice - is another construct underpinning this IC Map.

Therefore, utilizing the FLP-IC Map as a reflection tool by principals may assist in revealing their financial theory of action. Two types of theories of action were identified by Argyris (1993). “One was the theory that individuals espouse and that comprised their beliefs, attitudes, and values. The second was their theory-in-use – the theory that they actually employed” (p. 51). The FLP-IC Map may illustrate whether a principal’s espoused theory of action is consistent with their theory in-use. Borrowing our example above , a principal’s espoused theory of action embodies transparency with financial leadership practices within the school by sharing financial decision making with a leadership team. After utilizing the FLP-IC Map the principal’s reflections reveal a

tendency to frequently engage only the office manager in ongoing daily dialogue regarding resource allocation decisions and expenditure effectiveness. The principal acknowledges the mismatch between the espoused theory of action held and the actual Model I theory in-use, which favors limited discussion with others and frequent discussion with only the office manager. At this point the challenge for the principal is to transform the espoused theory of action into a theory in-use by learning “a new set of skills and a new set of governing values” (p.54). Argyris (1993) finds that many individuals espouse Model II values and skills however few routinely act on their espoused values and skills.

Reaching beyond the underlying map supports of the “ideal or furthest from the ideal” thinking of Hall and Hord (2006), and the “productive or defensive reasoning theories in-use” from Argyris and Schon (1973), is the third part of the multidimensional theoretical framework; the ability of the leader to accurately diagnose the type of challenge that exists in the environment. According to Heifetz (1994) leaders deal with two types of circumstances in their complex environments: technical problems and adaptive problems. Technical problems are situations faced every day that have “known” responses (Heifetz, p. 72). Adaptive problems are more complex and no adequate response has yet been developed. Technical challenges can be “fixed” with clear solutions, while adaptive challenge solutions are not as “clear cut” (p. 74). Adaptive challenges require learning “to define problems and implement solutions” (p. 75). As principals assess their contextual reality, the variety in responses is dependent upon their diagnosis of the types of challenge being faced. As noted on the FLP-IC Map, A.1 (Appendix B), diagnosing whether the financial challenge requires a technical - random

response or an adaptive - complex response is dependant on formal in-depth analysis of school culture and climate (variation “a”) or random attention to outdated information (variation “e”).

The “ideal or furthest from the ideal” continuum of Hall and Hord (2006), “productive or defensive reasoning” theories in-use of Argyris and Schon (1973), and the accurate diagnosis of “adaptive or technical” challenges attributed to Heifetz (1994), collectively identifies the thinking that corroborate the development of the FLP-IC Map.

### Identifying and Displaying the Configurations of Financial Leadership Practice

While the first section of this chapter described the evolution of the IC Map for financial leadership practices within the four school contexts, this section will identify and describe the configurations of financial leadership practice. Utilizing the findings from the completed Financial Leadership Practice IC Map (Appendix B), differences and similarities in financial leadership practice within the four school contexts will be described. Finally, how the range of financial leadership practices support/inhibit the attainment of the school improvement goals are addressed. While Chapter Four addressed research question one, this section specifically addresses research questions two, three, and four:

What are the configurations of financial leadership used by principals in the four school contexts?

What are the differences/similarities in financial leadership practice in the four school contexts?

How do the financial leadership practices support/constrain the attainment of the school improvement goals in the four school contexts?

### *Configurations of Financial Leadership Practice*

Identification of two financial leadership configurations was found in this study:

#### *Participatory Allocation Configuration and Distributive Autonomy Configuration.*

Rooted in the principal, teacher, office manager and central office administrator/board member interviews, 12 site observations, and analysis of site-based documents provided to this researcher, the two configurations reflected the decision-making process the site utilized to allocate resources within the accountability context of their school.

#### *Participatory Allocation Configuration (PAC)*

Participatory Allocation was most closely associated with the school contexts that were allocated budgets by the school district and were bound with highly regulated spending requirements on all categories within their budgets. Additionally, at times principals at these sites were required to use instructional programs and materials not of their own choosing.

Principal's financial leadership practices within the Participatory Allocation Configuration were perceived as open and collaborative by the teachers interviewed for this study. For example, one PAC teacher states:

*"Our principal is very open and wants to have our opinion,... wants to know as a whole what we think as a school" (Teacher Interview, 3/09).*

Another PAC teacher within the same school reports that the principal meets with the leadership team, waits for feedback from the leadership team representatives and then *"takes it (feedback) into consideration"* when making the final decision.

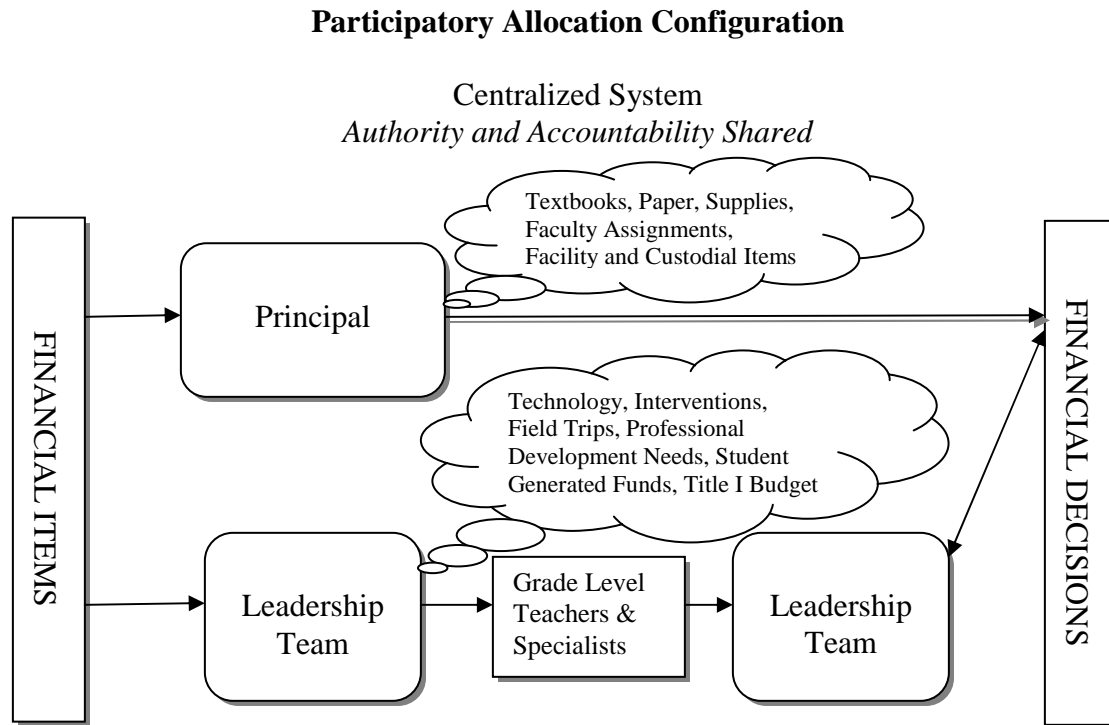
One PAC principal acknowledges that while the leadership team is involved with financial decisions they also serve in an advisory capacity to the principal on some decisions. This was reflected in the principal's statement:

*"I do solicit input from my Leadership Team... and give them some decisions to make, but there are some things that I simply have to make as the principal that I do without input" (Principal Interview, 5/09).*

Transparency in financial decision-making was still achieved as all financial decisions made by the principal were eventually brought to the leadership team for purpose of principal transparency and accountability in spending.

In this configuration (Figure 5.3) financial authority and accountability is partially shared with a leadership team. The leadership team representative is tasked with the responsibility of communicating the leadership team's discussions and decisions. Grade level teachers and specialists are encouraged to voice their thoughts and concerns to the leadership team representative who will share their concerns with the overall leadership team. This process then leads to decisions regarding the allocation of school resources. This process was observed to be similar for instructional decisions made by the schools within this configuration as well. Respectful and reflective discussions were observed among PAC leadership teams as principals lead the teams through the agenda items.

Figure 5.3 Participatory Allocation Configuration



Financial items brought before the leadership team in the PAC are openly discussed and when necessary, as in the case of Title I funds, secure whole school and parental consensus on allocation decisions. PAC leadership team meetings observed ranged between thirty and forty five minutes.

*Distributive Autonomy Configuration (DAC)*

Distributive Autonomy was the configuration that characterized a decentralized system functioning within a centralized system. Distribution of authority is sanctioned and even encouraged by district officials (Kowalski, 2006). Within this configuration authority and accountability were distributed to the schools from a centralized system. In return for autonomy, schools within the DAC needed to demonstrate tangible evidence



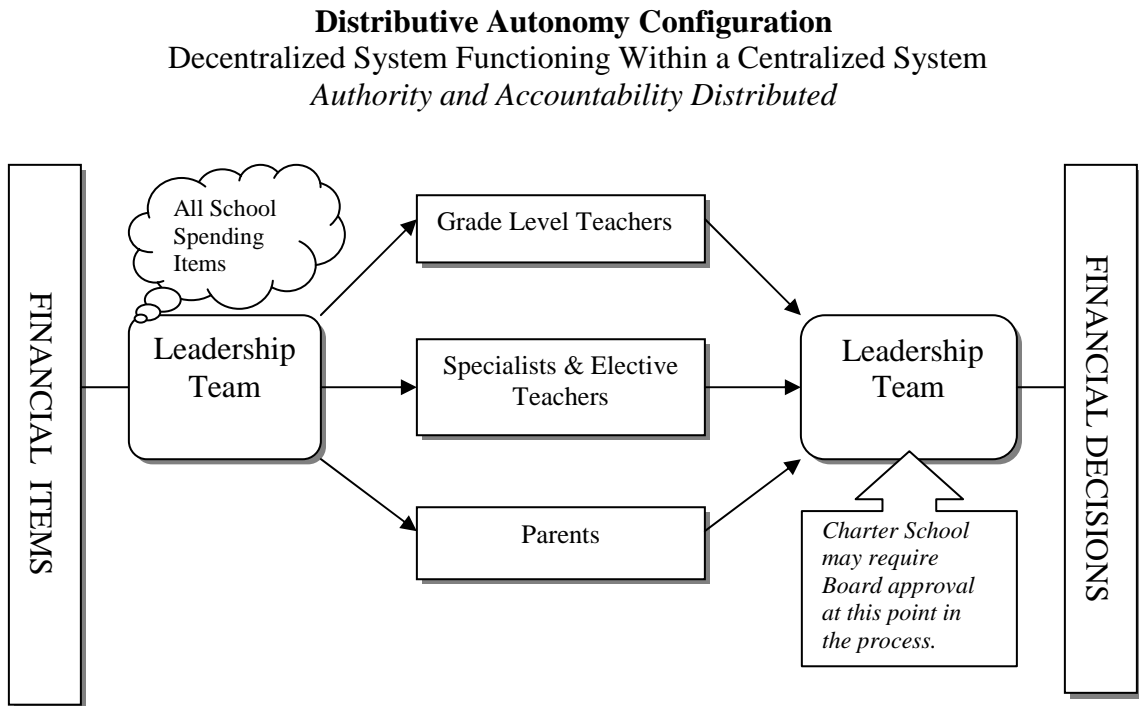
for their decisions, most often in the form of student achievement results. In some cases within the Distributive Autonomy context, schools could be shut down or positions could be reassigned if results were not demonstrated as defined by state law and district policy.

The schematic of Distributive Autonomy Configuration (Figure 5.4) displays the congruency between the espoused spending theory of action and the actual theory in-use for this configuration. All financial, and instructional, decisions are under the purview of the teachers. The internally formalized nature of the communication process within the Distributive Autonomy Configuration begins with the teacher representatives on the leadership team and includes the principal, and a parent. Teachers within this context feel ownership for their decisions and monitor their results regularly to ensure they are getting the results they intended.

Two comments from teachers in the distributive autonomy configuration are reflective of this statement. First, a full time classroom teacher commented, “When I came to this school it was wonderful because the principal keeps all the books open. As a leadership team member we go over everything.” Another teacher comments,

“Everything is for the students. It all goes back to them. If we are buying this, how is it going to directly impact learning to further the children’s education?” Finally, a teacher in a distributive autonomy configuration school comments; “I have to keep complete and accurate records of everything. Know exactly what you have and where do you spend it so that you are not duplicating things.”

Figure 5.4 Distributive Autonomy Configuration



Pivotal and passionate discussions were observed among DAC leadership teams as principals led the teams through agenda items. All financial items are brought before the leadership team in the DAC. Each item is frankly discussed while the principal skillfully seeks to obtain consensus before moving on to additional agenda items. DAC leadership team meetings observed lasted a minimum of two hours.

In summary, the configurations of financial leadership practice, both Participatory Allocation and Distributive Autonomy, were most identifiable through the interviews, observations, and document analysis process conducted by the researcher. Each configuration represents a specific accountability context where autonomies regarding financial decisions differ. Findings reveal there was significant financial decision-making authority given to teachers within the Distributive Autonomy Configuration while

teachers within the Participatory Allocation Configuration were involved with the financial decisions in a meaningful but less autonomous way. In other words, PAC teachers had influence on but not necessarily decision-making authority equal to the principal. DAC teachers have the same one vote as the principal. As one DAC teacher states regarding financial decisions:

*“ It starts at the bottom and we bring it up and we all make decisions together. Nothing is just, it goes to a higher power and that’s it. It’s always decided together” (Teacher Interview, 3/09).*

### Differences and Similarities in Financial Leadership Practice

#### Within the four School Contexts

Attempting to reveal the differences and similarities in financial leadership practices between the four school contexts, the researcher again drew from the final draft of the IC Map (Appendix B) and Spradley’s (1980) Developmental Research Sequence analysis of the collected data (APPENDIX B). Analysis revealed the interrelatedness and interdependence of clusters and components by the elements of money, people, and time..

Principals perceived these salient elements of money, people, and time as either fixed entities to work through and around or autonomous tools, depending on their school context. The dimensions of contrast between financial leadership practices are represented by the tight – loose dynamic in Table 5.5.

While similar processes were evident in all contexts (similarities are listed in the center column of Table 5.5) the differences were found to be rooted in the ranges of implementation for each process (differences are listed on either side of the center column on Table 5.5). For example, while all contexts studied had a system in place to

Table 5.5 Financial Leadership Practice “TIGHT - LOOSE” Dynamic

TIGHT	 ELEMENTS	LOOSE
<i>MONEY</i>		
Totally Inclusive Decisions: Empowerment, Charter	<i>Financial Decision Making</i>	Shared Decisions: Title I, Non-Title I
Purchase Mentality: Empowerment, Charter	<i>Resource Deployment</i>	Allocated Mentality: Title I, Non-Title I
Link Expenditures to Student Outcomes: Empowerment, Title I, Non – Title I	<i>Financial Data Tracking</i>	Focus on Financial Compliance: Charter
Required Community Participation: Empowerment, Charter, Title I	<i>Community Involvement on Financial Items</i>	Optional Community Participation: Non-Title I
<i>PEOPLE</i>		
Union Contract Modified: Empowerment, Charter	<i>Hiring Authority</i>	Union Contract Fixed: Title I, Non-Title I
Innovative Structure: Empowerment, Charter	<i>Governance Structure</i>	Traditional Structure: Title I, Non-Title I
Ability to Shape Learning Approaches: Empowerment, Charter	<i>Curricular Approaches</i>	Mandates Shape Learning Approaches: Title I, Non-Title I
<i>TIME</i>		
Ample Collaboration Time: Empowerment, Charter	<i>Leadership Team Collaboration Time</i>	Time Sensitive Collaboration Time: Title I, Non-Title I
Time Structure: Entrepreneurial Empowerment, Charter	<i>Student Instructional Time</i>	Time Structure: Status Quo Title I, Non-Title I

track spending (*Financial Data Tracking*) within their budgets, one context was found to be focused intently on financial compliance while three contexts went beyond compliance reporting to linking expenditures to student outcomes. The empowerment, Title I, and Non Title I contexts were found to be tight in their use and analyze of financial and student achievement data to inform purchasing decisions. This dynamic suggests there is no one right “blend” that served every circumstance. This find was consistent with the The Turnaround Challenge Report, (2007).

Findings also revealed the decentralized schools involved in the process of implementing a new or innovative *curricular approach* for their contexts were found to be tight or non-negotiable on the curricular approach element in order to ensure their vision became a reality. Centralized contexts, working with an established curriculum, were looser on the same element with less curricular change to manage or negotiate. This contrast highlights the loose/tight dynamic in relation to context management, implementation, and design.

Organizational tensions that exist within each context may also account for the tightness or looseness dynamic within a site. For example, the charter context was undergoing the initial stages of internal *governance restructuring*. The empowerment context was implementing a new funding formula for budget composition for then next school year. Therefore, both contexts were characterized by being tight on their negotiated governance structures while the Title I and Non-Title I contexts were characterized as loose on this element as their traditional structure remained the same or status quo.

Indeed organizational tensions are known for the traditional structures that operate as they have been and where change was not a factor to their governance structure. This contrast highlights the loose/tight dynamic in relation to context management, implementation, and design.

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In summary, not surprisingly all contexts shared the same concerns regarding the common elements of money, people, and time. Operational processes identified through analysis of the interview transcripts, and observational field notes, site documents, and ethnographic journal reflexive entries further revealed similar tools and routines used. However, dimensions of contrast or variations were revealed as each of the common processes was observed during their implementation within the different contexts. Differences in financial leadership practices were displayed as a tight-loose dynamic in Table 5.5. The differences were found to be in the ranges of implementation for each

practice.

Simply put, decentralized contexts were granted greater autonomy. With greater choice in creating their context, stakeholders held tightly to their negotiated processes as learning and building capacity for implementing their authority was a priority.

Decentralized contexts were mindful of the impact of their decisions. The centralized contexts had less autonomy with processes and held loosely to the processes that were non-negotiable. While mindful of their actions, decisions in the centralized context were more standard and routine. Although the centralized contexts in this study acted on the district regulations and mandates, they retained a sense of accountability and responsibility for their outcomes.

#### Financial Leadership Practices that Support/Inhibit the Attainment of School Improvement Goals Within the Four School Contexts

As noted in Chapter Four, the definition of financial leadership practice had expanded to include the concept of mindset. *The tools, routines, and mindset used by the governing body of a school to allocate resources to achieve the school improvement goals and support instructional programming for students* is the finalized definition of financial leadership practice for this study. An interesting relationship was uncovered while determining how these elements of financial leadership practice interacted to either support or inhibit the attainment of the school improvement goals within the four contexts.

Referring to the theme analysis matrix (Table 4.1) the reader will notice the salient components of the definition of financial leadership practice: *tools, routines, and mindset*. Taking notice of the semantic relationship for each of the themes builds the case

for the finding that the relationship a school has with its school improvement plan appears to determine the effectiveness of the financial leadership practices: Tools are attributes of the organization's ability to analyze and synthesize current realities. Routines are the ways to implement the vision of the organization. Mindset is a kind of thinking and reasoning that permeates the school site. School improvement plans (SIP) that were collaboratively designed, regularly monitored, and when determined necessary revised, were not viewed as a compliance document but rather as a dynamic ongoing living document reflecting the vision and goals of the school.

*SIP: Nexus of Financial Leadership Practices and Instructional Leadership Practices*

The SIP connection is key to develop financial leadership practices that support not inhibit attainment of the school's improvement goals. Once financial leadership practices are rooted in resource tools, accountability routines, and collaborative mindsets of school practitioners, variations emerge that adapt to the unique context of the site.

Table 5.6 Financial Leadership Practices Connection with the SIP, highlights the impact of the financial leadership practices as they interact with school contexts that have an ongoing dynamic or compliant connection with their SIP.

Three of the four contexts collaboratively designed their SIP's. The alignment of those contexts' financial leadership practices supported academic goal attainment except where money was not available to fully fund the SIP. Funding was a concern for two of the four contexts within this study; the Charter and Non-Title I schools.

While schools understood the SIP as a learning contract between the school, the students, and the community, how each context interpreted and negotiated its



implementation through the financial lens depended on their understanding and commitment to aligning the tools, routines, and mindset available at their site.

Table 5.6 Financial Leadership Practices Connection with the SIP

<b>FLP CONTEXT</b>	<b>Mindset</b>	<b>Tools</b>	<b>Routines</b>	<b>Support/Inhibit SIP Goals</b>
Title I	Must Do – Make AYP	SIP – Designed Collaboratively by Stakeholders	Weekly Leadership Meetings, Monthly Finance Meeting	Budgets financed initiatives in the school improvement plan. Reallocation of funds aligned with findings for improvement.  PRACTICES supported attainment of the school improvement goals.
Non-Title I	Can Do – Keep the upward trend going	SIP – Designed Collaboratively by Stakeholders	Weekly Leadership Meetings, Monthly Finance Meeting	Time for people allocated to revisit academic calendar outlining the benchmarks for the student learning goals and to collaborate on assessment results of the content tested  Lack of funds to fully fund the School Improvement Plan was an ongoing tension to adapt to.  PRACTICES supported attainment of the school improvement goals
Charter	Will Do – Restructuring for sustained success	SIP – Compliance document	Weekly Team Meetings, Bimonthly Finance, and Quarterly Board Meetings	Administrative Roles and Responsibilities needed redefining. Cohesive alignment for decision-making. Lack of funds to fully support the School Improvement Plan.  PRACTICES Overall promoted the school’s vision but somewhat inhibited school improvement goal attainment due to restructuring of positions and reassignment of tasks.
Empowerment	Watch Us Do It – It’s a Team Decision	SIP – Designed Collaboratively by Stakeholders	Bi-monthly Leadership Team Meetings, Weekly assessment for learning, Recorded assessment data weekly as evidence, Dialogue/reflect on practice weekly	Monitored student progress weekly, changed quickly to make modifications for improvement – adaptable  PRACTICES strongly promoted alignment for attainment of school improvement goals.

## Summary

Interfacing the Developmental Research Sequence (Spradley, 1980) with the Innovation Configuration mapping process of (Hall & Hord, 2006) led to the development of the Financial Leadership Practice Innovation Configuration Map. (APPENDIX D). The “ideal or furthest from the ideal” continuum of Hall and Hord (2006), “productive or defensive reasoning” theories in-use of Argyris and Schon (1973), and the accurate diagnosis of “adaptive or technical” challenges attributed to Heifetz (1994), collectively identified the thinking that corroborated the development of the FLP-IC Map.

Through further analysis of the data from the interviews, observations, and document analysis two configurations of financial leadership practice were identified: the *Participatory Allocation Configuration* and the *Distributive Autonomy Configuration*. Each configuration represents a specific accountability context where autonomies regarding financial and instructional decisions differed. Significant financial decision-making authority was granted to teachers within the Distributive Autonomy Configuration while teachers within the Participatory Allocation Configuration were involved with the financial decisions in a meaningful but less autonomous way than their Distributive Autonomy Configuration counterparts.

Concerns regarding the elements of money, people, and time were shared among all contexts. Differences in financial leadership practices were displayed as a tight-loose dynamic. Once financial leadership practices are rooted in targeted resource tools, mindful internal accountability routines, and collaborative, inquiry based mindsets of school practitioners, variations emerge that adapt to the unique context of the site.

Contexts with greater autonomy held tightly to those negotiated autonomies while centralized contexts were loose with financial, curricular, and personnel elements. Granted greater autonomy, decentralized contexts held tightly to their negotiated processes and mindfully attended to the outcomes of their decisions. The centralized contexts had less autonomy with processes and as a result held loosely to those processes that were non-negotiable. Also mindful of their actions and the outcomes that resulted, some of the financial decisions in the centralized context may rest solely with the principal.

Finally, the school improvement plan served as the nexus between a school's financial leadership practices and their instructional leadership practices when the school improvement plan was collaboratively designed and implemented as intended. This supports Hall and Hord's (2006) contention, that in order for a plan to be implemented with fidelity, those who are going to be implementing it need to have input into the plan's development.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into three sections: (a) summary, (b) conclusions, and (c) recommendations. The findings of this study were generated from two phases. Research questions one, two, and three were addressed in phase one of the study which began the initial development of the Innovation Configuration Map (IC Map) through intertwining the ethnographic analysis of the Developmental Research Sequence (Spradley, 1980). Research question four was addressed in phase two that lead to the final draft of the IC Map.

#### Summary of Findings

*Research Question 1: How do principals' experiences to date with financial leadership shape their current practice?*

Bandura (1999) asserts that mastery experiences are the most effective way of creating a strong sense of efficacy. Wood and Bandura (1989) stated that self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources and courses of action needed to meet given situational demands. In this study principals identified their experiences with different people who contributed to their financial self-efficacy and thereby helped to shape their present financial leadership practices.

Principal experiences were categorized within the following headings: transparency, governance structure, site-based decision-making, other's who have influenced, and coursework experiences and training. Three of the four principals acknowledged working with their previous supervisors as having had the greatest impact on shaping their current financial practices. In these circumstances, that meant a dynamic

and energetic principal. The experiences of working with their principal while making decisions, leading discussions, and developing consensus among groups of people served as the authentic mastery level experiences with financial leadership. This is consistent with Bandura's (1977) conclusion that authentic mastery experience is the most influential source of efficacy.

### *Transparency*

A transparent financial management style influenced one of the principal participants significantly. Open discussions and sharing of financial data with groups of teachers was a much more comfortable fit with this principal than in a former working environment that was characterized as "seeming secretive" by comparison. The experience was characterized as "seeming secretiveness" since only a small select group of teachers were privy to financial documents or discussions. The principal participant was a teacher at the time and was one of members of the small select group. "Feeling uncomfortable with the responsibility at that time" (Principal Interview 2/09) and with this management choice, the principal was relieved to work for another principal who conducted all the financial decision-making with a site-based council. Sharing information with many stakeholders in the school was an important factor for this principal's current practices. In fact, a Leadership Team was in place to conduct financial discussion in an open group forum. The principal comments, "They [financial decisions] really have to be their decisions". (Principal Interview, 2/09).

### *Governance Structure*

Another principal credited a governance structure for influencing current day financial practices. This principal reflected on the teaching experience of working in a consensus model school that allowed for feedback from various constituent groups. Feedback was then taken to a steering committee that voted on it and was shared with the school as a whole. “I would say I probably have based a lot of my governance here based on my experiences with that.” (Principal Interview, 5/09). Interestingly, the same principal regarded the authors of the research literature as role models. While contending, “We just shoot from the hip” when it comes to financial leadership practice, this principal acknowledged the team effort involved, “We really have just been creating this as we go working together as a team.” (Principal Interview, 2/09)

### *Site-Based Decision Making*

At an early stage of the third principal’s administrative career, an invitation to serve on a district finance committee provided great insight into financial management techniques. The ability to “Ask the right questions of the right people” afforded this principal greater insight into the area of financial leadership. However, while working as a teacher, this principal participant reflected on the experience of working for a principal “who really started site-based management before it was really popular” (Principal Interview, 2/09). For this principal those experiences, “...gave me a lot of reason to include more people in decision-making in finance” (Principal Interview, 2/09).

### *Other’s Who Have Influenced Principals*

One principal credited a former school’s office manager for the “on the job training” regarding financial practices. While another principal attributed the seven years

of previous administrative work as the preparation for financial management of the school today. Additionally, two of the principal's reflected on their previous teaching experiences as having an impact on their current day practices. Two other principals recognized the collective knowledge of their teaching staff and "just talking to them" as having an impact on shaping their current financial leadership practices.

#### *Coursework Experiences and Training as Preparation for Financial Leadership*

Three of the four principals claimed their college preparation experiences with finance were minimal and not related to the job they were expected to do. One principal stated that coursework was beneficial for preparation for the administrative position.

Additionally, principals comments regarding trainings provided for them by the school district were mixed. One principal felt certain district trainings were effective when a new finance system was launched in the district. Principals' networking with other principals was considered to be an effective method of training. All principals concurred that there was no substitute for "on the job training".

#### *Principal Advice and Recommendations*

A variety of suggestions and advice were offered to new administrators regarding financial leadership:

1. "Take time to learn the budget and how it works."
2. "Never say yes right at that moment. Look at the budget, look at the big picture before you say yes."
3. "Slow down, take your time, and listen."

4. “Learn the laws. Make sure all the people that work with you, not for you, *with you* understand them.”
5. “Keep an open dialogue.”

Principals in this study recommended training be provided for:

1. *Types of accounts* - student generated accounts, student store accounts, budget carryovers in traditional schools and autonomous schools
2. *Laws and regulations* - and how they apply to the daily operations in the school
3. *Effective communication* – including how to facilitating effective communication with your office manager
4. *Finance and budgeting* – periodic updating of rules and procedures, ongoing refresher courses
5. *Training for assistant principals* - focusing on the financial components of the job.

*Research Question 2 and 3: What are the configurations of financial leadership used by principals in the four school contexts? and What are the differences/similarities in financial leadership practice in the four school contexts?*

The results of this study revealed the identification of two configurations of financial leadership: the *Participatory Allocation Configuration* and the *Distributive Autonomy Configuration*. When reporting on the findings regarding the configurations of financial leadership and the similarities and differences of financial leadership, it is difficult to separate the configurations from the characteristics that define them. Research



question two sought to identify the arrangement of emergent themes of tools, routines, and mindset used by the principals in the four school contexts.

Research question three identified the contrasts or likenesses of each context's configuration. Configuration models identified within this study are of value to the research community's greater understanding of how principal's financial leadership is focused toward "influencing internal school process that are directly linked to student learning" (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, p.38).

*Participatory Allocation Configuration: Focus on Management*

Two schools, the Title I school and the Non Title I school comprised the *Participatory Allocation Configuration* (PAC). The PAC involved the formal leader, the principal, sharing authority and accountability with informal leaders, the teachers. This configuration promoted enhanced organizational effectiveness and incorporation of democratic principles and values (Leithwood & Duke, 1998). The principal in this configuration retained the ultimate authority with financial decisions yet was highly transparent with those decisions. Promoting participatory allocation in a school context helped build ownership among the teachers by inviting them to share in the financial decision making process. This process ensured order and consistency within these contexts (Kotter, 1990) and was consistent with Northouse's findings that participative leadership, "...integrates suggestions into the decisions about how the group or organization will proceed" (Northouse, 2007, p. 130).

The Title I and Non-Title I contexts displayed attributes of the PAC. Both contexts sought the counsel of Leadership Team members for guidance on financial and instructional issues and integrated their various suggestions. The communication loops

were in place to have Leadership Team members inform grade level teachers of the agenda items and voice any concerns for this purpose. Leadership Team representatives reported any grade level concerns that would then be taken into consideration in the principal's final decision.

Principals in the PAC schools shared authority with the Leadership Team however retained the right to make the ultimate decision. Prioritized wish list of supplies, staffing placements, technology purchases, interventions, and written proposals for field trips were examples of the types of financial requests for which the principal retained the final decision. However, through the PAC, teachers were assured to have a voice by having input into the choices and decisions of the spending allocations within their school. Conversations at PAC school leadership team meetings were polite, respectful, and supportive of recommendations. Resource allocations throughout budget lines were made transparent to leadership team members at regularly scheduled meetings. Teachers in PAC schools reported great trust, respect, and approval for the manner in which their principals related to them regarding financial issues at their school.

*Distributive Autonomy Configuration: Focus on Leadership*

Two schools, the Empowerment and the Charter school comprised the *Distributive Autonomy Configuration* (DAC). The DAC schools were given formal authority by the state or district for items such as budget, curriculum, and time schedules in exchange for responsibility for student outcomes. Setting broad guidelines, this configuration required leaders to engage employees and the public in creating change. This configuration challenged leaders to be more affected by competing values, beliefs, and biases (Kowalski, 2001). Leaders in this configuration influenced teams of

individuals toward goal attainment by generating consensus on all issues related to the school. Transparency with financial issues was critical in the distributive autonomy configuration. This configuration demanded rigid adherence to the autonomies it had been granted. At the same time, however, it promoted and encouraged individual innovation and autonomy in day-to-day operations. “This configuration allowed leaders of an organization to emphasize the importance of control and freedom at the same time. Schools that follow the dictates of directed autonomy have been characterized as both tightly and loosely coupled” (DuFour & Eaker, 1991, p.51).

In DAC schools financial decisions must be taken to the Leadership Teams for discussion. No decisions were made and then handed down to the Leadership Team as was noted in the PAC. Authority was distributed throughout the organization to the people closest to the students. Additionally, conversations at DAC school leadership team meetings were demanding of its participants. Since resources at DAC schools needed to be purchased, rather than being allocated from a central administration, teachers carefully weighed the options of their spending decisions. Lively and stimulating dialogue ensued as recommendations were consistently challenged before consensus was achieved. The principals in these contexts were consensus builders who may advocate for their point of view but are open to learning and most of all, listening to the stakeholders in the school’s learning community. Principals in this configuration realized they had but one vote and the teachers owned the responsibility for the outcomes of the decisions they made.

*Financial Leadership and Management: Tight – Loose Dynamic*

Despite the context, principals in both configurations were constantly balancing the tasks, routines, and mindset. This is consistent with DuFour and Eaker’s (1999)

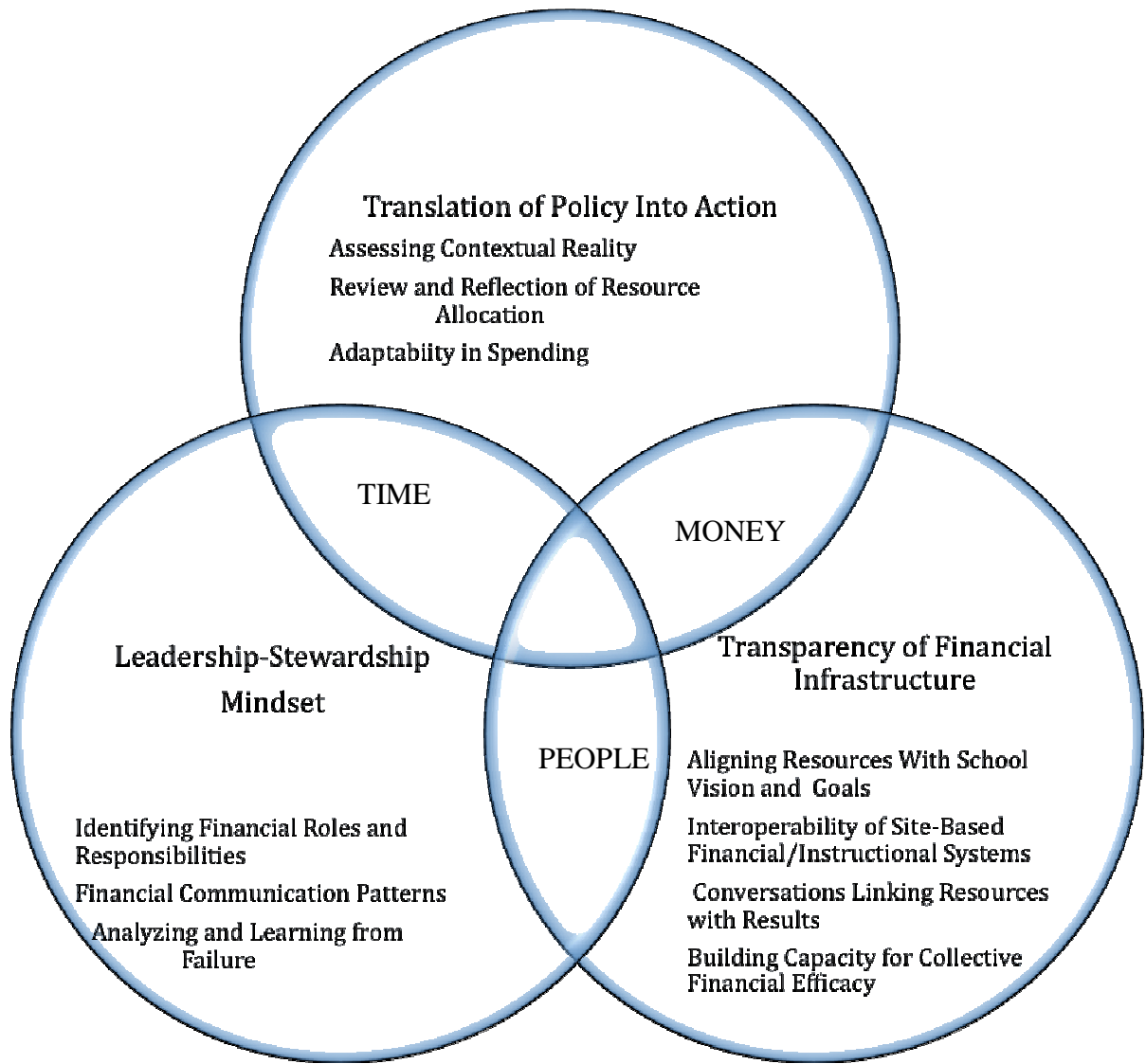
findings that “Schools must be both loose and tight; principals must both encourage innovation and insist on compliance” (p.55).

Features of the different configurations were expressed on a tight-loose continuum (Table 5.5). This continuum represented a principal’s internal challenge in establishing effective financial leadership practices to achieve a balance between system accountability and adaptability (Elmore, 2000, Heifetz, 1994, Odden, 1997, Picus, 2000); while emphasizing the importance of coordination and integration of decisions to ensure expenditures were strategically aligned to the school improvement plan (Senge, 1990, Reeves, 2009, Whitaker, 2003, Salazar, 2008).

The three clusters identified on the IC Map: *Translation of Policy into Action*, *Transparency of Financial Infrastructure*, and *Leadership-Stewardship Mindset* were all operationally linked by the principals’ and leadership teams’ allocation of money, people, and time (See Figure 6.1). The similarities of financial leadership practice across both PAC and DAC configurations are the common elements of: financial decision making, resource deployment, financial data tracking, community involvement, hiring authority, governance structure, curricular approaches, teacher collaboration time, and student instructional time. The differences in financial leadership practice lies within the ranges of implementation for each element as noted in Table 5.5. Principals must diagnose the right combination of the tight-loose dynamic for their particular context (DuFour & Eaker, 1999, Heifetz, Grashow & Linsky, 2009).

Participants interviewed for this study were tight on wanting the best for the students and the learning environment and tight on the expectation that funds would only be spent on the students. Student needs were first. The debate about means was addressed

Figure 6.1 Innovation Configuration Map Clusters and Money, People, Time Link



differently in the centralized and decentralized contexts. This is discussed in the conclusion section.

Participants interviewed for this study were loose on resisting the mandates, regulations, and policies that were handed down to them. These items are non-negotiable

and were translated by each principal in a manner that allowed their site to meet the contextual realities of their school.

Rigid mandates for spending were noted in the centralized schools. In contrast, autonomies were carefully protected in the decentralized schools. Funds in the centralized schools were previously allocated throughout various categories within their budgets while decentralized contexts created their budgets by purchasing items within budget categories that reflected site priorities. Whether items are allocated or purchased, all principals within this study were committed to providing targeted and relevant learning experiences for their students.

*Research Question 4: How do the financial leadership practices support/constrain the attainment of the school improvement goals in the four school contexts?*

In the study sites, when the principal's financial leadership practices were driven by the instructional program and the school's vision and goals, teachers had greater clarity in spending, assessment of expenditure effectiveness, and reallocation of resources became routine and ultimately embedded within the operating fabric of the school.

When roles and responsibilities were not clearly defined, inefficiency and ineffectiveness, and frustration in financial decision-making resulted. Allocations driven by past spending patterns without current analysis of expenditure effectiveness and with a disregard for stakeholder's instructional needs resulted in the attainment of the school improvement goals being hindered. Discussions focusing on recreating the alignment between job roles and responsibilities led to the monitoring of expenditures and analysis of the financial infrastructure to support the school improvement goals.

Fidelity in implementation of the school improvement plan proved to be the link between financial leadership practices that supported or constrained school improvement goals within the four school contexts. Table 5.6 outlines this link among the four contexts.

### Conclusions

The configurations of site-based financial leadership practice were rooted in the mindset established and implemented on a day-to-day basis by the principal, faculty, and staff within each of the four school contexts. When the use of the tools, routines, and mindsets representing the unique context of the school converged purposefully with the school improvement plan, stakeholders in the learning community took ownership of the SIP's contents and outcomes. The school improvement plan became the learning contract between the school, students, parents, and community.

Flattened organizations, where the principal was just one vote, scrutinized their tools and routines for efficiency and effectiveness. In this configuration teachers' voices had an impact on the way business was conducted within the school: where everyone was an owner, everyone learned, and an ongoing conversation with equals existed.

The following are six implications from this study and will be discussed in the following sections: (a) theory of action – theory in-use, (b) means and ends, (c) diagnosing reality; managing tensions, (d) principal as staff developer – tiered professional development, (e) identifying the paradoxes, and (f) the financial intangibles; trust and respect.

### *Theory of Action – Theory In-Use*

The espoused leadership *theory of action* for all of the study participants interviewed and observed was similar: (a) to align spending with the school improvement plan, (b) to involve stakeholders in financial decisions, (c) to be mindful of previous spending choices, and (d) to take responsibility for the student outcomes as a result of their spending decisions. In these study sites however disconnects were in evidence.

Variations existed within each of the school sites regarding their *theory in-use*. The theories in-use revealed different methods of implementation to achieve a similar result. Thus two implementation configurations emerged from this study, the Participatory Allocation Configuration and the Distributive Autonomy Configuration. While a range of teacher and parent participation with financial decisions, depth of conversations relating to school expenditures, and the time dedicated specifically to analysis of financial spending varied at each site, all participants reported a sense of transparency and openness on the part of their principal in relation to their financial leadership practices.

### *Means and Ends*

Decentralized schools, or schools that were determined to be within the DAC displayed the tendency to focus on the budgeting process with the ends in mind. Within the DAC context, formal authority to purchase what the school site determined was needed was distributed to the school site level. In contrast, the PAC schools, characterized by a centralized structure, were allocated resources from an office at the district level. These schools tended to focus on their ability to secure enough resources



(ie. teachers, interventions, remedial programs, and necessary school supplies for their students).

### *Diagnosing Reality: Managing Tensions*

Accurately diagnosing financial situations helps focus school leaders' attention on school improvement. Diagnosing means that you are able to perceive, tease out, and make distinctions among things that are going on in the environment (Wagstaff, 2005, LSS Field notes).

Acknowledging the tensions that existed within their environments allowed principals to filter and translate external mandates and policies into manageable actions at their sites. Principals embraced financial and instructional tensions rather than resisted them so that the internal vision and goals of the school could be realized. This was true in both configurations. Consequently, the principal served as a buffer between the external vision of the state or district allowing the internal vision of the site to be the priority. How the principal actualized this at their particular school site contributed to the variations we saw in the IC Map.

### *Principal as Staff Developer - Tiered Professional Development*

Apart from traditional educational management programs a tiered support system for managerial tasks such as budget preparation and negotiation, financial monitoring, and consensus building; for example, would be beneficial to principals according to the participants in this study. Consideration for the skills of a principal in both configurations should drive the development of such a program. As DuFour (1999) states, "There is no reason to believe that simply involving teachers in decision making and providing high levels of teacher autonomy will improve a school. Uninformed people do not make good

decisions” (p. 2). Indeed, the role of principal in these configurations also included the role of staff developer in building a sense of collective financial efficacy among staff members.

### *Identifying the Paradoxes*

Call them contextual contradictions, environmental absurdities, illogical ironies, or just leadership challenges, but the following paradoxes existed unevenly within the contexts examined for this study.

1. Teachers collaboratively planned their school improvement plan but with no money to fund it. (one PAC school and one DAC school)
2. Schools were granted greater autonomy with money, people, and time but no professional development was offered to manage or lead the new site-based management initiative. (DAC schools)
3. Schools needed additional specific curricular interventions but were sent mandated interventions that did not apply to their learning situation. (one PAC school)
4. Norms for financial decision-making existed but sufficient time to discuss and dialogue effectively did not exist. (PAC schools)
5. Opportunities for funding the SIP student learning were inconsistent based on the availability of resources at the different sites. (one PAC school and one DAC school)

### *The Financial Intangibles: Trust and Respect*

Elizabeth A. City (2008), author of *Resourceful Leadership*, asserts, “Even when you know how to use resources well, the work is difficult because you are trying to convert not a building, but beliefs and practices” (p.9). The ability and desire of each of four principals in this study to connect with their teachers was evident. The principals in

this study viewed their work as a mission not just a job. Ensuring their students got the best opportunities to learn drove their actions, interactions, and reactions regarding financial practices. Interactions observed between the principal's and their Leadership Teams, and the reaffirming comments from both the teachers' and office managers' interviews affirmed their high levels of confidence for their principal.

Striking a strategic balance between financial leadership and shared authority was both an ongoing reality and tension of the principals' financial leadership practice. Authority was used by principals to mobilize people to face tough issues. Leaders distributed authority to assist and allow Leadership Teams to struggle with the changing financial landscapes differently. In this way, principals were able to focus teacher's attention on the financial realities they collectively faced within their given contexts. In this study, it was found that providing teachers with accurate information regarding finances made *school budgets transparent*. Providing access to the budget information made *teachers trust their school leaders*. Providing opportunities for teacher to talk about how best to spend resources made *teachers respect their leaders*.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this study was to understand and describe the financial leadership practices of elementary school principals within four school contexts. Whereas this study was foundational in nature positing a definition for financial leadership practice, expanding the study to the secondary levels of schooling, i.e. middle schools and high schools, would add another dimension to the first draft of the financial leadership practice definition presented in this study.

Replication of this study within one school context per study may give greater in-

depth clarity to the understandings and mechanics of financial leadership practice and to the tight-loose dynamic at work within the given contexts.

A principal's previous experiences with financial leadership raise questions about a principal's sense of financial self-efficacy. Principal self-efficacy studies are limited in the literature. Development of a financial leadership practice self-efficacy tool could use as its basis the findings in the FLP-IC Map. A study of this nature could add to the narratives of self-efficacy for principals through a survey approach.

Finally, the FLP-IC Map developed for this study can be used to collect data to determine the range of financial leadership practice within a given context. The purpose of an IC Map is to develop consensus about what a practice in-use looks like. Different contexts were selected to ensure the probability of variation in practice. The intended use of the IC Map was for professional development and practitioner reflection on the financial leadership practices within an elementary school. "Whatever the application, the goal of any good educational tool is to increase outcomes for students and others involved" (Hord, et. al, 2006, p. 45). The FLP-IC Map presented as the grounded theory for this study can be used as a diagnostic or as a self-reflective tool within another researcher's study to determine financial leadership practice nuisances within various school contexts and/or to test the veracity of the map itself.

How the financial leadership mindset, tools, and routines interacted at each site was influenced by principals' previous experiences with financial leadership practices. But people cannot do what they are not aware of. That is why the FLP-IC Map is beneficial. It begins to put word pictures together to identify and describe what financial leadership practice is.

As other researchers conduct studies to further identify and describe the contextual nuances of financial leadership practice, this researcher would welcome their use of the definition posited within this study as an entry point for discussion and deliberation and critique. As Glesne (2006) states, “True research does not end. Instead, it points the way for yet another search” (p. 220).

APPENDIX A  
PROTOCOLS

Semi- Structured Interview Protocols  
District/Region/CFO

Personal and Professional Information

1. Can you share with me some information about you? Where are you from originally? Where did you attend college?
2. When did you know you wanted to become an educator? Who influenced your decision?
3. As the superintendent, what are your greatest rewards and challenges?

Resource Allocation and Decision-Making Practices

4. Based on the recent financial trends with the budget, where do you see the public school system headed in the next 5 years?
5. What knowledge and skills for resource management and decision-making do you want your principals to have?
6. Discuss your expectations for principals relative to resource allocation and decision-making in their schools.
7. In the context of resource allocation and decision making for student achievement at the school level, can you discuss a “best case scenario”/ the ideal of what you would see?
8. Can you speak to the role of technology in supporting resource allocation decisions within the district?

Principal Preparation for Financial Leadership

9. What would you change about how principals are prepared to manage school finances?
10. What are the key areas (components) you would include for professional development relative to the budget, resource allocation, and fiscal decision-making?
11. How would you expect to assess the impact of the professional development?
12. When principals discuss their budgets with you, what is the most common topic they talk about? What advice do you give them?

Leadership Practice and Change

13. What are some of the promising financial leadership practices you see either in use or would like to see in use in this district?
14. Can you discuss the structures in place or future plans to assist principals with increasing/developing their sense of confidence in using budgets as instruments of change?
15. What advice would you give principal’s regarding education’s fiscal fitness for the future?

Thank you for your time and interest in answering questions for this study.  
Initial Open-ended Interview Questions

Principals/Teachers/ School Secretary

1. What are your experiences(s) in school(s) that helped shape your present financial leadership practice perspectives?
2. What are the financial leadership practices of your school?
3. Could you explain how financial decisions are made at your school?
4. How are budgets handled in your school?
5. Can you explain how the budget supports teaching and learning in your school?
6. How does the principal interact with teachers regarding school finances? or How do teachers interact with the principal regarding school finances?
7. What are the financial leadership tools used within your school?  
Prompt: How is data used to inform resource distribution?
8. What are the financial leadership routines used within your school?  
Prompt: How often does the finance committee meet?
9. How are others involved with the financial leadership decisions within your school?  
Prompt: Describe the types of communication regarding finances at the school?
10. What are your biggest financial leadership concerns?
11. If your school was given a \$20,000 gift, how would it be allocated?
12. Can you discuss your role models when it comes to financial leadership practices?
13. What is the most important financial leadership advice you would give to new administrators/school secretaries/teachers?
14. Are there any other comments you would like to offer regarding this topic that were not asked?



Semi- Structured Interview Protocols  
Intermediate/Ending Principal Questions

Personal and Professional Information: Background Questions

1. Can you share with me some information about you? Where are you from originally? Where did you attend college? What was your major?
2. When did you know you wanted to become an educator? Who influenced your decision?
3. As a principal, what are your greatest rewards and challenges?

Principal Preparation for Financial Leadership: Knowledge and Efficacy Questions

4. Share with me your satisfaction with the training experiences you received for the principalship regarding the dimensions of financial and instructional leadership.  
Probe: How were these experiences helpful to you in your present position?
5. What recommendations would you make concerning training experiences for principals in the area of financial leadership?  
Probe: How would you assess the impact of the training?

Resource Allocation and Decision Making Practices:

Context Questions

6. How has the school budget been prepared? Discuss the core considerations for budget preparation. How are these priorities determined?  
Probe: Has a model been used in the budget preparation process?
7. What are the funding sources that are unique to your school?
8. What are the expectations for student outcomes and teacher performance as a result of these allocations?
9. What actions/practices are used to furnish data that determine effectiveness of program/instruction practices purchased?

Process Questions

10. Can you discuss the financial leadership infrastructure of the school?
11. I'd like to hear how the financial objectives align with the goals of the school. What are the financial leadership practices that support this alignment?
12. Select three phrases that best describe how finances are managed at your school:  
a) Financial decision-making is shared with teachers, staff members, students, and parents. b) I crunch the numbers daily to determine where we are financially. c) Some decisions are shared with the teachers and staff while I make the decisions regarding the distribution of grant, Title, instructional fund, etc. d) My office manager handles the day to day bookkeeping tasks while I oversee the work. e) Reallocation of funds is a common financial practice when we determine where our greatest needs are. f) We need to tighten up (We are in the process of tightening up) the financial infrastructure this year to monitor spending effectiveness. Please place the phrases in priority order. Explain your choices.
13. What are the budget activities within your school?  
Probe: How do you determine the effectiveness of these actions/practices?

14. How are budget decisions made? (timelines of decision, financial calendar, meetings with protocols)

*Product Questions*

15. How have financial leadership practices affected student/teacher performance?

16. Which financial decisions produced positive/negative results? Examples.

17. What were some unintended consequences of financial decisions? Examples.

Leadership Practice and Change:

18. When teachers speak to you about spending money, what are the most common things they ask or say?

19. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the people involved with the process allocating resources.

20. Discuss the role technology plays in supporting the different systems within your school.

Probe: What and how is data generated to inform instructional and financial decisions?

Thank you for your time and interest in answering questions for this study.

Semi- Structured Interview Protocols  
Board Member Questions:

Personal and Professional Information

1. Can you share with me some information about you? Where are you from originally?
2. What was your career path to becoming a Board Member?
3. What were the decision points for serving on the Board?

Resource Allocation and Decision-Making Practices

4. Based on the recent financial trends, where do you see the school headed in the next 5 years?
5. What qualities do you want your principal to have?
6. Discuss your expectations for principals relative to resource allocation and decision-making in their schools.
7. Can you speak to the role of technology in supporting resource allocation decisions within the district?

Principal Preparation for Financial Leadership

8. What would you change about how principals are prepared to manage school finances?
9. What are the key areas (components) you would include for professional development relative to the budget, resource allocation, and fiscal decision-making?
10. How would you expect to assess the impact of the professional development?
11. When principals discuss their budgets with you, what is the most common topic they talk about? What advice do you give them?

Leadership Practice and Change

12. What are some of the promising financial leadership practices you see either in use or would like to see in use?
13. Can you discuss the structures in place or future plans to assist principals with increasing/developing their sense of confidence in using budgets as instruments of change?
14. What advice would you give principal's regarding education's fiscal fitness for the future?

Thank you for your time and interest in answering questions for this study.



## Social/Behavioral IRB – Expedited Review Approval Notice

### NOTICE TO ALL RESEARCHERS:

*Please be aware that a protocol violation (e.g., failure to submit a modification for any change) of an IRB approved protocol may result in mandatory remedial education, additional audits, re-consenting subjects, researcher probation suspension of any research protocol at issue, suspension of additional existing research protocols, invalidation of all research conducted under the research protocol at issue, and further appropriate consequences as determined by the IRB and the Institutional Officer.*

**DATE:** December 19, 2008  
**TO:** Dr. Teresa Jordan, Educational Leadership  
**FROM:** Office for the Protection of Research Subjects  
**RE:** Notification of IRB Action by Dr. Paul Jones, Co-Chair  
Protocol Title: **Configurations of Site-Based Financial Leadership Practice and School Context**  
Protocol #: 0811-2922

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This memorandum is notification that the project referenced above has been reviewed by the UNLV Social/Behavioral Institutional Review Board (IRB) as indicated in Federal regulatory statutes 45 CFR 46. The protocol has been reviewed and approved.

The protocol is approved for a period of one year from the date of IRB approval. The expiration date of this protocol is December 3, 2009. Work on the project may begin as soon as you receive written notification from the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS).

### PLEASE NOTE:

Attached to this approval notice is the official **Informed Consent/Assent (IC/IA) Form** for this study. The IC/IA contains an official approval stamp. Only copies of this official IC/IA form may be used when obtaining consent. Please keep the original for your records.

Should there be *any* change to the protocol, it will be necessary to submit a **Modification Form** through OPRS. No changes may be made to the existing protocol until modifications have been approved by the IRB.

Should the use of human subjects described in this protocol continue beyond December 3, 2009, it would be necessary to submit a **Continuing Review Request Form** 60 days before the expiration date.

If you have questions or require any assistance, please contact the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at [OPRSHumanSubjects@unlv.edu](mailto:OPRSHumanSubjects@unlv.edu) or call 895-2794.

Office for the Protection of Research Subjects  
4505 Maryland Parkway • Box 451047 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047  
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PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE USE REQUESTED ABOVE:

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APPENDIX B

IC MAP

## Financial Leadership Practice Innovation Configuration Map

Form A  
2009

Sylvia Tegano  
*Financial Leadership Practice*

Variations in financial practices within each school may yield different outcomes where school principals have adapted their leadership practices to site-based needs. This study found that explaining, analyzing, and documenting the configurations that exist with recognized financial leadership practices helps to illuminate the connection between spending practices and student achievement in different school contexts, including empowerment and charter schools. This study employed an ethnographic perspective to generate a grounded theory to contribute to the understanding of financial leadership practice in four elementary school contexts. The literature, interviews, observations, document analysis, and review of relevant financial artifacts at each site was used to build word pictures in the form of an Innovation Configuration Map, which represented financial leadership practice as grounded theory.

Change researchers have developed a tool-an Innovation Configuration Map- that consists of “snapshots” of likely practices that can be seen in different situations. It describes the operational forms that an innovation.

The following pages contain descriptions of *financial leadership practice*. The descriptions are organized according to key components that are designed to be reflective of research-based practice. Each component includes a number of possible variations that describe different ways that *financial leadership practice* may function or be carried out.

The Innovation Configuration Map for *financial leadership practice* may be used in a number of ways:

1. **Team and individual self-analysis and reflection:** Frequently when new programs are implemented, too little information is provided about what they can do. The IC Map presents descriptions of different configurations or ways that teachers can approach *financial leadership practices*. Leaders and teams can review their practice and ways they are implementing *financial leadership practice* and compare it with those practices presented on the Map.
2. **Leader peer observation and coaching:** Leaders can use the IC Map to observe colleagues. The Map serves as a guide for planning, for observing, and for follow-up dialogue about what is going on in the school.
3. **Planning for staff development:** The IC Map can be used by leaders, teachers, curriculum coordinators, and staff developers as a communication and diagnostic tool to help in clarifying and focusing on those aspects of financial leadership practice that are most in need of attention.
4. **Program evaluation:** The IC Map can be used by principals, curriculum coordinators, staff developers, and other management personnel to evaluate the extent to which innovation components are being implemented.

Hall, G.E., & Hord, S. M., (2006). *Implementing Change: Patterns, Principals, and Potholes* (Second Edition). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Hord, S.M., Stiegelbauer, S.M., Hall, G.E., & George, A.A., (2006). *Measuring Implementation in Schools: Innovation Configurations*. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, p. 29.

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## Financial Leadership Practice Innovation Configuration Map

Form A

<b>A) Translation of Policy Into Action</b> - Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses of Culture and Climate; Stakeholder Commitments; School Improvement Funding; Supervisor Involvement; Communication Patterns; Quality of Budget Reviews; Purposeful Financial Oversight; Financial Record Keeping; Budget Decision Sources					
<b>A.1 Assessing Contextual Reality</b>					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
<p><b>Ongoing</b> analysis of school culture and climate. Triangulation of data to support goal setting.</p>	<p>Needs assessment conducted <b>twice a year</b> to determine effectiveness of actions and results gleaned from those actions, in order to develop a new learning contract between the school and community.</p>	<p><b>Formal needs assessment conducted once a year for the present population of students.</b></p>	<p>Only required needs assessment elements are <b>rushed</b> to be completed by the imposed deadline.</p>	<p>Needs assessment activity is <b>informal and unorganized.</b></p>	<p>Previous year’s needs assessment information is used <b>with little or no updating.</b></p>
<p><u>A.1a Stakeholder Commitment</u></p>					
<p><b>Stakeholder groups demonstrate commitment</b> through respectful engagement resulting in shared ownership of school outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Stakeholders hold each other accountable</b> for aligning actions with the school improvement plan.</p>	<p><b>Key stakeholder reviews previous year’s data to inform development of new goals, and purchases of programs and intervention systems.</b></p>	<p><b>Single stakeholder rushed to dissect</b> key strengths, priority concerns, and root causes.</p>	<p><b>Stakeholders given results of inquiry</b> process performed by another group.</p>	<p><b>Stakeholders are not engaged</b> in school-wide assessment.</p>
<p><u>A.1b School Improvement Funding</u></p>					
<p><b>School improvement plan</b> spending is detailed for achieving each goal. <b>Financial support for each goal has been secured.</b></p>	<p><b>School improvement plan</b> spending is specific for achieving each all goals. <b>Financial supports for the goals are promised.</b></p>	<p><b>School improvement plan spending is fragmented. Financial supports for the goals are partially secured.</b></p>	<p><b>School improvement plan</b> spending is generalized. <b>Financial support for the goals is identified as inadequate.</b></p>	<p><b>School improvement plan</b> spending is similar to previous year without regard to current plan. <b>Financial sources that supported last year’s plan no longer exist.</b></p>	<p><b>School improvement plan</b> spending and alignment between goals is <b>obtuse and unrealistic.</b> Finance sources <b>unidentified.</b></p>
<p><u>A.1c Principal’s Immediate Supervisor Involvement</u></p>					
<p>Supervisor fully <b>supports site’s financial and instructional choices.</b></p>	<p>Supervisor <b>strives to protect site’s financial and instructional choices</b> from outside interference when possible.</p>	<p>Supervisor <b>abides by site’s financial and instructional choices.</b></p>	<p>Supervisor <b>somewhat aware of site’s financial and instructional choices. Interferes with site’s decisions.</b></p>	<p>Supervisor <b>does not fully understand site’s financial and instructional choices. Tells site what to do.</b></p>	<p>Supervisor <b>directs site’s financial and/or instructional decisions.</b></p>

A.2 Review and Reflection of Resource Allocations					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
Weekly meetings review <b>efficiency and effectiveness of existing resource allocation processes.</b>	Bimonthly reviews view status of budgets to <b>ensure spending was implemented in the manner prescribed by the school improvement plan.</b>	Monthly reviews view status of budgets and <b>monitor expenditures and budget balances.</b>	Quarterly meetings are scheduled to conduct a <b>review of budget balances.</b>	Reviews <b>are conducted sporadically throughout the year to review the status of the budget.</b>	<b>Reviews may or may not occur</b> to review budget.
Status of budgets <b>is presented and priority items are discussed</b> at length. Adjustments are made if a reallocation is needed.	Balances for major budget lines are <b>discussed in relation to activity output.</b>	Balances of <b>only selected items are discussed. Discussion centers on remaining funds.</b>	<b>Discussion focused on supplies</b> that are nearly depleted. Little thought or discussion to related outputs.	Balances are <b>presented as a symbolic gesture of compliance.</b>	Budget <b>checked when there is a request or an item balance triggers a review.</b>
<u>A.2a Utilization of Tools/Routines</u> Allocation tools and routines <b>are flexible and are revised</b> to reflect the program and activity needs when disconnects are detected.	Allocation tools and routines <b>may be adjusted</b> to ensure ease of use for stakeholders and <b>to</b> ensure accountability and openness of spending practices.	Allocation tools and routines <b>are in place</b> to ensure accountability and openness of spending practices within the school.	Allocation tools and routines <b>exist</b> in the handbook for review but are not consistently put into practice.	Allocation tools and routines are <b>used from previous year. Yet determination of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of tools and routines from the previous year has not been assessed.</b>	Allocation tools and routines are <b>unsystematically implemented. Over reliance on one tool and routine.</b>

A.3 Adaptability in Spending					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
<p><b>Monthly</b> “reality check” of internal policies and practices allow for pre-quarter or pre-semester correction. Current changes in external regulations or laws are reflected in practice.</p>	<p><b>Midquarter</b> “reality check” of internal policies and practices allow for adjustments with instruction or financial spending.</p>	<p><b>Midsemester</b> “reality check” of internal policies and practices allow for adjustments with instruction or financial spending. Financial reallocations attempted if adjustments allowed.</p>	<p><b>Semester</b> “reality check” of internal policies and practices allowing for possible adjustments with instruction or financial spending.</p>	<p><b>Yearly</b> “check” of internal policies and practices allowing for possible adjustments with instruction or financial spending. Feedback is not elicited but will be heard.</p>	<p><b>No</b> “check” of policies. Feedback is not elicited nor considered when given.</p>
<p><b>Operational flexibility</b> is valued for sustainability of vision. Gap between vision and reality rectified in a timely manner. Measures applied to ensure gap narrows.</p>	<p><b>Operational flexibility</b> is realized after formal discussions with leadership committees occur. Gap between vision and reality narrows in brief amount of time after formal discussions are held.</p>	<p><b>Operational flexibility</b> is espoused yet changes need to linger in organization before a shift is realized. Gap between vision and reality narrows over a substantial period of time and informal discussions.</p>	<p><b>Operational flexibility</b> is limited for changes to occur. Gap between vision and reality exists indefinitely.</p>	<p><b>Operational flexibility</b> is not evident. Rules and procedures lock in stability. Changes unlikely to occur.</p>	<p><b>Operational flexibility</b> is rejected. Site philosophy discourages flexibility.</p>
<p><u>A.3a Financial Record Keeping</u></p>					
<p><b>Historical documentation</b> of what worked and what did not work for the school exists to prevent missteps repeated.</p>	<p><b>Current documentation</b> of staff satisfaction with programs and materials exists.</p>	<p><b>Oral history</b> of satisfaction with programs and materials.</p>	<p><b>Invoice evidence</b> of spending document purchases of programs and materials used in the past.</p>	<p><b>School improvement plan</b> budget allocation page reviewed.</p>	<p><b>No</b> spending paper trail exists.</p>
<p><u>A.3b Budget Decision Source</u></p>					
<p><b>Frequent opportunities for faculty and staff to voice</b> ideas and concerns through productive reasoning and shared decision making yet consensus is reached to benefit the needs of the students. Formal structures exist to share perspectives.</p>	<p><b>Voice given to faculty members through monthly collaborative conversations.</b> Consensus is sought to benefit the needs of the students.</p>	<p><b>Grade level leaders</b> report concerns at formal leadership meeting and grade level meetings.</p>	<p><b>Staff surveys</b> offered to voice concerns or comments about suggested change.</p>	<p><b>Principal and/or office manager are the source of budget decisions.</b></p>	<p><b>Source(s) of decision making at the site unclear.</b></p>

<b>B) Transparency of Financial Infrastructure</b> – Fiscal Decision Alignment; Ability to Exchange and Use Information, Resource-Result Connection; Capacity for Financial Efficacy; Distributing/Sharing Authority					
B.1 Aligning Resources With School Vision and Goals					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
Fiscal decisions are <b>driven</b> by the school’s vision and goals and lead to intended student outcomes.	Fiscal decisions <b>support</b> both school vision and goals.	Fiscal decisions <b>align irregularly with</b> school vision or school goals.	Fiscal decisions <b>espoused to match</b> the school’s vision and goals.	Fiscal decisions <b>unconnected</b> to school’s vision and goals.	Fiscal decisions are <b>arbitrary</b> .
B.2 Interoperability of Site-Based Financial/Instructional Systems					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
School <b>databases connect to share financial and instructional information in a timely manner</b> . Specific school data is gathered, coordinated, and entered on to databases in an efficient and systematic manner to make informed instructional and financial decisions.	<b>Grade level databases exist but are not all connected to one another</b> causing hard copies of data to be made and shared when available in order to make instructional and financial decisions.	Grade level <b>databases randomly exist</b> . Grade levels work in isolation of each other within the school when making instructional and financial decisions.	School is <b>actively working to interface all systems with each other</b> . It is a priority for departments and grade levels to be connected so that instructional and financial decisions are data driven.	School <b>espouses the importance of data driven decisions</b> , but data mechanisms not in place.	School <b>does not use systems</b> to collect data nor uses data to drive instructional or financial decisions.
<b>Timelines</b> for collection, data analysis and data reporting methods are clearly defined. Numeric data displays of results are generated to inform instructional decisions in <b>“real time”</b> .	<b>Timelines are flexible for</b> coordinating and analyzing the data but must be analyzed within a certain window of time. Data analysis and data reporting methods generate displays of results however there is a <b>“data delay”</b> . Decisions are data driven by the group once they have the data.	<b>Timelines determined by grade level</b> for data to be collected, shared, and analyzed. Data displays are <b>infrequently</b> generated.	<b>Timelines</b> for data discussions are not met due to the inability of systems to generate requested data in a timely manner.	<b>Timelines</b> to coordinate data into a coherent school-wide system for reporting are beginning to be discussed.	Timelines <b>not a priority</b> .
<b>All members</b> have access to instructional and financial data.	<b>Certain members</b> have access to instructional and financial data.	Members have access to financial data on an <b>as need to know basis</b> .	Access to data is a <b>challenge</b> . Guidelines to gain access to information are being developed.	Infrastructure to access data <b>is a work in progress</b> .	Data not available through sites computer system.

B.3 Conversations Linking Resources with Results					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
<p><b>Resource-Results connection is an embedded practice.</b> Conversations and evidence determine the best combination of resources to achieve school goals. School-wide consensus on spending priorities is required before allocations are dispersed.</p>	<p><b>Resource-Results connection intermittently monitored to determine spending impact.</b> Governance committee member consensus is sought prior to allocation dispersement. Evidence on investment impact is collected and discussed.</p>	<p><b>Resource-Results connection made on a per teacher basis</b> rather than on a school-wide basis. Administration determines availability of resources based on staff requests. Written approval or denial of funds for request is sent to teachers.</p>	<p><b>Resource-Results connection is a compliant activity.</b> Only monitored or discussed when requested. Administrator informs staff of allocation decisions. Feedback is requested from staff after decision is made.</p>	<p><b>Resource-Results connection is not requested.</b> School secretary determines allocation dispersement with Principal approval. Teacher committee notified of how money was spent.</p>	<p><b>Resources – Result information is not available.</b> Spending process is unknown to school community.</p>
B.4 Building Capacity for Collective Financial Efficacy					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
<p><b>Principal models and implements strategies</b> to channel resources to create an effective and efficient learning environment.</p>	<p><b>Principal defines expectations</b> for resource allocation discussions and their desired outcome from spending.</p>	<p><b>Leaders allocate resources</b> within the school based on historical spending patterns. The past drives present spending practices.</p>	<p><b>Principal assumes</b> teachers and school community understand allocation mechanisms.</p>	<p><b>Principal and office manager</b> only ones who understand financial issues relating to the school.</p>	<p><b>Tutorials exist</b> to address financial management concerns.</p>
<p>Principal and Leadership Team have <b>complete autonomy</b> to make informed and integrated resource allocations decisions. The Principal and leadership team members vote and come to consensus on school management issues. Written guidelines are established to inform the process.</p>	<p>Principal <b>distributes authority</b> and responsibility to Leadership Team in allocating resources and determining school management items. Consensus is sought through voting before expenditures are made.</p>	<p>Principal <b>distributes authority</b> with Leadership Team regarding resources and <b>some management</b> decisions.</p>	<p>Principal <b>shares authority</b> with Leadership Team regarding <b>certain budgets</b>. Team members are informed of all allocation decisions.</p>	<p>Principal <b>shares authority for resources with the office manager</b>. Allocations are reported to a finance committee.</p>	<p><b>Principal retains authority</b> for all resource and management items.</p>

**C) Leadership - Stewardship Mindset** – Organizational Structure; Tasks; Trust; Financial Communication Patterns, Protocols, Participation; View of Failure

**C.1 Identifying Financial Organizational Roles and Responsibilities**

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
<p>Organizational governance chart clearly articulates financial job responsibilities. Chart reviewed <b>continuously</b>. Financial tasks and routines are clearly defined.</p> <p><b>Trust is evident</b> between administrators, faculty and staff members.</p>	<p>Organizational governance chart identifies “go to” person for financial items. Chart reviewed at semester. Financial tasks and routines are generally identified.</p> <p><b>Trust is extended</b> to the members as they execute their roles and responsibilities in good faith.</p>	<p>Organizational chart includes a heading for the banker. Formal leaders update chart <b>each year</b>. Chart is essentially a school directory. Job descriptions are unchanged from year to year, only the names of the people doing them.</p> <p><b>Trust maybe threatened</b> if and when inefficiency is detected.</p>	<p>Organizational chart is updated <b>each year</b> by the office manager with Principal approval. Chart is a compliance requirement.</p> <p>Consistent role and responsibility duplication cause confusion and <b>mistrust</b> among faculty members.</p>	<p>Organizational chart exists but <b>cannot be located</b>. Members monitor themselves without immediate supervision and oversight.</p> <p><b>Trusting relationships need to be built.</b></p>	<p><b>No organizational chart</b> exists. Members do a task if they want to.</p> <p><b>Trust</b> eroded beyond repair.</p>
<p><b>C.1a Checklist of Tasks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Budget balance oversight</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation of expenditures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communicator of spending</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School liaison for budget</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inventory controller</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing materials/supplies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing equipment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of spending patterns</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of impact of materials</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recommends expenditures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Enforcer of spending protocol</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Disperser of resources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinates meeting agenda and minutes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Report coordination</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In-service staff on spending protocols</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Finance committee member</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School Imp. Committee member</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Designs organizational charts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent /community liaison</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality/greeter/tour guide</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Routine clerical work (filing)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Posts daily announcements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Screener for formal leaders</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Principal</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Assistant Principal</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Office Manager</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Committee</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Other</u></b></p>

C.2 Financial Communication Patterns					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
<p>Leadership Team meetings are formally calendared to discuss the budget in <b>order to deepen the school communities understanding of the impact the allocated resources are having on student learning.</b> Formal agendas and protocols exist. Results of discussions from budget meetings influences other committees' choices and decisions.</p>	<p>Leadership Team meetings are formally calendared for <b>collaborative planning and analysis of student achievement in regard to the budget.</b> An agenda is developed for the meeting. Budget agenda items are part of other meetings after the Leadership Team meets.</p>	<p>Budget Meetings are formally calendared to <b>encourage participation</b> of all school members. Discussions items are listed in advance</p>	<p>Budget meetings are not calendared in advance. The budget is a topic at other selected meetings held within the school.</p>	<p>Budget meetings called as needed.</p>	<p>Budget Meetings do not occur.</p>
<p><u>C.2a Meeting Protocols</u>            Formal <b>agendas and protocols</b> exist for each meeting. Meetings are conducted over a <b>two-hour</b> time period. <b>Teachers are paid</b> for their time to attend the meetings. Consensus is a norm. Minutes posted school-wide.            Office manager responsible for reporting status of finances since last meeting as well as providing an integrated analysis of the status of students meeting instructional goals.</p>	<p>Meetings are held before or after school. Duration of meetings is approximately <b>one hour.</b> Consensus is valued. Minutes posted to attending members. Office manager present if questions arise regarding finance oversight.</p>	<p>Meetings are held before or after school honoring the teacher contracted agreement. Duration of meetings is approximately <b>35 – 40 minutes.</b> Consensus is valued. No minutes. Principal may decide some of the issues if agreement is not reached.</p>	<p>Meetings are held before, during or after school. Meetings <b>may or may not occur</b> depending on the day's events. Principal decides most of the issues.</p>	<p><b>No formal meeting called.</b> Leadership committee signs off on spending. Principal decides.</p>	<p>Principal signs off on spending.</p>
<p><u>C.2b Informal Leader Participation</u>            Leadership Team members <b>freely voice their perspectives</b> as well as share financial information with their grade levels and then report back to formal leaders.</p>	<p>Leadership Team <b>tasked with voicing their perspectives</b> and report back to their grade level members on financial issues.</p>	<p>Leadership Team <b>may or may not voice their perspectives.</b> They report back to their grade level members for feedback on designated financial issues.</p>	<p>It is <b>assumed sharing of financial information occurs</b> if a Leadership Team meeting has occurred.</p>	<p><b>Rumors</b> fill financial information void.</p>	<p>Sharing of financial information <b>does not happen.</b></p>

C.3 Analyzing and Learning from Failure					
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
<p><b>Norm is to embrace failure as a learning opportunity.</b>  <b>Willingness to identify root causes and challenge underlying assumptions that lead to failure.</b>            School-wide analysis encouraged building on organizations' strengths.</p>	<p><b>Failure analyzed to prevent repeated unsuccessful efforts.</b>            Formal and informal school leaders assist with analysis.</p>	<p><b>Failure acknowledged and an immediate solution prescribed with minimal reflection.</b></p>	<p><b>“Fix-it” mode - errors are detected and corrected</b> without questioning or altering the present practices and goals.</p>	<p><b>Errors are acknowledged</b> yet response is slow to address.</p>	<p><b>Failure is not acknowledged</b> and is undiscussable.</p>
<p><b>Rally all available resources</b> to assist in creating a timely solution. Allow time for discussion. Communicate lessons learned while articulating reasons and actions for change. Identify financial and instructional <b>“fractal experiences”</b> that encourage positive actions steps.</p>	<p><b>Resource availability assessed</b> to assist with corrective actions. Feedback loop in place to communicate redirection of effort. Processes modified to meet goals. <b>Learning occurs.</b></p>	<p><b>Resources restricted</b> to original allocations. <b>Additional monitoring determines if further assistance is needed.</b></p>	<p><b>Looking for fault</b> and assigning blame. Spirit of inquiry and openness for failure analysis not evident. <b>Status quo remains undisturbed.</b></p>	<p><b>Unable</b> to diagnose the issues preventing the organization from succeeding.</p>	<p><b>Unwilling</b> to diagnose the issues preventing the organization from succeeding.</p>

\*Fractal experiences (McREL, 2007, p.19) are small carefully designed improvement experiences that serve as a dual purpose: to teach improvement processes and to begin to build collective efficacy that encourages school staff to take on ever-larger challenges.



## APPENDIX C

### DOMAINS

**Domain Analysis, Semantic Relationship, Components, Dimensions**  
**X is a step in Y**  
***Identifying tensions is a step in overcoming them***

**DOMAIN: ASSESS REALITY**

**Strengths**

- a. qualities of the leader; trusting, caring, gets things done, no ego
- b. determination to succeed
- c. collaborative nature of staff
- d. transparent decision making
- e. autonomy in budgeting, personnel
- f. committed staff

**Weaknesses**

- a. inconsistent assessment of purpose
- b. rigid rules on dollar spending
- c. spending regulations do not meet site needs
- d. community unable to participate
- e. school improvement goals and funding not aligned

**Stakeholder Commitment**

- a. partnerships with the community members
- b. mixture of compliant and committed staff
- c. district resources to demonstrate support
- d. vision and sense of purpose
- e. not all stakeholders engaged
- f. hold each other accountable

**Political Landscape**

- a. mandates on spending
- b. learning targets handed down to sites
- c. financial sources not reliable from year to year
- d. political efficacy of leaders to promote for the site
- e. sense of inconsistency in policy and practice

**Domain Analysis, Semantic Relationship, Components, Dimensions**  
**X is a step in Y**  
***Identifying tensions is a step in overcoming them***

**DOMAIN: FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY**

**Vision – Goal Alignment**

- g. know the goals
- h. assess the goals
- i. spending disconnected to school vision
- j. school vision and goals are the heart of the

**Interoperability of Systems**

- f. feedback valued
- g. frequency of feedback critical
- h. post test scores to icon
- i. connection with technology and spending emerging
- j. instructional data systematically collected and reported
- k. financial data collected

**Resource-Result Connection**

- g. discussions evolve into debate regarding resource allocation
- h. conversation polite and light
- i. principal takes care of oversight
- j. office manager tracks money
- k. committee reflects on spending outcomes

**Identity Dilemma**

- a. purpose of spending
- b. dueling agendas
- c. input and/or output focus
- d. use of tools and routines to reinforce practice

**Financial Efficacy**

- f. principal models openness providing full disclosure of finances
- g. teachers dialogue with teams about school finance
- h. formal structures enable spending inquiry
- i. complicated explanations of expenditures
- j. leadership committee input valued and expected
- k. we are a team and make all financial decisions

**Domain Analysis, Semantic Relationship, Components, Dimensions**  
**X is a step in Y**  
***Identifying tensions is a step in overcoming them***

**DOMAIN: LEADERSHIP – STEWARDSHIP MINDSET**

**Roles and Responsibilities**

- k. organizational charts outline tasks and position responsibility
- l. we are frustrated by the inefficiency of the administrative roles
- m. members monitor each others results
- n. overlapping responsibilities lead to inefficiency and frustration
- o. renegotiate control and responsibility about spending

**Trust / Trustworthy**

- a. principal inspires us to do our best
- b. office manager keeps us informed
- c. we determine where the money is spent
- d. principal knows what to do
- e. we will take on more responsibility and be more accountable for the outcomes

**Communicating Financially**

- a. teacher leaders responsible for consensus building
- b. consensus is the goal, most of us can live with a decision
- c. posting of meeting minutes keeps us informed
- d. discuss the “undiscussable” - what is the dollar cost of people and time
- e. monitoring account updates clear and current
- f. presentation of financial information in useful ways

**Productive/Creative Reasoning**

- a. confront differences between vision and reality regarding finances
- b. strive to align financial systems to needs of learners
- c. school members take ownership of their decisions
- d. decide on and pilot new approaches to FLP

**View of Failure**

- a. experimentation and risk taking encouraged without retribution
- b. analyze actions and learn from mistakes
- c. feedback and monitoring loops in place for reflection on resource use
- d. acknowledge fractal financial experiences

**Leadership**

- a. choices and resources centralized
- b. accountability and authority

**Stewardship**

- a. distribute financial decisions to those closest to the work
- b. team members have tools to analyze their own financial status
- c. those responsible for student outcomes also understand economic consequences of their choices
- d. staff fully involved in budget process – visible and transparent process
- e. staff regularly self-monitors their performance against agreed upon goals

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