Empowering Teachers: Characteristics, Strategies, and Practices of Successful Principals

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EMPOWERING TEACHERS: CHARACTERISTICS, STRATEGIES, AND PRACTICES OF SUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS

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ABSTRACT

Empowering Teachers: 
The Characteristics, Strategies, and Practices of Successful Principals 

By 
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Dr. Teresa S. Jordan, Examination Committee Chair 
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This study implemented an exploratory mixed-methods design to better understand how the characteristics of a principal, specifically the strategies, behaviors, and actions, lead to the perception of empowerment as perceived by the teachers themselves. 

An expert panel identified three highly successful principals assigned to elementary schools within a large urban district. Each was the principal of the school for a minimum of 4 years that utilized and sustained a shared-governance structure. Site observations at the schools, as evidenced by principal supervisors, indicated a successful governance structure, strong educational focus, and a sustained data-driven design for school improvement. 

The teachers at each of the highly successful principals’ schools were surveyed for both qualitative and quantitative data from two survey instruments. Teachers responded to open-ended questions designed to identify specific characteristics of the principals’ that contributed to their sense of empowerment. Teachers also responded to statements to explore the overall schools’ governance in the areas of: decision-making,
professional growth, status, self-efficacy, autonomy, and impact. Both instruments were compared across schools to determine emergent themes of characteristics and overall empowerment among the schools.

Embedded in reform initiatives is the concept of teacher empowerment as a means to increase the effectiveness of a school as an organization. If sustaining shared governance models and ensuring teachers are an integral part of the solutions to school reform, then determining what actions successful principals engage in, and how those actions influence a teacher’s sense of empowerment would be valuable information for practicing school administrators. What are the characteristics of successful principals that lead to the perception of teacher empowerment?

By looking at schools in a large urban school district, this study provides insight into how teachers perceive ‘empowerment’ and their contributions to the school in the areas of decision-making, professional growth, status, self-efficacy, autonomy, and impact. It also identifies specific characteristics, strategies, and practices of principals that contribute to teachers’ sense of empowerment.

The study revealed principals’ characteristics, strategies, and behaviors significantly affected teachers’ feelings, thinking, and behaviors and their perceptions of empowerment across six dimensions of empowerment: Decision Making, Professional Growth, Status, Self-Efficacy, Autonomy, and Impact (Short, 1991).
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It is in genuine gratitude that I thank all those who made this dissertation possible. This dissertation would not have been possible without the support and willingness of the teachers who shared their personal perspectives of their experiences with empowerment at their schools. The time, information, and the access that you provided me to do my research was beyond measure.

I am eternally grateful to my dissertation chair, Dr. Teresa S. Jordan who worked long hours with me to see this project to finalization. Her encouragement throughout the program was beyond that of a professor. You are a remarkable teacher and person from whom I have learned so much. I would also like to thank my committee members: Dr. Jim Hager, Dr. James Crawford, and Dr. Linda Quinn. The time, support, encouragement, and wisdom that you have provided will not be forgotten.

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needed your sweet little faces checking in on me to remind me that giving up wasn’t an option.

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- My work family at Ober ES, who continued to inspire and remind me each day the importance of education by their commitment and dedication to our school. I am so fortunate to work with such an amazing group of people.
DEDICATION

You are still growing up and learning about life, and I hope that you know I am still growing and learning too. Remember that no dream is ever too small, too big, or too out of reach -- and don’t let anyone tell you otherwise. If you work hard and persevere through all of the obstacles and barriers that might get in the way of your dreams, you can and will accomplish extraordinary things. I hope one day this will inspire you to continue your education – it is one thing in life that no one can take away from you.

To my girls, Fiona and Bella, with all my love I dedicate this to you.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 unleashed a new era of education that included accountability and expectations of reform. This made it necessary for school administrators to find new ways to meet the unique needs of school populations, increase student achievement, and improve school organizations. This act caused administrators and teachers to change their usual ways of thinking, tools for measuring student achievement and organizational success, and also drastically changed their roles as professionals in their organizations.

Leadership in schools is no longer looked at as a matter of developing a set of distinct skills and building knowledge but rather, the ability to embed skills and knowledge in a complex, analytical “mental map” that can be applied to complex, varied, and uncertain situations (Kelley & Peterson, 2007). Teachers have increased expectations from school leaders and additional responsibilities than they have had in the past, along with needs for additional training and skill-sets to be able to meet the growing demands of their profession. The impact of these changes created a cultural shift in the way schools function and caused educators to give real attention to the area of organizational culture (Hall & Hord, 2006).

Change has become a constant force within education; someone or something is always trying to change it; whether by proposing a new program or practice, or implementing federal reform movement to improve student achievement (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). As in all organizations and established professions, there are long-established values and norms that define personal and professional practices.
Teachers use these established norms as a justifications for the way they teach and in some cases the reasons for which they join or stay in the profession. Teachers have seen innovations come and go, time and time again (Fullan, 2001). Fullan (2001) explains the frustration this causes for not only teachers but also school leaders:

In schools the main problem is not the absence of innovations but the presence of too many disconnected, episodic, piecemeal, superficially adorned projects… The result, according to one associate superintendent, is that ‘frustration and anger have never been higher. When attempting to garner new funds or develop new programs, over and over again, he hears from principals and teachers ‘we don’t want anything else. We’re over our heads.’” (pgs. 109-110)

Change is often avoided in schools due to fear of failure, anxiety, or a misalignment with personal or professional beliefs. “As inescapable as change is in today’s world, we still tend to hope that change will avoid us personally and professionally. Further, when confronted with change there is a natural tendency to focus on how to defend ourselves from it instead of how to use and succeed with it” (Hall & Hord, 2006, pg. 3). Which, in turn, creates a high rate of failure of reform and restructuring initiatives in schools. Coupled with constant pressures of change regarding practices and accountability measures of increased student achievement comes elevated resistance. Clarke (2000) states, “The mixed messages teachers receive from external requirements from government, calling for reform in what they do whilst maintaining and exceeding present levels of pupil performance, causes them considerable anxiety as change challenges their values and beliefs, taking them further from the teacher/learner relationship based around care, concern and shared investigation to a service role, devoid of the human touch” (pg. 10). School leaders have difficulty attaining teacher ‘buy-in’ for research based school improvement efforts leaving implementation of best practices and the effects on teacher performance and student learning lacking significance. Lambert
(2003) stated, “Restructuring was intended to create avenues for people to be together so that they could get to know each other and build relationships, hold genuine dialogue, explore ideas together, and generally interact in productive, beneficial ways” (pg.11). Therefore research on change has emphasized the importance of the individual in process. Hall & Hord (2006) state, “Successful change starts and ends at the individual level” (pg. 7).

Shared decision-making and teacher professionalization are key elements of school restructuring efforts (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). In an effort to change the rate of failure of reform movements in schools, school leaders strategically address the dynamics of school culture through practices and principles of change to create an environment focused on continuous improvement (Kotter, 1996; Hall & Hord, 2006; Fullan, 2007; Barth, 2007). School leaders implement educational change movements in their buildings based on research of best practices and data analysis, specifically to sustain efforts of school improvement. This cannot be accomplished with mandates of reform but only with collaborative practices targeted at common and agreed upon organizational goals encircled by the commitment to shared decision-making and teacher empowerment. Zmuda, Kuklis, and Kline (2004) state, “Success or failure of the staff development innovation will largely depend whether the desired results are possible and whether they are worth the effort. Change will require staff to ‘unlearn’ existing practices, struggle with the uncertainty and frustration about ‘getting it right,’ and monitor, adjust, and refine performance to achieve the greatest effect” (pg. 117). Reeves (2004) stated, “If teachers systematically examine their professional practices and their impact on student achievement, the result of such reflective analysis will finally
transform educational accountability from a destructive and unedifying mess to a constructive and transformative force in education” (pg. 6). In efforts to facilitate this type of force Reeves’ described, teachers need to be empowered to reflect on instructional practices and make instructional decisions in the classrooms aimed at increasing student achievement. Glickman (1991) sums up the idea that successful schools empower teachers to be at forefront of school improvement initiatives, “The principal of a successful school is not the instructional leader but the coordinator of teachers as instructional leaders” (pg. 7).

**Statement of the Problem**

To date there is limited research from teachers’ perspectives on the characteristics, the strategies and practices, which principals use to empower teachers and the specific effects of such strategies and practices on teachers’ sense of empowerment.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify the characteristics of principals that lead to the perception of teacher empowerment based on the teachers’ own definition of the term.

Professional reading in the area of sustaining school improvement revolves around the idea that leaders at the building level must focus on establishing a clear vision, providing ongoing professional development, and empowering teachers to build organizational capacity (Greenleaf R.K., 1977; Melenyzer, 1990; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Fernandez, 1993; Short & Greer, 1997; Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Fullan, 2001; Schmoker, M., 2001; Reeves, 2002; Lambert, 2003). This
mirrors the mandates in previous reform movements for schools to develop climates that support school improvement (Hall & Hord, 2006).

Embedded in reform initiatives is the concept of teacher empowerment. Teacher empowerment has been evident in educational research and professional reading journals since the 1980’s (Short & Greer, 1997). There are many ways in which teacher empowerment has been defined and evaluated. Teacher empowerment has had many definitions and implications as evidenced by the frequent presence in educational professional literature. Studying the effectiveness of empowerment, as a tool to improve schools, is not only difficult to measure but there is also a significant continuum of what empowerment may look like in schools with successful principals. Therefore, there are many other ways to examine teacher empowerment and its role in schools. School leaders around the country know that the number one factor in achievement is instruction (Schmoker M., 2006). Good teachers make a difference and need to be involved in efforts of school improvement. In an attempt to produce high performing teachers and maximize their affects on student learning and school improvement, school leaders build the capacity of their teachers by empowering them to make instructional decisions and increasing their professional autonomy. Teachers who are more involved in school-wide decisions and whose efforts are acknowledged report being more innovative and revitalized (Blase & Kirby, 2009). Blasé & Blasé (2001) state the affect empowerment can have on instruction:

Teaching is a fundamentally a moral (or value-based) activity and, as such, it requires that teachers have the expertise to engage in thoughtful deliberations and professional authority to participate meaningfully in decisions about their schools and classrooms. Principals who embrace these concepts rather than merely expecting teachers to implement other people’s visions for schools will accord teachers respect and dignity and will help them to be more fully responsible for
work-related decisions. This combination of respect and dignity is the essence of empowerment. (pg. 3)

Little is known about principals’ strategies that directly and indirectly influence teacher empowerment (Blase & Blase, 2001). The researcher’s interest in this study is focused on the role of the leader and the actions in place that empower teachers. It will be necessary to examine a few schools in depth to determine what actions successful principals; specifically the common behaviors, attitudes, values, and goals of these principals, and determine how those actions influence the feelings of empowerment in schools.

**Research Questions**

The researcher sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the characteristics of successful principals that lead to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment?
- How do teachers perceive the characteristics of school principals that influence their sense of empowerment?
- What approaches to leadership produce positive benefits identified by empowered teachers?
- From the perspective of the teacher, what does effective, facilitative, empowering leadership look like?
- What feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of teachers result from the characteristics of their principals?

**Conceptual Framework**

This study was modeled after the research of Blasé & Blasé (2001), from the book *Empowering Teachers: What Successful Principals Do*, in which participants define their
perception of the term empowerment and the characteristics of their principals that lead to their feelings and sense of empowerment. It is based on the theory that any action of a school leader consciously or unconsciously motivated may have significance in a given situation (Blase & Blase, 2001).

The research is that of a mixed method design, no a priori categories were collected and analyzed to generate descriptive categories, themes, and conceptual and theoretical ideas (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Stauss, 1967). Tesch (1990), states, “The data themselves remain the most suitable and the richest source for the development of an organizing system” (pg. 141). Data collection and analysis were consistent with symbolic interactionist theory, research in which connections among the identified and categorized elements are sought (Tesch, 1990; Blase & Blase, 2001). Although this method recognizes that structural factors influence action, it emphasizes the individual perception and interpretation rather than generalization (Martin & Gynnild, 2011). The study examined the characteristics of principals that teachers perceived to have significance in relation to their empowerment.

Aligned with the work of Glaser & Strauss (1967), an open-ended questionnaire was used to investigate teacher’s perspectives with regards to empowerment (Martin & Gynnild, 2011). “If a researcher enters the field with preconceived questions or categories as non-classic forms of grounded theory allow, emergence and grounding are derailed” (Martin & Gynnild, 2011). The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE), and open-ended questionnaire was constructed to collect personal meanings for the research study. The questionnaire was developed in consultation with professors and a group of six teachers and then pilot-tested with 27 full-
time teachers who were graduate students.Suggestions were made by both groups to determine the final form of the questionnaire. No definitions of successful leadership or empowerment were presented to teachers on the questionnaire for completion of the study.

The League of Professional Schools criteria was used to determine “successful principals” for the study: educational focus, governance processes, use of action research, annual reports, on-site visitations, teacher reports, and reports of facilitators (league staff members assigned to the school). The identified schools began implementing shared governance structures and action research protocols in Fall 1990 and aligned with the league’s purpose to “establish representative, democratic decision-making structures to promote teacher involvement in school-wide instruction and curricular decisions” (Blase & Blase, 2001). The IPCCTE was administered to 285 teachers in 11 successful principals’ schools - 5 elementary, 3 middle, and 3 high schools. Teachers were also asked to give background information and rate their principal with regard to overall contribution to their sense of empowerment on a sliding scale from 1 to 7. (The mean score for the principals’ overall influence was 6.1.)

Data from the participant’s questionnaires were coded according to principles for inductive research and comparative analysis (Martin & Gynnild, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2005). Emergent categories and subcategories were identified and characteristics were coded into strategies and personal characteristics. Each strategy and characteristic was then analyzed to determine its affect on teacher empowerment (#3 on the IPCCTE). Descriptive matrixes were also used to identify and refine conceptual and theoretical ideas derived from the data in order to
allow comparisons across principals’ strategies in developing emergent themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The research of Blasé & Blasé (2001) was modified for the purpose of this study in terms of the selection of successful principals, the number of schools and participants, and the addition of the School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992).

**Summary of Methodology**

This mixed-method study investigated the broad question, how do teachers perceive the characteristics of school principals that influence their sense of empowerment? A questionnaire examined teachers’ perceptions of their school principals’ characteristics in relation to teacher empowerment and explore why certain characteristics impacted their perceptions and sense of empowerment (Blase & Blase, 2001). The study also examined the overall measure of school empowerment as well as assess several components of empowerment including; decision-making, professional growth, status, self-efficacy, autonomy, and impact (Short & Rinehart, 1992).

Based on the previous study, conducted by Blasé and Blasé (2001), a smaller sample of schools and participants was included in this study to further investigate the behaviors and actions of successful principals and why teachers perceive certain principals’ characteristics to be empowering. This study specifically focused on three elementary schools in a large urban school district in the Western United States.

This study, in alignment with the original study, utilizes Symbolic Interactionist Theory (Tesch, 1990), which emphasizes the meaning people assign to action, therefore, open-ended research methods were utilized for data analysis and no a priori categories were used to direct data collection and no definitions of successful leadership or
empowerment were presented. The demographic information, principal’s rating, and the Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) were utilized as instruments for this study. All teachers assigned to the school site were asked to complete the demographic information, School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992), and answer all questions from IPCCTE (Blase & Blase, 2001). Data sheets were collected by the researcher.

A more specific quantitative phase was added to the original study and conducted simultaneously with the written questions in order to compare the level of impact each principal had on their staffs’ perceptions of empowerment with their identified characteristics and/or behaviors. Participants completed the School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart) in addition to answering the rating question constructed in the original study, “Of all things in the school that may/could contribute to your sense of empowerment, how much do characteristics (e.g. behavior, attitudes, values, goals, etc.) of your principal contribute?” (Blase & Blase, 2001).

**Data Analysis**

Analysis of teachers’ data included detailed descriptions of the empowering strategies used by shared governance principals and data were coded according to principles of inductive research and comparative analysis (Martin & Gynnild, 2011; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Glesne, 2006; Creswell, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). This required a comparison of each new unit of data to those coded previously for emergent categories and subcategories. Characteristics were coded into personal characteristics, strategies, and behaviors. Each strategy and characteristic was then analyzed to determine its impact on aspects of teacher empowerment: feelings, thinking,
and behavior (#3 on IPCCTE). Descriptive matrixes were used to identify and refine conceptual and theoretical ideas derived from the data. Comparisons were conducted across principals’ strategies to assist in refining analyses of emergent themes. Display matrices were developed based on participants’ responses to the open-ended questions on the IPCCTE. Data were collected and analyzed to generate descriptive categories, themes, and conceptual ideas (Blase & Blase, 2001).

**Source of Data**

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of three open-ended questions. The data collected from the questionnaire went through comparative analysis and then an analysis of emergent themes to determine strategies and personal characteristics of principals then further analysis was conducted to determine impact on aspects of teacher empowerment: feelings, thinking, and behaviors. Display and descriptive matrices were designed to synthesize the major strategies and characteristics and identify and refine ideas derived from the data. (Blase & Blase, 2001)

All teaching staff of the three designated “highly successful” elementary school principals, who participated in the study, provided background information, a rating of the school principal on *The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment* (IPCCTE) with regard to overall contribution to their sense of empowerment, and answered the following open-ended questions (Blase & Blase, 2001):

1. Describe one *characteristic* (attitude, value, behavior, etc.) of your principal that contributes to your sense of empowerment. Please illustrate this by providing a real life example below.

2. Please explain *why* this characteristic makes you feel empowered. Again, give a real world example to illustrate why.
3. To show what you mean by empowered as it relates to this characteristic of your principal, please describe and give examples of your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. We want to know what feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result.

Participants were also given the School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992) in which they responded to 38-item statements with respect to the extent to which they felt empowered using the 5-point Likert-type response scale with the following anchors (Short & Rinehart, 1992): Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5). A factor analysis was then conducted to determine levels of school empowerment.

Subject Selection

Intermountain West Urban School District Cabinet Members (pseudonym), consisting of at least two principal supervisors identified three highly successful elementary school principals. For the purpose of selection, the criteria established by The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) for highly successful principals were used. They are:

- The principal has been in the school for at least 4 years utilizing and sustaining a shared-governance structure
- Site observations indicate shared decision-making, a strong educational focus, and a data-driven design for school improvement

Significance of Study

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) state, “If we consider the traditions and beliefs surrounding leadership, we can easily make a case that leadership is vital to the effectiveness of a school. In fact, for centuries people have assumed that leadership is critical to the success of any institution or endeavor” (pg. 4). One could argue then that
the effectiveness of a school is one that produces successful and positive results for students. Therefore, there continues to be a demand for greater accountability to increase student performance. Schools are required to ensure that all students achieve mastery of curriculum objectives, and local schools focus on implementing national and state expectations to the best of their abilities (Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008). As a result, the primary role of the school principal is that of an instructional leader. Lambert (2003) states, “A principal’s vision, standing alone, needs to be ‘sold’ and ‘bought into.’ By contrast, a shared vision based upon the core values of participant and their hopes for the school ensures commitment to its realization” (pg. 6). Building collaboration and reaching a common mission and vision is a constant in professional literature surrounding the improvement of all successful organizations (Greenleaf R. K., 1977; Bredeson, 1989; Glickman, 1991; Rost, 1991; Short & Greer, 1997; Collins, 2001; Homrig, 2001; Fullan, 2001; York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, & Montie, 2001). Strong, Richard, and Catano (2008) state, “After all it is the expertise of teachers upon which any quality educational system is built. Wise principals know that going it alone makes meeting instructional goals virtually impossible” (pg. 6). Teachers are vital to improving student learning and it is essential that they be in the forefront on efforts and decisions related to instruction and curriculum. Salazar (2008) refers to teachers as “the silver bullet” (pg. 68).

James Maxwell was quoted as saying, “The people’s capacity to achieve is determined by their leader’s ability to empower.” Empowerment has many implications from its frequent presence as a dominant phrase in educational and professional literature related to school reform and improvement (Short & Greer, 1997; Melenyzer, 1990; Blase & Blase, 2001; Salazar, 2008; Blase & Kirby, 2009). Transforming and sustaining
improved organizations, specifically schools, requires the commitment and motivation of not just the principal but also all stakeholders. Salazar (2008) states, “(High-impact) principals are sensitive to the needs of their teachers and work toward empowering their followers to make things happen in the school” (pg. 18). Leaders need successful strategies to implement and sustain improvements in their schools so that there is true motivation and commitment to get results. Studying the effectiveness of empowerment as a tool to improve schools is challenging to measure as there is a large continuum of what empowerment may look like in schools with successful principals (Blase & Blase, 2001). Therefore there are many ways to examine teacher empowerment and its affect on schools and job performance.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) stated, “the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people” (p.5). In addition, then the implementation of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act, currently referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) forced a reform movement, focused on educational excellence and accountability, to the forefront of school districts across the country. Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach (1999) state, “Around the world, schools, and the societies of which they are a part, are confronting the most profound changes, the like of which have not been seen since the last great global movement of economic and educational restructuring more than a century ago” (pg. vii). Consequently, recent professional literature in this field is highly focused on school improvement and change, leadership styles and strategies, and teacher empowerment.
The continuous shifting of reform efforts of the public school system has always identified problems in schools, however; the overwhelming amount of literature in the area of school improvement provides evidence that solutions have not been found for sustaining improvement for the long term. Schmoker (2001) stated:

We have the opportunity to blow the lid off school attainment, dramatically and swiftly reduce the achievement gap, and enhance the ‘life chances’ of all children, regardless of their social or economic circumstances. We have an opportunity to create schools better than anything we’ve ever seen or imagined. Higher test scores would only be a side-benefit of this transformation. Indeed, state assessments themselves would have to be significantly revised to adjust to this explosion in the effectiveness, especially with respect to higher-order thinking and critical reasoning. (pg.2)

The difficulty with finding solutions and seizing these opportunities for ideal systems to sustain school reform and improvement is that change plays a significant factor in this process. Education has seen many programs come and go as new research and staff development comes forward, however research on change indicates that schools are not persevering long enough to see these opportunities become realities.

School improvement and the process of change go hand in hand yet, it is rarely taken into account during the course of implementation (Hall & Hord, 2006). Schools are under heavy pressure to increase student achievement. Due to pressures of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and the focus on high-stakes testing, districts across the country have gone into crisis mode. In an effort to meet the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals year after year to avoid the negative consequences that are in place for schools that do not meet AYP goals, schools are searching for solutions to reform. There is an implied assumption with this approach that schools will incorporate the necessary changes to make test scores go up, however, the support for individuals in the change process and
professional development available to schools and teachers to implement these changes for sustainability in the long-term is not always evident (Hall & Hord, 2006).

Most change takes three to five years with a strategic plan in mind (Hall & Hord, 2006). Nevertheless, examples of efforts in districts across this country would suggest otherwise, and change becomes that of an event rather than a process. In order for school reform to become an improved school system, and build the trust and capacity of teachers, research on change should be seriously considered before implementing effective practices that promote school improvement and student achievement.

Schools have a tremendous impact on student achievement if they follow the lessons learned from 35 years of scientifically based research (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2003). There are three factors:

- School Level Factors
- Teacher Level Factors
- Student Level Factors

School level factors that affect student achievement and promote school improvement, as stated by Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2003) are:

1. A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum
2. Challenging Goals and Effective Feedback
3. Parent and Community Involvement
4. Safe and Orderly Environment
5. Collegiality and Professionalism

Specifically in the strand of Collegiality and Professionalism (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2003), school improvement is reliant on the fact that teachers and staff are
treated by one another, and others, as professionals and experts at their craft. It has been well-established that there is a relationship between school leadership and climate, and that climate is a factor related to school effectiveness (Fullan, 2001; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Barth, 2007; Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008). Policies and structures at the school and district levels need to support these practices as well as the school improvement process. Teachers need the opportunity to work together in professional and collaborative teams to dialog, plan for instruction and student intervention and extension, and problem solve (DuFour & Marzano, 2011). Schools need to create governance structures that allow for teacher involvement and decision-making in regards to curriculum and instruction because teachers affect change in their schools. Schmoker (2006) states, “Isolation ensures that highly unprofessional practices are tolerated and thus proliferate in the name of … professionalism. ‘What works’ morphs easily into what feels good, or keeps kids occupied or ‘what I’ve always done and gotten good evaluations for’” (pg. 24). Building collaboration among staff not only allows opportunities for professional growth but, also provides focus on student learning, common goals, and positive work relationships (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999; Hackman, 2002; Lambert, 2003; Blase & Blase, 2004; Reeves, 2004; Robbins & Alvy, 2004; Schmoker M. , 2006; Salazar, 2008).

Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, (2001) confer, “…The most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher” (pg.3) Therefore, the pedagogical knowledge of a school’s teaching staff is of extreme importance. Schools need to provide multiple and ongoing opportunities for meaningful staff development activities and grant teachers with the opportunities, support, and resources needed to be successful in their roles and
instructional leaders. Schmoker (2006) states, “Instruction itself has the largest influence on achievement (a fact still dimly acknowledged)” (pg. 10).

Leaders in successful schools increase the capacity of others within the school to produce positive outcomes on student learning. The leadership approach in these high-performing organizations target school culture by fostering teacher empowerment through shared leadership, common vision and goals, and shared opportunities for professional growth. In schools with strong teacher leadership, principals supported and positively affected the teachers’ professional work by the following methods (Bredeson, 1989):

- Providing time, space, and money to implement ideas
- Reassuring people that ideas and plans, even when challenged, are valued
- Letting go throughout the growth process (not directing others, staying out of the way, and allowing mistakes)
- Being informed
- Being available
- Providing an open, friendly, supportive environment

Principals of successful schools did not covey a “know it all” attitude and did not judge others. These principals used several strategies to enhance teacher practice by providing opportunities for professional development, current professional literature, and additional support and resources whenever possible (Bredeson, 1989).

Reeves (2002) states, “We know what to do, yet decades of research and reform have failed to connect leadership intentions to classroom reality” (pgs. 1-2). Successful implementation of new processes and practices does not just magically happen in
schools, it happens in classrooms. The organizational leader strategically plans for positive change to build of professional capacity leading to sound instructional decisions and significant learning outcomes. It is for this reason, that leaders must have the ability to build upon the strengths of teachers that will in turn lead to organizational capacity. DuFour and Marzano (2011) sum it up best, “Creating the conditions to help others succeed is one of the highest duties of a leader. If school and district leaders are to create the conditions that help more students succeed at learning at higher levels, they must build the capacity of educators to function as members of high-performing collaborative teams” (pg. 86).

**Definition of Key Terms**

*Accountability:* The obligation of someone to explain and justify his or her actions to some other person or group (Smith & Piele, 2006).

*Autonomy:* The degree of freedom (i.e., professional discretion) that individuals have in determining work processes (Blase & Kirby, 2009).

*Decision-making:* The participation of teachers in critical decisions that directly affect their work (Short P. M., 1991).

*Impact:* Teachers’ sense that they have an effect and influence on school life. They feel what they are doing is worthwhile, they are doing it in a competent manner, and they are recognized for their accomplishments (Short P. M., 1991).

*Instructional Leadership:* The critical focus of attention by leaders is the behaviors of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999).
Leadership: An influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes (Rost, 1991).

Moral Leadership: The critical focus of leadership ought to be on the values and ethics of leaders themselves (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999).

Professional Growth: Teachers’ perceptions that the school in which they work provides them with opportunities to grow and develop as professionals, to learn continuously, and to expand one’s own knowledge and skills through the work life of the school (Short P. M., 1991).

Self-Efficacy: Teachers’ perceptions that they have the skills and ability to help students learn, are competent in building effective programs for students, and can effect changes in student learning (Short P. M., 1991).

Servant Leadership: The leader’s attention is focused on duties and responsibilities - to others as persons and, to the school itself (Sergiovanni, 2007).

Status: Teachers’ perceptions that they have professional respect and admiration from colleagues. Teachers feel that others respect their knowledge and expertise (Short P. M., 1991).

Teacher Empowerment: The opportunity and confidence to act upon one’s ideas and to influence the way one performs in one’s profession. True empowerment leads to increased professionalism as teachers assume responsibility for and an involvement in the decision making process (Melenyzer, 1990).

Teacher Leadership: Teachers who demonstrate a set of skills, and a way of thinking and acting that is sensitive to teachers, to teaching, and to the school culture (Lieberman, Saxl, & Miles, 2007).
Transformational Leadership: A form of leadership that assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of organizational members (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999).

**Limitations**

This study focused on perceptual data relevant to teachers’ perspectives of the characteristics of their principals. These perspectives were only those of the teachers and cannot be related to that of the principals. This limited the study for replication in that perspectives of others would vary. This study also cannot answer specific questions about what should happen at a particular time in a given school and it fails to reveal how successful empowering principals balance the multitude of issues that accompany shared leadership.

**Delimitations**

A relatively small sample size of three elementary schools in one school district was the focus of this study. Empowerment was not defined by the researcher, but by that of individual participants in the study. This study did not look at the relationship between improved student learning, the effectiveness of empowerment, or the quality of the teacher.

**Summary**

Blasé and Blasé (2001) stated, “True empowerment extends well beyond participation in decision makings; it also involves the elevation of teachers as knowledgeable professionals” (pg.13).

The review of literature suggests that teachers are the key to students’ success. It is very clear that what happens in the classroom outweighs even the actions of the school
itself when looking at student achievement. Therefore, it is necessary for school leaders to change how they approach and address the empowerment of teachers and their importance in the process of educational reform and improvement. “Successful shared governance principals sense that the school’s success lies in the skills and attitudes of the professional staff, not merely in the leadership capabilities of the principal…such principals feel that teachers can and should be trusted to do what is best for students” (Blase & Blase, 2001).

The actions of school leaders create conditions in which teachers can enhance their professional expertise. They create an atmosphere of trust and respect for teachers, support teachers’ decisions and professional development and growth, support risk taking, and provide adequate time for collaboration and common planning.

Research, time and time again, has supported that teachers are the key to improving student performance (Schmoker M., 2006; Salazar, 2008; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; DuFour & Marzano, 2011). Therefore, the quality of the teacher is of extreme importance to the overall performance of the organization. If teacher empowerment leads to an improved organization and we are providing resources and trust in developing teachers as professionals and experts in school buildings, school leaders have a responsibility to make sure they are accountable and performing in a satisfactory manner while sustaining school improvement efforts in an attempt to positively impact student learning.

**Organization of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is organized into nine chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction of this study and presents the specific problem of study and its components. Chapter 2
presents a review of the literature related to the question of study. Chapter 3 details the methodology for the research design. Chapter 4 represents the findings of the problem of study and research questions. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 contain organization of the data gathered from each of the three school sites respectively. Chapter 8 details the cross-school site analysis. Chapter 9 contains the summary of the results, conclusions, implications for practices, and recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In 1983, the National commission on Excellence in Education presented a report on the quality of education in America called, *A Nation At Risk* (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The purpose of the report was to “define the problems afflicting American education and to provide solutions, not search for scapegoats” (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). It reflected a multitude of reasons as to why schools were failing and in the opening of the report (1983) stated:

> If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge. Moreover, we have dismantled essential support systems, which helped make those gains possible. We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament.

Due to the dissemination and full discussion of this report and its findings, much research surrounding schools honed in on the areas of: leadership, change, school improvement and reform, effectiveness of leaders and teachers, and teacher leadership and empowerment (Melenyzer, 1990; Rost, 1991; Short & Rinehart, 1992; Kotter, 1996; Short & Greer, 1997; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; Lambert, 2003). An effort to improve the dissatisfaction with the status quo remains constant in education (Hess, 2008). Hall & Hord (2006) state, “If there are no changes in practice, there is little reason to expect a change in outcomes” (pg. 9). Two decades later, education continues to be in an age of reform. DuFour & Marzano (2011) make the assumption that because school leaders take on a great personal toll when
implementing change and reform initiatives, “Promising practices in education have not led to improved student achievement and ultimately have been abandoned” (pg. 75).

The review of the literature will cover areas of educational leadership related to: Leadership and Leadership Styles, Change, School Reform and School Improvement, School Leadership Effectiveness, and Teacher Empowerment.

**Leadership and Styles of Leadership**

We are in an era in which the demand for a high quality leader is greater than ever. With the advancement of technology, increased accountability to stakeholders and shareholders in our business world, it is essential for organizations to have the right person leading the way. The problem lies in determining who that right person is for each organization, and what that person can bring to enhance excellence in the people and mission of that organization. “Outstanding leadership is exquisitely sensitive to the context in which it is exercised” (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999).

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) state “The concept of leadership dates back to antiquity” (pg. 5). The word leader did not appear in the English language until the 1300’s, 500 years later leadership, as a word, finally came into use, but it wasn’t until the turn of the twentieth century that formal studies became evident (Rost, 1991). Discussions of the study of leadership appear in the works of Plato, Caesar, and Plutarch and for centuries people have assumed that leadership is critical to the success of any institution or endeavor. Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005) confirm, “Regardless of the theory used to explain it, leadership has been intimately linked to the effective functioning of complex organizations throughout the centuries” (pg. 5).

Leadership has been defined in professional literature in countless ways and is
oftentimes misconstrued as a position of status, authority, and/or power. There is not one clear, agreed upon definition of the concept, however many famous people, researchers, and authors have provided their beliefs about what leaders are and leadership is, and should be. John Quincy Adams, the sixth President of the United States of America (1825-1829), was quoted, “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more; you are a leader.” Jim Gardner (2007) states, “Leadership is the process of persuasion or examples by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leaders and his or her followers.” Peter Senge (2007) defines leaders as, “…those people who ‘walk ahead’, people who are genuinely committed to deep change in themselves and in their organizations. They lead through developing new skills, capabilities, and understanding. And they come from many places within the organization.” There are a myriad of ways in which a leader and the concept of leadership could be defined based upon with whom you are speaking. Rost (1991), states the perplexity of leadership best, “If scholars and practitioners have not focused on the nature of leadership, it should not surprise any of us who are interested in the subject that we do no know what leadership is” (pg.5).

For the purpose of this study, the review of the literature focuses on the concept of leadership and the characteristics and actions of a leader, rather than the defining term or role itself. “It is neither feasible nor desirable at this point in the development of the discipline to attempt to resolve the controversies over the appropriate definition of leadership. Like all constructs in social sciences, the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no correct definition” (Yukl, 2010).
Styles of leadership have been studied, developed, criticized, and admired for as long as there have been identified roles in humanity. “One hears and reads a surprising number of sentences that describe leaders in general as having such and such attributes and behaving in such and such a fashion – as though one could distill out of the spectacular diversity of leaders an idealized picture of The Leader” (Gardner, 2007). Furthermore, that ideal is searched for by every person who has read at least one of the countless publications on leadership; many of them being executives looking for that perfect person for their companies, and unintentionally refuting the uniqueness of the organization and its purpose.

Leadership styles come in many different forms and leaders offer diverse qualities to their followers that are geared to meet the unique needs of an organization; this can’t be packaged into an ideal mold. The idea that there is one style, or ideal mold, is “inevitably constricting” (Gardner, 2007). As Jim Collins (2001) states, “Entrepreneurial success is fueled by creativity, imagination, bold moves into uncharted waters, and visionary zeal” (pg. 121). This would imply that the style of a leader should be adaptable to the organization’s current situation. Parks (2005) further articulates:

As our world becomes more complex, diverse, and morally ambiguous, leadership trainings and programs abound and executive coaching has appeared on the scene. Yet there remains a gnawing awareness that our prevailing myths and many of our assumed practices of leadership match neither the central perils nor the finest aspirations spawned by the forces of dramatic change – affecting every society, institution, corporation, agency, organization, community, neighborhood, task force, or project team. (pg.2)

In order to fully understand the complexity of leadership studies and the subsequent impact on employees, this literature review will look to specific leadership styles. This review will not cover all leadership styles, only styles that can be related to
the question of the study, specifically focusing on styles that support participative, facilitative, and shared governance structures, as identified by scholars and practitioners in this field. “Leadership principles are timeless, while, the models that examine those principles may change” (Homrig, 2001).

**Categories of Leadership**

In early research of the styles of leadership, there were limited groups in which leaders could be identified. In 1939, a group of researchers led by psychologist Kurt Lewin identified three generic styles of leadership specifically concerned with the decision making process. Leadership styles were identified as Autocratic, Democratic, and Laissez-Faire. These terms were exchanged in other works with the terms Authoritarian, Participative, and Free-Reign or Delegative.

Autocratic (Authoritarian) leaders provide clear expectations for what needs to be done, when it should be done, and how it should be done. There is a clear division between the leader and the followers. The Autocratic leader makes decisions independently, without involvement or consultation from the group. Once a decision is made, compliance is expected. Democratic (Participative) leaders offered guidance to group members, but also participated in the group and allowed input from other group members. This style of leadership encourages group members to provide input, but the leader ultimately retains the final say over the decision-making process. Laissez-Faire (Free-Reign/Delegative) leaders offer little or no guidance to group members and decision-making is up to the group members.

In conclusion, research from Lewin’s study in 1939, the Democratic style was determined to be the most effective, mainly due to the motivation of its group members.
However, further studies implied that in order to be most efficient and effective, leaders should decide which style is to be used depending on the needs and objectives of the decision-making situation. This aligns with the perspectives of Gardner (2007) and Collins (2001) as stated earlier.

**Situational Leadership**

“Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation” (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). The *Situational Leadership Model* was designed to assist managers in diagnosing the demands of their current situations determined by the “readiness” of the follower. *Readiness* was defined as the ability and willingness of a person to take responsibility for directing his/her own behavior in relation to a specific task to be performed (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). This model is based upon the relationship, and the extent of direction a leader gives, socio-emotional support a leaders provides, or the preparedness level that followers exhibit on a specific task, function, activity, or objective the leader is attempting to accomplish through the individual and/or group (Babou, 2008).

Blanchard and Hersey defined four leadership styles dependent of the ability, skill level, and willingness of each follower in the *Situational Leadership Model* (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001).

1. Telling/Directing Leader — a leader provides detailed instruction and closely coaches the follower.

2. Selling/Coaching Leader — a leader provides explanations and principles, engages the follower in a discussion of the work, and coaches as needed.

3. Facilitating/Counseling Leader — the leader assists the follower with goal clarification and ideas, then coaches as needed
4. Delegating Leader — the goal is clarified and the work turned over to the follower.

The *Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model* looks not only at task behavior but also relationship (See Figure 2.1).

Figure 2. 1

*Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model*

Source: (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001)

**Transformational Leadership**

“Transformational leadership entails not only a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship, but an elevation of both — a change for the better” (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). James MacGregor Burns
(1978) coined the term *transformational leader* to describe the ideal situation between leaders and followers (Burns, 1978). James Keagen used Burns’ ideas to build a developmental model of leadership that further explained the continuum between transformational and transactional leadership.

The concept of transformational leadership comes from the understanding between the terms transactional and transformational leadership (Burns, 1978). Burns (1978) defined leadership as, “Leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations of both leaders and followers” (pg. 19). *Transactional leaders* approach followers with an opportunity for exchange (Burns, 1978). Whereas, Burns describes a transformational leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006) as one who “recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower, looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower” (pg. 4).

Bernard Bass, an academic leadership theorist, studied the idea of Transformational Leadership and its effects (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass’ version of transformational leadership dominated this research and included four categories of practices (Bass & Riggio, 2006):

1. Charisma: practices that arouse strong emotions and identification with the leader’s personal qualities and sense of mission
2. Inspirational leadership: communicating an appealing vision and modeling exemplary practices consistent with that vision
3. Individualized consideration: providing support and encouragement to employees
for their efforts, and opportunities to develop further

4. Intellectual stimulation: practices that increase followers’ awareness of problems and encourage them to think about their work in new ways

Kenneth Leithwood most fully developed a model of transformational leadership that has been central in studies related to leadership in schools. The model conceptualizes such leadership along seven dimensions: building school vision; establishing school goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualized support; modeling best practices and important organizational values; demonstrating high performance expectations; creating a productive school culture; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions. The model focuses on delegating to and empowering employees through use of structured decision-making and shared common goals. It further embeds the idea that full participation from all is needed to create an evolving and successful organization. (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999)

The literature often differs in the interpretations of the concept of transformational leaders but Joseph Rost (1991) described the central theme best, “Real transformation involves active people, engaging in influence relationships based on persuasion, intending real changes to happen, and insisting that those changes reflect their mutual purposes” (pg. 123).

Servant Leadership

“Many school administrators are practicing a form of leadership that is based on moral authority, but often this practice is not acknowledged as leadership” (Sergiovanni, 2007, p. 75). This type of leader is one that has a “whatever it takes” attitude to get the job done versus a direct and command type leadership style. This style focuses on the
idea that command types of leadership cannot be used in isolation with the expectation of improved organizational effectiveness. “If command and instructional leadership are practices as dominant strategies rather than supporting ones, they can breed dependence in teachers and cast them in roles as subordinates” (Sergiovanni, 2007). Sergiovanni (2007) further describes that when people feel as if they are subordinates they rely on “leaders” to manage them and they comply but offer little else to the development of the organization or its shared goals.

“The concept of Servant Leadership is the means by which leaders can get the necessary legitimacy to lead” (pg. 80). It is based on Robert K. Greenleaf’s (2003) idea that “a new moral principle is emerging which holds that only authority deserving one’s allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leaders in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader” (pg. 33). This concept is based on the idea that a great leader is a servant first and relies heavily on the moral authority. Sergiovanni (2007) found Servant Leadership to “strengthen people’s confidence by their belief that the leader makes judgments on the basis of competence and values, rather than self-interest” (pg. 80). The foundation of Servant Leadership is that leaders practice by serving others, in an effort to serve the values and ideas that shape the organization (Greenleaf R. K., 2003). Sergiovanni (2007) articulates the message behind the philosophy of a Servant Leader, “The leadership that counts, in the end, is the kind that touches people differently. It taps their emotions, appeals to their values, and responds to their connections with other people. It is a morally based leadership – a form of stewardship” (pg. 76).
Level 5 Leadership

Harry S. Truman, the thirty-third President of the United States of America (1945-1953), once said, “You can accomplish anything in life, provided that you do not mind who gets the credit.” This is an astute example of a Level 5 Leader as described by Jim Collins (2001). The study conducted by Collins (2001) identified companies that made a rise from good results to great results and were able to sustain those results for at least fifteen years. He compared those companies to companies that failed to rise to “great” results or failed to sustain the results to “discover the essential and distinguishing factors at work” (pg. 3). The original concept of the study was to ignore the companies’ executives, however, during the study the researchers could not ignore something that was described in the book as, “consistently unusual,” about the executives in the good-to-great companies. What Collins (2001) and his team found at the helm of each of the “good-to-great” companies was what he coined a “Level 5 Leader.”

Table 2.1

The Five Levels of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 5</th>
<th>Level 5 Executive</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Builds enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Effective Leader</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Catalyzes commitment to and vigorous pursuit of a clear and compelling vision, stimulating higher performance standards.</td>
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<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Competent Manager</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Organizes people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of predetermined objectives.</td>
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<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Contributing Team Member</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Contributes individual capabilities to the achievement of group objectives, and works effectively with others in a group setting.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Highly Capable Individual</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makes productive contributions through talent, knowledge, skills, and good work habits.</td>
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</table>

Source: (Collins, 2001)
Collins (2001) stated, “Compared to high-profile leaders with big personalities who make headlines and become celebrities, the ‘good-to-great’ leaders seem to have come from Mars” (pg. 12). The *Five Levels of Leadership* are described in Table 2.1 above. Level 5 Leaders were not what the lay would describe as characteristics of a leader. Self-effacing, quiet, reserved, even shy – these leaders are paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will (Table 2.2). They are more like Lincoln and Socrates than Patton or Caesar” (pg. 12-13). Those who worked with or wrote about the good-to-great leaders continually used words like quiet, humble, modest, reserved, shy, gracious, mild-mannered, self-effacing, understated, did not believe his own clippings; and so forth (Collins, 2001). In spite of this, Collins (2001) found Level 5 leaders were not weak or timid, they “were fanatically driven, infected with an incurable need to produce results” (pg. 30). The identified good-to-great leaders wanted to see the company even more successful in the next generation and were comfortable with the idea that most people wouldn’t know from where the success came. Their focus was only on the mission and goals of the company itself. Collins (2001) emphasized that “Level 5 leaders look out the window to apportion credit to factors outside themselves when things go well (and if they cannot find a specific person or event to give credit to, they credit good luck). At the same time, they look in the mirror to apportion responsibility, never blaming bad luck when things go poorly” (pg. 35). The summary below (Table 2.2) shows the two sides of Level 5 Leadership.
Table 2.2

The Two Sides of Level 5 Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Will</th>
<th>Personal Humility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creates superb results, a clear catalyst in the transition from good to great.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a compelling modesty, shunning public adulation; never boastful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates an unwavering resolve to do whatever must be done to produce the best long-term results, no matter how difficult.</td>
<td>Acts with quiet, calm determination; relies principally on inspired standards, not inspiring charisma, to motivate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sets the standard of building an enduring great company; will settle for nothing less.</td>
<td>Channels ambition into the company, not the self; sets up successors for even greater success in the next generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looks in the mirror, not out the window, to apportion responsibility for poor results, never blaming other people, external factors, or bad luck.</td>
<td>Looks out the window, not in the mirror, to apportion credit for the success of the company – to other people, external factors, and good luck.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Collins, 2001)

Collins (2001) makes an assumption that Level 5 Leaders do not appear at the top of our companies and institutions due to the humility that is required from Level 5 leadership. He believes that personal drive and ambition of what it takes to become a CEO of a major company may ironically prevent that person from becoming “great.” Collins (2001) best articulates the reason there are few great, “Good is the enemy of great. And that is one of the key reasons why we have so little that becomes great” (pg.1).

Summary of Leadership and Styles of Leadership

There has been a great deal written about and learned about leadership over the past century and yet, there is no final definition of good leadership (Rost, 1991). Common characteristics and actions can be fused from the examples of leadership styles discussed above to further attempt to describe the ideal leader. Nevertheless, we have learned that there are many uncontrolled factors to be considered when evaluating the style of leadership a leader should replicate, including; the needs and motivation of the
employees, the level of participation and commitment of the employees, the defined goals and objectives of the organization, and the willingness to do what it takes meet those goals and objectives. These factors highly impact decision-making to foster great results in institutions and make replication of any one leadership style impossible. We can learn lessons from the literature, by extrapolating similarities between leadership styles and their effectiveness, and lead our organizations with people involved in the process, a shared vision, and attainable results in mind. It can be confirmed, from years of research on leadership and the varied styles of leadership noted above, that leadership in its definition, and as a concept, is quite subjective. “They will never tell us anything important about how to exercise outstanding leadership, because outstanding leadership is exquisitely sensitive to the context in which it is exercised” (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999).

Change

Change is the one thing that is guaranteed to happen in all organizations over time. “The rate of change in the business world is not going to slow down anytime soon. If anything, competition in most industries will probably speed up over the next few decades” (Kotter, 1996). Businesses and corporations are expected to produce increased results, with greater accountability and less income, time, and resources to make it happen. This makes change inevitable for leaders and their employees.

Barth (2007) states:

Probably the most important – and the most difficult – job of the school-based reformer is to change the prevailing culture of a school. The school’s culture dictates, in no uncertain terms, ‘the way we do things around here.’ Ultimately, a school’s culture has far more influence on life and learning in the schoolhouse than the state department of education, the superintendent, the school board, or even the principal can ever have.
The culture of each school is very different with its own patterns of norms, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, values, and traditions that are ingrained in the core of the organization itself, making school cultures extraordinarily resistant to change.

Research in regard to change, specifically in the area of education, requires reformers to be aware of the culture, the way things are, and the complexity of the change process and its impact on people in the organization. “Change is a process through which people and organizations move as they gradually come to understand and become skilled and competent in the use of new ways” (Hall & Hord, 2006). The challenge in most organizations is that change is expected to take place quickly and efficiently. However, the research states that most change, specifically in education, takes three to five years to be implemented at a high level (Hall & Hord, 2006). Hall & Hord (2006) identified twelve principles of change (Table 2.3) based upon patterns observed repeatedly in the change process in an effort to reduce, if not eliminate, the apprehension and dread associated with change, leading to successful results.

Table 2.3

*Principles of Change*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Change is a Process, Not an Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>There Are Significant Differences in What Is Entailed in Development and Implementation of an Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>An Organization Does Not Change until the Individuals within It Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Innovations Come in Different Sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Interventions Are the Actions and Events That Are Key to the Success of the Change Process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. There Will Be No Change in Outcomes until New Practices Are Implemented

7. Administrator Leadership Is Essential to Long-Term Change Success

8. Mandates Can Work

9. The School is the Primary Unit for Change

10. Facilitating Change is a Team Effort

11. Appropriate Interventions Reduce Resistance to Change

12. The Context of the School Influences the Process of Change

Source: (Hall & Hord, 2006)

John Kotter (1996) identified The Eight-Stage Change Process. “To be effective, a method designed to alter strategies, reengineer processes, or improve quality must address these barriers and address them well” (Kotter, 1996, p. 20). Therefore, the process is associated with one of eight “fundamental errors” that undermine transformation efforts (See Table 2.4).

Table 2.4

The Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Establishing a Sense of Urgency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Examining the market and competitive realities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying and discussing crises, potential crises, or major opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Creating the Guiding Coalition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Putting together a group with enough power to lead the change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Getting the group to work together like a team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Developing a Vision and Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Creating a vision to help direct the change effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing strategies for achieving that vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Communicating the Change Vision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Using every vehicle possible to constantly communicate the new vision and strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having the guiding coalition role model the behavior expected of employees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Empowering Broad-based Action
   - Getting rid of obstacles
   - Changing systems or structures that undermine the change vision
   - Encouraging risk taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions

6. Generating Short-term Wins
   - Planning for visible improvements in performance, or “wins”
   - Creating those wins
   - Visibly recognizing and rewarding people who made the wins possible

7. Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change
   - Using increased credibility to change all systems, structures, and policies that don’t fit together and don’t fit the transformation vision
   - Hiring, promoting, and developing people who can implement the change vision
   - Reinvigorating the process with new projects, themes, and change agents

8. Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture
   - Creating better performance through customer- and productivity-oriented behavior, more and better leadership, and more effective management
   - Articulating the connections between new behaviors and organizational success
   - Developing means to ensure leadership development and succession

Source: (Kotter, 1996)

Fullan (2007) exclaims, “A culture of change consists of great rapidity and nonlinearity on the one hand and equally great potential for creative breakthroughs on the other. The paradox is that transformation would not be possible without accompanying messiness” (pg. 169). Change does not come easy; it takes commitment and compassion on part of the leader through the process. To some degree, the downside of change and equally, the pain and angst that comes along with it are unavoidable. Fullan (2007) further emphasizes that, “All successful schools experience ‘implementation dips’ as they move forward” (pg. 175). The implementation dip is an actual dip in performance and confidence due to the learning of new skills and new understandings that creates additional anxiety, nervousness, and resistance to those immersed. The way the
‘downsides,’ that come along with change, are handled determines the level of effectiveness and success of the innovation implementation and its sustainability. Fullan (2001) states:

Effective leaders have the right kinds of sensitivity to implementation. They know that change is a process, not an event. They don’t panic when things don’t go smoothly during the first year of undertaking a major innovation or new direction. They are empathic to the lot of people immersed in the unnerving and anxiety-ridden work of trying to bring about a new order. They are even…appreciative of resistance. (pg. 175)

Kotter (1996) concurs:

People who are attempting to grow, to become more comfortable with change, to develop leadership skills – these men and women are typically driven by a sense that they are doing what is right for themselves, their families, and their organizations. That sense of purpose spurs them on and inspires them during rough periods. (pg. 186)

Summary of Change

As stated above, change is not an easy process. Research on the topic of change and processes for action has been evident in school research and reform movements. It requires many characteristics, actions, and behaviors to be working cohesively and in alignment with the mission and goals of an organization. “The combination of trust and a common goal shared by people with the right characteristics can make for a powerful team. The resulting guiding coalition will have the capacity to make needed change happen despite all the forces of inertia. It will have the potential, at least to do the hard work involved in creating the necessary vision, communicating the vision widely, empowering a broad base of people to take action, ensuring credibility, building short-term wins, learning and managing dozens of different change projects, and anchoring the new approaches in the organization’s culture” (Kotter, 1996, p. 66).
School Reform/School Improvement

*Learning Organizations* is a term utilized in research related to leadership and the idea that all people are born learners and businesses and companies need to embrace this concept in order to be prominent among their competitors. Bolman and Deal (2008) and their *Human Resource Frame* centers on what organizations and people do for one another.

“The organizations that will truly excel in the future will be the organizations that discover how to tap people’s commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in an organization” (Senge, 2007, p. 4). Peter Senge (2007) further develops the idea of a *learning organization* through use of five disciplines: Systems Thinking, Personal Mastery, Mental Models, Building Shared Vision, and Team Learning. Senge (2007) argues that leaders in typical organizations favor control over the natural impulse of curiosity and learning. He further states, “The practice of a shared vision involves the skills of unearthing shared ‘pictures of the future’ that foster genuine commitment and enrollment rather than compliance. In mastering this discipline leaders learn the counterproductiveness of trying to dictate a vision, no matter how heartfelt” (pg.9).

Organizations need a cadre of talented, highly motivated employees who are committed to giving their best (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Bolman and Deal (2008) state, “Our most important asset is our people” (pg. 117). The needs of the individuals and the organization can be aligned so everyone profits. The Human Resource Frame (Bolman & Deal, 2008) focuses on the relationship between people and organizations and argues, “People’s skills, attitudes, energy, and commitment are vital resources that can make or break an enterprise” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 122). A skilled and motivated workforce
with a higher level of intelligence, and commitment is a powerful and strategic advantage for an organization in this era of global competition and rapid change (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

“Ambitious sets of content standards, unrelenting accountability pressures, increased diversity of learners, and expanded societal demands all conspire to raise the ante on the performance of schools while exacerbating the difficulty of making the needed improvements” (Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004). The necessity of preparing students for exit to college and the workforce in a time of economic hardship, global competitiveness, and increased technology make school reform and improvement inevitable and the pressure on schools to do so is at an all time high. The research in the area of effective school improvement practices focus on continuous professional development for all stakeholders, collaborative teacher planning for instruction and assessment, data analysis, and setting specific and measurable learning improvement goals for the school and students. York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, and Montie (2001) clarify, “Without significant advances in the capacity of schools to promote continuous learning and improvement, the demands on educators will exceed their capacity to promote high levels of learning for all students” (pg. xxii).

Schmoker (2001) states, “Collaboration, data collection, and goal-setting unlock and foster the emergence of a host of improvement ideas and the implementation of the best ‘proven’ programs and initiatives” (pg. 1-2). An article written for The Los Angeles Times described the three most improved schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District and identified the practices and procedures that led to the schools’ success (Helfand & Sahagun, 1999):
• First, teachers aimed their efforts explicitly at the achievement of measurable learning goals.

• Second, they worked in teams to reach their goals. Teachers talked to one another about their work, go together regularly to analyze successes and failures, shared materials, and refined their instruction.

• Third, teachers made regular use of achievement data to identify and address areas of concern. Teacher teams “routinely assess students progress to target deficiencies and buttress strengths”

“Continuous improvement, a mantra in the domain of education, simply means an unwavering commitment to progress. What is much more complex, however, is what the particular innovations should be, why they are necessary, and how they can be achieved” (Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004). Six steps of continuous improvement have been identified in research as described below (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5

*Six Steps of Continuous Improvement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1: Identify and clarify the core beliefs that define the school’s culture.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Explanation**  
Some faculties may hold achievement in the academic disciplines as primary; others may believe that the social and emotional development of student is primary. Both are core beliefs and drive teacher support for the status quo or the need to change the status quo. |
| **Operating Principles**  
• Each school is a complex living system with purpose. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 2: Create a shared vision by explicitly defining what these core beliefs will look like in practice.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Explanation**  
This is the shared vision of what the school community will look like when its core beliefs truly inform practice. It is a narrative description of what is seen and heard in every part of the school community. |
| **Operating Principles**  
• A shared vision articulates a coherent picture of what the school will look like when the core beliefs have been put into practice.  
• The legitimacy of a shared vision is based on how well it represents all perspectives in the school community. |
Step 3: Collect accurate, detailed data and use analysis of the data to define where the school is now and to determine the gaps between the current reality and the shared vision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Operating Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The collection and analysis of data lead to rich conversations among a staff about the meaning of the data and an honest assessment of teaching and learning practices. By identifying the gaps between where a school is now and the shared vision, staff members gain clarity on what they have to do to achieve that vision. | • Once staff members commit to the shared vision, they must gain clarity on their responsibility for achieving that vision.  
• When staff members perceive data to be valid and reliable in collection and analysis, data both confirm what is working well and reveal the gaps between the current reality and the shared vision in a way that inspires collective action. |

Step 4: Identify the innovation(s) that will most likely close the gaps between the current reality and the shared vision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Operating Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Staff must have the opportunity to learn what the change is and what impact it will have, both individually and collectively. They must be able to see what it looks like in practice. | • All staff must see the content of staff development as a necessary means to achieve the desired end.  
• It is not the number of innovations addressed in the staff development plan but rather the purposeful linkage among them that makes systemic change possible and manageable. |

Step 5: Develop and implement an action plan that supports teachers through the change process and integrates the innovation within each classroom and throughout the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Operating Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Staff members must be trained, coached, and supported throughout the staff development process so that they can integrate the change into the classroom and into the system. Resource allocation will need to balance individual staff needs with overall constraints in time and budget. Leaders also will have to be responsive to specific concerns and still ensure that all teachers meet their responsibility for the innovation to succeed. | • Staff development must promote collective autonomy by embracing teaching as a distributed quality of the school.  
• Planning must provide the clear, concrete direction necessary for systematic change while remaining flexible enough to accommodate the “nonrational” life in schools.  
• Staff development must reflect the predictable stages of teacher concern about the complexities of moving from new learning to systemic consequences. |
Step 6: Embrace collective autonomy as the only way to close the gaps between the current reality and the shared vision, and embrace collective accountability in establishing responsibility for closing the gaps.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Operating Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student achievement holds primacy here, but how it is both defined and measured varies depending upon the core beliefs articulated in Step 1.</td>
<td>• A competent system proves itself when everyone within the system performs better as a result of the collective endeavors and accepts accountability for that improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004)

Continuous improvement should be embedded in the culture of the school in which all stakeholders hold a commitment to incessantly improve their practices and reflect upon performance outcomes. “In a competent system teachers and administrators are actively participating in the continuous improvement journey because they believe that what is being asked of them is collectively challenging, possible, and worthy of the attempt” (Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004, p. 20). In a school it should be agreed upon, and expected, that students, teachers, administrators, and parents focus and reflect specifically on standards, assessment, and accountability for learning. “Education is about learning – not only student learning but also staff learning. Learning is a function of reflection” (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, & Montie, 2001, p. 19).

Current research on school improvement states that schools have a tremendous impact on student achievement (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Lambert, 2003; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999; Reeves, 2004; Salazar, 2008; Schmoker M. , 2006). Research from Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2003) supports three factors that impact student achievement:

- School Level Factors
- Teacher Level Factors
• Student Level Factors

School level factors that affect student achievement and promote school improvement, are broken into five major strands (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2003):

1. A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum
2. Challenging Goals and Effective Feedback
3. Parent and Community Involvement
4. Safe and Orderly Environment
5. Collegiality and Professionalism

Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum, as identified by Robert Marzano (2003), “is the first factor, having the most impact on student achievement” (pg. 22). Marzano defines a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum as, “primarily a combination of my factors ‘opportunity to learn’ and ‘time.’” Academic standards have been said to be too numerous and that teachers lack the necessary time to teach the standards appropriately (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2003). The language of the standards varies widely from state to state, with words such as indicators, objectives, benchmarks, and standards all illuminating to what students should know and be able to do (Reeves, 2002).

In the United States of America standards are adopted by the state, and in the past varied considerably between the states, making it hard to determine the effectiveness of school improvement initiatives related to student achievement. However, most recently, the National Governors Association of Best Practices (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), as a means to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare students for college and the workforce, developed a common national curriculum. Currently these standards, called Common Core State Standards (CCSS),
have been adopted by 45 of the 50 United States of America in addition to The District of Columbia, US Virgin Islands, and Northern Mariana Islands, providing schools with a consistent curriculum for comparison of student growth and performance. The mission of the CCSS (2011) is:

To provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.

This new adoption is a large reform initiative that will add a new level of comparison of student growth and performance across the United States of America, as well as make the curriculum viable and guaranteed for students, impacting school improvement on a significant level.

Specifically in the strand of Collegiality and Professionalism (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2003), school improvement is reliant on the fact that teachers and staff are treated by one another, and others, as professionals and experts in their craft. “A competent system requires several significant shifts- from unconnected thinking to systems thinking, from an environment of isolation to one of collegiality, from perceived reality to information-driven reality, and from individual autonomy to collective autonomy and collective accountability” (Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004, p. 1). Moving from isolation to a more collective approach is not easy for schools because it involves changing the ways things have always been done.

Schmoker (2006) confirms, “Professional learning communities have emerged as arguably the best, most agreed-upon means by which to continuously improve instruction and student performance” (pg. 106). Professional learning communities require teachers
to establish a common schedule of what specific standards aligned with state assessment guides and adopted curriculum documents they will teach. These teams meet regularly for collective planning, follow-up, assessment analysis, and adjustment of instruction. A key benefit to this type of professional and collective approach is that teachers and/or participants who work in collaboration with colleagues are afforded more opportunities for reflection and self-growth or continuous professional development (DuFour & Marzano, 2011). James Surowiecki, of The New Yorker, states, “A successful face-to-face team is more than just collectively intelligent. It makes everyone work harder, think smarter and reach better conclusions than they would have on their own.”

**Summary of School Reform/School Improvement**

“The greater the number of people involved, the greater the potential to significantly improve educational practice and, therefore, the greater the potential to enhance student learning” (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, & Montie, 2001, p. 19). Teachers know a great deal about good instruction and strategies that work. “Investing in people requires time and persistence to yield a payoff” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 141). Opportunities for collaboration between colleagues reinforce the implementation of these effective teaching practices, which in turn, benefits students and school improvement.

There is not one model of school improvement or reform, however, there are themes emerging from the literature review to include the following (Schmoker M., 2001):

- Almost any school could imitate or adapt the best features and techniques developed by successful systems.
- Test-driven, measureable improvement is in fact always substantive improvement. A strident rejection of state and standardized tests is
counterproductive and ultimately harmful to both teacher morale and student learning.

- Processes showcase teachers’ collaborative efforts to create and refine lessons and units. Such work results in immediate benefits for improved teaching and school be scheduled into the summer and school year without delay. These processes would replace much of what is now known as “staff development.”

- Leadership is as leadership does.

- We need to put teacher leadership efforts behind us to get results-oriented teacher leadership out of the blocks. Schools, districts, and states need to create and fund more opportunities for both leadership and responsibility for results.

“Much depends on our willingness to engage rather than avoid such issues and opportunities. And time does matter. Right now, the life chances of many thousands of children hang on the actions we take. Their option, their ability to participate fully in the life of their communities depend on how soon and how vigorously we implement the best methods” (Schmoker M., 2001, p. 3).

**School Leadership Effectiveness**

There have been many research articles, dissertations, and books written on the effectiveness of school leaders (Rost, 1991; Parks, 2005; Blase & Blase, 2004; Blase & Kirby, 2009; Blase & Blase, 2001; Bredeson, 1989; Collins, 2001; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Fullan, 2001; Glickman, 1991). So what are the qualities, characteristics, and behaviors of effective school leaders?

“Because leadership is multidimensional, affected by variables in both people and environment, it follows that there can be no single recipe for leading any organization, let alone an institution as complex as a school” (Smith & Piele, 2006, p. 5). As with any definition in the realm of education, there is never one concrete example or phrase to capture what it looks, sounds, and feels like to be an effective leader. However, many
researchers have made deliberate attempts based on their findings. Smith and Piele (2006), define effective leadership as, “The activity of mobilizing and empowering others to serve the academic and related needs of students with utmost skill and integrity” (pg. 5). “Outstanding school leaders start with a conviction about what school ought to be. This conviction gives birth to a vision, a mental image that guides these effective leaders in their daily routine activities and interactions with teachers, students, and communities” (Smith & Piele, 2006, p. 15).

Pam Salazar (2008) states:

High-impact leaders promote an academic learning climate. They ensure that all students reach the level of academic achievement that was once expected by only a few. Considerations of both excellence and equity guide every decision they make. High-impact leaders make high expectations part of the way they do business; they expect excellence, monitor performance, and provide feedback as necessary. (pg. 27)

Whitaker (2003) states “All principals- including our most effective and our least effective colleagues- have high expectations for their teachers. The difference between average and great principals lies in what they expect of themselves” (pg. 17).

Effective principals not only valued their staff members and their professional expertise but also provided them opportunities to demonstrate and exercise their commitment to their schools and students (Blase & Kirby, 2009; Blase & Blase, 2004; Whitaker, 2003; Smith & Piele, 2006). “Outstanding principals know that if they have great teachers, they have a great school; without great teachers, they do not have a great school” (Whitaker, 2003, p. 7). Teachers need to be involved in the process in order to show commitment versus compliance in their roles. Blasé and Blasé (2001) exclaimed, “Successful shared governance principals sense that the school’s success lies in the skills and attitudes of the professional staff, not merely in the leadership capabilities of the
principal…such principals feel that teachers can and should be trusted to do what is best for students” (pg. 33). These principals sincerely involve teachers in decision-making aligned with school improvement, instruction, and resources. Teachers feel valued, listened to, competent, and confident in their abilities to meet school goals related to increased student achievement (Blase & Blase, 2001; Short & Greer, 1997; Blase & Kirby, 2009).

Bredeson (1989) found that in schools with strong teacher leadership the principals supported and positively affected the teachers’ professional work by the following methods (Bredeson, 1989):

- Providing time, space, and money to implement ideas
- Reassuring people that ideas and plans, even when challenged, are valued
- Letting go throughout the growth process (not directing others, staying out of the way, and allowing mistakes)
- Being informed
- Being available
- Providing an open, friendly, supportive environment

It was also stated, by Bredeson (1989), that the principals did not convey an all-knowing attitude and did not judge others. Whitaker (2003) stated, “Effective principals viewed themselves as responsible for all aspects of their school” (pg.15).

*Competence* has been identified as a characteristic of effective principals (Smith & Piele, 2006). “Studies have shown that teachers are influenced most by principals who have ‘expert power,’ a term that simply means competence. Teachers are less influenced by the principal’s power to punish, by his or her status or position, or even by the power
to reward than by their perception that the principal is an expert, is competent, and can get the job done” (Smith & Piele, 2006, p. 4).

Stronge, Richard, and Catano (2008) identified eight **Qualities of Effective Principals** for understanding and prioritizing the principal’s work (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6

**Qualities of Effective Principals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Quality</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality 1: Instructional Leadership</td>
<td>The principal fosters the success of all students by facilitating the development, communication, implementation, and evaluation of a shared vision of learning that reflects excellence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality 2: School Climate</td>
<td>The principal fosters the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a positive and safe school climate for all stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality 3: Human Resource Administration</td>
<td>The principal fosters effective human resources administration through the selection, induction, support, and retention of quality instructional and support personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality 4: Teacher Evaluation</td>
<td>The principal conducts meaningful, timely, and productive evaluations of teachers and other staff members in order to support ongoing performance effectiveness and school improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality 5: Organizational Management</td>
<td>The principal fosters the success of all students by supporting, managing, and overseeing the school’s organization, operation, and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality 6: Communication and Community Relations</td>
<td>The principal fosters the success of all students by collaborating effectively with all stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

53
Quality 7: 
Professionalism

The principal fosters the success of all students by demonstrating integrity, fairness, and ethical behavior.

Quality 8: 
The Principal’s Role in Student Achievement

The principal’s leadership results in acceptable, measurable progress based on established standards.

Source: (Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008)

With the principals’ role changing significantly over the past several years into a role of instructional leader, as identified in the qualities listed above, the principal is still responsible for the managerial aspects of the job (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Fullan, 2001; Greenleaf R. K., 1977; Kotter, 1996; Leithwood K. A., 2007; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2003). “Given the competing demands for precious time, it is imperative not only that principals do their work well, but also that they do the right work” (Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008, p. xii). When it comes to what really matters in schools there are two things that count, (1) teaching and learning and (2) supporting teaching and learning (Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008, pg. xii).

Research has confirmed a positive and strong relationship between effective instructional leadership behaviors exhibited by principals and teacher commitment, professional involvement, motivation, and innovativeness (Blase & Blase, 2001; Blase & Kirby, 2009; Collins, 2001; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2003). Principal behaviors connected to teachers’ professional growth and performance were as follows (Blase & Blase, 2004):

• Framing school goals
• Communicating school goals
• Supervising and evaluating instruction
• Coordinating the curriculum
• Monitoring student progress
• Protecting instructional time
• Maintaining high visibility
• Providing incentives for teachers
• Promoting professional development
• Providing incentives for learning

In the work of Blasé & Blasé (2004), Sheppard (1996) found “promoting teachers’ professional development was the most influential instructional leadership behavior at both the elementary and high school levels and that only three to five principal behaviors accounted for most of the influence on teachers’ commitment, involvement, and innovativeness.”

Blasé and Blasé (2004) identified what successful principals do to facilitate empowerment and reform in schools and their impacts on teachers in the areas of conferencing, staff development, and reflection (Table 2.7). Blasé and Blasé (2004) further identified the impact on principals’ use of visibility, praise, and autonomy (Table 2.8).

Table 2.7

The TiGer Model: Three Themes of Instructional Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Talk with Teachers</th>
<th>Promote Teachers’ Professional Growth</th>
<th>Foster Teacher Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build trust</td>
<td>Study literature and proven programs</td>
<td>Develop teachers' reflection skills in order to construct professional knowledge and develop sociopolitical insights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. Building a Culture of Collaboration, Equality, and Lifelong Study of Teaching and Learning Through Talk, Growth, and Reflection (the TiGeR Model)

Table 2.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Supervisors’ Behaviors – Positive and Negative – Affect Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being Visible</strong> results in:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High morale and motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhanced self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased sense of security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reflection and reflectively oriented behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Praising</strong> results in:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feeling rewarded, cared</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Blasé & Blasé (2004) presented descriptions of three primary elements of successful instructional leadership that emerged from their study:

- Conducting instructional conferences
- Providing staff development
- Developing teacher reflection

Principals’ use of these behaviors dramatically and positively impacted teachers’ feeling and attitudes, thinking, and instructional behavior (Blase & Blase, 2004). Blasé & Blasé found that other reasons for the effectiveness of principal behaviors identified above are related to the fact that these behaviors accomplish the following (Blase & Blase, 2004):

1. Give teachers choice and discretion.
2. Foster nonthreatening interaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extending Autonomy results in:</th>
<th>Maintaining Control results in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• High motivation</td>
<td>• Limited involvement in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhanced self-esteem and</td>
<td>decision making (false image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence</td>
<td>of governance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased sense of security</td>
<td>• Sense of being manipulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and professional discretion</td>
<td>• Feeling abused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reflection and reflectively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oriented behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Damage self-esteem</th>
<th>Fear</th>
<th>Confusion</th>
<th>Loss of respect and trust for principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearing to comply; ignoring, avoiding principal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance and rebellion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cautiousness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Blasé & Blasé, 2004, pg. 19)
3. Provide evidence of authentic interest.

4. Allow for ‘pleasing the principal.’

Learning from best practices is what any one could hope from all members of a professional learning community. It is the expectation that not only administrators and teachers learn from others’ successes and failures in a means to increase their competency in the classroom and the workplace but students as well. Stronge, et al (2008) deduce, “If we are to succeed as an educational enterprise in a highly competitive world, then we must embrace leadership development – not in a cursory fashion, but rather in an ongoing, comprehensive, sustained manner” (pg. xii).

**Summary of School Leadership Effectiveness**

Research on effective leadership practices and high-impact leaders has many combined themes from which school leaders can learn. It is agreed that both scholars and practitioners of educational administration believe that all principals play a critical role in schools. “Student achievement outcomes are viewed as an indirect result of principals’ actions that affect instructional climate and classroom organization” (Blase & Kirby, 2009, p. 2).

Effective school leaders ensure a clear and agreed upon vision, mission, and purpose exists in their schools and then guarantee the direction of their daily work is aligned with specific and measureable organizational goals for increased achievement (Blase & Blase, 2001; Blase & Blase, 2004; Blase & Kirby, 2009; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Fullan, 2001; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Reeves, 2002; Salazar, 2008; Schmoker M., 2006). These leaders appreciate the importance of continuous improvement and not only provide the time for teachers to improve their practice but also
model continuous learning. High expectations are provided for all members of the organization and ensure teachers and themselves are accountable for improvement goals (Reeves, 2004). Successful school leaders focus on curriculum, instruction, and student learning with drive, commitment, and passion and protect barriers that impeded these areas of importance. “The single most important factor for a successful school is having a successful teacher in each classroom” (Salazar, 2008, p. 69).

Strong school leaders support their teachers by including them in the process of school improvement. They ensure all teachers actively participate in professional development to improve instruction, provide time for reflection on teaching and learning in collaboration with colleagues, and coach and mentor teachers to continuously improve practices. These school leaders are deeply committed to their schools and students by continuously building upon the strengths of their teachers and empowering them in the process of school improvement as a means to produce positive outcomes for student achievement and learning. “Principals who embrace these concepts rather than merely expecting teachers to implement other people’s visions for schools will accord teachers respect and dignity and will help them be more fully responsible for work-related decisions” (Blase & Blase, 2001, p. 3).

**Teacher Empowerment**

James Maxwell once said, “The people’s capacity to achieve is determined by their leader’s ability to empower.” As discussed in the introduction above, *A Nation at Risk* (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) was followed by almost two decades of research and reform on school improvement. Reform movements then began to look at the pivotal roles of administrators and teachers and their impact on
effective and ineffective schools research. There has been consensus through research in the area of school improvement that the role of the teacher is a solution to the effectiveness of schools. This is not different than that of any organization. “The organization benefits from a talented, motivated, loyal, and free-spirited workforce. Employees in turn are more productive innovative, and willing to go out of their way to get the job done” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 141).

Pressure on schools to dramatically improve results has required rapid change in all aspects of teaching and learning. As noted above, change is not easy and with it oftentimes comes resistance and feelings of anxiety, frustration, and grief. Armstrong (2006) explains, “Teachers are forced to adopt programs and use teaching methods that may not be congruent with their own teaching philosophies. Their own abilities and integrity as educators are ignored, and as a result they become disempowered” (pg. 62). Impacts of change in schools that led to feelings of anxiety, frustration, grief, and oftentimes resentment from teachers led to another wave in research in regards to reform and school improvement bringing about the terms teacher autonomy and teacher empowerment at the forefront of professional literature on successful schools (Hall & Hord, 2006; Kotter, 1996; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Fernandez, 1993).

As in any organization, autonomy is a basic human need and desire for all individuals and leads to increased work motivation, commitment, and success. Blasé and Kirby (2009) refer to autonomy as, “the degree to freedom (i.e. professional discretion) that individuals have in determining work processes” (pg. 58). Bolman and Deal (2008) state, “Progressive organizations give power to employees as well as invest in their development. Empowerment includes keeping employees informed, but it doesn’t stop
there. It also involves encouraging autonomy and participation, redesigning work, fostering teams, promoting egalitarianism, and infusing work with meaning” (pg. 149).

By escalating the amount of freedom and professional discretion teachers have in regards to teaching and learning, it is the hope of school leaders that their motivation, commitment, and success will be increased as well. Those who work most closely with students each day need to have competence and motivation during this time of accountability and change to produce positive results in student achievement. Blasé and Blasé (2001) depict, “Educational leaders are being asked to surrender power and to share power with rather than holding power over teachers in the belief that this power sharing will release the great potential of teachers to effect the improvement of schools and student achievement” (pg. 5).

Research on school reform supports the idea of increased autonomy and empowerment and encourages shared decision making and active involvement on part of teachers to provoke participation in developing and supporting school goals and student learning in a way in which their expertise is valued and put into action. Improved autonomy and empowerment for teachers, in addition to principals’ impact on the feelings and perceptions of teachers in regards to empowerment, have been identified as key factors in developing successful schools. Teacher empowerment and teacher autonomy have been terms that have been interchanged in professional practice in schools. Therefore it is necessary to assert that term autonomy will be included in the references of teacher empowerment discussed below as part of the definition.

Teacher empowerment has many definitions and implications from its frequent presence in educational professional literature (Blase & Blase, 2001; Blase & Kirby,
2009; Short & Rinehart, 1992; Short & Greer, 2002; Melenyzer, 1990). For the purpose of this study the term empowerment will not be defined, as it is the impression and participants’ own perception of empowerment that is being reviewed.

Research in the area of teacher empowerment has been encompassed by the fact that teachers have crucial opportunities each day to impact students’ achievement and learning. Furthermore, teachers are responsible for implementing best practices when it comes to curriculum and instruction; therefore, they need to be highly involved in opportunities for professional growth and its development, and also empowered to make decisions surrounding these issues at the school. “Teachers are willing to accept principals’ authority in scheduling, public relations, and student services. In contrast, in the realm of instruction, teachers claim the authority of expertise and assert that this professional authority supersedes the principal’s positional authority” (Blase & Kirby, 2009, p. 60). It is necessary that teachers take an active role in the school improvement process and perceive this role as genuine and meaningful in its impact on school goals. “True empowerment extends well beyond participation in decision makings; it also involves the elevation of teachers as knowledgeable professionals” (Blase & Blase, 2001, p. 13).

Studying the effectiveness of empowerment as a tool to improve schools is very difficult to measure and there is a large continuum of what empowerment may look like in schools with successful principals. Research in this area has been encompassed around the idea that teachers’ perceptions of empowerment are most important, rather than the term or label empowerment as described in definitions through research. Behaviors such as articulating a vision, providing teacher recognition, being visible, being decisive,
supporting shared decision making, and demonstrating trust were identified with empowering leadership (Blase & Blase, 2001).

Melenyzer (1990) conducted research based upon teachers’ varying meanings of empowerment through observations of their daily actions and their stories about these events. “If teachers’ meanings emphasize various aspects of teacher empowerment already present in the literature, a comparison will reveal which aspects are present and which dominate, thus providing a relevant picture of teacher empowerment from those who are seeing it, living, it, and practicing it” (Melenyzer, 1990). Melenyzer’s research consisted of interviews with teachers, school administrators, and district administrators as well as continuous daily observations and attendance at all teacher meetings, activities, and extra-curricular events from October through June in an identified school of approximately 40 teachers. Through evidence collection, analysis, and interpretation, ten themes of empowerment were identified (Melenyzer, 1990):

1. Teachers sharing leadership
2. Teachers sharing in decision making
3. Teachers accessing the knowledge bases
4. Trusting relationships and confidence in self and others
5. The extension of recognition and appreciation
6. Caring, sharing, a sense of community
7. Honest and open communications between teacher-teacher, and between administrator-teacher
8. The maintenance of high expectations
9. Collegial and administrative support
10. Safeguarding what’s important
Neudfeld and Freeman (1992) found behaviors that significantly enhanced teachers’ sense of empowerment:

1. Trusting and treating teachers as professionals
2. Creating a nonrestrictive work environment in which teachers can take chances and risk failures
3. Exhibiting a leadership style that is neither dogmatic nor autocratic
4. Inviting divergent points of view
5. Giving teachers a clear voice in decision making

A decade later Blasé and Blasé (2001) conducted research specifically looking at how successful shared governance principals empowered teachers and described the reported effects that these leaders had on teachers’ sense of empowerment. The study examined what effective principals do to develop a culture and climate that is participative and collectively shares in decision-making. The study also focused on how teachers’ viewed specific characteristics of their principals and why they were perceived to be empowering. An open-ended questionnaire was used to collect data and was administered to 285 teachers in 11 identified schools (5 elementary, 3 middle, and 3 high schools) that were members of the League of Professional Schools since its foundation. Teachers’ data were analyzed based and detailed descriptions of empowering strategies used by their principals were identified based on the following questions asked of teacher participants included on *The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE)* (Blase & Blase, 2001):

1. Describe one characteristic (attitude, value, behavior, etc.) of your principal that contributes to your sense of empowerment. Illustrate this by providing a real life example.
2. Please explain why this characteristic makes you feel empowered. Give a real world example to illustrate why.

3. To show what you mean by empowered as it relates to this characteristic of your principal. Please give examples of your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. (I want to know what feelings, thought and behaviors result.)

Blasé and Blasé (2001) found as a result of their study that successful principals were described, by their teachers, as: trustworthy, honest, open, continuously growing, and problem-solvers. Successful principals were said to be persistent in their efforts to build and demonstrate their trust in teachers’ professional judgment. Blasé and Blasé (2001) stated that principals’ strategies significantly affected teachers’ behavior, thinking, and attitudes. Specifically, when principals encouraged autonomy, innovation, and risk-taking it enhanced teachers’ self-esteem, confidence, professional satisfaction, creativity, sense of classroom efficacy, and ability to reflect on instructional issues. In conclusion of the study, Blasé and Blasé identified actions of the principals that enhanced the teachers’ sense of empowerment (Blase & Blase, 2001):

- Modeling, building, and persistently supporting an environment of trust among teachers, who they consider professionals and experts
- Systematically structuring the school to encourage authentic collaboration by establishing readiness and common goals and by responding to the school’s unique characteristics
- Supporting shared governance efforts by providing professional development and basic resources
- Maintaining a focus on teaching and learning
- Supporting teacher experimentation and innovation, granting professional autonomy, and viewing failure as an opportunity to learn
- Modeling professional behavior, especially by exhibiting caring, optimism, honesty, friendliness, and enthusiasm
• Encouraging risk taking and minimizing threat (or constraints on teacher freedom and growth)

• Praising teachers and using other symbolic rewards (e.g., valuing and respecting teachers)

• Setting the stage for discussing and solving the metaproblems of a school through effective communication, openness and trust, action research, group participation in decision making, and effective procedural methods for solving problems

Blasé and Blasé (2001) concluded that teachers overwhelmingly identified principal leadership as the most important factor that contributes to teachers’ empowerment. “It is clear that true teacher empowerment and the democratization of schools is unlikely to occur unless educational leaders support such actions by teachers and aggressively collaborate with teachers and other to pursue educational goals,” (Blase & Blase, 2001, p. 164).

Summary

The professional reading suggests that failures in initiating active teacher empowerment and increased autonomy in decision-making may result, in part, because principals lack the particular leadership skills and knowledge that aligns with change in shared governance models in schools. Research, as stated above, agrees that using leadership styles that are considered democratic, facilitative, and/or participatory to include shared governance and empowerment of teachers, leaders will have a better chance in facilitating change and school improvement initiatives aligned with teaching and learning. Blasé and Blasé (2001) explain, “Using facilitative power, educational leaders create favorable conditions for teachers to enhance their personal and collective performance” (pg. 13).
“As the demand for schools to improve student performance increases, the need for principals to cultivate broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership becomes essential. Principals who build and sustain leadership capacity share the following core beliefs” (Lambert, 2003, p. 117). Lambert (2003) identified essential core beliefs for sustaining leadership capacity:

1. Teachers, parents, and students can be successful leaders when given the opportunity to lead;
2. School community members must experience success in leadership roles;
3. Leadership capacity will be enhanced when the principal supports the leadership experiences of others;
4. Building the individual leadership capacity of the many builds organizational leadership capacity; and
5. The ability to do this important work lies within the school membership.

Research has been clear about one thing; when it comes to successful schools and improved student learning, teachers make the difference (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Reeves, 2004; Salazar, 2008; Schmoker M., 2006). Three essentials for schools have been identified as: a reasonably coherent curriculum (what we teach); sound lessons (how we teach); and far more purposeful reading and writing in every discipline (Schmoker M., 2011). How can this dramatic improvement of student learning, demanded for in A Nation at Risk (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) be achieved if teachers are not involved in the process of school improvement?

Blasé and Blasé (2001) captured the necessity of teacher empowerment and involvement best, “Education takes place in the classroom and the only real educational reform would also take place in the classroom” (pg. xiii). Bolman and Deal (2008)
concur, “When individuals find satisfaction and meaning in work, the organization profits from effective use of their talent and energy” (pg. 164).

Through the professional literature and research we understand that when teachers and administrators work collectively for common goals in regards to student achievement, improvement occurs. Why would schools stray from the need to empower teachers? “Empowering teachers by implementing shared governance is more than the ‘in’ thing for educators; rather, it may be the best way to fulfill the school’s mission and achieve its goals” (Blase & Blase, 2001, p. 14).

Principals have a monumental impact and opportunity to build successful schools. Developing trust, shared leadership, and continuous learning in a school is necessary for sustaining any school improvement initiative and effective principals apply this knowledge. Effective principals are resilient about their efforts to build capacity in their schools as a means to improve student learning. They acknowledge that not all teachers can produce positive results in academic achievement, great teachers do. They realize the importance of leadership, coaching, mentoring, supervision, and accountability. “People are not your most important asset. The right people are” (Collins, 2001, p. 13). Effective, successful, and high-impact principals hold teachers and themselves accountable for performance. They hold high expectations and release responsibility and power to the expertise of the professionals in their buildings. “Teachers who are given frequent opportunities for learning and collaboration are more committed to their students and feel a freedom to grow and develop that has few limitations” (Blase & Kirby, 2009, p. 61).

A lot can be learned from research and applied by practitioners in the areas of leadership and leadership styles, change, school improvement and reform, effective
leadership, and teacher empowerment. It should not be novel to learn what successful leaders and principals are doing and what works in schools, but a standard practice. School leaders should be accountable for application of best practices just as teachers, if the ultimate goal is to dramatically improve education in our schools.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was based on the qualitative research by Blasé & Blasé (2001), to investigate the broad question, how do teachers perceive the characteristics of school principals that influence their sense of empowerment? The study, conducted by Blasé and Blasé (2001), utilized the League of Professional Schools membership to select and identify founding schools that had successful shared governance structures in place since the fall of 1990. “Successful Principals” were defined as those whose staffs had attained high levels of empowerment and participative decision making as defined by league criteria (e.g., educational focus, governance processes, and use of action research) and reflected in (a) annual reports, (b) on-site visitations, (c) teacher reports, and (d) facilitator (league staff member) reports. The study included only those principals who were considered highly successful (Blase & Blase, 2001).

The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) was constructed for the research to collect data from 285 teachers in these 11 select schools – 5 elementary, 3 middle, and 3 high schools. This inventory was pilot-tested and then refined based on the pilot to design the final form of the instrument (Blase & Blase, 2001).

Teachers in the selected schools were asked to give background information and rated their principals with regard to overall contribution to their sense of empowerment on a sliding scale from 1 to 7 (Blase & Blase, 2001). Teacher participation in this study was voluntary and one teacher in each of the successful principals’ schools administered the questionnaire to teachers during a meeting, collected completed questionnaires, and
mailed responses to the researcher. School principals were not present during the meetings and a period of 35 minutes was required for its completion.

The demographic information indicated that in general, very slight differences were apparent when the study sample was compared with the national distribution of teachers in terms of gender, age, marital status, highest degrees earned, average number of years in teaching, and tenure or non-tenure. The sample had a lower proportion of elementary teachers and a higher proportion of secondary schools.

Analysis of the questionnaire page generated 367 examples of influence characteristics, and then those characteristics were coded into strategies and personal characteristics. Each strategy and characteristic was then analyzed to determine its impact on three aspects of teacher empowerment: feelings, thinking, and behavior. Display matrixes were designed to synthesize these data for each of the major strategies and characteristics. Descriptive matrixes were also used to identify and refine conceptual and theoretical ideas derived from the data collected. This included comparisons across principals’ strategies.

This research differed from the study conducted by Blasé & Blasé (2001) in terms of the selection of successful principals, the number of schools and participants, and the addition of the School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992).

The qualitative phase of the study described specific characteristics of principals that gave teachers the perception of empowerment. However, the overall measures of empowerment and the relationship to the schools’ climates were better understood using quantitative methods.
Problem Statement

To date there is limited research, from teachers’ perspectives, on the characteristics, the strategies and practices, that principals use to empower teachers and the specific effects of such strategies and practices on teachers’ sense of empowerment.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this mixed-methods research design was to identify the characteristics of principals, as identified by teachers that led to their sense of empowerment. In this study, the Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) (Blase & Blase, 2001) and the School Participants Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992) was used to determine specific characteristics of principals that lead to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment. Data were collected and analyzed to generate descriptive categories and themes that lead to teacher empowerment. The data were collected and analyzed across three schools in a large urban school district.

Research Questions

The researcher sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the characteristics of successful principals that lead to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment?
- How do teachers perceive the characteristics of school principals that influence their sense of empowerment?
- What approaches to leadership produce positive benefits identified by empowered teachers?
From the perspective of the teacher, what does effective, facilitative, empowering leadership look like?

What feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result from the characteristics of their principals?

Table 3.1 summarizes the research questions and corresponding research methods, type of data collected, process of analysis, and related literature used in the study.

Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Kind of Data Collected</th>
<th>Process of Analysis</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Time of Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) What are the characteristics of successful principals that lead to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment?</td>
<td><strong>Documents:</strong> IPCC TE</td>
<td>Comparison Analysis &amp; Coding of emergent themes</td>
<td>Blasé &amp; Blasé (2001)</td>
<td><strong>Collection:</strong> March 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miles &amp; Huberman (1994)</td>
<td><strong>Analysis:</strong> March 2012–April 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) How do teachers perceive the characteristics of school principals that influence their sense of empowerment?</td>
<td><strong>Documents:</strong> IPCC TE, School Participants Empowerment Scale</td>
<td>Comparison Analysis &amp; Coding of emergent themes, Factor Analysis</td>
<td>Blasé &amp; Blasé (2001)</td>
<td><strong>Collection:</strong> March 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miles &amp; Huberman (1994)</td>
<td><strong>Analysis:</strong> March 2012–April 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creswell (2005)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) What approaches to leadership produce positive benefits as identified by empowered teachers?</td>
<td><strong>Documents:</strong> IPCCTE, School Participants Empowerment Scale</td>
<td>Comparison Analysis &amp; Coding of emergent themes, Factor Analysis</td>
<td>Blasé &amp; Blasé (2001)</td>
<td>Collection: March 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) From the perspective of the teacher, what does effective, facilitative, empowering leadership look like?</td>
<td><strong>Documents:</strong> IPCCTE</td>
<td>Comparison Analysis &amp; Coding of emergent themes</td>
<td>Blasé &amp; Blasé (2001)</td>
<td>Collection: March 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) What feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result from the characteristics of their principals?</td>
<td><strong>Documents:</strong> IPCCTE</td>
<td>Comparison Analysis &amp; Coding of emergent themes</td>
<td>Blasé &amp; Blasé (2001)</td>
<td>Collection: March 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td><strong>Documents:</strong> IPCCTE</td>
<td>Comparison Analysis &amp; Coding of emergent themes</td>
<td>Blasé &amp; Blasé (2001)</td>
<td>Collection: March 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| This research consisted of an exploratory mixed-methods design (Creswell, 2005). This design differed from the study on which it is based by the addition of a rating scale making the study both qualitative and quantitative, both instruments were given concurrently. In the research design the researcher emphasized the qualitative data over the quantitative data (Creswell, 2005). Creswell (2005) stated, “The purpose of an
exploratory mixed methods design is the procedure of first gathering qualitative data to explore a phenomenon, and then collecting quantitative data to explain the relationships found in the qualitative data” (pg. 516). Due to the question of study and its value on the perceptions and interpretations of teachers the qualitative data were emphasized. Aligned with exploratory mixed-methods design the researcher used the quantitative data to build on or explain the qualitative findings (Creswell, 2005).

As stated by Blasé and Blasé (2001), “The importance of perceptual data to studies focusing on influence is well established” (pg. 165). Similar studies in the field of education have relied on data regarding the perspectives and interpretations of participants at the school level (Blase & Kirby, 2009; Blase & Blase, 2001; Short & Greer, 1997; Whitaker, 2003).

Sample and Subject Selection

This study utilized an Expert Panel of Intermountain West Urban School District Cabinet Members (pseudonym) that consisted of at least two principal supervisors who identified three “highly successful” elementary school principals. The criteria for which principals were selected as “highly successful” are identified below:

- Principals have been in the school for at least 4 years utilizing and sustaining a shared-governance structure

- Site observations from principal supervisors indicate a:
  - Successful governance structure
    - Leadership Team is highly involved in decisions related to curriculum, instruction, and budget, etc.
  - Strong educational focus
    - Actualized Vision & Mission Statements
    - Instructional time is protected, etc.
  - Data-driven design for school improvement
    - Staff is regularly engaged in discussions regarding school and student data
Instructional decisions are based on data analysis, etc.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data were organized by the researcher for simultaneous collection from participants in the form of an enclosed response packet. The data were collected from study participants in the same fashion. The researcher administered the study and a volunteer teacher was selected at each identified school site for the collection and return of all research materials to the researcher in sealed envelopes. The data were then analyzed in four phases after collection. Findings from data analysis were extrapolated and conclusions formed in an effort to explain and answer the original research questions.

Procedures for Analysis of the Data

Data Analysis: Phase One

In Phase One of the data analysis, the data went through comparative analysis to increase generalizability and deepen the understanding and explanation of the participants’ responses (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Display matrices were used to make full analyses, ignoring no relevant information, to focus and to organize the data coherently (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Once the data were organized in a matrix, responses to the open-ended questions were coded to highlight emergent themes (Creswell, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Glesne, 2006). Codes were grouped into concepts and then categorized to develop theories. Table 3.2 provides an example of a matrix to determine comparisons of participants’ responses for coding from the IPCCTE questionnaire.
Table 3.2

Sample Matrix: Participant Response to IPCCTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Q1= IPCCTE Question 1, Q2=IPCCTE Question 2,Q3= IPCCTE Question 3*

Data Analysis: Phase Two

During *Phase Two*, an analysis of emergent themes, as identified in the coding that took place in *Phase One*, was used to determine personal characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of principals, then further analysis was conducted to determine the impact on aspects of teacher empowerment: feelings, thinking, and behaviors. Display and descriptive matrices were designed to synthesize the major strategies and characteristics and identify and refine ideas derived from the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Table 3.3 provides an example of a matrix used for analyzing emergent themes and characteristics based on *Phase One* of the data analysis.

Table 3.3

Sample Matrix: Principals’ Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Characteristics</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Affective</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>
Data Analysis: Phase Three

As described in methods consistent with exploratory mixed-methods research, in Phase Three of data analysis, the researcher analyzed the quantitative data in order to make connections and better understand the qualitative data (Creswell, 2005). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the Likert Scale data from The School Participants Empowerment Scale (SPES) in which participants rated 38 statements in terms of “how well they describe how you feel” using the scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree (Short & Rinehart, 1992). Six dimensions of empowerment were included for analysis in the scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992): (a) Decision Making, (b) Professional Growth, (c) Status, (d) Self-Efficacy, (e) Autonomy, and (f) impact. The analysis of the scale for the SPES in previous studies by Short and Rinehart was determined by calculating the mean for each subscale by totaling circled responses for items in a subscale and dividing the number of items in the subscale. To make interpretations of participants’ responses the researcher used the mode, or the most frequent response, for the purpose of this study. Percentages of each rating were constructed to display the distribution of responses (percentages that agree, disagree, etc.).

Data Analysis: Phase Four

During Phase Four of the data analysis, display and descriptive matrices were designed to synthesize the major strategies and characteristics with the six dimensions of empowerment as identified by Short and Rinehart (1992). Table 3.4 provides an example of a matrix used to analyze emergent themes and characteristics in comparison with the six dimensions of empowerment (Short & Rinehart, 1992)
Table 3.4

Sample Matrix: Comparison of IPCCTE and SPES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Characteristics (IPCCTE)</th>
<th>Decision Making</th>
<th>Professional Growth</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Self Efficacy</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rigor and Trustworthiness

*Rigor, trustworthiness, accuracy, and authenticity* all address the process of data collection and analysis to ensure accurate and valid interpretations in research (Creswell, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Due to the subjectivity of qualitative research methods, validity cannot be mathematically measured as a study using quantitative methods.

“Judgments about the trustworthiness of such a process cannot be made with conventional criteria; criteria devised especially for and demonstrably appropriate to naturalistic inquiry are required” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 44). This study closely followed the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to ensure the rigor and accuracy of the study and in doing so also respected the standards of trustworthiness; triangulation, member-checking and auditing as described below (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell, 2005).

Credibility

The credibility (validity) is enhanced when findings are confirmed by more than one instrument measuring the same thing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). *Triangulation* and
Member checking are qualitative processes to validate findings in research for credibility (internal validity) as identified by Creswell (2005).

Triangulation is described as “the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection in descriptions and themes in qualitative research” (Creswell, 2005). Triangulation is also integrated in the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) specifically under a standard of trustworthiness, credibility. Therefore, triangulation was used as the strategy to determine the credibility of this study due to the various measures and data sources collected. Multiple teachers and schools were used as the source of data for this research to better understand emergent themes. Due to the mixed-methods design, the study used both methods, quantitative and qualitative, to identify and corroborate data collected. Multiple measures of the collection of data were used, including an open-ended questionnaire and a scale to determine perceptions of empowerment. The sources of data used in this study were tested in previous research (Blase & Blase, 2001; Short & Rinehart, 1992) allowing the findings to be more dependable when supported by varied independent sources (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Transferability

Qualitative research in the mixed-method design was emphasized over the quantitative data. Qualitative research examines transferability in the terms of whether the conclusions of a study have any larger significance (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The researcher presented detailed and careful interpretations of the findings of the characteristics of principals to provide the reader with the information necessary to determine transferability to practice. A goal of the study was to provide principals with
specific characteristics and/or behaviors that lead to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment.

**Confirmability**

Confirmability was achieved by use of *triangulation* of the two survey instruments to refrain the researcher’s biases. Written responses on the survey instrument from the participants further confirmed the researcher’s objectivity. *Member checking* is the process in which the researcher checks their findings with participants in the study to determine if their findings were accurate (Creswell, 2005). A logical source of corroboration is going back to the participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The researcher checked for clarification on emerging ideas and themes from the study findings by presenting early findings for a response from the school participants, as needed, to ensure accurate and conclusions were represented in the research.

**Dependability**

Dependability is also referred to in the research as *reliability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). “Dependability is parallel to the conventional criterion of reliability, in that it is concerned with the stability of the data over time” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 242). The underlying concern with dependability (reliability) is whether the process of study is consistent across researchers and methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Five available procedures to examine an instrument’s reliability have been identified for researchers: test-retest reliability, alternate forms, alternate forms and test-retest reliability, inter-rater reliability, and internal consistency reliability (Creswell, 2005). The study was based on a previous study conducted by Blasé and Blasé (2001), in which the instrument used was pilot-tested by 27 teachers (internal consistency
reliability), refined, and then administered to 285 teachers in 11 schools (internal consistency reliability).

The second instrument administered in this study is a rating scale developed and tested in three separate studies to ensure reliability of the instrument (Short & Rinehart, 1992). The obtained internal-consistency estimate of reliability for the total scale was .94 (Short & Rinehart, 1992).

Due to the exploratory mixed-method design, dependability was measured based on the consistency of the results within the instruments. This study used internal consistency reliability by administering the instrument developed by Blasé and Blasé (2001) and Short and Rinehart (1992) at three identified school sites. Scores from the instruments were considered reliable and accurate when individual’s scores were internally consistent across the items on the instrument (Creswell, 2005).

**Role of the Researcher**

For this research study, the researcher served multiple roles as an investigator, interpreter, and evaluator of the questions posed. Being that research contains both quantitative and qualitative measures, the researcher often and intentionally played a subjective role in the study as well as gathered and analyzed quantitative data objectively (Stake, 2010).

As a practicing school administrator the researcher had contextual knowledge of the varied roles of practitioners as well as the inner workings of a school. This researcher’s background is in elementary education and currently holds the position of principal at an elementary school in a large urban school district. By nature of the job, the researcher had visited various schools and experienced different styles of leadership and
the effects of the styles of leadership on the morale, climate, and culture of the schools. This served as both an asset during evaluation but also had the potential to create bias. Throughout this study, the researcher strived to neglect her personal bias as a means to remain attentive to the research.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research methodology that was used to conduct this study. “Empowerment is a dominant theme in all types of organizations including business, industry, and service organizations” (Short & Rinehart, 1992). Studying the effectiveness of empowerment as a tool to improve schools is very difficult to measure and there is a large continuum of what empowerment may look like in schools with successful principals (Blase & Blase, 2001; Short & Rinehart, 1992; Melenyzer, 1990; Blase & Kirby, 2009; Short & Greer, 2002). The emphasis of empowerment shifts away from the need to function and instead toward one’s shared responsibility to the community (Sergiovanni, 2007, p. 88). Therefore, there are many other ways to look at teacher empowerment and its role in schools. Schmoker (2001) states, “Any school leader could immediately benefit from and by making a religion of teamwork and teacher leadership” (pg. 2).

This study examined the characteristics and/or strategies of three principals and compared them to the impact they had on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment in their schools as a means to provide other school leaders with strategies to influence teacher empowerment, teacher leadership, and shared-decision making in their schools.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study looked to identify characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that led to the perception of empowerment from the teachers’ own definition of the term. Three elementary schools in a large intermountain west urban school district were the focus of this study’s mixed-method design. All school and principal names used throughout the case studies are pseudonyms. The term *empowerment* was not defined by the researcher but by each participant in the study. A questionnaire examined teachers’ perceptions of their school principals’ characteristics in relation to teacher empowerment and explored why certain characteristics impacted their perceptions and sense of empowerment (Blase & Blase, 2001). The study also examined the overall measure of school empowerment as well as assessed several components of empowerment including; decision-making, professional growth, status, self-efficacy, autonomy, and impact (Short & Rinehart, 1992).

An expert panel identified three highly successful principals that had been assigned school to their school for a minimum of 4 years, utilizing and sustaining a shared-governance structure, and site observations from principal supervisors indicated a successful governance structure, strong educational focus, and a data-driven design for school improvement. The three principals selected were (pseudonyms): Mrs. Romane, Marius Elementary School; Mr. Hammond, Teunis Elementary School; and Mrs. Kaspar, Basir Elementary School.

A staff meeting was held at the school site of each of the highly successful principals in which the researcher explained the study to the group and asked for their
voluntary participation. An open-ended questionnaire and Likert-scale were used as instruments for data collection as outlined in Chapter Three. Between the three elementary schools, 75 teachers attended the staff meetings and 35 teachers completed the participant packets (46.67%). In addition to the survey instruments, participants were asked to give background information and rate their principal with regard to overall contribution to their sense of empowerment on a sliding scale from 1 to 7. The study sample consisted of 35 teachers, in three schools; in one large intermountain west urban school district is organized in Table 4.1 below. The mean score for the principals’ overall influence was 6.1 which was equal to the mean score from the original study conducted by Blasé and Blasé (2001), from which this study was modified.

Table 4. 1

*School Participants’ Personal and School Background Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Marius ES</th>
<th>Teunis ES</th>
<th>Basir ES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PARTICIPANTS</strong></td>
<td>14 (14/27)</td>
<td>9 (9/21)</td>
<td>12 (12/27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51.85%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL INFO.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Teachers</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Students</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal-Years at School</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TENURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probationary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Probationary</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAMILY STATUS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIGHEST DEGREE EARNED</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA/BS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>M.Ed./Ed.S</td>
<td>Ed.D/Ph.D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Mean</td>
<td>42.7 Years</td>
<td>34.88 Years</td>
<td>47.83 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Years</td>
<td>11.25 Years</td>
<td>8.22 Years</td>
<td>19.25 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years with Current Principal</td>
<td>5.5 Years</td>
<td>4.22 Years</td>
<td>4.67 Years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RATING SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The rating scale refers to teachers’ perceptions of principals’ characteristics contribution to their overall sense of empowerment on a rating scale of 1 to 7.

Analysis of the qualitative data, consisted of three current flows of activity, as identified by Miles and Huberman (1994): data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

The data were analyzed in four succinct phases. *Phase One* included data analysis of the Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) (Blase & Blase, 2001). The response data were first summarized and labeled by concept to gain clarity to the emerging themes (data reduction). *Phase Two* of the study included organizing the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors to determine the feelings, thinking, and behaviors that result. The concepts (*Phase One*) were sorted and organized by identifiable characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of principals to determine emergent themes at each school (data display). Each of the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors (Item 3 on the IPCCTE) were then analyzed to determine the impact on empowerment and coded as affective (feelings), cognitive (thinking), or behavioral. *Phase Three* of the study was an analysis of the School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992) in which the mode of each identified subscale was calculated. The purpose of this scale was to ascertain the overall level of empowerment in each school, as measured by the six dimensions of empowerment (Short, 1991). *Phase Four* of the study analyzed the qualitative and quantitative data.
comparison of emergent themes from the IPCCTE and the SPES survey instruments. The process of data display continued, and emergent themes were compared to the mode of each subscale from the quantitative data from the School Participants’ Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992) through use of a display and descriptive matrices (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Conclusions were drawn from each of the data displays to depict the findings of each school and verified through return searches of the participants’ response packets (conclusion drawing/verification). The process was repeated for each of the three identified schools. A cross-site analysis occurred utilizing the same processes to triangulate the data among highly successful principals in order to develop a list of common characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that led to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment.

This chapter includes an in-depth look at three highly successful principals to answer the following research questions identified in the study:

- What are the characteristics of successful principals that lead to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment?
- How do teachers perceive the characteristics of school principals that influence their sense of empowerment?
- What approaches to leadership produce positive benefits identified by empowered teachers?
- From the perspective of the teacher, what does effective, facilitative, empowering leadership look like?
• What feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of teachers result from the characteristics of their principals?

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 examine each of the three highly successful principals through the lens of their teachers to determine the impact of specific characteristics, strategies, and behaviors on their perceptions of empowerment.
CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS: SCHOOL A

Marius Elementary School

“Because she trusts us to be professional and because we know what her expectations are for us (and herself) we are free to use our brains, our training, and our instincts to do what is best for kids.” ~ Marius Teacher, 3/2012

Identifying the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of highly successful principals to determine teachers’ sense of empowerment began at Marius Elementary School with highly successful principal, Mrs. Romane, as determined by the Expert Panel. Mrs. Romane was assigned to Marius Elementary School for the last ten years. She supervised 32 teachers in a school of 568 students. Marius Elementary School was located in the east region of the city. As reported by the state (2011), the school population was majority Hispanic/Latino (49.2%) and White/Caucasian (30.7%). Just over half of the students were identified as having a low socio-economic status (FRL, 52.8%), and over one-third of students were Limited English Proficient (LEP, 36.7%). Marius Elementary School met the requirements for The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 for Adequate Yearly Progress (2011) as determined by the state.

Mrs. Romane was notified by the researcher of the selection of the expert panel and was asked for access to her school site. She was flexible, willing to share, and immediately set up a time for the study to take place at her school. The study was scheduled for early morning and was held in the school’s library. A teacher introduced herself to the researcher and explained that she would start the staff meeting and another teacher would collect all materials, as discussed in their leadership team meeting conducted earlier in the week.
The staff meeting held by the researcher at Marius Elementary School consisted of 27 (84%) teachers. Fourteen of the teachers completed the teacher participant packet, a response rate of 51.85%. The mean age of teachers and number of years teaching were, 42.7 and 11.25 years respectively. The average number of years working with Mrs. Romane was 5.5 years.

In the researcher’s opinion it was evident from the initial meeting of the staff that teachers’ felt a sense of authority and power. There was an overall sense of positivity as evidenced through the observations and interactions among and between staff members and the researcher. Teachers’ combined responses also included a strong sense of ownership and positivity as described through descriptions of Mrs. Romane. To better demonstrate the frequent emphasis on words and phrases expressed by teachers at Marius Elementary School, a Wordle was created.

A Wordle is a website resource that generates “word clouds” from text that give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text (Feinberg, 2011). Figure 5.1 represents the Wordle for Marius Elementary School and provides the reader with a visual understanding of important concepts as perceived by teachers assigned to the school.
As demonstrated by the *Wordle* (Figure 5.1) teachers deemed Mrs. Romane had empowered them through use of shared decision-making, a sense of team, a common focus on students and best practices, trust, and autonomy with curriculum and instruction. Teachers’ responses were listed below to provide the reader with a depiction of how the teachers’ perceived the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of their principal, Mrs. Romane, which led to their feelings of empowerment.

Mrs. Romane proved to teachers they had a voice in decisions related to curriculum and the school. Teachers expressed a sense of ownership in describing their shared-decision making practices at the school. The responses from teachers, as demonstrated below, expressed these feelings:
“My principal contributes to my sense of empowerment, by allowing me to voice my opinions and having a say on what happens in our school. I don’t feel as though I’m being told what and what not goes on at school.” (Marius Teacher #1)

“(She) allows and encourages teachers to empower themselves and make decisions.” (Marius Teacher #5)

“Our principal makes it clear that she is only 1 vote in the school.” (Marius Teacher #8)

“Nothing is approved if the Leadership Team doesn’t approve it. (Her) mantra, ‘I’m only one vote. It’s up to everyone.’” (Marius Teacher #9)

Teachers felt that Mrs. Romane provided them with a sense of team. It was articulated through teachers’ responses that she was a part of school processes, activities, and decisions at the school. The teachers clearly communicated that they felt a sense of togetherness and importance from being treated as equals in decisions that affected their work, as evidenced in their statements below.

“Constantly reminding everyone they are in charge of the school.” (Marius Teacher #2)

“When decisions have to be made on certain subjects she has one vote...there is a true team feeling.” (Marius Teacher #4)

“When we are asked our thoughts and opinions on what we feel is best for our school it gives us a feeling of ownership.” (Marius Teacher #5)

“She will be content with whatever the majority decides – even if it’s not the same as her opinion.” (Marius Teacher #6)

“We have leadership which is a group of people that vote on school decision (sic). (We all have 1 vote) including our principal. We decide as a team. She may not always agree with it but she listens and let’s us decide.” (Marius Teacher #7)

“(She) has always made it clear that we, the teachers, run this school and that we ultimately determine the school’s mission and values.” (Marius Teacher #12)

Teachers at Marius Elementary School also voiced a strong focus on students as described through the principal’s characteristics, strategies, and behaviors. More specifically, Mrs. Romane not only communicated her focus on putting students first but
also practiced what she preached. It was clear through the responses that teachers also
adopted her lead.

“As long as students are growing and succeeding, I know (she) will trust my decisions.”
(Marius Teacher #5)

“As a staff we are able to determine the best options for our school to ensure that
students’ needs were met first.” (Marius Teacher #6)

“When a student concern arises our principal will ask, ‘What’s best for kids?’” (Marius
Teacher #7)

“Our principal tutors 3-4 students twice weekly and she expects every teacher to
participate.” (Marius Teacher #7)

“(She) constantly reminds us that kids come first.” (Marius Teacher #10)

Best Practices were also evident in teachers’ responses. Mrs. Romane listened,
encouraged experimentation, focused on data, and not only provided opportunities for
professional growth but also acted as a participant in staff development.

“We want to listen to others’ ideas so we can be better and work for the good of the
students and staff.” (Marius Teacher #4)

“Our principal will let us try it, new things, experiment to gather data.” (Marius Teacher
#7)

“I work with teachers that are not only taking classes but there are others that are
teacher leaders. Last year we had 2 book studies before school.” (Marius Teacher #7)

“She encourages us to collaborate with peers and work together to discover the best
ways of achieving our goals.” (Marius Teacher #8)

“She is always researching and studying what works and then brings in books to do book
studies with the whole staff. By doing the book studies you get to share what is working in
the classroom. It also allows you to hear how it is working in others’ classrooms.”
(Marius Teacher #13)

“She takes her own time to research the latest findings to ensure evidence based
strategies/ideas are incorporated into everyday practices. She takes the time to share her
research on the best practices in hopes that the school will adopt research-based
instruction and school management.” (Marius Teacher #14)
Several responses directly or indirectly made reference to Mrs. Romane’s characteristic of trust in regards to decisions, input, and professional knowledge.

Teachers emphasized they felt respected and valued as experts in their craft and it in turn made them work harder because she believed and trusted them to make the best decisions for students in their classes.

“She trusts us that we are going to do what benefits students.” (Marius Teacher #3)

“She trusts us to do our job professionally...when she asks us to implement something in our classrooms she assumes it will be done. She doesn’t micromanage...because she shows trust in us, we don’t want to let her down.” (Marius Teacher #4)

“It’s nice to know that we as teachers are entrusted with decision-making ‘power.’” (Marius Teacher #5)

“(She) trusts us as professionals, and as educators with the students at our school. She trusts us to plan together as grade level teams, and trusts that we are preparing our students for success. Because of this trust, we all work very hard to not let her down.” (Marius Teacher #10)

Teachers’ conveyed a convincing sense of professional autonomy at the school and classroom levels. Mrs. Romane allowed choice with programs, pacing, and allowed professional discretion in making decisions related to school improvement and student achievement. This impacted teachers’ sense of self-efficacy as stated below:

“Most recently, with the new CCSS standards we asked if we could arrange the pacing as we saw fit and she answered with ‘what do you think?’ This is how she supports us to do what we think is best and works well.” (Marius Teacher #3)

“We are free to use our brains, our training, and our instincts to do what is best for kids.” (Marius Teacher #4)

“I feel like my degree is worth something if I am able to use my own knowledge to make decisions that are best for my students. I feel I can use any resources that I feel students need to succeed.” (Marius Teacher #5)
The data were further analyzed as described in the four phases as outlined in Chapter 4 through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

**Phase One**

The data from the IPCCTE were summarized (Appendix I) and labeled by concept for comparative analysis. Emergent concepts, describing the principal, were highlighted and are listed in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1

*Concepts & Emergent Themes: Marius Elementary School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shared-decision making</th>
<th>Positive Attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building trust</td>
<td>Professional growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens</td>
<td>Belief/Faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicits input</td>
<td>Supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Genuine feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages Debate</td>
<td>Values Hard Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-player</td>
<td>Teacher Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivating</td>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages collaboration</td>
<td>Continuous improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common vision</td>
<td>Visionary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase Two

The concepts as identified by teachers at Marius Elementary School about Mrs. Romane (Table 5.1) were then organized and sorted by characteristics, strategies, and behaviors to determine emergent themes. Table 5.2 represents the organization of concepts.

Table 5.2

*Analysis of Emergent Themes and Personal Characteristics of a Principal: Marius Elementary School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>Shared decision-making</td>
<td>Builds trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>Encourages Autonomy</td>
<td>Listens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Provides professional development</td>
<td>Researches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-player</td>
<td>Solicits input</td>
<td>Reads professional literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivating</td>
<td>Encourages debate</td>
<td>Values hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Emphasizes a common vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for teacher leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data were further analyzed to determine the impact of the themes on teachers’ feelings (affective), thinking (cognitive), and behavior. Table 5.3 represents the impact that specific characteristics of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.
Table 5.3 *Impact on Themes: Characteristics of a Principal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>Cognitive/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Cognitive/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-player</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivating</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Cognitive/Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4 represents the impact that specific strategies of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.

Table 5.4

*Impact on Themes: Strategies of a Principal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared decision-making</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages Autonomy</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides professional development</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicits input</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages debate</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes a common vision</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.5 represents the impact that specific behaviors of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.

Table 5.5

*Impact on Themes: Behaviors of a Principal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Builds trust</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researches</td>
<td>Cognitive/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads professional literature</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values hard work</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Phase Three**

An analysis of the SPES (Short & Rinehart, 1992), a Likert-type Scale, of the participants’ responses were included to calculate the mode of each of the six dimensions of teacher empowerment as described by Short and Rinehart (1992): Decision Making, Professional Growth, Status, Self-Efficacy, Autonomy, and Impact. Figure 5.2 shows the calculation of mode for each of the subscales listed above in relation to Marius Elementary School.
The mode for each of the subscales of the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992) at Marius Elementary School was 5, *Strongly Agree*.

The percent of positive responses for each subscale were: Autonomy, 76.79%; Decision Making, 74.82%; Impact, 97.62; Professional Growth, 95.24%; Status, 100%; and Self-Efficacy, 98.81%.

**Phase Four**

The last phase of data analysis included comparing emergent themes from the IPCCTE with the modes of the SPES in each of the six dimensions of empowerment.

The six dimensions of teacher empowerment were defined by Short (1991, pgs. 9-14) as:

- **Decision-Making** relates to the participation of teachers in critical decisions that directly affect their work. In many cases, this means participation in decisions involving budgets, teacher selection, scheduling, curriculum, and other programmatic areas.

- **Professional Growth** refers to teachers’ perceptions that the school in which they work provides them with opportunities to grow and develop as professionals, to learn continuously, and to expand one’s own knowledge and skills through the work life of the school.

- **Status** refers to teachers’ perceptions that they have professional respect and admiration from colleagues. Teachers feel that others respect their knowledge and expertise.
Self-Efficacy refers to teachers’ perceptions that they have the skills and ability to help students learn, are competent in building effective programs for students, and can effect changes in student learning.

Autonomy refers to the teachers’ sense of freedom to make certain decisions that control certain aspects of their work life. These aspects may be scheduling, curriculum, textbooks, and instructional planning.

Impact refers to the teachers’ sense that they have an effect and influence on school life. They feel that what they are doing is worthwhile, they are doing it in a competent manner, and they are recognized for their accomplishments.

The responses from teachers on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) were compared with the six dimensions of empowerment as defined above (Short, P. M., 1991). Teachers’ comments were reorganized from concepts and data reductions (Phase One) into subscales of the SPES.

**Decision-Making**

- Voice my opinions
- I have a say on what happens in our school
- She is constantly reminding everyone they are in charge of the school
- As a staff we are able to determine the best options for our school
- She will be content with whatever the majority decides even if it's not the same as her opinion
- Our principal makes it clear that she is only 1 vote in the school
- She trusts us to make good decisions
- Empowering us to vote and help make decisions
- Involves me in every decision that is made at the school
- Noting is approved if the leadership team doesn’t approve it.
• She says, “I’m only one vote. It’s up to everyone.”

• As a staff we discuss and decide which staff would stay and what positions would be cut

• We, the teachers, run this school, and we ultimately determine the school’s mission and values

• Teachers discuss and vote on everything that we do

• Entrusted with decision-making “power”

**Professional Growth**

• She takes the time to mentor

• Allows all staff to be part of the leadership team and present at Staff Development

• She gets you to step out of your comfort zone but is always there to give you support when needed

• She is always researching and studying what works

• Book studies with the whole staff

• She takes her own time to research the latest finding to ensure evidence based strategies/ideas are incorporated into everyday practices

**Status**

• She is constantly reminding everyone they are in charge of the school

• She gives us encouragement and suggestions

• My degree is worth something

• Presented all the ideas fairly never truly expressing the option she preferred

• She will be content with whatever the majority decides

• Highly successful people are motivators

• We work so hard but so does our principal
• She encourages us to collaborate with peers and work together to discover the best ways of achieving our goals

• We aren’t handed a program and told to teach it

• We are trusted to create lessons

• Trusts us as professionals, because of this trust we all work very hard to not let her down

• She is coming into my room to see the positive things that are happening not negative

• During staff development she uses us as examples instead of district examples. We have experts right here who we should be learning from.

• Values me as a teacher and decision-maker

• You get to share what is working in the classroom

**Self-Efficacy**

• We do what’s best for students

• She trusts us that we are doing what benefits students

• She listens to others’ ideas and suggestions before she makes decisions

• We want to listen to others’ ideas so we can be better and work for the good for the students and staff

• Feel comfortable to share our ideas, opinions, and concerns

• She listens and let’s (sic) us decide

• She encourages us to collaborate with peers and work together to discover the best ways of achieving our goals

• Helps everyone to behave professionally and put the good the students and the school first

• She doesn’t expect us to have all the answers

• You are allowed to debate if your focus is what’s best for students
• She constantly reminds us that kids come first, an attitude we have all adopted

• Trusts us as professionals

• My attitude is effected (sic) by our school’s motto, “Be exceptional.” The attitude of our principal, and our staff makes me what to do my best and be an “exceptional teacher.”

• We are equals who work together to build each other up and most importantly love and teach our children

• We work together to solve school issues

• She knows we do a good job and do what is best for kids

• She shows us off at staff development and brings visitors by to see us

• She is sincere when telling us we are great teachers and that we could run this school even if she was not here

• We know she values us

• Everyone’s input is considered

• I know that what I am doing is what I had a part of creating

• You get to share what is working in the classroom

Autonomy

• Trusts us to be professional

• We are free to use our brains, our training and our instincts to do what is best for kids

• Supports us to do what we think is best and works well

• She doesn’t micro-manage

• She allows and trusts us to make decisions

• Encourages teachers to empower themselves and make decisions

• We are entrusted with decision-making “power”
• I can use any resources that I feel students need to succeed
• Freedom to choose
• She will let us try it- new things, experiment to gather data
• We are trusted to create lessons
• Trusts us to teach

Impact
• Having a say on what happens in our school
• A feeling of ownership
• My degree is work something
• She will be content with whatever the majority decides even if it’s not the same as her opinion
• We always have a vote
• She puts it back on us to figure out the solution
• She listens and let’s us decide
• I feel valued and trusted
• She involves me in every decision of the school
• I know that I have a voice in my school, I use it
• I am given respect for the level of education that I have and my opinion matters
• Makes me want to do my best and be an “exceptional teacher”
• She gives us positive reminders that helps me remember what my job is
• I’m helping build a positive environment and structuring an attitude of success for my students
• We work as a team
• We are equals who work together to build each other up and most importantly love and teach our children

• She believes in us

• Shows us off at staff development

• She is sincere when telling us we are great teachers and that we could continue to run this school even if she was not here

• I know that what I am doing is what I had part of creating

The feelings (affective), thinking (cognitive), and behavioral impact on teachers (Tables 5.3, 5.4, 5.5) based on the principals’ characteristics, strategies, and behaviors from the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) were compared with the six dimensions of empowerment as defined above (Short, 1991). Table 5.6 represents the comparison matrix.

Table 5.6

*Comparison Matrix: The Alignment of Two Instruments (IPCCTE and SPES)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Characteristics (IPCCTE)</th>
<th>Decision Making</th>
<th>Professional Growth</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Self Efficacy</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared decision-making</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builds trust</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicits input</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages Debate</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-player</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivating</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages collaboration</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes a common vision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional growth</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows Belief/Faith</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine feedback</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values Hard Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Leadership</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes Continuous improvement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of Characteristics</strong></td>
<td><strong>18%</strong></td>
<td><strong>36.4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>63.6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>59.1%</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>50%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. The two instruments used were: The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) and the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992).*

**Summary**

Analysis of both qualitative (IPCCTE) and quantitative (SPES) data confirmed that teachers at Marius Elementary School perceived to be empowered by their principal, Mrs. Romane. Statements from teachers clearly identified characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that impacted their feelings, thinking, and behaviors related to their work at the
school. The analysis of responses on the rating scale (SPES) also indicated a high perception of empowerment across each of the six dimensions of empowerment defined by Short (1991).

The teachers’ responses on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) indicated that Mrs. Romane demonstrated characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that led to her teachers’ sense of empowerment. The analysis of teachers’ responses indicated a difference in impact between characteristics, strategies, and behaviors. The characteristics identified by teachers (Table 5.3) had mostly cognitive and behavioral impacts; strategies (Table 5.4) had mostly affective and cognitive impacts; and behaviors (Table 5.5) had affective, cognitive, and behavioral impacts on teachers related to their work.

The percent of positive responses on the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) for all six dimensions defined by Short (1991) were all above 74%, and four of the dimensions were above 95% positive. In addition, the calculation of mode for each of the domains acknowledged that most participants Strongly Agreed with the statements on the SPES (Table 5.7), indicating a high perception of empowerment at the school.

Differences between the two instruments were also detected from teachers at Marius Elementary School. The IPCCTE emphasized autonomy and decision-making as main concepts that led to perceptions of empowerment, as demonstrated in Figure 5.1, however, those same two areas were the lowest dimensions of empowerment as measured by percent of positive responses (Autonomy, 76.79%; Decision Making, 74.82%), compared to the other dimensions on the SPES (Figure 5.2). This was also demonstrated in Table 5.7, whereas, teachers felt a greater sense of Status, Self-Efficacy, and Impact; over Decision Making, Professional Growth, and Autonomy. This could be due to the
different lens participants were required to use to portray levels of empowerment at their school. Statements on the SPES were focused on one’s self with a sense of anonymity, versus writing written responses to the researcher describing real-life examples of principal’s characteristics, strategies, and behaviors as examined on the IPCCTE. In the researcher’s opinion this may have attributed to the differences revealed between the two instruments utilized in the study.

Based on the overall analysis of the two instruments utilized in this mixed-method study, the data clearly conveyed a high perception of empowerment based upon the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of Mrs. Romane, as well as across the six dimensions of empowerment (Short & Rinehart, 1992). The result indicated a positive impact on teachers’ feelings, thinking, and behavior related to their work.
CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS: SCHOOL B

Teunis Elementary School

“It isn’t a ‘what the principal says’ type of work environment, which allows for lots of discussion.” ~Teunis Teacher, 3/2012

Teunis Elementary School was the second location for research. Mr. Hammond, an identified highly successful principal, opened Teunis Elementary School six years ago (2006). He supervised 52 teachers in a school of 951 students. Teunis Elementary School was located in the south region of the city. As reported by the state (2011), the school population was majority White/Caucasian (39.4 %) and Hispanic/Latino (25.2%). About one-third of the students were identified as having a low socio-economic status (FRL, 36.7%), and only a small percentage of students were Limited English Proficient (LEP, 12.5%). Teunis Elementary School met the requirements for The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 for Adequate Yearly Progress (2011) in English Language Arts and is in Need Improvement (Year 1) in Mathematics as determined by the state.

Mr. Hammond was notified by the researcher of the selection of the expert panel and was asked for access to his school site. He was very personable, open, and didn’t hesitate to set up a time for the study to take place at his school. The study was scheduled for early morning and was held in the school’s library. Mr. Hammond introduced the researcher to the school’s librarian who volunteered to collect all materials from participants. He then introduced the researcher to the staff before heading out to fulfill his daily duties as principal of Teunis Elementary School.

The staff meeting held by the researcher at Teunis Elementary School consisted of 21 teachers (40%). Nine of the teachers completed the teacher participant packet, a response rate of 38.1%. The mean age of teachers and number of years teaching were,
34.88 and 8.22 years respectively. The average number of years working with Mr. Hammond was 4.22 years.

In the opinion of the researcher, the teachers at Teunis Elementary School exhibited a strong rapport with one another. It was evident there was a sense of urgency and business in getting to their professional responsibilities, their work was important to them. Combined responses from Teunis teachers alluded to a sense of participation through shared decision-making, focus on students and instruction, growth, and a supportive environment with autonomy, as evidenced through descriptions of Mr. Hammond. To better demonstrate the frequent emphasis on words and phrases expressed by teachers at Teunis Elementary School, a Wordle was created (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6. 1
*Teunis Elementary School Wordle: Emphasis of Emergent Themes*

Source: Wordle – Beautiful Word Clouds (www.wordle.net)
Teachers at Teunis Elementary School demonstrated their participation in important decisions aligned to school improvement and instruction as evidenced by their responses on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001). Teachers expressed their ability to solve problems and work together as a team to improve their practices and school through shared-decision and collaboration facilitated by Mr. Hammond.

“We as a team and school, can seek out help when faced with a dilemma and fine something that works for us. We are not given directives about something, but rather we find options that may work for us.” (Teunis Teacher #1)

“My principal expects staff to look at the whole child when making decisions based on consensus with a team.” (Teunis Teacher #3)

“(Mr. Hammond) uses the ‘team’ type of leadership. He has teachers involved in the decision making of the school. He has teachers sit on panels for hiring...Everyone must own what is going on in the school.” (Teunis Teacher #5)

“My principal is open-minded and willing to listen to all sides of an issue. Many times I have gone to him with what I believe is a more effective way of doing things and he has always given me the benefit and respect I deserve.” (Teunis Teacher #6)

Responses from Mr. Hammond’s teachers also indicated a focus on students and quality instruction. It was evident that teachers were reflective of their practices and used data to support instruction. Students were central in decision-making processes. It was clear that teachers at Teunis Elementary School wanted to improve their professional performance in the classroom to meet the needs of students and that was expected of Mr. Hammond.

“Our population at our school and therefore the needs of our school have evolved over the past years. In that time, our principal has had to reprioritize our focus base on those needs even through it is uncomfortable and challenging.” (Teunis Teacher #1)

“Teachers are required to support and evaluate instruction with data from student work. Teachers are focusing on their instruction methods and evaluating student success. I hold myself accountable and constantly re-evaluate my methods when looking at data and my instruction.” (Teunis Teacher #2)
“He has talked with the staff about the feeling of being uncomfortable, but working through that feeling to make change happen and hopefully leading to achievement and growth.” (Teunis Teacher #3)

“He values the instructional day with minimal interruptions...Having time, such as this allows me to re-teach skills. This in turn allows me to provide more in depth lessons in the structured time, therefore reaching my higher level learning and moving all students higher.” (Teunis Teacher #4)

“My principal is a dedicated, hard worker who is willing to step outside of his comfort zone if it will positively impact students.” (Teunis Teacher #6)

It was apparent in teachers’ responses that Mr. Hammond not only valued student growth but also professional growth in order to impact students and the overall organization of the school. Teachers expressed their openness to change, as well as his, and felt encouraged to try new ideas through their continuous improvement initiatives and professional development at the Teunis Elementary School.

“My principal values growth. He expects that all students show growth while at the same time expecting that staff members show growth as professionals...We also are engaged in professional development, something inherently that leads to growth.” (Teunis Teacher #3)

“(Mr. Hammond) has an attitude of change. This allows me to feel empowered because he allows discussion on making change and doing things that are good for our students...If I want change, I am responsible to help make it happen. We are told that if we have a problem we must be able to present solutions before discussing the problem.” (Teunis Teacher #5)

“As a result of witnessing his hard work and working together on decisions as a team with my principal I am an owner in this process. I strive for excellence because I have complete ‘buy-in.’” (Teunis Teacher #6)

It was clearly articulated through teachers’ responses that Mr. Hammond provided a supportive environment for staff members. Teachers felt they were listened to, and comfortable sharing and discussing ideas and concerns with him. A sense of autonomy was also communicated, teachers felt trusted to make decisions and felt encouraged to take risks to impact student success at the school.
“Our principal is going through the process with the staff and can emphasize with the challenges that the staff faces.” (Teunis Teacher #1)

“My principal values good judgment and places trust in those who demonstrate good judgment. Staff members are able to create plans and proposals that are submitted to the principal for review and feedback with basic direction from the principal.” (Teunis Teacher #3)

“He is available. If I need something (support, advice, etc.) I know I can go to him and no matter what he is working on, he will help me first. I can stop by his office and he will be available right then.” (Teunis Teacher #4)

“He believes in me and trusts me in what I am teaching...When my principal shows that he believes in me and what I am teaching it makes me a better teacher and want to do even more challenging things with my students.” (Teunis Teacher #7)

“Our principal, (Mr. Hammond), values what the teachers have to say about our school.” (Teunis Teacher #8)

The data were further analyzed as described in the four phases as outlined in Chapter 4 through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

**Phase One**

The data from the IPCCTE were summarized (Appendix J) and labeled by concept for comparative analysis. Emergent concepts, describing the principal, were highlighted and are listed in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1

*Concepts & Emergent Themes: Teunis Elementary School*

- Shared-decision making
- Sense of team
- Professional Growth
- Openness to change
- Empathetic
- Common vision of learning
- Values good judgment
- Builds trust
- Autonomy
- Continuous Improvement
Phase Two

The concepts as identified by teachers at Teunis Elementary School about Mr. Hammond (Table 6.1) were then organized and sorted by characteristics, strategies, and behaviors to determine emergent themes. Table 6.2 represents the organization of concepts.

Table 6. 2

Analysis of Emergent Themes and Personal Characteristics of a Principal: Teunis Elementary School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High expectations</td>
<td>Values instructional time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Driven</td>
<td>Available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Follows through</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solver</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-minded</td>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief</td>
<td>Values others’ ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive</td>
<td>Listens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Empathizes         | Shared-decision making          | Openness to change          |
Values good judgment| Opportunities for leadership     | Follows through              |
Attitude of change  | Builds sense of team             | Hard worker                 |
Team-player         | Maintains high expectations      | Listens                     |
Open-minded         | Data driven                       |                            |
Respectful          | Common vision of learning        |                            |
Supportive | Focus on continuous improvement
---|---
Dedicated | Protects instructional Time
Trusts | Encourages autonomy
Determination | Problem solving methods
Believes in people | Builds trust
Values others’ ideas | Promotes ownership
Proactive | Offers flexible ideas/solutions

The data were further analyzed to determine the impact of the themes on teachers’ feelings (affective), thinking (cognitive), and behavior. Table 6.3 represents the impact that specific characteristics of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.

Table 6.3

*Impact on Themes: Characteristics of a Principal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empathizes</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values good judgment</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude of change</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-player</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-minded</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusts</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believes in people</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values others’ ideas</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.4 represents the impact that specific strategies of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.

**Table 6.4**

*Impact on Themes: Strategies of a Principal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared-decision making</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for leadership</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builds sense of team</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains high expectations</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data driven</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common vision of learning</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on continuous improvement</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protects instructional Time</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages autonomy</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving methods</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builds trust</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes ownership</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.5 represents the impact that specific behaviors of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.

Table 6.5

Impact on Themes: Behaviors of a Principal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Openness to change</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows through</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard worker</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase Three

An analysis of the SPES (Short & Rinehart, 1992), a Likert-type Scale, of the participants’ responses were included to calculate the mode of each of the six dimensions of teacher empowerment as described by Short and Rinehart (1992): Decision-making, Professional Growth, Status, Self-Efficacy, Autonomy, and Impact. Figure 6.2 shows the calculation of mode for each of the subscales listed above in relation to Teunis Elementary School.
Analysis for Mode of SPES Subscales: Teunis Elementary School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBSCALES</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUTONOMY</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECISION MAKING</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPACT</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONAL GROWTH</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATUS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF EFFICACY</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Bolded numbers indicate the numbers on the Likert-type Scale (5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Disagree).

The mode for each of the subscales of the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992) at Teunis Elementary School was 5, *Strongly Agree*; or 4, *Agree*, indicating an overall positive perception of empowerment at the school. The percent of positive responses for each subscale were: Autonomy, 75%; Decision-Making, 65.56%; Impact, 98.15%; Professional Growth, 95.24%; Status, 94.44%; and Self-Efficacy, 98.15%.

**Phase Four**

The last phase of data analysis included comparing emergent themes from the IPCCTE with the modes of the SPES in each of the six dimensions of empowerment. The six dimensions of teacher empowerment were defined by Short (1991, pgs. 9-14). The responses from teachers on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) were compared with the six dimensions of empowerment as defined above (Short, P. M., 1991). Phrases from teachers’ comments were reorganized from concepts and data reductions (Phase One) into subscales of the SPES.
Decision Making

• We, as a team and school, can seek out help when faced with a dilemma and find something that works for us
• Expects staff to look at the whole child when making decisions based on consensus with a team
• “Team” type of leadership
• Teachers are involved in the decision making of the school
• Empowers me to make decisions or at the very least take part in the decision making process in matters that directly effect me and my students
• Letting the teachers have a direct say in the school staffing next year

Professional Growth

• Sense of many leaders (or opportunities in the building)
• Gathering ideas from other schools
• Had to reprioritize our focus based on needs even though it is uncomfortable and challenging
• High expectations, required to support and evaluate instruction with data from student work
• Constantly re-evaluate my methods
• Expecting that staff members show growth as professionals
• Feeling appropriately challenged and encouraged to continue to improve my practice
• Engaged with differentiated professional development, something inherently that leads to growth
• If something isn’t working we can, as a group try to make adjustments
• Encourages me to be more flexible and willing to try new things
Status

- Have the power and ability to seek out support rather than waiting for someone to do it for us
- I am trusted to make good decisions
- He doesn’t question me about my need or request
- If I want change, I am responsible to help make it happen
- Willing to listen to all sides of an issue
- Given me the benefit and respect I deserve
- I am confident when making decisions about my classroom because he has always verbally supported me in these instances
- Empowers me to make decisions or at the very least take part in the decision making process in matters that directly effect me and my students

Self-Efficacy

- Feel validated in my belief that everyone can grow and that while we have targets for all, that pathway to those targets will look different for each individual
- He told me he knew I could do it and I was doing great, it made me believe and feel more confident in my ability to teach
- He gives me confidence in myself and what I am teaching
- Students are given many opportunities to “get it,” all staff tries their best to help facilitate this endeavor
- Supports staff in being sure that growth is investigated via multiple measures
- Allows me to provide more in depth lessons in the structures time, therefore reaching my higher level learners and moving all students higher
- He allows discussion on making change and doing thing that are good for our students
- Willingness to work alongside me as a teacher
- He had no doubt I would be able to get my students to understand the concept
• Pushes for what us teachers want and need; taken several roads to get us there

• Values what teachers have to say about our school

**Autonomy**

• Able to create plans and proposals that are submitted to the principal for review and feedback with basic direction from the principal

• Having him trust me to do my job allows me to focus on instruction rather than what I need from him or what he will think

• Allows people to readjust ideas and change gears whenever needed

• I had different ideas, he trusted me and changed what he had previously mandated

• Trusting us to teach the standards using our choice of curriculum and materials

**Impact**

• Have power and ability to seek out support rather than waiting for someone to do it for us

• I feel like I contribute to the school community in a meaningful way

• Feeling appropriately challenged and encouraged to continue to improve my practice

• I know I’m never stuck, if something isn’t working we can, as a group, try to make adjustments

• Sit on panels for hiring, allows grade levels to select any new hires, which gives ownership to the grade level…good or bad

• Working together on decisions as a team with my principal I am an owner in this process

• I feel like I belong and am cared about at this school

The feelings (affective), thinking (cognitive), and behavioral impact on teachers (Tables 6.3, 6.4, 6.5) based on the principals’ characteristics, strategies, and behaviors
from the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) were compared with the six dimensions of empowerment as defined above (Short, 1991). Table 6.6 represents a comparison matrix.

Table 6.6

*Comparison Matrix: The Alignment of Two Instruments (IPCCTE and SPES)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Characteristics (IPCCTE)</th>
<th>Decision Making</th>
<th>Professional Growth</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Self Efficacy</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared-decision making</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of team</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Growth</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to change</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathetic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Driven</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-minded</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common vision of learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values good judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builds trust</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values instructional time</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows through</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values others’ ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The two instruments used were: The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) and the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992).

**Summary**

Teachers at Teunis Elementary School perceived to be empowered by their principal, Mr. Hammond as evidenced by both qualitative and quantitative data. Statements from teachers clearly identified multiple characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that impacted their feelings, thinking, and behaviors related to their work at the school. The analysis of responses on the rating scale (SPES) also indicated a solid perception of empowerment across each of the six dimensions of empowerment defined by Short (1991).

The teachers’ responses on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) indicated that Mr. Hammond demonstrated characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that led to his teachers’ sense of empowerment. The analysis of teachers’ responses indicated a difference in impact between characteristics, strategies, and behaviors. The *characteristics* identified
by teachers (Table 6.3) had mostly affective impacts; strategies (Table 6.4) had mostly affective and cognitive impacts; and behaviors (Table 6.5) had affective and behavioral impacts on teachers related to their work.

The percent of positive responses on the School Participant Empowerment Scale for all six dimensions defined by Short (1991) were above 75% with the exception of Decision Making. Four of the dimensions were above 94% positive. In addition, the calculation of mode for each of the domains acknowledged that most participants Strongly Agreed or Agreed with the statements on the SPES (Figure 6.2), indicating a solid perception of empowerment at the school.

Differences between the two instruments were also discovered from teachers at Teunis Elementary School. The IPCCTE emphasized autonomy and decision-making as main concepts that led to perceptions of empowerment, as demonstrated in Figure 6.1, however, those same two areas were the lowest dimensions of empowerment as measured by the percent of positive responses (Autonomy, 75.9%; Decision-Making, 65.6%), compared to the other dimensions on the SPES. It was unpredicted to the researcher that the subscale of Decision Making had 24 Neutral responses. Whereas, the statements from the open-ended responses clearly communicated a shared decision making model was in place as conveyed in Phase Four above. Upon further analysis of teachers’ statements, it was noted by the researcher that comments from teachers at Teunis Elementary School in regards to decision making were sometimes contradictory as evidenced by specific word choices of the participants. Words emphasized by bold text below within examples of teachers’ responses demonstrate this point further:
“Through (Mr. Hammond)’s integrity, experience and listening to everyone from students, teachers, staff and our community he sets a very supportive way of running his school.”

“(Mr. Hammond) reviewed and approved my unique modification and elimination of social studies to get the time.”

“When I came to (Teunis) I had ‘different’ ideas about the way in which my program should be executed and he trusted me to change what he had previously mandated.”

“Because (Mr. Hammond) has teachers involved in decision making, sometimes the teachers are the ones who are responsible when something doesn’t work out.”

“Staff members are able to create plans and proposals that are submitted to the principal for review and feedback with basic direction from the principal.”

This was also demonstrated in Table 6.7, teachers felt a greater sense of Status, Self-Efficacy, and Impact over Decision Making, Professional Growth, and Autonomy.

Based on analysis of two instruments utilized in this mixed-method study, the data conveyed a positive perception of empowerment based upon the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of Mr. Hammond, as well as across six dimensions of empowerment (Short & Rinehart, 1992) as evidenced by the calculated mode for each subscale (Figure 6.2). The result indicated a positive impact on teachers’ feelings, thinking, and behaviors related to their profession and daily responsibilities as teachers.
CHAPTER 7 FINDINGS: SCHOOL C

Basir Elementary School

“I don’t think there is one teacher in this school that doesn’t believe that (Mrs. Kaspar) is the hardest worker in the building. With that being said, she still has the ability to be there for any staff member or student who needs to talk.”

~Basir Teacher, 3/2012

The final location of research was at Basir Elementary School. The principal, Mrs. Kaspar was assigned to Basir Elementary School for the last six years. She supervised 46 teachers in a school of 805 students. Basir Elementary School was located in the northwest region of the city. As reported by the state (2011), the school population was majority White/Caucasian (63.6 %). Less than one-fourth of the students were identified as having a low socio-economic status (FRL, 22.2%), and only a very small percentage of students were Limited English Proficient (LEP, 6.8%). Basir Elementary School met the requirements for The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 for Adequate Yearly Progress (2011) in English Language Arts and Mathematics as determined by the state.

Mrs. Kaspar was notified by the researcher of the selection of the expert panel and was asked for access to her school site. She was very personable, kind, willing to share and didn’t hesitate to set up a time for the study to take place at her school. The study was scheduled for early morning and was held in the school’s staff lounge. Mrs. Kaspar introduced the researcher to a teacher on the school’s leadership team who volunteered to collect all materials from participants. While waiting for the meeting to begin it was evident that Mrs. Kaspar had a warm rapport with her staff members through the observations of the researcher. It appeared that teachers were genuinely happy to see her as they greeted one another. Students of staff members played a game of tag with Mrs.
Kaspar that took place every morning as they came to school through the front office. At the time of the staff meeting, Mrs. Kaspar and her assistant principal welcomed her staff members and introduced the researcher to the staff to explain and begin the study of research.

The staff meeting held by the researcher at Basir Elementary School consisted of 27 teachers (59%). Twelve of the teachers completed the teacher participant packet, a response rate of 44.44%. The mean age of teachers and number of years teaching were, 47.83 and 19.25 years respectively. The average number of years working with Mrs. Basir was 4.67 years.

The teachers at Basir Elementary School radiated passion for their work. They were proud and the climate exuded happiness through the observations of the researcher. Combined responses from Basir teachers indicated shared decision-making, a positive and trusting climate, and autonomy, as described through descriptions of Mrs. Kaspar. To better demonstrate the frequent emphasis on words and phrases expressed by teachers at Basir Elementary School, a Wordle was created (Figure 7.1).
Teachers referenced their involvement in shared decision making at the school in regards to matters that directly related to the improvement of Basir Elementary School.

There was also a sense of team and collaboration as evidenced in the responses concerning their principal, Mrs. Kaspar. Teachers appreciated their opportunities for input and discussion in decisions that impacted their school.

“(Mrs. Kaspar) is a true team player. When we meet as an empowerment team to vote on important decisions, she is one vote in the group. (Mrs. Kaspar) does not veto our decisions. She respects the team and helps and guides us to making the best decisions for our school.” (Basir Teacher #1)

“(Mrs. Kaspar) values her employees opinions and demonstrates an attitude that makes her employees feel like true members of the team. When making decisions regarding materials or allocation of funds she takes employee input into consideration.” (Basir Teacher #2)

“My principal believes in giving decision making to the teachers. We make decisions regarding important issues like budget and what kinds of programs we should implement.” (Basir Teacher #5)

“The principal values the opinions of the teachers in regards to our budget and how the money is spent.” (Basir Teacher #9)
“(Mrs. Kaspar) feels a sense of responsibility in making this school a success. Because we are an empowered school we take the responsibility by making decisions that effect both the teachers that work here and the students...You can not blame anything on other people. We have chosen to do things in a certain way, and sometimes it works out and sometimes it doesn’t.” (Basir Teacher #10)

Basir Elementary School was portrayed throughout the teachers’ responses on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) as a positive work environment in which teachers felt listened to, supported, and confident as a reaction to the levels of trust and support exuded from their principal, Mrs. Kaspar. Teachers communicated being valued and respected as described through their explanations of characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of their principal that impacted their sense of empowerment.

“(Mrs. Kaspar) really listens to teachers, parents, and students. I feel very comfortable and confident in being able to discuss anything with (Mrs. Kaspar).” (Basir Teacher #1)

“I love coming to work and really enjoy being with the kids. This is a positive work environment.” (Basir Teacher #3)

“She always listens to teacher concerns and is always available for consultation. She is very aware of teachers’ needs and always tries to accommodate our desires. Whenever I have concerns she welcomes them and does the utmost to alleviate them. I appreciate her rapid response to questions and she makes herself available at all times; not just during school hours.” (Basir Teacher #4)

“My principal is very positive with the staff. She consistently gives positive reinforcement and rewards to staff. The staff wants to do a better job because we are told we are valued. We are told during staff meetings. We are told through personal notes. We are told through email. We get treats and rewards in our boxes. Again, because of all the positive, I can’t help but be positive with my students and want to work hard for them.” (Basir Teacher #5)

“(Mrs. Kaspar) is strong in her beliefs and she is always doing what is best for her school. She is compassionate about this and also promotes this within her staff...She is compassionate and this, in turn, makes us compassionate. She leads by example.” (Basir Teacher #6)

“(Mrs. Kaspar) supports her teachers and staff 100%. If there is ever a problem with a child or a parent, she stands by her teachers entirely. This makes me feel empowered because I know I can go to my boss with any issue, and she will listen to me completely
and take my problem seriously.” (Basir Teacher #7)

“The atmosphere is this school is superb. It is no accident that we are being led by such a compassionate person. Her concern, kindness, and consideration makes the (sic) possible.” (Basir Teacher #8)

“Positive work environment leads to confident/happy teachers.” (Basir Teacher #12)

A sense of autonomy was also revealed at Basir Elementary School. Teachers felt trusted to make decisions and felt encouraged risks to impact student success at the school as evidenced in their responses on the IPCCTE.

“When choosing our new math program, (Mrs. Kaspar) gave teachers choices. We were able to evaluate programs to determine which best fit each grade levels (sic) needs.” (Basir Teacher #1)

“I truly respect her professionalism. She sets high standards that the staff adheres to. She allows us to approach teaching in creative ways like using the Kagan strategies and other ones as well. The setting is comfortable enough that I feel I am on the right track to explore the way I want to present my lessons and administrate my classroom. Prime example, she does not micro-manage.” (Basir Teacher #3)

“We make decisions regarding important issues like budget and what kinds of program we should implement. We are treated as professionals that are experts in our craft...Because of our ability to make decisions, we feel like professionals. I work hard because I feel like I have ownership over big decisions.” (Basir Teacher #5)

“I feel empowered because she is ‘hands off’ and trusts that we are going to do the best for our students and let’s (sic) us teach to our strengths.” (Basir Teacher #6)

“I feel empowered when I can cover all the standards by teaching my way. My principal gives me the freedom to do this.” (Basir Teacher #8)

“The principal has the attitude that the teacher should have the freedom to determine what resources to use to teach the standards.” (Basir Teacher #9)

The data were further analyzed as described in the four phases as outlined in the

(Miles & Huberman, 1994).
Phase One

The data from the IPCCTE were summarized (Appendix K) and labeled by concept for comparative analysis. Emergent concepts, describing the principal, were highlighted and are listed in Table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1

*Concepts & Emergent Themes: Teunis Elementary School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>· Team-player</th>
<th>· Timely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>· Shared-decision making</td>
<td>· Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Respectful</td>
<td>· Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Listens</td>
<td>· Rewards staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Values opinions</td>
<td>· Has vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Values people</td>
<td>· Belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Sincere</td>
<td>· Compassionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Professional</td>
<td>· Leads by Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· High-standards</td>
<td>· Supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Autonomy</td>
<td>· Tenacious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Builds trust</td>
<td>· Empathetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Available</td>
<td>· Kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Considerate</td>
<td>· Hard worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Determined</td>
<td>· Values hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Invested</td>
<td>· Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Values relationships</td>
<td>· Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Open and Honest</td>
<td>· Recognizes strengths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase Two

The concepts as identified by teachers at Basir Elementary School about Mrs. Kaspar (Table 7.1) were then organized and sorted by characteristics, strategies, and behaviors to determine emergent themes. Table 7.2 represents the organization of concepts.

Table 7.2

*Analysis of Emergent Themes and Personal Characteristics of a Principal: Basir Elementary School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team-player</td>
<td>Shared-decision making</td>
<td>Listens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Solicits input from others</td>
<td>Values hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Maintains high standards</td>
<td>Recognizes and rewards staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values opinions and input</td>
<td>Encourages autonomy</td>
<td>Hard worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values people and relationships</td>
<td>Builds trust</td>
<td>Recognizes and communicates strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely</td>
<td>Available to others</td>
<td>Positive Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Welcomes concerns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Emphasizes common vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Leads by example</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Problem Solves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenacious</td>
<td>Searches for creative solutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathetic</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Considerate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data were further analyzed to determine the impact of the themes on teachers’ feelings (affective), thinking (cognitive), and behavior. Table 7.3 represents the impact that specific characteristics of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.

Table 7.3

*Impact on Themes: Characteristics of a Principal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team-player</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values opinions and input</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values people and relationships</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenacious</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathetic</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerate</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invested</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4 represents the impact that specific strategies of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.

Table 7.4

*Impact on Themes: Strategies of a Principal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared-decision making</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicits input from others</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains high standards</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages autonomy</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builds trust</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available to others</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcomes concerns</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.5 represents the impact that specific behaviors of the principal have on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment at the school site.

Table 7.5

*Impact on Themes: Behaviors of a Principal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listens</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values hard work</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizes and rewards staff</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard worker</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizes and communicates strengths</td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Attitude</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Phase Three**

An analysis of the SPES (Short & Rinehart, 1992), a Likert-type scale, of the participants’ responses were included to calculate the mode of each of the six dimensions of teacher empowerment as described by Short and Rinehart (1992): Decision-making, Professional Growth, Status, Self-Efficacy, Autonomy, and Impact. Figure 7.2 shows the
calculation of mode for each of the subscales listed above in relation to Basir Elementary School.

Figure 7.2

*Analysis for Mode of SPES Subscales: Basir Elementary School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBSCALES</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUTONOMY</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECISION MAKING</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPACT</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONAL GROWTH</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATUS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF EFFICACY</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Bolded numbers indicate the numbers on the Likert-type Scale (5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Disagree).

The mode for each of the subscales of the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992) at Basir Elementary School was 5, Strongly Agree; or 4, Agree, indicating an overall positive perception of empowerment at the school. The percent of positive responses for each subscale were: Autonomy, 87.5%; Decision-Making, 80.8%; Impact, 94.4%; Professional Growth, 100%; Status, 100%; and Self-Efficacy, 100%.

**Phase Four**

The last phase of data analysis included comparing emergent themes from the IPCCTE with the modes of the SPES in each of the six dimensions of empowerment. The six dimensions of teacher empowerment were defined by Short (1991, pgs. 9-14). The responses from teachers on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) were compared with the six dimensions of empowerment as defined above (Short, P. M., 1991). Phrases from
teachers’ comments were reorganized from concepts and data reductions (Phase One) into subscales of the SPES.

**Decision Making**

- Vote on important decisions
- She does not veto our decisions
- Helps and guides us to making the best decisions for our school
- Being able to voice what I think impacts our students and staff
- Believes in giving decision-making to the teachers

**Professional Growth**

- I am always looking for ways to better myself
- Always thinking of ways I can do things in a better, more effective way
- Truly motivates me to be a better teacher, which proves that you can teach an old dog new tricks
- Inspires me to find new materials and use new teaching practices
- I am more willing to take risks and branch out knowing my decisions are supported
- Willing to keep learning and making changes that make a more effective class

**Status**

- She respects the team and helps and guides us to making the best decisions for our school
- We are not afraid to voice our opinions even though they might not be popular with the rest of the group
- Values her employees opinions and demonstrates an attitude that makes her employees feel like true members of the team
• Nice to be trusted and respected as an educator
• Treating us as professionals and not micromanaging us
• Welcomes concerns and does the utmost to alleviate them
• Treats us as professionals in our craft
• We feel like professionals
• Supports her teachers 100%
• Takes a personal responsibility to make sure teachers are taken care of
• She values the work I do with children
• My expertise matters
• She looks for strengths and lets you know

Self-Efficacy

• By modeling respect we feel confident and empowered to make the best choices for our students
• I was able to work on and create it in the school
• Able to evaluate programs to determine which best fit each grade levels needs
• She trusts us to do our job
• I feel comfortable and well-respected at work
• We know our needs best
• Supports her teachers and staff 100%
• There is nothing I can’t do to improve my students’ ability to achieve
• She values the work I do with children
• Makes me feel that I have the power to change lives by my dedication to doing what is best for students
• Made me feel I am the best person suited to do the job

**Autonomy**

• Vote on important decisions
• Allows us to approach teaching in creative ways
• She does not micromanage
• We chose what math program we wanted even though it was different from other grade levels
• She is “hands off” and trusts that we are going to do the best for our students and let’s (sic) us teach to our strengths
• I can cover all the standards by teaching my way, freedom to do this
• I can select resources that make me feel comfortable and ones that I can use effectively
• Plans my program and run it as I think best
• Gives opportunity to plan to meet class needs
• I have a say in what and how I teach

**Impact**

• I felt as through I had some control over what was coming
• Allowing the staff to have a voice contributes to the entire staff’s sense of empowerment
• Because of our ability to make decisions, we feel like professionals
• I feel I have a voice on how the school’s money can be best put to use
• Determined to make this the best school possible
• I know I make the choices that I do in the best interest of my students and the students of the school
• My responsibility as their teacher is to make them as successful as possible no matter what obstacles may present themselves

• Makes me feel that I have the power to change lives by my dedication to doing what is best for students

The feelings (affective), thinking (cognitive), and behavioral impact on teachers (Tables 7.3, 7.4, 7.5) based on the principals’ characteristics, strategies, and behaviors from the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) were compared with the six dimensions of empowerment as defined above (Short, 1991). Table 7.6 represents a comparison matrix.

Table 7.6

Comparison Matrix: The Alignment of Two Instruments (IPCCTE and SPES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Characteristics (IPCCTE)</th>
<th>Decision Making</th>
<th>Professional Growth</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Self Efficacy</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team-player</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values opinions and input</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values people and relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenacious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathetic</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind/Considerate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invested</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/Honest</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared-decision making</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicits input from others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains high standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages autonomy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builds trust</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available to others</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcomes concerns</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes common vision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads by example</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solves/Searches for creative solutions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values hard work/Hard worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizes and rewards staff</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizes and communicates strengths</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Attitude</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Characteristics</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
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<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The two instruments used were: The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) and the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992).

Summary

Teachers at Basir Elementary School perceived to be empowered by their principal, Mrs. Kaspar, as evidenced by both qualitative and quantitative data. Statements from teachers clearly identified multiple characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that impacted their feelings, thinking, and behaviors related to their work at the school. The analysis of responses on the rating scale (SPES) also indicated a consistent perception of empowerment across each of the six dimensions of empowerment defined by Short (1991).

The teachers’ responses on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) indicated that Mrs. Kaspar demonstrated characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that led to his teachers’ sense of empowerment. The analysis of teachers’ responses indicated a difference in impact between characteristics, strategies, and behaviors. The characteristics identified by teachers (Table 7.3) had mostly affective and cognitive impacts; strategies (Table 7.4) had mostly affective and cognitive impacts; and behaviors (Table 7.5) had affective and behavioral impacts on teachers related to their work.

The percent of positive responses on the School Participant Empowerment Scale for all six dimensions defined by Short (1991) were above 80% and three of the dimensions (Professional Growth, Status, Self Efficacy) were 100% positive. In addition, the calculation of mode for each of the domains acknowledged that most participants...
Strongly Agreed or Agreed with the statements on the SPES (Figure 7.2), indicating teachers at Basir Elementary School perceived a strong perception of empowerment.

Differences between the two instruments were also uncovered from teachers at Basir Elementary School. The IPCCTE emphasized autonomy and decision-making as main concepts that led to perceptions of empowerment, as demonstrated in Figure 7.1, however, those same two areas were the lowest dimensions of empowerment as measured by percent of positive responses (Autonomy, 87.5%; Decision-Making, 80.83%), compared to the other dimensions on the SPES, although the percentages were still perceived high. The researcher became aware, through analysis of the IPCCTE, that teachers’ responses didn’t directly discuss professional development, growth, and/or opportunities for trainings. Teachers’ alluded to wanting to improve their practice but professional growth was identified specifically as a characteristic, strategy, and/or behavior of Mrs. Kaspar that contributed to their sense of empowerment. The subscale of Professional Growth, however, had a 100% positive response from the teachers at Basir Elementary School and the mode of the subscale also indicated clearly that teachers’ Strongly Agreed (SPES). It can be assumed that this is due to the teachers at Basir Elementary School having professional experience. The mean number of years teaching was 19.25 years. It is likely that teachers with this level of experience may perceive other characteristics to be more prominent from their principal as their needs may not be as great as a less veteran staff.

As demonstrated in Table 7.8, teachers felt a greater sense of Self-Efficacy and Impact over the other subscales (Short & Rinehart, 1992) as over 50% of the
characteristics, strategies, and behaviors identified on the IPCCTE influenced teachers’ perceptions in those two subscales on the SPES.

Based on analysis of the two instruments utilized in this research study, the data conveyed an overall positive perception of empowerment based upon the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of Mrs. Kaspar, as well as, across six dimensions of empowerment (Short & Rinehart, 1992) as evidenced by the calculated mode for each subscale (Figure 7.7). The result indicated a positive impact on teachers’ feelings, thinking, and behaviors related to their work and practices as a teacher at Basir Elementary School.
CHAPTER 8
CROSS ANALYSIS

In the preceding chapters, the school sites for each of three identified highly successful principals were evaluated as separate groups using the framework outlined in Chapter 4. In this chapter a cross analysis was conducted to determine what similarities or differences existed between the three groups. The chapter consists of a comparison of school and teacher background information, the Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE), the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES), and overall perceptions of teacher empowerment at the three school sites.

**Background Information**

Background information for each of the three schools and teachers were collected and varied in the number of teachers supervised, the total number of students, and how long the principal had been assigned to the school and worked with the staff (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Marius ES</th>
<th>Teunis ES</th>
<th>Basir ES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Teachers</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Students</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal-Years at School</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean of teachers’ ages and number of years teaching also differed between the three groups. Marius and Basir Elementary Schools were much closer in mean ages of teachers between the three schools (Figure 8.1) with 42.7 and 47.83 years respectively. While Teunis Elementary School revealed a mean age of 34.88 years.
Figure 8.1

*Mean Age of Teachers*

Marius and Teunis Elementary Schools were closer in the average numbers of years teaching (Figure 8.2) with 11.25 and 8.22 years respectively. The average number of years teaching at Basir Elementary School was nearly double that of the other schools at 19.25 years.
The background information also illustrated that teachers had worked with their principals for an average of 4 years or more at each school site, therefore they had a strong working knowledge of their principals’ characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that contributed to their sense of empowerment over time.

**Cross Analysis: IPCCTE**

The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) was used to identify specific characteristics of principals that led to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment in each of the three schools.

A *Wordle* was created for each of the school sites based on teachers’ responses to the IPCCTE demonstrating greater prominence to words that appeared more frequently in the source text. As illustrated in Figure 8.3, a difference in word prominence was evident among schools. To further demonstrate the differences, the researcher listed the top ten words, in order, at each school (Table 8.2).
Table 8. 2

*Wordle: Top 10 Words of Prominence Among Schools*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marius ES</th>
<th>Teunis ES</th>
<th>Basir ES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>Allows</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>Best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach</td>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions</td>
<td>Feel</td>
<td>Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The differences identified in the *Wordles* also aligned with the overall themes revealed through careful reading of participants’ statements on the IPCCTE. In the
researcher’s opinion, one dominant theme for each elementary school was revealed through both methods of analysis with this instrument.

Teachers’ responses at Marius Elementary School focused on shared governance as the main contributor to their perceptions of empowerment. As identified by the Wordle, words of prominence were; vote, decisions, and suggestions. The Marius teachers’ responses to the open-ended questions on the IPCCTE would corroborate this focus.

Teunis Elementary School teachers revealed attention on growth for improvement. The words emphasized were; ideas, growth, and focus. It was evident in the teachers’ statements that there was a focus on improvement and/or growth. It could be assumed that this would be the focus based on the school’s adequate yearly progress status of Needs Improvement (Year 1).

Teachers at Basir Elementary School concentrated on the positive climate of their school. Dominant words, as portrayed by the Wordle, included; positive, feel, and best. As described earlier in the chapter, the mean years of teaching were almost twice that of the other two schools included in the study. The Wordle and the teachers’ statements indicated the importance of the positive climate established by their principal’s characteristics that influenced their sense of empowerment. This could be construed by the fact that the teachers felt comfortable and competent in their practices through experience and therefore, appreciated the recognition for their positive contributions to the school.

Likenesses were also noticed among schools including word emphases of staff, students, and school, which could be assumed typical at any school. Similarities among
themes emerged and were better illustrated by the overall responses, in context, as obtained from participants of the study. These common themes aligned with the previous work of Blasé and Blasé (2001, pg. 143), and were evident in all three schools:

- Building Trust
- Sustaining Structures for Shared Governance
- Providing Teachers with Strategic Support
- Encouraging Autonomy and Innovation
- Modeling Professional Behaviors and Characteristics
- Minimizing Threat and Encouraging Risk
- Valuing and Rewarding Hard Work and Good Results
- Establishing Systems for Problem Solving

Characteristics, strategies, and behaviors for each of the three highly successful elementary school principals, as described by their teachers, fell into all of the themes listed above as depicted in teachers’ responses on the IPCCTE.

**Building Trust**

“To be fully effective professionals, we must feel that we work in an environment of trust” (Blasé & Blasé, 2001, pg. 23).

It was evident in each of the three schools that building trust was a contributor to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment. Each principal built trust within their school buildings and teachers’ responses perceived trust, specifically linked with professionalism and school improvement, as a characteristic that contributed to their sense of empowerment.

“(Mrs. Romane) trusts us as professionals, and as educators with the students at our school She trusts us to plan together as grade level teams, and trusts that we are
preparing our students for success. Because of this trust, we all work very hard to not let her down.” (Marius Teacher, 3/2012)

“I know I can trust (Mr. Hammond) and he is trusting me. He does not question me about my need or request. Having him trust me to do my job allows me to focus on instruction, rather than what I need from him or what he will think.” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)

“I feel empowered because (Mrs. Kaspar) is ‘hands off’ and trusts that we are going to do the best for our students and let’s us teach to our strengths.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

Sustaining Structures for Shared Governance

“Successful shared governance principals show trust in teachers’ capacity for responsible involvement in both school-level and classroom-level decision making” (Blasé & Blasé, 2001, pg. 32).

Teachers in each of the highly successful principals’ schools had structures for shared governance in place. All three principals encouraged shared decision-making and provided all teachers with opportunities for input in regards to decisions that would directly impact their work. Teachers perceived to be equals and felt valued and respected because their ideas, thoughts, and opinions were taken into consideration.

“I know that (Mrs. Romane) values me as a teacher and decision maker. I feel that I have a voice and a vote on the decisions that shape our school. As teachers, we meet with our grade levels to discuss issues and vote. Our votes are then brought together to the leadership team so that everyone’s input is considered.” (Marius Teacher, 3/2012)

“This willingness to work along side me as a teacher empowers me to make decisions or at the very least take part in the decision-making process in matters that directly effect me and my students. As a result of witnessing (Mr. Hammond’s) hard work and working together on decisions as a team with my principal I am an owner in this process. I strive for excellence because I have complete ‘buy-in.’” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)

“We meet as an empowerment team to vote on important decisions, she is one vote in the group. (Mrs. Kaspar) does not veto our decisions. She respects the team and helps and guides us to making the best decisions for our school.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

Providing Teachers with Strategic Support

“Principals support their schools’ instructional goals by serving as resource providers and guardians of instructional time” (Blasé & Kirby, 2009, pg. 77).
Teachers’ responses to the IPCCTE indicated that each of the highly successful principals strategically supported teachers through professional development, professional literature, and feedback directly aligned with teaching and learning, and/or availability. It was apparent that teachers in each of these schools focused on instruction and refinement of practices to improve student learning as evidenced through their responses to what feelings, thinking, and behaviors resulted from principals’ identified characteristics. The focus in each school was that of continuous improvement through formal and informal measures that supported both students and teachers.

“(Mrs. Romane) is always researching and studying what works and then bring(s) in books to do book studies with the whole staff. By doing book studies you get to share what is working in the classroom. It also allows you to here (sic) how it is working in others classrooms. She had us doing collaborate planning (STPT) before any other school. It made us all fell like part of a team working together not an individual.” (Marius Teacher, 3/2012)

“My principal values growth. (Mr. Hammond) expects that all students show growth while at the same time expecting that staff members show growth as professionals. He has talked with the staff about the feeling of being uncomfortable, but working through that feeling to make change happen and hopefully learning to achievement and growth.” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)

“(Mrs. Kaspar) always listens to teacher concerns and is always available for consultation. She is very aware of teachers’ needs and always tries to accommodate our desires. Whenever I have concerns she welcomes them and does the utmost to alleviate them. I appreciate her rapid responses to questions and she makes herself available at all time; not just during school hours.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

**Encouraging Autonomy and Innovation**

“By virtue of their expectations for professional status, teachers demand autonomy regarding curriculum and instructional decisions, particularly at the classroom level” (Blasé & Kirby, 2009, pg. 58).

Teachers included in the study felt respected, valued, supported, and a sense of freedom to utilize their skills and knowledge to make decisions in the best interest of their students as demonstrated in their responses. It was conveyed they did not want to be
told how to teach and even stated it devalued their degrees and education to be given a program to follow. The highly successful principals in each of the three schools exuded a sense of trust in teachers and in turn, it made the teachers more open to try and experiment with new strategies and tools to improve their instruction.

“Because she trusts us to be professional and because we know what her expectations are for us (and herself) we are free to use our brains, our training, and our instinct to do what is best for kids. If there is an area of expertise that we are more familiar with than her (although that is sometimes hard because she is well-read), she allows and trusts us to make decisions. I am driven to do my best because I wouldn’t want to let her down.” (Marius Teacher, 3/2012)

“There is a sense that we, as a team and school, can seek out help when faced with a dilemma and find something that works for us. We are not given directives about something, but rather we find options that may work for us, as a school. With math, we weren’t directed to use a certain program, but rather we found resources for support. The feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that result are ones of autonomy and problem-solving. We have the power and ability to seek out support rather than waiting for someone to do it for us.” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)

“I am more willing to take risks and branch out knowing my decisions are supported. I am willing to keep learning and making changes that make a more effective class.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

**Modeling Professional Behaviors and Characteristics**

“One of the bridges that every parent must cross is the acknowledgement that our children have interests that extend beyond our home; wise leaders recognize that colleagues have vital interests and relationships outside of work” (Reeves, 2008, p. 79).

The highly successful principals described in this study built a positive and supportive school climate in their schools through listening and being available, physically and emotionally. Teachers described their principals as honest, kind, compassionate, and open and stated these characteristics impacted their perceptions of empowerment. The responses from teachers also indicated that because principals modeled positive and supportive practices they also wanted to do the same with their colleagues and their students.
“(Mrs. Romane) has your step out of your comfort zone but is always there to give support when needed. She doesn’t ask more of us then she is willing to give herself.” (Marius Teacher, 3/2012)

“My principal is open-minded and willing to listen to all sides of an issue. Many times I have gone to him with what I believe is a more effective way of doing things and he has always given me the benefit and respect I deserve. Working with someone with whom I feel I can be open and honest promotes an atmosphere of trust.” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)

“We often hear or read about leaders who are successful because they can ‘crack the whip’ and make things happen. It is also important for a leader to show compassion or empathy for her staff and students. I don’t think there is one teacher in this school that doesn’t believe that (Mrs. Kaspar) is the hardest worker in the building. That being said, she still has the ability to be there for any staff member or student who needs to talk. I hope my students feel the same way about me when they need someone to talk to.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

Minimizing Threat and Encouraging Risk

“Without risk, there can be no improvement, and ‘good’ teachers know this intuitively” (Blasé & Blasé, 2001, pg. 111).

An emphasis of the responses from the IPCCTE indicated that teachers felt empowered through professional autonomy and were encouraged to take risks. The principals described in the study valued opinions and ideas, even if they differed from their own. New ideas were welcomed and principals were comfortable trying new and different things in an effort to improve practice. Teachers felt empowered to take risks because threat was minimized and their principals supported innovation.

“She encourages us to collaborate with peers and work together to discover the best ways of achieving our goals. It’s comforting to know she doesn’t expect us to have all the answers. It helps us not to feel isolated and alone in a profession when that is very common.” (Marius Teacher, 3/2012)

“Because I trust him and believe he is a rational honest person, I am a more dedicated colleague and employee. This type of respect for my opinion and ideas also encourages me to be more flexible and willing to try new things.” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)
“By modeling respect, we in turn feel confident and empowered to make the best choices for our students. We are not afraid to voice our opinions even though they might not be popular with the rest of the group.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

**Valuing and Rewarding Hard Work and Good Results**

“The simple but sincere act of praising teachers appears to be a primary, effective, and valued form of reward for teaching” (Blasé & Blasé, 2001, pg. 123).

Teachers’ responses illustrated a positive impact on empowerment because their principals recognized, rewarded, and noticed their hard work, contributions, participation, and their effort on a regular basis. This provided teachers the perception of being valued and respected for their time, skills, and expertise as professionals in the workplace.

“I know she is coming into my room to see the positive things that are happening not negative. I want to come to work and I want to get feedback from her.” (Marius Teacher, 3/2012)

“When I informed him of how I felt about the lesson and he told me he knew I could do it and I was doing great, it made me believe and feel more confident in my ability to teach what I needed to teach. He gives me confidence in myself and what I am teaching.” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)

“My principal is very positive with the staff. She consistently gives positive reinforcement and rewards to the staff. The staff wants to do a better job because we are told we are valued.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

**Establishing Systems for Problem Solving**

“Problem solving is the highest order skill of a team of educational colleagues” (Blasé & Blasé, 2001, pg. 138).

As described by the teachers of highly successful principals identified in this study, each principal was portrayed as a problem solver. Each group of teachers described their principals as being creative and tenacious in solving school issues. The highly successful principals listened to and solicited opinions of others, didn’t take ‘no’ for an answer, and welcomed candid and frank conversations to remove barriers.
“Last year she wanted to use our budget to have an ‘instructional coach/AP.’ The school as a whole did not like the idea. After much discussion (very candid and frank), she saw that this was diving and fracturing the staff so she backed off her preference and went with the majority.” (Marius Teacher, 3/2012)

“(Mr. Hammond) shows determination by pushing for what us teachers want and need. An example would be the ST Math programs we are trying to get for our school; he thinks it will benefit our staff and students and has taken several roads to get us there.” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)

“(Mrs. Kaspar) has a ‘can do’ attitude. She is tenacious, and does not take ‘no’ for an answer if she believes we can solve a problem another way. She is great at ‘thinking outside the box.’ She has the ability to help others see another point of view instead of being arbitrary – ‘This is the way it is – period.’ I feel empowered by working with someone who is open to new ideas and finding unique ways to solve problems.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

Mrs. Romane, Mr. Hammond, and Mrs. Kaspar were portrayed as having similar characteristics as described through the emerging themes aligned with Blasé and Blasé (2001). Teachers at each of the school felt valued, trusted, and respected to do their jobs and also experienced support in taking risks to improve upon practices.

Few differences were illustrated through the teachers’ responses to their principals impact on feelings (affective), thinking (cognitive), and behaviors that resulted from perceptions of empowerment when organized into characteristics, strategies, and behaviors and compared across schools (Table 8.3).

Table 8.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marius ES</strong></td>
<td>Cognitive/Behavioral</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teunis ES</strong></td>
<td>Affective/Behavioral</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basir ES</strong></td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
<td>Affective/Cognitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As demonstrated in Table 8.3, perceptions of empowerment had a highly affective impact on teachers. Positive feelings resulted when teachers perceived to be empowered to perform their professional responsibilities. When narrowed into categories of characteristics, strategies, and behaviors; principals’ strategies produced a cognitive impact whereas; principals’ behaviors generated a behavioral response from teachers.

**Cross Analysis: SPES**

As illustrated in the preceding chapters, analysis of the mode for each of the six dimensions of empowerment, on the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992), were calculated at each school to determine the level of empowerment in each subscale: Decision Making, Professional Growth, Status, Self-Efficacy, Autonomy, and Impact. The figures below illustrate the participants’ responses on a Likert-type rating scale for each school as compared to one another across the six dimensions of empowerment (Short, 1991).

*Decision-Making* relates to the participation of teachers in critical decisions that directly affect their work. In many cases, this means participation in decisions involving budgets, teacher selection, scheduling, curriculum, and other programmatic areas.
**Figure 8. 4**  
*Comparison of Scores for Subscale: Decision Making*

Professional Growth refers to teachers’ perceptions that the school in which they work provides them with opportunities to grow and develop as professionals, to learn continuously, and to expand one’s own knowledge and skills through the work life of the school.

**Figure 8. 5**  
*Comparison of Scores for Subscale: Professional Growth*
*Status* refers to teachers’ perceptions that they have professional respect and admiration from colleagues. Teachers feel that others respect their knowledge and expertise.

Figure 8. 6

*Comparison of Scores for Subscale: Status*

*Self-Efficacy* refers to teachers’ perceptions that they have the skills and ability to help students learn, are competent in building effective programs for students, and can effect changes in student learning.
Autonomy refers to the teachers’ sense of freedom to make certain decisions that control certain aspects of their work life. These aspects may be scheduling, curriculum, textbooks, and instructional planning.

Figure 8. 7

*Comparison of Scores for Subscale: Self-Efficacy*

![Bar chart](image)

Figure 8. 8

*Comparison of Scores for Subscale: Autonomy*

![Bar chart](image)
Impact refers to the teachers’ sense that they have an effect and influence on school life. They feel that what they are doing is worthwhile, they are doing it in a competent manner, and they are recognized for their accomplishments.

Figure 8.9

Comparison of Scores for Subscale: Impact

The quantitative data confirmed that each of the three identified principals for this study positively contribute to teachers’ sense of empowerment. Table 8.4 compares the percent of positive responses across schools. While all schools illustrated a strong and positive response rate, Basir Elementary School teachers perception across almost six dimensions assessed in the SPES were somewhat higher, with the exception of Impact, in which it was the lowest of the three schools. Teunis teachers conveyed a sense of uncertainty in regards to overall empowerment in the area of Decision Making as demonstrated in Table 8.4.
Table 8.4

Percent of Positive Responses for SPES Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Marius ES</th>
<th>Teunis ES</th>
<th>Basir ES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>74.82%</td>
<td>65.56%</td>
<td>80.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Growth</td>
<td>95.24%</td>
<td>96.30%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>94.44%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>98.8%</td>
<td>98.15%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>76.79%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>97.62%</td>
<td>98.15%</td>
<td>94.44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992)

Summary

According to the data, principals’ characteristics, strategies, and behaviors significantly affected teachers’ feelings, thinking, and behavior and their perceptions of empowerment. This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative data to measure teachers’ overall levels of empowerment. Characteristics described by participants on the IPCCTE were compared with the six dimensions of empowerment as defined by Short (1991). Table 8.5 portrays the percentage of characteristics, strategies, and/or behaviors that aligned with the corresponding dimension of empowerment (i.e. 18% of the characteristics identified by Marius ES teachers aligned with Decision Making as defined by the SPES). It demonstrates that each of the highly successful principals’ characteristics, strategies, and/or behaviors that contributed to their teachers’ perceptions of empowerment aligned with the six dimensions of empowerment defined by Short (1991).
Table 8. 5

*Comparisons of Characteristics and the Dimensions of Empowerment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Marius ES</th>
<th>Teunis ES</th>
<th>Basir ES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decision Making</strong></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Growth</strong></td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Efficacy</strong></td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact</strong></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The percent of Characteristics on the IPCCTE that aligned with definition of each subscale was reported.

Based on cross analysis of data sets it is evident that the highly successful principals selected by the expert panel provided their teachers with a strong sense of empowerment that impacted their feelings, thinking, and behaviors in positive ways. Teachers at all three schools rated their principal with regard to overall contribution to their sense of empowerment on a sliding scale from 1 to 7. As aligned with the original study (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) the mean score for principals’ overall influence was 6.1 across schools. Teachers at each school site confirmed that of all the things in their school that may/could contribute to their sense of empowerment the characteristics of their principal had a high contribution.
CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into three sections: (a) summary, (b) conclusions, and (c) recommendations. This study used a four-phase, mixed methods design to generate the findings for each of the five research questions. The data collected from the Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE) (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) were used to answer all questions of the study. The data collected from the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) (Short & Rinehart, 1992) were used to answer questions two and three.

*Phase One* of the research utilized qualitative methods to examine teachers’ perceptions of characteristics that contributed to their sense of empowerment. *In Phase Two*, the data were further organized to determine the impact of principals’ characteristics on teachers’ feelings, thinking, and behavior. *Phase Three* utilized the SPES to ascertain the teachers’ overall perceptions of empowerment across the six dimensions defined by Short (1991). *Phase Four* compared the IPCCTE and SPES to determine if the characteristics and dimensions of empowerment were aligned.

**Summary of Findings**

**Research Question 1: What are the characteristics of successful principals that lead to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment?**

In this study, teachers identified the characteristics of their principals that led to their perceptions of empowerment. Principals’ characteristics were summarized into emergent themes and then organized into characteristics, strategies, and behaviors.
This study confirmed the findings of the Blasé and Blasé (2001) study, that teachers’ sense of empowerment was enhanced by characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of their principals. The characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that emerged from this study included:

- Building Trust
- Sustaining Structures for Shared Governance
- Providing Teachers with Strategic Support
- Encouraging Autonomy and Innovation
- Modeling Professional Behaviors and Characteristics
- Minimizing Threat and Encouraging Risk
- Valuing and Rewarding Hard Work and Good Results
- Establishing Systems for Problem Solving

While the three principals in the study portrayed different emphases on the IPCCTE, each highly successful principal conveyed and/or utilized all of the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors identified above. There were no characteristics, strategies, and/or behaviors listed by any of the teachers that did not align with the findings above.

**Research Question 2: How do teachers perceive the characteristics of school principals that influence their sense of empowerment?**

Teachers perceived the characteristics of school principals, as aligned with their responses on the IPCCTE (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) and the six dimensions of empowerment (Short & Rinehart, 1992), as positive influences on their perceptions of empowerment. Teachers perceived their principals’ intentions to be sincere and they were willing to support their principals’ vision for the school.
Research Question 3: What approaches to leadership produced positive benefits as identified by empowered teachers?

The highly successful principals included in this study have implemented and sustained a shared governance structure at their schools, as this was the criterion established for selection by the Expert Panel. However, teachers’ responses in the study, from both qualitative and quantitative instruments, confirmed positive impacts of including teachers in the process of shared governance. “If teacher behaviors carry primary weight and leaders secondary, then the behaviors of leaders to motivate teachers for school improvement are doubly important” (Blase & Kirby, 2009, p. 126). Responses from teachers in the three schools included in this study described the positive approaches to leadership their principals portrayed.

Teachers appreciated the opportunities to be a part of the decision making processes, specifically decisions directly aligned with the schools’ budget, instruction, and school improvement. All three highly successful principals utilized a shared governance structure in which all staff members were allowed one vote to determine the direction of the school. Teachers perceived this structure to enhance their sense of empowerment. This will be further exemplified through the researcher’s answer to the following question.

Research Question 4: From the perspective of the teacher, what does effective facilitative, empowering leadership look like?

Schools implement shared governance structures to best suit the needs of the school, causing variations of what effective, facilitative, and empowering leadership looks like across school. The three schools depicted in this study all had similar models
of shared governance and teachers across the schools perceived and described what this type of leadership looked like in similar ways. This is best illustrated through the teachers themselves:

“(Mrs. Romane) always involves me in every decision that is made at school. Nothing is approved if the Leadership team doesn’t approve it (they’ve received feedback from grade level first). (Her) mantra, ‘I’m only one vote. It’s up to everyone.’ She doesn’t force her opinions on you and you are allowed to debate if your focus is ‘what’s best for students.’ When I know that I have a voice in my school, I use it. I am happier and more productive because I have a voice in the education of my students. I am given the respect for the level of education that I have, and my opinion matters.” (Marius Teacher 3/2012)

“(Mr. Hammond) uses the ‘team’ type of leadership. He has teachers involved in the decision making of the school. He has teachers sit on panels for hiring. This allows the grade level to select any new hires, which gives ownership to the grade level...good or bad. As part of the empowerment team we get to decide on school wide hiring every year, which allows teachers to creatively figure out what positions are needed. These practices make me feel empowered because If (sic) I want change, I am responsible to help make it happen. We are told that if we have a problem we must be able to present solutions before discussing the problem. Everyone must own what is going on in the school. Because (he) has teachers involved in decision making, sometimes the teachers are responsible when something doesn’t work out.” (Teunis Teacher, 3/2012)

“(Mrs. Kaspar) is a true team player. When we meet as an empowerment team to vote on important decisions she is one vote in the group. (Mrs. Kaspar) does not veto our decisions. She respects the team and helps and guides us to making the best decisions for our school. Being one member of the team, we really respect her. All decisions are discussed with the team and then taken back to our grade levels to discuss with them. We then meet again as a team to vote on our decision. By modeling respect, we in turn feel confident and empowered to make the best choices for our students. We are not afraid to voice our opinions even though they might not be popular with the rest of the group.” (Basir Teacher, 3/2012)

Research Question 5: What feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result from the characteristics of their principals?

In Phase Two of the research, teachers communicated increased feelings of happiness, self-esteem, self-confidence, efficacy, value, respect, and status. Positive impacts in drive, job satisfaction, teacher reflection, power, and ownership were also communicated. Overall responses from teachers concluded that the characteristics of their
principals increased their willingness to work harder, take risks, and improve their practices because threat was minimized and there was a sense of belonging, team, and common goals.

**Conclusions**

“Teacher commitment has been identified as a key aspect of a school’s capacity for change through insights hard-wrung from the innovation failure dating back to the 1960s” (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, Changing leadership for changing times, 1999, p. 135). Principals have an extraordinary opportunity to build successful schools.

Developing trust, shared leadership, and focusing on continuous learning in a school is necessary for sustaining any school improvement initiative and effective principals apply this knowledge, as illustrated by the highly successful principals identified in this study.

The principals’ characteristics, strategies, and behaviors positively impacted teachers’ sense of empowerment through their feelings, thinking, and behaviors as demonstrated through the two survey instruments included in this mixed-methods study. The findings of this study emphasized allowing teacher voice and input through shared governance structures and collaboration as a main contributor to teachers’ sense of empowerment. Although, all three highly successful principals, depicted in this research, utilized and portrayed all of the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors that led to teachers’ perceptions of empowerment listed below:

- Building Trust
- Sustaining Structures for Shared Governance
- Providing Teachers with Strategic Support
- Encouraging Autonomy and Innovation
• Modeling Professional Behaviors and Characteristics
• Minimizing Threat and Encouraging Risk
• Valuing and Rewarding Hard Work and Good Results
• Establishing Systems for Problem Solving

All characteristics, strategies, and behaviors had a positive and affective impact on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment. In turn, the teachers described their schools as being a positive and safe environment.

The six dimensions of empowerment (Short, 1991) were also accentuated through the comparison of the two survey instructions included in this study. Teachers responded positively to empowerment in the subscales of Decision Making, Professional Growth, Status, Self-Efficacy, Autonomy, and Impact.

The findings of this study align with those of other research on facilitative leadership and shared governance in schools. Salazar (2008) states:

In high-impact schools there is an underlying belief that persons affected by decisions should be involved in shaping those decisions. These schools have found ways to involve more people in decision making, and at the same time, to create structures that ensure coordination toward common goals and facilitate communication and sharing among all staff members of the school community (pg. 48).

The findings from this study confirm that leadership practices should focus on feelings, thinking, and behaviors of teachers that benefit the overall climate, professionalism, and commitment to school improvement through shared governance structures. “The greater the number of people involved, the greater the potential to significantly improve educational practice and, therefore, the greater the potential to enhance student learning” (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, & Montie, 2001, p. 19).
Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this mixed-methods research design was to identify the characteristics of principals, as identified by teachers that led to their sense of empowerment. A relatively small sample size of three elementary schools in one school district was the focus of this study. This study does not look at the relationship between improved student learning, the effectiveness of empowerment, or the quality of the teacher.

Potential Study #1:

This study was modified from a study by Blasé & Blasé (2001) to incorporate the School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992). Replication of this study would bring additional clarity to the qualitative and quantitative measures utilized to determine the impact of teachers’ perceptions of empowerment. Similar studies should address multiple school settings including secondary schools to strengthen the findings of research.

Potential Study #2:

In order to better understand the processes and characteristics of highly successful principals, observing within one school context per study through qualitative measures and observations may give greater in-depth clarity to the phases of implementation of shared governance structures that lead to the positive impacts expressed by teachers about their perceptions of empowerment. Specifically identifying what should happen at a particular time in a given school to uncover how highly successful principals balance the numerous issues of facilitative leadership.
Potential Study #3:

This study focused on highly successful principals that utilized a facilitative approach to leadership. Replication of this study within schools utilizing different models of leadership could be used to determine how different leadership styles impact teachers’ perceptions of empowerment through the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors identified as well as across the subscales of the SPES.

Potential Study #4:

This study only focused on the characteristics, strategies, and behaviors of highly successful principals. A comparison study of empowerment schools with successful and unsuccessful principals could be beneficial in determining negative affective, cognitive, and behavioral impacts on teachers’ perceptions of empowerment.

Potential Study #5:

The characteristics, strategies, and behaviors connected to teacher empowerment in this study make no connection with student learning. In-depth research at one school of a highly successful facilitative leader, through intensive case study, could lend itself to identifying the connections of the impacts of teachers’ perceptions of empowerment with improved student achievement and overall school improvement.
APPENDIX A

IPCCTE

*The Inventory of Principals’ Characteristics that Contribute to Teacher Empowerment (IPCCTE)*

Questions for the teacher questionnaire (Blase & Blase, 2001):

1. Describe one characteristic (attitude, value, behavior, etc.) of your principal that contributes to your sense of empowerment. Illustrate this by providing a real life example.

2. Please explain why this characteristic makes you feel empowered. Give a real world example to illustrate why.

3. To show what you mean by empowered as it relates to this characteristic of your principal. Please give examples of your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. (I want to know what feelings, thought and behaviors result.)
APPENDIX B
REQUEST LETTER TO DR. PAULA SHORT

July 16, 2011
Dr. Paula Short
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Tennessee Board of Regents

Dear Dr. Short,

I am requesting permission to use the School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Reinhart, 1992) as part of my doctoral study, which is a study modified from the book Empowering Teachers: What Successful Principals Do (Blasé & Blasé, 2001).

I plan to form an Expert Panel from the school district to identify three successful elementary schools that have implemented a shared-governance model. It is intended through the study that each teacher at the selected schools will take the School Participant Empowerment Scale and a minimum of ten teachers at each site will be interviewed utilizing the questions from the original study (Blasé & Blasé, 2001) to determine the overall level perception of empowerment at the school, the specific teachers’ perceptions of empowerment, and what characteristics of their school principals impact that perception.

I agree to use the scale as developed, without editing your copyright.

If you require further information, please feel free to contact me at 702-401-9933, or cpellis@cox.net.

I respectfully look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Cailin Ellis
Doctoral Student
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
APPENDIX C
RESPONSE TO REQUEST LETTER TO DR. PAULA SHORT

Email Dated: January 3, 2012 (5:56 a.m.)

Dear Cailin:

You have permission to use the School Participant Empowerment Scale in your revised study. I have attached the instrument for your use. Please let me know if I can provide any additional help. By the way, who is your doctoral chair?

Best regards,

Paula

Paula Myrick Short, Ph.D.
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Tennessee Board of Regents
1415 Murfreesboro Road
Nashville, TN 37217
615-366-4411
paula.short@tbr.edu <mailto:paula.short@tbr.edu>
www.tbr.edu

From: Cailin Ellis [cpellis@cox.net]
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2011 7:50 PM
To: Paula Short
Subject: Request Letter

Dr. Short,

I wrote to you back in July requesting permission to use the School Participant Empowerment Scale, which you granted, and since have changed my study slightly. I have rewritten my request for permission (attached). If permission is granted to use the scale for my study I would also like to request where I can obtain copies for administration and directions for analysis.

I appreciate your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,
Cailin Ellis
Doctoral Student
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
APPENDIX D

SCHOOL PARTICIPANT EMPOWERMENT SCALE (SPES)

(Copyright 1992 Paula M. Short and James S. Rinehart)

Please rate the following statements in terms of how well they describe how you feel. Rate each statement on the following scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

1) I am given the responsibility to monitor programs.
2) I function in a professional environment.
3) I believe that I have earned respect.
4) I believe that I am helping kids become independent learners.
5) I have control over daily schedules.
6) I believe that I have the ability to get things done.
7) I make decisions about the implementation of new programs in the school.
8) I am treated as a professional.
9) I believe that I am very effective.
10) I believe that I am empowering students.
11) I am able to teach as I choose.
12) I participate in staff development.
13) I make decisions about the selection of other teachers for my school.
14) I have the opportunity for professional growth.
15) I have the respect of my colleagues.
16) I feel that I am involved in an important program for children.
17) I have the freedom to make decisions on what is taught.
18) I believe that I am having an impact.
19) I am involved in school budget decisions.
20) I work at a school where kids come first.
21) I have the support of my colleagues.
22) I see students learn.
23) I make decisions about curriculum.
24) I am a decision maker.
25) I am given the opportunity to teach other teachers.
26) I am given the opportunity to continue learning.
27) I have a strong knowledge base in the areas in which I teach.
28) I believe that I have the opportunity to grow by working daily with students.
29) I perceive that I have the opportunity to influence others.
30) I can determine my own schedule.
31) I have the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers in my school.
32) I perceive that I am making a difference.
33) Principals, other teachers, and school personnel solicit my advice.  
34) I believe that I am good at what I do.  
35) I can plan my own schedule.  
36) I perceive that I have an impact on other teachers and students.  
37) My advice is solicited by others.  
38) I have the opportunity to teach other teachers about innovative ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>1, 7, 13, 19, 25, 30, 33, 35, 37, 38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Growth</td>
<td>2, 8, 14, 20, 26, 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>3, 9, 15, 21, 27, 34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Efficacy</td>
<td>4, 10, 16, 22, 28, 32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>5, 11, 17, 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>6, 12, 18, 24, 29, 36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculate the mean for each subscale by totaling circled responses for items in a subscale and divide by the number of items in the subscale.
APPENDIX E

UNLV IRB APPROVAL

UNLV UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS

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 audit, 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: February 28, 2012
TO: Dr. Teresa Jordan, Educational Leadership
FROM: Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
RE: Notification of IRB Action
   Protocol Title: Empowering Teachers: Characteristics, Strategies, and Practices of Successful Principals
   Protocol #: 12014028M
   Expiration Date: February 27, 2013

This memorandum is notification that the project referenced above has been reviewed and approved by the
UNLV Social/Behavioral Institutional Review Board (IRB) as indicated in Federal regulatory statutes 45 CFR

The protocol is approved for a period of one year and expires February 27, 2013. If the above-referenced
project has not been completed by this date you must request renewal by submitting a Continuing Review
Request form 30 days before the expiration date.

PLEASE NOTE:
Upon approval, the research team is responsible for conducting the research as stated in the protocol most
recently reviewed and approved by the IRB, which shall include using the most recently submitted Informed
Consent/Assent forms and recruitment materials. The official versions of these forms are indicated by footer
which contains approval and expiration dates.

Should there be any change to the protocol, it will be necessary to submit a Modification Form through ORI -
Human Subjects. Any changes may be made to the existing protocol until modifications have been approved by
the IRB. Modified versions of protocol materials must be used upon review and approval. Unanticipated
problems, deviations to protocols, and adverse events must be reported to the ORI – HS within 10 days of
occurrence.

If you have questions or require any assistance, please contact the Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects at IRB@unlv.edu or call 895-2794.

Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
4505 Maryland Parkway • Box 451047 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047
382-2170 • FAX: 702-288-0867

Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
4505 Maryland Parkway • Box 451047 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047
382-2170 • FAX: 702-288-0867

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APPENDIX F
UNLV INFORMED CONSENT APPROVAL

INFORMED CONSENT
Department of Educational Leadership

TITLE OF STUDY: Empowering Teachers: Characteristics, Strategies, and Practices of Successful Principals

INVESTIGATORS: Dr. Teresa Jordan, Principal Investigator; Callin Ellis, Student Investigator

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: Callin Ellis (702) 401-9933

Purpose of the Study
You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to determine your perception on how the characteristics of your principal contribute to your sense of empowerment as well as your overall sense of empowerment.

Participants
You are being asked to participate in the study because your principal has been identified as highly successful and you are a practicing teacher in his/her school.

Procedures
If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked, during a staff meeting before or after school, to do the following: provide background information, answer open-ended questions, and respond to statements based on a Likert-type scale. Filling out the information and surveys allows us to use your data in our study. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

Benefits of Participation
There may be no direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn about the specific characteristics, strategies, and practices of your principal that lead to your perception of empowerment. Knowledge of these characteristics, strategies, and practices can better inform school leaders on how to develop and sustain shared-governance structures in their schools.

Risks of Participation
There are risks involved in all research studies. There are no reasonable foreseeable risks involved in this study.

Cost/Compensation
There will be no financial cost to you to participate in this study. The study will take 45-50 minutes of your time.

Approved by the UNLV IRB. Protocol #1201-10268M
Received: 02-14-12 Approved: 02-14-12 Expiration: 02-27-15

Participant Initials ___
TITLE OF STUDY: Empowering Teachers: Characteristics, Strategies, and Practices of Successful Principals

Contact Information
If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Dr. Teresa Jordan at teresa.jordan@unlv.edu, or Carlin Ellis at cpeiris@cox.net. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794 or toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

Confidentiality
All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential as possible. Your surveys will not be shared with your supervisors. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for three years after completion of the study. After 3 years the information gathered will be shredded and any electronic files will be deleted.

Participant Consent:
I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant
Date

Participant Name (Please Print)

Approved by the UNLV IRB. Protocol #1201-1026M
Received: 02-14-12 Approved: 02-14-12 Expiration: 02-27-13

Participant Initials ___

2 of 2
January 23, 2012

Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects
University of Nevada Las Vegas
4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 451047
Las Vegas, NV 89154-1047

Subject: Letter of Acknowledgement to Conduct Research at CCSD Elementary Schools.

Dear Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects:

This letter is to acknowledge that I have reviewed a request by Cailin Ellis and Dr. Teresa Jordan to conduct the research project entitled, “Empowering Teachers: Characteristics, Strategies, and Practices of Successful Principals” at identified elementary schools.

When the research project has received approval from the UNLV Institutional Review Board and the Department of Research of the Clark County School District, and upon presentation of the approval letter to me by the approved researcher, as a representative of the Clark County School District, I grant permission for access into the identified three elementary schools.

If I have any concerns or require additional information, I will contact the researcher and/or the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Karen West
APPENDIX H

CCSD IRB LETTER OF APPROVAL

March 8, 2012

Caitlin Parrice Ellis
1323 Manorwood Street
Las Vegas, NV 89135

Dear Caitlin:

The Research Review Committee office of the Clark County School District has received your request entitled: Lessons Learned from Improving School Leaders. We are pleased to inform you that your sponsored proposal has been approved with the following provisions:

1. Participation is strictly and solely on a voluntary basis.
2. Provide letter of acceptance from principals who agree to be involved with the study.

This research protocol is approved for a period of one year from the approval date. The expiration of this protocol is March 7, 2013. If the use of human subjects described in the referenced protocol will continue beyond the expiration date, you must provide a letter requesting an extension one month prior to the date of expiration. The letter must indicate whether there will be any modifications to the original protocol. If there is any change to the protocol it will be necessary to request additional approval for such change(s) in writing to the Research Review Committee.

Please provide a copy of your research findings to this office upon completion. We look forward to the results. If you have any questions or require assistance please do not hesitate to contact Brett Campbell at 855-778-3 or e-mail at bdcampbell@interactccsd.net.

Sincerely,

John N. Carpenter
John N. Carpenter, Ph.D.
Coordinator IV
Chair, Research Review Committee

c/o: Brett Campbell
   Karen West — SPONSOR
   Jeremy Haeuser — SUPPORT
   Pedro Martinez
   Research Review Committee

REC-41-2012

Main Office: 5100 West Sahara Avenue • Las Vegas, Nevada 89146 • Telephone (702) 799-5000
## APPENDIX I

### PARTICIPANT RESPONSE MATRIX FOR IPCCTE: SCHOOL A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Voice my opinions; Having a say on what happens in our school</td>
<td>Not being told what and what not to do</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Constantly reminding everyone they are in charge of the school</td>
<td>Question not answered</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>We do what’s best for children; Supports us to do what we think is best and works well</td>
<td>Trusts us that we are going to do what benefits students</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Trust; She gives us encouragement and suggestions; She sets and models a high level of expectations for herself; she assumes it will be done; she doesn’t micro-manage; follows up on our requests</td>
<td>Because she shows trust in us, we don’t want to let her down.</td>
<td>Trusts us to be professional; free to use our brains, our training and our instincts to do what is best for kids; we are more familiar she allows and trust us to make decisions; I wouldn’t want to let her down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open-mindedness; one vote; very candid and frank discussions; went with the majority</td>
<td>Listens to others’ ideas and suggestions before she makes decisions; willing to listen and respect others’ opinions and suggestions</td>
<td>She models for us to be open-minded; true team feeling; we want to listen to others ideas so we can be better and work for the good of the students and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>Encourages teachers to empower themselves and make decisions</td>
<td>Entrusted with decision-making “power”</td>
<td>We use our budget; vote on budget decisions; we are asked our thoughts and opinions; a feeling of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trust; will trust my decisions</strong></td>
<td><strong>We changed how students were switching; gave us power to decide</strong></td>
<td><strong>ownership</strong> My voice is heard; my degree is worth something; use my own knowledge to make decisions that are best for students; can use any resources that I feel students need to succeed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As a staff we were able to determine the best options for our school to ensure students needs were met first; presented all of the ideas fairly never truly expressing the option she preferred</strong></td>
<td><strong>She will be content with whatever the majority decides even if its not the same as her opinion</strong></td>
<td><strong>Feel comfortable to share our ideas, opinions, and concerns; we always have a vote</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Freedom to choose; will ask what’s best for kids; puts it back on us to figure out the solution</strong></td>
<td><strong>Will let us try it-new things, experiment to gather data</strong></td>
<td><strong>Freedom to make choices; gives a person confidence that choices are good; we have leadership which is a group of people that vote on school decisions (we all have 1 vote) including our principal; we decide as a team; she listens and let’s us decide.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High expectations – highly successful people are motivators and expect greatness</strong></td>
<td><strong>We are driven by data</strong></td>
<td><strong>Our principal tutors 3-4 students twice weekly and she expects every teacher to</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A8</td>
<td>Our principal makes it clear that she is only 1 vote in the school</td>
<td>Trusts us to make good decisions; empowering us to vote and help make decisions</td>
<td>I feel valued and trusted; helps everyone to behave professionally and put the good of the students and the school first</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourages us to collaborate with peers and work together to discover the best ways of achieving our goals</td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>It’s comforting to know she doesn’t expect us to have all the answers; it helps us not to feel isolated and alone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A9</th>
<th>Involves me in every decision that is made at the school; nothing is approved if the leadership team doesn’t approve it; “I’m only one vote. It’s up to everyone.”</th>
<th>Doesn’t force her opinions on you; allowed to debate if your focus is what’s best for students</th>
<th>When I know that I have a voice in my school, I use it; I am happier and more productive; I am given the respect for the level of education that I have and my opinion matters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust; trusted to create lessons; we aren’t handed a program and told to teach it</td>
<td>We go to school, pay thousands of dollars for a degree, student teach and then are expected to just follow a program?; I am trusted to teach.</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A10</th>
<th>Attitude towards staff and students; constantly reminds us that kids come first; an attitude we have all adopted</th>
<th>My attitude is effected by tour school’s motto, “Be exceptional.” The attitude of our principal, and our staff that makes me what to do my best</th>
<th>Positive reminders that helps me to remember what my job is; I am helping to build a positive environment, and structuring and attitude of success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A12</td>
<td>We, the teachers, run this school, and that we ultimately determine the school’s mission and values; sincere</td>
<td>Values me as a teacher and decision maker; I have a voice and a vote on the decisions that shape for my students; is contagious</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A11</td>
<td>Takes the time to mentor; in our class once month to observe and make sure we are committed to school goals; she is positive; trusts us to teach.</td>
<td>Sense of trust; she is coming into my room to see the positive things that are happening not negative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She treats us all the same; she believes in us; she knows we do a good job and do what is best for kids</td>
<td>Staff development she uses us as examples instead of district examples of good teaching; we have experts right here and we should be learning from</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is not a “chosen” one it is who you pick from your grade level.</td>
<td>I want to come to work and I want to get feedback from her; it’s positive environment; we work together to solve school issues; leadership team meets to make school decisions;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We are equals who work together to build each other up and most importantly love and teach our children.</td>
<td>She is again showing us off at staff development; brings visitors by to see us; not scheduled for a certain teacher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We work as a team; we are equals who work together to build each other up and most importantly love and teach our children.</td>
<td>I have ownership; makes me work harder because I am working towards goals and ideas that I have chosen; I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A13</td>
<td>Allowing all staff to be part of leadership team and presenting at Staff Development; all staff is involved</td>
<td>Presenting at staff development shows that what you are doing is empowering to the students and how we collaborate so everyone is sharing.</td>
<td>Step out of your comfort zone but is always there to give you support when needed; doesn’t ask more of us then she is willing to give herself; it frightens you but in the long run it makes you a better educator, because of the experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
|     | She is always researching and studying what works; book studies with the whole staff.          | You get to share what is working in the classroom; allows you to hear how it is working in others’ classrooms. | Security in knowing (she) is knowledgeable in best practices and what potentially works best for our students. | Sometimes it seems like is has to be her way or no way at |
| A14 | She takes own time to research the latest findings to ensure evidence based strategies/ideas are incorporated into everyday practices. | Shares her research on the best practices in hopes that the school will adopt researched-based instruction and school management. |                                                                                           |                                                                                           |
| recognized; wanting to be a key player in what empowerment means and could mean to our district | all; we get a say; I don’t think our opinion’s always matter because she has her own agenda; have some concerns about her knowledge/beliefs on Special Ed. |

*Note.* Participants were labeled by school and number in group (A1= School A, Participant 1). Questions were labeled, Q1=IPCCTE Question1, Q2= IPCCTE Question 2, and Q3= IPCCTE Question 3.
### APPENDIX J

**PARTICIPANT RESPONSE MATRIX FOR IPCCTE: SCHOOL B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Seeks out information or knowledge from others; sense of many leaders (or opportunities in the building); gathering ideas from other schools</td>
<td>We, as a team and school, can seek out help with faced with a dilemma and find something that works for us; not given directives about something, but rather we find options; find resources for support</td>
<td>Autonomy and problem solving; power and ability to seek out support rather than waiting for someone to do it for us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Openness to change and growth; had to reprioritize our focus based on those needs even though it is uncomfortable and challenging</td>
<td>Going through the process with the staff and can empathize with the challenges that the staff faces.</td>
<td>Collaboration, empathy, and teamwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>High expectations; required to support and evaluate instruction with data from student work</td>
<td>Teachers are focusing on their instruction methods and evaluating student success</td>
<td>I hold myself accountable; constantly re-evaluate my methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student learning comes first; all students have the opportunity to participate in learning activities; Learning is #1; interventions; extra curricular activities</td>
<td>Students are given many opportunities to “get it”; All staff tries their best to help facilitate this endeavor</td>
<td>I have been given the opportunity to teach my subject to all of our kiddos; Gives the students an extra opportunity for learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>Values good judgment and places trust in those who demonstrate</td>
<td>Reflect on a situation ant then make a decision that appropriately</td>
<td>Being trusted by my principal makes me feel valued and appreciated; feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good judgment; Staff members are able to create plans and proposals that are submitted to the principal for review and feedback with basic direction from the principal</td>
<td>Addresses the situation; I am trusted to make a good decision so long as it is not out of my hands</td>
<td>Like I contribute to the school community in a meaningful way</td>
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<tr>
<td>Values growth; expects all students to show growth while at the same time expecting that staff members show growth as professionals; talked with staff about the feeling of being uncomfortable but working through that feeling to make change happen and hopefully leading to achievement and growth</td>
<td>Expects staff to look at the whole child when making decisions based on consensus with a team; supports staff in being sure that growth is investigated via multiple measures; engaged with differentiated professional development, something inherently that leads to growth</td>
<td>Feeling appropriately challenged and encouraged to continue to improve my practice; feel validated in my belief that everyone can grow and that while we have targets for all, that pathway to those targets will look different for each individual; like the possibility for team work and collaboration this spirit brings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4 Values the instructional day with minimal interruptions; allows students to be part of all instruction, not leaving the room throughout the day</td>
<td>I have empowerment in my class and my class schedule; taking students out of the room for interventions throughout various times devalues the teacher’s instruction; allows me to intervene in other areas of provide extensions</td>
<td>I can re-teach more in depth, which makes me happy; allows me to provide more in depth lessons in the structures time, therefore reaching my higher level learners and moving all students higher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available if I need</td>
<td>I know I can trust</td>
<td>Makes my job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5</td>
<td>Attitude of change; he allows discussion on making change and doing things that are good for our students; allows people to bring curriculum or ideas from other schools or experiences that may be good for us to use; allows people to readjust ideas and change gears whenever needed.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I know I’m never stuck; if something isn’t working we can, as a group try to make adjustments; it isn’t “what the principal says” type of work environment, which allows for lots of discussion.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Like a roller coaster ride because we have so much say we often feel frustrated in the “process” of things; Teachers sometimes just want to be told what to do; Discussion often leads to a divide in the staff when people have different opinions; examples often surround the need for certain positions; if someone says the “position” isn’t needed, the person in the position sees this directly as they are not needed.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

|    | “Team” type of leadership; teachers involved in the decision making of the school; sit on panels for hiring. |
|    | If I want change, I am responsible to help make it happen; we are told if we have a problem we must |
|    | Because teachers are involved in decision making, sometimes the teachers are the ones who are
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B6</th>
<th>Open-minded and willing to listen to all sides of an issue; always given me the benefit and respect I deserve</th>
<th>Working with someone with whom I feel I can be open and honest promotes an atmosphere of trust; I am confident when making decisions about my classroom and when advising my parent population because he has always verbally supported me in these instances.</th>
<th>Again trust, there is no more important feeling; Because I trust him and believe he is a rational honest person, I am a more dedicated colleague and employee; this type of respect for my opinion and ideas also encourages me to be more flexible and willing to try new things.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dedicated, hard worker who is willing to step outside of his comfort zone if it will positively impact students; I had “different” ideas; he trusted me to changed what he had previously mandated</td>
<td>Willingness to work alongside me as a teacher empowers me to make decisions or at the very least take part in the decision-making process in matters that directly effect me and my students</td>
<td>Witnessing his hard work and working together on decision as a team with my principal I am an owner in this process; strive for excellence because I have complete “buy-in.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

allows grade level to select any new hires, which gives ownership to the grade level…good or bad; decide on school wide hiring every year, which allows teachers to creatively figure out what positions are needed

be able to present solutions before discussing the problem; Everyone must own what is going on in the school.

responsible when something doesn’t work out; the principal may shift the balme of poor scores onto the teachers saying, “well you said that you could do better with other materials, so its your fault;” There is always not a clear vision because we have too many hands in the pot sometimes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B7</th>
<th>Belief; he believes in me and trust me in what I am teaching; he had no doubt that I would be able to get my students to understand the concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helps me to feel empowered; he told me he knew I could do it and I was doing great, it made me believe and feel more confident in my ability to teach; he gives me confidence in myself and what I am teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When my principal believes in me and what I am teaching it makes me a better teacher and want to do even more challenging things with my students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determination; pushing for what us teachers want and need; taken several roads to get us there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He shows he cares about our students education and the teachers; helps with fundraisers for the program and being part of the reward in different ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makes me proud to be a teacher; excited that my principal is involved in these programs and fundraisers for the students and teachers support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B8</td>
<td>Attitude; trusting us to teach the standards using our choice of curriculum and materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I can be creative and free to teach the standards in the most effective way for me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trusts us (me); In prior school experiences I have felt like I was restricted because I had to use a certain curriculum and teach in a certain manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values what the teachers have to say about our school; letting the teachers have a direct say in the school staffing next year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He values what we have to say; we have a say about what we want our six-day rotation will look like next year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I feel like I belong and am cared about at this school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B9</td>
<td>Willing to listen to my ideas of how I want to run my classroom to the agenda of meeting I have been held</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reviewed and approved my unique modification and elimination of social studies to get</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valued my boss when they would look me in the fact and focus on what I had to say; desire and focus of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. Participants were labeled by school and number in group (B1= School B, Participant 1). Questions were labeled, Q1= IPCCTE Question 1, Q2= IPCCTE Question 2, and Q3= IPCCTE Question 3.
## APPENDIX K

### PARTICIPANT RESPONSE MATRIX FOR IPCCTE: SCHOOL C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>True team player</td>
<td>Vote on imp. Decisions; she is one vote; does not veto our decisions; respects the team and helps and guides us to making the best decisions for our school</td>
<td>We really respect her; all decisions are discussed with the team then taken back to our grade levels to discuss them; by modeling respect we feel confident and empowered to make the best choices for our students; we are not afraid to voice our opinions even though they might not be popular with the rest of the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listens to teachers, parents, and students</td>
<td>I feel comfortable and confident in being able to discuss anything with her; She listened and we discussed and voted on (my idea); I was able to work on the program and create it in the school</td>
<td>Something I was really passionate about was able to become a reality at our school. She supported the decision and was part of a team to help create it; I feel a great sense of pride and accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Values her employees opinions and demonstrates an attitude that makes her employees feel like true members of the team; she takes employee input into</td>
<td>Gave teachers choices; able to evaluate programs to determine which best fit each grade levels needs; know my opinion as to which program would be effective</td>
<td>Feelings; positive, valued, respected, capable, trusted Thoughts: nice to be trusted and respected as an educator Behaviors: more buy in with math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consideration</td>
<td>was taken into consideration</td>
<td>program, a stronger desire to utilize it with fidelity</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>When we were facing budget cuts last year, I was given the opportunity to rate what positions I felt were most important. This behavior of allowing the staff to have a voice contributes to the entire staff’s sense of empowerment</td>
<td>By being able to voice what I think impacts our students and staff the most or least as we determined where cuts could take place, I felt as though I had some control over what was coming</td>
<td>Feelings: strong, respected, buy-in, control</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thoughts: if we have to lose someone I can be a part of the decision as to what program/person we should cut and choose what will impact students the least</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Behaviors: acceptance of the inevitable cuts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>I truly respect her professionalism; sets high standards that the staff adheres to; allows us to approach teaching in creative ways</td>
<td>The setting is comfortable enough that I feel I am on the right track to explore the way I want to present my lessons and administrate my classroom; she does not micro-manage</td>
<td>More on-site decision making instead of letting the district make decisions for us; we know our needs best; only negative feeling in regards to funding; some items/programs tend to get more priority over others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I love coming to work and really enjoy being with the kids; positive work environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treating us as professionals and not micromanaging us is the main factor; she trusts us to do our job</td>
<td>Plan my program and run it as I think is best; explore new programs or ideas that will benefit my class</td>
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<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>Always listens to teacher concerns; always available for consultation;</td>
<td>I feel comfortable and well-respected at work; empowering</td>
<td>Our principal supports each and every one of us; I feel very positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aware of teachers’ needs; always tries to accommodate our desires; welcomes concerns and does the utmost to alleviate them; I appreciate her rapid responses to questions and she makes herself available at all times; not just during school hours</td>
<td>feelings that I have given to me by administration; knowledge I will have my questions and concerns dealt with in a fair and just fashion make me feel good about coming to work every day</td>
<td>and respected; try to do my job well each and every day and because of our status I am always looking for ways to better myself; sense of well-being working for such a gifted and empowering ad administrator.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>Believes in giving decision-making to the teachers; we making decisions reading important issues like budget and what kinds of programs we should implement.</td>
<td>Treated as professionals that are experts in our craft; choose what math program we wanted even though it was different fro other grade levels</td>
<td>Because of our ability to make decisions, we feel like professionals; I work hard because I feel like I have ownership over big decisions; always thinking of ways I can do things in a better, more effective way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very positive with the staff; consistently gives positive reinforcement and rewards to staff</td>
<td>Staff wants to do a better job because we are told we are valued. We are told though staff meetings, personal notes, email, and get treats and rewards in our boxes</td>
<td>Because of all the positive I can’t help be positive with my students and want to work hard for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6</td>
<td>Strong in her beliefs and is always doing what is best for her school; compassionate about this and also promotes this within her staff</td>
<td>She is “hands off” and trusts that we are going to do the best for our students and let’s us teach to our strengths; compassionate and this, in turn, makes</td>
<td>Feel compassionate about our teaching; feel empowered and independent; Have freedom to teach certain ways (teach to our strengths) and enhance curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C7</td>
<td>Supports her teachers and staff 100%; if there is ever a problem with a child or parent, she stands by her teachers entirely</td>
<td>I know I can go to my boss with any issue; she will listen to me completely and take my problem seriously</td>
<td>I enjoy coming to work every day. I have a say in what and how I teach; get praise from (her) when my students perform well on tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C8</td>
<td>Tenacity; whenever she finds a barrier she has the resolve to break down or go around whatever obstacle is in her way; rarely takes “no” for an answer</td>
<td>I can transfer this characteristic into my classroom; there is nothing I can’t do to improve my students’ ability to achieve; I don’t take “no” for an answer either.</td>
<td>Truly motivate me to be a better teacher, which proves that you can teach an old dog new tricks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C9</td>
<td>The attitude that the teacher should have the freedom to determine what resources to use to teach the standards; allowing me to use the SS text to teach reading skills and strategies</td>
<td>Attitude makes me feel empowered because I can select resources that make me feel comfortable and ones that I can use effectively. I brought in many trade books for students who have</td>
<td>Freedom to choose my own resources makes me feel more energized; inspires me to find new materials and use new teaching practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The atmosphere in this school is superb; it is no accident that we are being led by such a compassionate person; her concern, kindness, and consideration makes this possible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values the opinions of the teachers in regards to our budget and how the money is spent; opportunity to vote to keep a computer teacher</th>
<th>shown an interest</th>
<th>Enjoy having a better understanding and awareness of where the school’s money is being spent; having a voice in budget matters is very impt. to me; I feel that having this voice cuts down teacher frustration in a major way</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determined to make this the best school possible; sets goals for the employees with our help and for the students; regardless of obstacles she finds a way to overcome them; takes a personal responsibility to make sure teachers are taken care of and invests time and energy into making this a positive place to work</td>
<td>I know she will do whatever is necessary to make sure I have a position here at this school; she recognizes that I do my best and have shown to be a good teacher; her positive feedback and trust she puts in me I know I am so lucky to be at this school</td>
<td>Diligence; we invest time and energy to complete tasks given to us; includes making sure our students succeed; decisiveness; recognized what needs to be done to improve our students abilities in what every subject and make decisions to help them feel empowered to change and improve their grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility – feels a sense of responsibility in making this school a success; we take the responsibility by making decisions that effect both the teachers that work here and the students</td>
<td>I know I make the choices that I do in the best interest of my students and the students of the school; my responsibility as their teacher to make them as successful as possible no matter</td>
<td>I feel that being responsible as an empowerment school you can not blame anything on other people; we have chosen to do things a certain way and sometimes it works out sometimes it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C11</td>
<td>Values the teachers and their relationships with students; appreciates that we work extra hard to foster a positive relationship with our students, parents, and community; PTO works closely with her and in turn her work ethic and positive attitude affects the entire school. A “can do” attitude; she is tenacious and does not take “no” for an answer; she believes we can solve a problem in another way; great at “thinking outside the box;” has the ability to help others see another point of view instead of being arbitrary (This is the way it is – period.)</td>
<td>She values the work that I do with children; makes me feel that I have the power to change lives by my dedication to doing what is best for students; allowing me to work with those students who most need support via a variety of programs. Empowered by working with someone who is open to new ideas and finding unique ways to solve problems; able to see others’ points of view and work through my difficulties that may arise with all groups: teachers, parents, PTO, custodians, front office, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to plan to meet class needs</td>
<td>Confidence and respect; principal regularly says thank you and in emails</td>
<td>Planning, students benefit with well-planned, meaningful instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior- positive attitude/open-honest; looks for strengths and let’s you know; goes to best for school; evaluations and observation notes positive; interaction with her supervisors regarding teachers, budget, standing</td>
<td>Observation notes/evaluations highlight strengths – validate job doing for class and school; overall school performance – she “has our back”</td>
<td>Positive work environment leads to confident/happy teachers; am more willing to take risks and branch out knowing my decisions are supported; willing to keep learning and making changes that make a more effective class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Participants were labeled by school and number in group (C1= School C, Participant 1). Questions were labeled, Q1=IPCCTE Question1, Q2= IPCCTE Question 2, and Q3= IPCCTE Question 3.
APPENDIX L

SAMPLE PARTICIPANT PACKET

Research Study: Empowered Teachers

The purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics of principals that lead to the perception of teacher empowerment based on the teachers' own definition of the term.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may decide not participate in the study at any time. Identifiable information will not be collected from you and the researcher will keep all data collected from you confidential.

It is expected that the time for completion is approximately 50 minutes.

Your participation will include:

1. Completion of background information for participant comparisons across schools. (Pg. 2)
2. Rating your principal with regard to overall contribution to your sense of empowerment on a sliding scale from 1 to 7. (Pg. 2)
3. Completion of an open-ended questionnaire consisting of 3 questions for each of two characteristics identified by you – you will answer the same questions twice identifying two separate characteristics. (Pg. 3-4)
4. Completion of The School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992) that consists of 38 statements, which you will respond to on a Likert-type scale. (pg. 5)

When you are finished please seal the envelope and hand it to the teacher administering the session.

Thank you for your participation!
School A

Background Information of Participant

Please circle or write the appropriate response to the questions below:

1. Gender: Male    Female

2. Age: ______

3. Number of years teaching: ______

4. Tenure: Probationary Nonprobationary

5. Family Status: Married Single Divorced

6. Highest degree earned: BA/BS M.Ed./Ed.S Ed.D/Ph.D

7. Number of years with current principal: ______

Rating Scale:

Of all the things in the school that may/could contribute to your sense of empowerment, how much do characteristics of your principal (e.g. behavior, attitudes, values, goals, etc.) contribute?

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

(1 low contribution- 7 high contribution)
Questionnaire – Part 1

(1) Describe one characteristic (attitude, value, behavior, etc.) of your principal that contributes to your sense of empowerment. Please illustrate this characteristic by describing real life examples of it below.

(2) Please explain why this characteristic makes you feel empowered. Again, give real examples to illustrate why.

(3) To show what you mean by being empowered as it relates to this characteristic of your principal, please describe and give examples of your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. We want to know what feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result.
Questionnaire – Part 2

(1) Describe one characteristic (attitude, value, behavior, etc.) of your principal that contributes to your sense of empowerment. Please illustrate this characteristic by describing real life examples of it below.

(2) Please explain why this characteristic makes you feel empowered. Again, give real examples to illustrate why.

(3) To show what you mean by being empowered as it relates to this characteristic of your principal, please describe and give examples of your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. We want to know what feelings, thoughts, and behaviors result.
School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES)
(Copyright 1992 Paula M. Short and James S. Rinehart)

Please rate the following statements in terms of how well they describe how you feel. Rate each statement on the following scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

1) I am given the responsibility to monitor programs. 1 2 3 4 5
2) I function in a professional environment. 1 2 3 4 5
3) I believe that I have earned respect. 1 2 3 4 5
4) I believe that I am helping kids become independent learners. 1 2 3 4 5
5) I have control over daily schedules. 1 2 3 4 5
6) I believe that I have the ability to get things done. 1 2 3 4 5
7) I make decisions about the implementation of new programs in the school. 1 2 3 4 5
8) I am treated as a professional. 1 2 3 4 5
9) I believe that I am very effective. 1 2 3 4 5
10) I believe that I am empowering students. 1 2 3 4 5
11) I am able to teach as I choose. 1 2 3 4 5
12) I participate in staff development. 1 2 3 4 5
13) I make decisions about the selection of other teachers for my school. 1 2 3 4 5
14) I have the opportunity for professional growth. 1 2 3 4 5
15) I have the respect of my colleagues. 1 2 3 4 5
16) I feel that I am involved in an important program for children. 1 2 3 4 5
17) I have the freedom to make decisions on what is taught. 1 2 3 4 5
18) I believe that I am having an impact. 1 2 3 4 5
19) I am involved in school budget decisions. 1 2 3 4 5
20) I work at a school where kids come first. 1 2 3 4 5
21) I have the support of my colleagues. 1 2 3 4 5
22) I see students learn. 1 2 3 4 5
23) I make decisions about curriculum. 1 2 3 4 5
24) I am a decision maker. 1 2 3 4 5
25) I am given the opportunity to teach other teachers. 1 2 3 4 5
26) I am given the opportunity to continue learning. 1 2 3 4 5
27) I have a strong knowledge base in the areas in which I teach. 1 2 3 4 5
28) I believe that I have the opportunity to grow by working daily with students. 1 2 3 4 5
29) I perceive that I have the opportunity to influence others. 1 2 3 4 5
30) I can determine my own schedule. 1 2 3 4 5
31) I have the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers in my school. 1 2 3 4 5
32) I perceive that I am making a difference. 1 2 3 4 5
33) Principals, other teachers, and school personnel solicit my advice. 1 2 3 4 5
34) I believe that I am good at what I do. 1 2 3 4 5
35) I can plan my own schedule. 1 2 3 4 5
36) I perceive that I have an impact on other teachers and students. 1 2 3 4 5
37) My advice is solicited by others. 1 2 3 4 5
38) I have the opportunity to teach other teachers about innovative ideas. 1 2 3 4 5
REFERENCES


VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Bachelor of Science, 1999
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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Master of Educational Leadership, 2002
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