HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN BEATING THE ODDS SCHOOLS: USING SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES TO INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

WARNELE RENEE CARMON: High School Principals in Beating the Odds Schools: Using Successful Leadership Practices to Increase Student Achievement
(Under the direction of Dr. Kathleen M. Brown)

A review of the Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC) database uncovered approximately 4,319 documents connected to the role of a school principal, most of which focused on elementary school, with only about 765 focused on high school. Within these 765 documents, only 13 discussed the principal’s influence on achievement. According to this information, not enough research exists on high school principals and student achievement in order to make reform efforts more effective and long-lasting.

The scarce research that does exist suggests that leadership practices do influence academic growth (Beck & Murphy, 1994; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Crawford, 1998; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Three main types of research are utilized to discuss the important effects of school leadership styles on student learning (Leithwood, 2005): (qualitative case-study evidence, large-scale quantitative evidence, and case studies). In a quantitative study by Gaziel (2007), the relationship between a secondary principal’s instructional leadership and student achievement was scrutinized. Gaziel (2007) found that, although studies showed that a principal’s behavior played a “pivotal role” in students’ academic achievement, there was “vagueness” surrounding the specific behaviors (Gaziel, 2007, p. 17). Gaziel emphasized the importance of looking “for the indirect effect of the principal’s instructional leadership behaviors on student achievement and the contextual variables such as students’ SES
background and school size on student achievement” (p. 17). In response to Gaziel and the discoveries of other researchers, this study will utilize interview data with principals in two different sets of high schools to investigate the role that principal leadership “practices” may play in student achievement.

The purpose of this study was to examine the key leadership “practices” of principals in two different high school contexts: (a) Beating the Odds (BTO) High Schools and (b) Low-Performing (LP) High Schools. This research study was framed within the 21 leadership responsibilities that Marzano et al. (2005) revealed in their meta-analysis focused on school leadership that works. In their study, Marzano et al. (2005) found that “in broad terms . . . principals can have a profound effect on the achievement of students in their schools” (p. 38). Interestingly, the researchers reported a “.25 correlation between principals’ leadership behavior and student achievement” (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 32).

The study revealed that BTO High Schools did a much better job than the LP High Schools at recruiting and maintaining the best teachers by building supportive yet collaborative environments and programs that increase student learning through the best instructional practices. The common themes of this study assisting in increased student achievement include: (a) teachers as academic achievement resources; (b) principals as change agents; (c) school environment as instructional centers; and (d) prep courses and second chance opportunities as ways to monitor and evaluate achievement.
This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Jeffrey, and my sons Jeremy and Jeffrey, Jr., whose encouragement, support and understanding of my goals have always been instrumental to my success. To my parents, Mary and Charlie Barrett who forgave me daily for visiting and calling less during the last four years, I will be visiting more now. To my sisters, Tonya Cherry and Monique Barrett and my brothers, Cornelius Barrett and Lamont Barrett who believed in my ability to accomplish this great task even when I did not believe in myself; please know that you have my full support in your future educational and professional growth opportunities. To Jackie Overton and Dr. Edith Best for proofreading many papers during my extensive course work; you have inspired me to be a better student and proofreader. To my girlfriends, Alvera Lesane, Carolyn Lyons and Dr. Valerie Morrow, you each played a special part in my completion of this dissertation and I am forever grateful for your friendship and our sister relationships. To Dr. Terrell Rogers and my Cameron Park Elementary School family, thanks for your encouragement and support.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I give honor to God because with him all things are possible if you believe and work hard; even a prolific dissertation about high school principals’ leadership “practices.”

A doctoral dissertation is certainly not a solitary work of art. In order to complete this tremendous project, I needed the support, direction and encouragement of several very successful professors/educators in addition to my supportive family and friends whom I acknowledged in the dedication. I am eternally grateful for the support of Dr. Kathleen Brown, advisor; Dr. James Veitch, reader; Dr. George Noblit, reader and Dr. Alvera Lesane, dissertation partner. This strenuous, yet exhilarating journey was possible because of all of you.
PREFACE

In the twenty-first century, the challenge of raising student achievement in our public schools is the responsibility of district leaders, principals, assistant principal, teachers, students, parents, and support personnel. It takes everyone in the school building to meet the growing needs of our diverse population of students today. However, for many school site-based administrators the challenge of utilizing the right leadership “practices” and placing the right teachers in classrooms rests on their optimistic shoulders and is the key to successfully raising academic achievement for all students. In this dissertation, W. Renee Carmon, graduate student at University of North Carolina looks at in detail the leadership “practices” of principals in five “Beating the Odds” and four low-performing high schools. According to the research of Marzano et al. (2005) in the book School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results, using 21 proven leadership responsibilities can have a positive impact in academic achievement for all students in all schools.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background

High schools whose students have high academic achievement have some related practices in common, one of the most important a strong principal leadership (Brown, 2006; Education Trust, 2005a; Fullan, 2006; Marzano et al., 2005; Scheurich & Skrla, 2003). According to the Wallace Foundation, school “leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2005, p. 5). At a time when high school reform is prevalent in the U. S., it is crucial that researchers take a closer look at principals and their contributions to academic achievement for all students.

Crawford (1998) acknowledged that “almost all educational reform efforts have come to the conclusion that the nation cannot attain excellence in education without effective school leadership” (p. 8). As crucial figures in terms of school wide change, initiatives, and vision (Andrews & Soder, 1987; Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005), many principals are expected to lead their schools to excellence with the initial leadership training they received from the university; however, updated twenty-first century leadership skills are crucial with the increasing rise of school standards and accountability in the US. In addition, given the strong relation between principal leadership and high-performing schools, Scheurich and Skrla (2003) claim that “good leadership, the bodies and
spirits of our leaders, is crucial to the justice of our cause for equity and excellence in schooling” (p. 99). Therefore, if students are expected to excel academically, school based leadership, relationship building, concept relevance, and rigor consistency must prevail in schools. The goal is to provide sustainable change in high schools that continually increases achievement for all students including Black, English Language Learners (ELL), low socio-economic and exceptional children’s populations. School-based leadership supplies the practices, the guidance, and the support necessary for this change to take place.

Statement of the Problem

A review of the Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC) database uncovered approximately 4,319 documents connected to the role of a school principal, most of which focused on elementary school, with only about 765 focused on high school. Within the 765 documents focused on high school, only 13 discussed the principal’s influence on achievement. According to this information, not enough research exists on high school principals and student achievement in order to make reform efforts more effective and long-lasting.

The scarce research that does exist suggests that leadership practices do influence academic growth (Beck & Murphy, 1994; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Crawford, 1998; Marzano et al., 2005). Three main types of research are utilized to discuss the important effects of school leadership styles on student learning (Leithwood, 2005): qualitative case-study evidence, large-scale quantitative evidence, and case studies. In a quantitative study by Gaziel (2007), the relationship between a secondary principal’s instructional leadership and student achievement was scrutinized. Gaziel (2007) found that, although studies showed that a principal’s behavior played a “pivotal role” in students’ academic achievement, there was
“vagueness” surrounding the specific behaviors (Gaziel, 2007, p. 17). Gaziel emphasized the importance of looking “for the indirect effect of the principal’s instructional leadership behaviors on student achievement and the contextual variables such as students’ SES background and school size on student achievement” (p. 17). In response to Gaziel and the discoveries of other researchers, this study will utilize interview data with principals in two different sets of high schools to investigate the role that principal leadership “practices” may play in student achievement.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the key leadership “practices” of principals in two different high school contexts: (a) Beating the Odds (BTO) High Schools and (b) Low-Performing High Schools. This research study will be framed within the 21 leadership responsibilities that Marzano et al. (2005) revealed in their meta-analysis focused on school leadership that works. In their study, Marzano et al. (2005) found that “in broad terms . . . principals can have a profound effect on the achievement of students in their schools” (p. 38). Interestingly, the researchers reported a “.25 correlation between principals’ leadership behavior and student achievement” (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 32).

Using the 21 leadership responsibilities as a conceptual framework, this study seeks to discover what leadership practices seem to contribute to the success or failure of high schools that serve challenging populations. It is expected that participants in this study will point to an increase in or lack of the following factors to help explain their present state: (a) student motivation, (b) parent participation, (c) school finances and/or (d) teacher expectation and preparation. As stated earlier, this study focuses on the principals’ responsibilities as they are expected to manage with zeal, confidence and excellence an “ever-expanding range of
skills and knowledge and take responsibility for practically everything in the school”
(Hurley, 2001, p. 4).

Major Research Question

The following research question will guide this study: What are the leadership “practices” of principals leading North Carolina high schools that are beating the odds and North Carolina high schools that are low-performing?

Research Sub-questions

The sub-questions include the following:

1. What are the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are beating the odds?
2. What are the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are low-performing?
3. What possible effect do the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are beating the odds have on student achievement?
4. What possible effect do the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are low-performing have on student achievement?
5. How do the leadership practices of the beating the odds and low-performing schools compare and contrast with one another?
6. How might the differences between the leadership practices of the beating the odds and low-performing schools affect achievement?
Definitions of Terms

The following terms are utilized several times throughout this study. It is important in order to decrease misconceptions, increase clarity and promote understanding that these six key terms be defined.

*Beating the Odds High Schools (BTOs)*: High schools that serve challenging populations under challenging circumstances that are performing above expectations.

*Low-Performing High Schools*: High schools serving similar populations that have been deemed Low-performing or Priority schools (“LP-Priority schools”). These schools have performance composite scores of less than 60%. According to Judge Howard Manning, North Carolina Superior Court Judge, performance composites below 60% do not ensure that all of the state’s children have an equal opportunity to get a sound basic education. Judge Howard Manning established the ruling in the case of Leandro vs. the state of North Carolina where the state’s poorest school districts sued for more money from the state. In the ruling, Judge Manning demanded that these poor school districts have the following:

1. Public classrooms with compassionate, qualified and skilled teachers.
2. Schools with adequate resources.
3. Schools led by an experienced principal

He made a major impact on North Carolina schools.

*High School*: A school in the United States that usually includes grades 9-12 or 10-12.

*High School Resource Allocation (HSRA) Study*: A qualitative research study designed primarily to verify whether the level of resources provided to North Carolina high schools that are low-performing and/or the allocation of the resources within those high
schools account for their failure to produce adequate student performance. If resource levels and allocations do account for the low performance, the study clarified how the low performing schools differ from similar beating the odds performing schools in these respects. The study was also intended to verify what improvement plans have been chosen in these schools, what proof supported the selected plans, and whether they have been entirely funded and put into action.

Leadership: Bennis and Nanus (1985) defined leadership as “the pivotal force behind successful organization and that to create vital and viable organization, leadership is necessary to help organizations develop a new vision of what they can be, then mobilize the organization change toward the new vision” (pp. 2-3).

Leadership Responsibilities: Marzano et al. (2005) record the following 21 leadership responsibilities that have statistically significant relationships with student achievement: (a) affirmation; (b) change agent; (c) contingent rewards; (d) communication; (e) culture; (f) discipline; (g) flexibility; (h) focus; (i) ideals/beliefs; (j) input; (k) intellectual stimulation; (l) involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment; (m) knowledge; (n) monitoring/evaluating; (o) optimizer; (p) order; (q) outreach; (r) relationships; (s) resources; (t) situational awareness; and (u) visibility (pp. 42-43).

Background Information on HSRA Study

As part of a team, the researcher was invited to participate in the HSRA Study designed to determine whether the level of resources provided to school districts and the use of those resources within the schools accounts for their failure to produce adequate student performance. The study was interested in potential differences in how lower and higher performing schools utilize these allocations. Secondly, the leg of the study in which the
researcher was actively engaged was the qualitative part clarifying how the high priority schools differ from higher performing schools with similar demographics, and determining what improvement strategies have been selected in these schools, what evidence supported the selected strategies and whether they have been fully funded and implemented.

As a research assistant in the HSRA study, this researcher conducted principal interviews with one other researcher. In some situations, this researcher was the primary interviewer with teacher focus groups. In this qualitative study, the investigator had to “unself” herself on several levels in order to effectively conduct the research (Glesne, 2006). For starters, in the spring of 2007 when the qualitative data was collected, the researcher served as an elementary associate principal, a mother of a high school age child, and a politically minded educator. Each role gave the researcher different views about high schools, student achievement, school administration and the HSRA study.

**Delimitations and Limitations**

Research is affected by controlled and uncontrolled factors that ultimately have the potential to impact results. Some of these factors are defined as delimitations and limitations. Delimitations narrow the scope of a study, while limitations are potential weaknesses that may impact the study (Creswell, 2003).

Delimitations for this study include the selection of schools. The study includes North Carolina high schools with significant populations of African American and economically disadvantaged students. There are, however, no schools in North Carolina that are recognized as “High-Performing” with populations reflective of the ones included in the study. Therefore, aligned to the High School Resource Allocation (HSRA) Study, the study focuses on identified “Low-Performing/High Priority” and “Beating the Odds” high schools.
The study is further delimited by the selection of schools for which a full realm of
data could be obtained. This includes demographic data as well as clear and complete
transcriptions of interviews. The researcher did not want to rely on interpreted data in cases
where full transcriptions were not available.

The primary limitation of this study is the use of an existing data set. The small study
sample and the interview protocol were directly designed for the High School Resource
Allocation (HSRA) project and may hinder the researcher from uncovering stronger data that
could reveal more information on high school principals and student achievement. Thus, the
data are not intended to be generalized or representative of all high school principals.

Additionally, the researcher is an assistant principal in an elementary school with
emerging aspirations to become a high school principal. As a parent of high school age
children, this researcher often analyzes the behaviors and responsibilities of high school
principals as it relates to the academic success of students. Some may view that position as
one of bias; however, it should be considered that it is common for researchers to conduct
research within their own professional practices with few negative effects.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

To establish a foundation for this study, the subject matter included in this literature review includes: (a) the history of school leadership; (b) leadership theories or models; (c) history of high schools in US; (d) high school reform efforts; (e) school leadership and student achievement; (f) evidence from successful schools; (g) relevant quantitative empirical studies; and (h) North Carolina Context. The topics unveiled in the conceptual framework focus on the following leadership theories or models: (a) contingency theory; (b) transformational/transactional leadership; (c) ethical or moral leadership; and (d) pedagogical or instructional leadership. The discussion on each of these leadership theories will be discussed chronologically, not necessarily by significance in educational leadership.

Principals who get and keep good teachers for their schools, principals who rid their schools of persistently ineffective teachers and programs, principals who tirelessly seek to build collaboration and consensus among the faculty, principals who consistently engage their faculties in analysis and discussions about student learning, and principals who demand and support improvements in teachers’ pedagogy—these are the leaders teachers, [students, parents, and education supporters] are seeking. (Mizell, 1994, p. 4)

As stated in the aforementioned quote, it is important that school administrators focus on student learning and improving teachers’ pedagogy. “According to the Wallace Foundation, school leadership is second only to teacher quality among school-related factors that have an effect on student learning” (Carter, 2004, p. 30). In agreement with the Wallace Foundation,
Crawford (1998) stated, “almost all educational reform reports have come to the conclusion that the nation cannot attain excellence in education without effective school leadership” (p. 8). There is much research to support the position that exceptional leadership is one of the keys to recruiting and retaining well-trained and confident teachers as well as well-taught and academically successful students (Beck & Murphy, 1994; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Crawford, 1998; Fullan, 2006; Marzano et al., 2005). A well-qualified teacher is the staple ingredient in the academic success for all children (Carter, 2004). Tomlinson and Allan (2000) state that “leaders must increase their own expertise to be able to support and assess teachers’ growth” (p. 81).

Administrators are responsible for knowing teachers’ career status, individual growth goals, and potential professional development needs to support those goals. This important administrative practice requires constant effective communication. “Dialogues between administrative leaders and teachers should be ongoing so that administrators develop an understanding of both growth and continuing struggles of teachers who seek to teach academically, socially, diverse populations” (Tomlinson & Allan, 2000, p. 81). This is important, especially since academically diverse populations are no longer the minority, but the majority. As a result, all teachers need the skills to teach diverse populations of students because effective principals achieve academic success through these well-trained educators. Fullan (2006) concurred, “principals make a difference or not through teachers individually and collectively by enabling them to work together inside and outside the school” (p. 1).

As such, administrators must be the lead learners in the school. Although professional development is not the focus of this study, it is an important leadership practice of administrators that fosters teacher and student successes. If educators and administrators
profess teaching students lifelong learners skills, then such leaders must be dedicated to “lifelong continual professional development” (Steffy, Wolfe, Pasch, & Enz, 2000, p. 1). Professional development should assist principals in examining their leadership practices and the leadership practices of those exceptional principals who continually attain academic success with the racial, socioeconomic, demographic make-up or other challenges in their schools. Effective leadership is non-negotiable when it comes to successfully advancing all students academically.

This study will focus on the similarities and differences between the leadership practices of high school principals in North Carolina who are beating the odds in increasing student achievement compared to those leadership practices of principals leading low-performing high schools. It is first important, however, to lay the historical foundation of high school leadership as it relates to the crisis of education in our world, the United States (US), and specifically the high schools in North Carolina. Thus, what follows this introduction is a brief section on the history of school leadership, followed by a description of some of the key leadership styles of principals as they developed throughout history. This section includes the following styles: (a) Trait Theory and Situational Leadership; (b) Contingency Theory; (c) Human Resource: Theory X and Theory Y; (d) Transformational and Transactional Leadership; (e) Ethical/Moral Leadership; and (f) Pedagogical or Instructional Leadership. The section on key leadership styles is followed by an in-depth discussion on the history of high schools in the US as it relates to school based leadership and student achievement at the high school level.
History of School Leadership

School leadership is not established by one stable history (Cuban, 1988; English & Anderson, 2004; Foucault, 1972; Leithwood & Riehle, 2003; Smith, Murphy, & Piele, 2006; Zinn, 1988). According to Bogotch (2004), “the history of school leadership is largely based on three recognized masterpieces: Education and the Cult of Efficiency (Callahan, 1972), The One Best System (Tyack, 1974), and The Managerial Imperative and the Practice of Leadership in Schools (Cuban, 1988)” (p. 7). These authors confirm that school leadership has been scrupulously saturated with business management concepts, issues of social justice, theories and rules in practices in education, and laws and polices (English & Anderson, 2004). Additional, throughout the history of school leadership, misunderstanding between the roles of managers and leaders prevail. Teachers and students need principals that understand how to balance management and leadership in schools. Cuban (1988) presented readers a convincing argument that teachers and administrators have a common goal within instructional, managerial, and political practices not recognized by their different roles and images. Despite wars over leaders being managers or leaders in the education system, school leaders, more poignantly, principals for the purpose of this study need to be the lead learners in order to increase academic achievement for all students.

Since, the principal was seen as playing a significant role in school improvement and academic achievement even in the late 1800’s. According to Spring (2001),

As larger schools replaced the one-room schoolhouse, two roles—principal teacher and assistant teacher—began to appear; the teaching functions of the principal teacher were slowly replaced with administrative duties. The emerging hierarchical system of supervision and administrative control made possible a uniform system of education. (p. 133)
Within this uniform system of education, principals were expected to monitor the activities of teachers and students for school improvement. Specifically, principals were to maintain reports, observe lessons, and manage the common activities and business of their schools (Bradley, 1992; Spring, 2001). Spring (2001) cited the observation of authors of the Cincinnati school report of 1858 concerning the evolution on the principalship. The authors declared that “the most effective agency in the improvement of the schools has been the constant and active supervision of the Principals over the labors of the Assistants” (pp. 152-153). In this quote, assistants refer to teachers. What more have researchers done to acknowledge the many changes in school leadership?

From the “great man” theories of the 1900s to instructional leadership of the twenty-first century, researchers have continued to extensively discuss, scrutinize and dissect the art of school leadership. According to Leithwood and Riehle (2003), “Leadership for America’s Schools,” a report on leadership presented in 1987 by National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (NCEEA) laid the groundwork of a rationale for improving the preparation and performance of school administrators” (p. 4). Researchers have frequently analyzed the role of the principal and its place in the larger social and educational context, advising principals in one decade to be “bureaucratic executives,” followed ten years later by “humanistic facilitators” and then “instructional leaders” (Beck & Murphy, 1994, p. 18). This evolution of school leadership advice has constantly influenced students’ academic achievement as it relates to the role of the principal in educational systems.

Because of the study of the role of the principal, a combination of solid facts about leaders and normative suggestions about leadership is buried in the majority of evolving definitions of leadership (Hallinger & Heck 1996a; Leithwood & Riehle, 2003). Bennis and
Nanus (1985) defined leadership as “the pivotal force behind successful organizations and that to create vital and viable organizations, leadership is necessary to help organizations develop a new vision of what they can be, then mobilize the organizational change toward the new vision” (pp. 2-3). Leithwood and Riehle (2003) suggest a more concise definition of “leaders mobilize and work with others to articulate and achieve shared intentions” (p. 7). Utilizing certain leadership theories/models and Comprehensive Reform Models (CPR), high school change agents frequently make attempts to change failing high schools to accomplish the goals described in the above definitions. These leadership theories and CPR models will be discussed later in this literature review. What follows next is a closer look at the history of leadership through the eyes of principals as bureaucratic executives, humanistic facilitators, and instructional leaders. Then, this section is followed by a discussion of the current perceived urgency in preparing and supporting school leadership in advancing student achievement.

**Bureaucratic Executives**

Since the establishment of the principalship in America, educators have redefined the role of school leaders many times. Smith et al. (2006) remind us that “historically, principals have functioned as middle managers, one link in a bureaucratic chain that extends from policy makers to students” (p. 34). This may have started with John Philbrick, the creator of the first grade school called the Quincy School, also known as the first principal of American schools (Cuban, 1988; Spring, 2001). Philbrick’s leadership role at the Quincy School was very broad. He was credited with the 1866 “model for school construction in San Francisco, New Orleans, Cincinnati, New Haven, and Louisville” (Spring, 2001, p. 152). Philbrick proposed something fundamentally different from the one-room school house. “The Quincy
School contained a greater number of schoolrooms, each of which could hold 56 students. What was considered its greatest improvement was the provision of a separate room for each teacher and a desk for each student” (Spring, 2001, p. 152). The separate desk for the teacher represented authority.

Interestingly enough, “with regard to symbols of authority, a separate office for the principal was included in the design” (Spring, 2001, p. 152). Students were enrolled in these common elementary schools for approximately nine years. For urban elementary schools across the country, the organizational and leadership design of the Quincy School became the model. The organization of schools in the late 1800s and early 1900s, classified Philbrick’s leadership style as “hierarchical bureaucratic.” The bureaucratic or transactional leadership model will be discussed further in a section on leadership styles.

**Humanistic Facilitators**

Beck and Murphy (1993) reported that principals were viewed as humanistic facilitators in the 1970s. From this researcher’s study of the history of leadership, factors establishing principals as humanistic facilitators are vague. It was assumed that human beings would instinctively treat students and teachers like human beings despite age, size or position. In order to understand the premise behind principals as humanistic facilitators, humanistic education is defined. Lyon (1974) defines humanistic education as “cognition or intellectual learning integrated with affective learning or feelings. When the two are integrated learning can be a lasting “peak experience” (p. 503). In other words, two human beings building a meaningful relationship within the educational environment generate a friendly place to work and achieve (Lyon, 1974). Booth and Roswell (2002) remind us that it is important for “principals to examine self first and to really try to understand who they will be as a leader, a human being and an educator” (p. 118). Thus, a humanistic facilitator is a leader who
remains human in leadership by guiding staff and students to increase academic achievement through the human resources of sharing beliefs, feelings, and experiences (Lyon, 1974).

**Instructional Leaders**

Since the 1980s, instructional leadership has been considered the most acknowledged theme in educational leadership (Cuban, 1988; Greenfield, 1987; Hallinger, 1992; Marzano et al., 2005). Cuban (1988) informed us that Ellwood Cubberly, along with a group of researchers, studied public schools in Salt Lake City, Utah concerning principal leadership. Cubberly first encouraged principals to “perform as both instructional supervisors and effective bureaucrats. . . . He forged the two conceptions into one: “principal as professional” (p. 82). However, according to Greenfield (1987), Mackenzie and Corey were the first to identify principals as instructional leaders in 1954. Greenfield (1987) defined instructional leadership as “actions undertaken with the intention of developing a productive and satisfying working environment for teachers and desirable learning conditions and outcomes for children” (p. 60). Since instructional leadership is a popular model, many other definitions have been proposed. Another definition offered by Cuban (1988) is “the notion that the principal supervised the school’s curriculum and instruction, leading the staff to improved schooling” (p. 80). Similar to Cuban, Hopkins (2003) declares that instructional leadership “is about creating learning opportunities for both teachers and students (p. 56). Hurley (2001) eloquently described the responsibilities of the instructional leader that educational supporters are most familiar with today in the quote below:

. . . instructional leaders must be able to coach, teach, and develop the teachers in their schools. They must be steeped in curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to supervise a continuous improvement process that measures progress in raising student performance. They must build learning communities within their schools and engage the broader school community in creating and achieving a compelling vision for their schools. (p. 1)
Consequently, instructional leaders in formal and informal leadership positions contribute an important part in changing academic achievement for all students in the history of educational reform. Many researchers (English & Anderson, 2004; Evans & Teddlie, 1995; Meyer & Macmillan, 2001; Suskavcevic & Blake, 1999) acknowledge or suggest that a combination of several leadership styles is needed for effective school improvement. Similar to bureaucratic executives and humanistic facilitators, descriptions of principals as instructional leaders continue to evolve daily. All three leadership styles will be unpacked further in the section on leadership theories or models.

**Leadership Theories or Models**

According to Marzano et al. (2005), no matter the theory used to clarify its purposes, leadership has been closely associated with the effective operation of complex organizations for many centuries. Furthermore, through these leadership theories or models, leaders intentionally seek to influence the behavior of others. As a result, what follows is a brief overview of nine leadership styles that may influence the productivity of teachers, students and parents. These styles encompass four main theories: Trait, Behavioral, Contingency, and Transformational (Owens, 1991). Consequently, these models have been chosen because they are the most prevalent according to the leadership and student achievement research completed thus far. It is important to discuss these leadership styles because of their direct influence on leadership and teacher behaviors and indirect effect on student performance and academic achievement. As mentioned earlier, no matter what style a principal exhibits, he or she must be able to “create new programs, select innovative curricula, and hire appropriate staff” (Boris-Schacter & Langer, 2006, p. 53).
In the early eighteenth century, leadership was considered something birthed within a person. Frequently referred to as the “great man” theory, leadership was understood to be a characteristic that a man should possess. Hence, early theorists sought to explain leadership on the basis of natural heritage. Bennis and Nanus (1985) summarized this theory of leadership by saying, “Those of the right breed could lead; all others must be led” (p. 5). At this point in history, men were the sole bearers of “leadership” which indirectly meant that women were excluded from leadership roles (Bass, 1981).

The debate between the trait theory of leadership and the situational leadership theory occurred because of the “great man” theory. Throughout the twentieth century, the trait approach welcomed the interest of great scholars and was the first systematic attempt to study leadership (Marzano et al., 2005; Northouse, 1997). Obviously, the untainted trait approach ignored other variables such as style, situation, context, or subordinates and focused entirely on the personal traits of a leader. Although a variety of research tests was conducted, Stogdill was the first to argue that both traits and circumstances were important for leadership (as cited in Northouse, 1997). Stogdill (1974) recapped 43 years of scientific research when he shared that:

A person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits, but the pattern of personal characteristics of the leader must bear some relevant relationship to the characteristic, activities and goals of the followers. Thus, leadership must be conceived in terms of the interaction of variables which are in constant flux and change. (pp. 63-64)

In the section above, the researcher discussed trait theory and situational leadership. The trait theory defined leadership through natural selection. On the other hand, situational leadership considers natural ability as well as technique, circumstances and background. In the next
section, contingency theory builds on trait theory and situational leadership by suggesting that leaders could be properly chosen and taught to be effective leaders.

Contingency Theory

Numerous approaches to leadership could be placed under contingency theory; however, the most commonly known theory was developed by Fiedler. In 1970, Fiedler recognized the weakness of his own research and developed a more integrated form of research in order to discover data that are more meaningful. What emerged was a model that focused on two types of leadership styles that suggested that leaders could be correctly selected and trained (Ott, 1996; Owens, 1998).

The first leadership style is task oriented, assuming that the leader must do the thinking and planning for a group given specific examples (Northouse, 2001). The second, a democratic model of leadership is considered to be relationship oriented (Northouse, 2001). The leader behaves as a facilitator of decision making to foster personal relationships. Evidence documents these styles as successful.

On a scale created by Fiedler (1996) for determining leadership style, subjects rated their co-workers based on attitude and personality with one score on an eight-point bi-polar adjective scale. Descriptors are “scaled on an evaluative dimension, giving a score of 8 to the most favorable pole (i.e. Friendly, Pleasant) and a score of 1 to the least favorable pole (i.e. Unfriendly, Unpleasant)” (Fiedler, 1996, p. 199). Scores are assigned a descriptor referred to as most or least preferred co-worker, LPC. Results according to Fiedler (1996) indicate that the person with high LPC who perceives his least preferred co-worker in a relatively favorable, accepting manner, tends to be more accepting, permissive, considerate, and person oriented in his relations with group members. The person who perceived his most and least preferred co-workers as quite different, and who sees his least preferred coworker in a very unfavorable, rejecting manner tends to be
directive, task-oriented and controlling on task relevant group behaviors in his interactions. (p. 199)

Interestingly, some important information to understand about Fiedler’s contingency theory is that leaders that do extremely well in more original situations are not necessarily superior to those who do extremely well in more traditional settings. Factors such as capability, aspiration, intelligence, and skills play a significant role in the success of a leader (Ott, 1996; Owens, 1998).

In summary, Fiedler’s contingency leadership model revealed that leaders can be chosen from a large group of individuals with different leadership skills in different areas. Furthermore, Fiedler’s research suggests that matching the principal’s leadership style to the school’s environment or culture may be effective for school improvement. Thus, the essence of the contingency theory is that different situations, environments, and cultures call for different leadership styles in order for change to occur. Unlike contingency theory, McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y encourage leaders to adjust their leadership styles based on whether an employee is motivated or an unmotivated worker.

**Human Resource: Theory X and Theory Y**

McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y first discussed in the 1960s “described two sets of conflicting assumptions that administrators tend to hold about people and their attitudes toward work” (Owens, 1998, p. 269). Theory X assumes that people have an aversion to employment and will avoid working if possible; therefore, managers, administrators, or supervisors must be present to lead the average worker through their daily assignments. The unmotivated employee needs rewards, compliments, and basically someone in authority to tell them exactly how to do his or her job (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Close supervision is significant for productivity. McGregor’s Theory Y states the exact opposite of Theory X. It
looks at the character of people at work in a positive way. This theory states that employees enjoy work and accept it as a normal part of life (Bolman & Deal, 1997). When committed to the goals of an organization, the employees exhibit initiative, self-motivation, and self-discipline on the job (Owens, 1998). The common worker looks for opportunities to be responsible on the job. Administrators who act upon Theory Y expect that the average worker will be innovative and have good judgment on the job.

**Transformational and Transactional Leadership**

“Building on the work of Burns (1978), Bass (1985), and Bass and Avolio (1994), Kenneth Leithwood (1994) developed the transformation model of school leadership” (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 15). Transformational leaders make major changes in visions, political and cultural systems of organizations while transactional leaders make minor adjustments in missions, structure and the management of human resources of organizations (Owens, 1998). Highlighting the importance of the leader-follower relationship, English (2003) noted that “studies of leaders rarely deal with the idea that leaders are transformed by the realities they embrace and so change reality, that followers are not only changed but change their leaders” (p. 29). With this in mind, it is important to note that “transformational leaders not only manage structure but they purposely impact the culture in order to change it. Conversely, transactional leaders are basically concerned with structures, emphasizing organizational purposes rather than people” (Harris et al., 2003, pp. 16-17). Transformational leaders are culture builders.

**Ethical/Moral Leadership**

It could be expected that a discussion on transformational/transactional leadership should lead to a discussion of ethical or moral leadership. Although this is not a theory,
beliefs and ethical purpose have recently become a central topic for leadership students (Harris et al., 2003). Moral leadership is linked to servant leadership to the leader being “primarily concerned with the service of others and the service ideal” (Harris et al., 2003, p. 20). According to Greenleaf (2005), “the only authority deserving one’s allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader” (p. 189).

Interestingly, according to Harris et al. (2003), “the best leaders tend to be those that create powerful learning communities and are able to integrate the intellectual, emotional and spiritual” (p. 20). These leaders recognize the importance of building trusting relationships through respecting each other’s belief and interdependent work. In sum, the concept of moral leadership compromises three related ideas:

1. The relationship between the leader and the led is not one merely of power, but is a genuine sharing of mutual needs, aspirations, and values.
2. The followers have latitude in responding to the initiatives of leaders.
3. Leaders take responsibility for delivering on the commitments and representations made to followers in negotiating the compact between leader and followers. (Owens, 1998, p. 210)

**Pedagogical or Instructional Leadership**

Like ethical leadership, pedagogical or instructional leadership is not a theory. However, it is important to discuss instructional leadership, since, in the last 20 years, it has been considered the most accepted theme in educational leadership (Marzano et al., 2005). Although instructional leadership is a popular model, it is not well defined. Smith and Andrews (1989) provided the most noted definition: “They identify four dimensions, or roles of an instructional leadership: resource provider, instructional resource, communicator, and visible presence” (p. 18).
It is important that the principal attend to roles daily to impact student achievement. As such, educational leaders and supporters realize that (Clark, 1985), “ideally, principals serve as instructional leaders” (Clark, 1985). Realistically, principals act as managers, politicians, arbitrators, paper pushers, and scapegoats. In other words, principals do anything and everything to keep their schools functioning at least at a minimum level” (p. 187). Most importantly, good instructional leaders find a way for all students to experience increased achievement regardless of background, race, community, socio economic status or dominate language differences (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003). According to Supovitz and Poglinco (2001),

the instructional leadership, not just by the principal but by a wider cast of individuals in both formal and informal leadership roles, can play a central role in shifting the emphasis of school activity more directly onto instructional improvements that lead to enhanced student learning and performance. (p. 1)

**History of High Schools in the U. S.**

In the next few sections, the researcher will discuss schooling in the US as it relates to leadership and student achievement. It is important to include this section because the creation of schools, curriculum and leadership responsibilities in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries established the foundation for what is today referred to as the comprehensive high school. What follows are brief paragraphs on the following eras: colonial, common school, progressive and modern. From 2001 to present, how much has schooling really changed since the first schools were organized in 1775? “Merle Curti [argued] that colonial education as an instrument for preserving economic and social arrangements was rooted in European tradition” (Spring, 2001, p. 12). It could be argued that this is still true today. What effect does this mindset have on high school academic achievement, the leaders and supporters of the twenty-first century?
From the Committee of Ten report of 1892 to the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education report of 1918, the high school course of study transformed from one created to serve elite, college bound adolescents to what we know today as the comprehensive high school with a “specialized and differentiated curriculum” (Spring, 2001, pp. 260-261). The “specialized and differentiated curriculum” offered a broad course of study which included academic and vocational programs. Vocational meant that high school students had access to curriculum that included studies in farming, business, secretarial, engineering, and the arts (Spring, 2001). This definition of the comprehensive high school remained prevalent for half a century. The significance of the creation of the first high school is important to include in this study as the research will guide the discussion about what is currently happening in high schools. Thus, what follows is a brief history of the establishment of the first high school, followed by information about the Committee of Ten and the Cardinal of Secondary Education Principles and the part these committees played in the birth of the high school curriculum.

The Common School Era—1800-1880

The first high school was commissioned at a Boston town meeting in 1821 (Reese, 1995). The name of the school was Boston English Classical and it admitted only boys with middle class values (Reese, 1995). Although Boston English Classical never became the model for the organization of high schools, “by the middle of the nineteenth century—high schools became an increasingly important segment of the public schools, drawing the native middle classes away from private academies to these new centers of learning” (Reese, 1995, p. xvii). Interesting, there was much discussion about the characteristics of these new
The Progressive Era—1880-1950

The Committee of Ten report of 1892 led by Harvard President Charles Eliot was established to lay the foundations for college admission, thus forcing the committee to review high school requirements (Mirel, 2006; Spring, 2001). Therefore, “the importance of the Committee of Ten’s final report was that it established a general framework for discussion of the goals of secondary education” (Spring, 2001, p. 256). The goals were to provide a “common education” in high school in preparation for life and a “specific education based on a future social destination” (Spring, 2001, p. 256) for those with higher educational or occupational desires.

Unlike the Committee of Ten report, the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education report of 1918 launched the structure for the contemporary high school by initiating a broad program of a variety of paths of studies (Spring, 2001). This report, filled with “social efficiency rhetoric” highlighted the acknowledgment of the “common school” and “unification” (p. 260). According to Spring (2001) the Cardinal Principles made high schools responsible for students social skills. At its conception, however, the high school did not materialize as a wide-spread institution until the 1920s and 1930s (Spring, 2001; Mondale & Patton, 2001). According to Reese as stated in Spring (2001) high schools would: (a) endorse the thought that success is reliant upon an individual’s accountability; (b) promote submission to the law; (c) weaken the possibility for political rebellion by forcing students to learn essential republican principles; and (d) add to the decrease of crime with the indoctrination of these essential republican principles. Reese (1995) discovered that from the
1820s to 1880s, the aforementioned characteristics of high schools were offered to local communities as reasons for constructing high schools. These characteristics were challenged by many vocal leaders of the time. Later in this chapter, those challenges will be discussed. At this point, it is important to discuss the act that legalized the high school.

According to Spring (2001), the famous Kalamazoo decision of 1874 was responsible for sealing the legal status of high schools. Before this time, Boston Latin, the school of the wealthy, was the only tax supported school (Reese, 1995). In the Kalamazoo case, it was alleged that residents were being taxed even though they never agreed through voting to establish free high schools (Spring, 2001). Justice Thomas M. Cooley of the Michigan Supreme Court dismissed the case, stating that the increased attendance at high schools was sufficient evidence despite no opportunity to vote. Therefore, the fact that the new institution of the high school was marked by increasing attendance was sufficient to ratify its existence as a public institution.

_The Modern Era—1950-2000_

From 1900 to 1980, the number of students aged fourteen to seventeen attending high school increased from one in ten to nine in ten (Mirel, 2006; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). During the Depression years of the 1930s to 1940s, approximately two-thirds of the population, or 6,545,991 students ages fourteen to seventeen, attended high schools (Mirel, 2006; Spring, 2001). However, there still remained confusion surrounding the purposes of a general high school education. Spring (2001) revealed that leaders were torn between differentiating the curriculum for “college bound and non-college bound” (p. 256) students and providing an education to “serve economic and social needs” (p. 254).
As the arguments regarding the proposed benefits of a high school education moved like wild fire throughout the U. S., “publicly supported high schools had to be available to all communities” (Goodman, 2006, p. 1). Under that demand, in 1918 “the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education issued a manifesto that turned the fundamental belief of the Committee of Ten [around]” (Mirel, 2006, p. 15). The Committee of Ten established that all public high school students should follow a college preparatory curriculum, regardless of their backgrounds, “while the Reorganization of Secondary Education called for expanded and differentiated high school programs, which it believed would more effectively serve the new and diverse high-school population” (Mirel, 2006, p. 15). The new and diverse population that included, the poor, immigrants, African-Americans, and other minorities who were thought to be inferior, unintelligent and non-inspirational and financially unable to afford college expenses. Thus, the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education proposed a differentiated curriculum “[which] allowed students to follow programs and take courses suited to their interests, abilities, and needs” (Mirel, 2006, p. 17).

In 1958, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) which also affected high school curricula. Congress used federal funds to improve instruction in mathematics, foreign language and science for the benefits of the national defense and security. In 1957, the successful launch of Soviet Union’s space satellite, Sputnik, ended an argument over federal aid to elementary and secondary schools and encouraged “national legislation to support training, equipment, and programs” in the important field of defense. Many educators, such as university scholars and curriculum specialists, were appointed to restructure academic content specifically on the high school level.
In 1965 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was a federal reaction to the considerable societal changes taking place in American, primarily poverty (Spring, 2001). The ESEA provided $1 billion to enhance and advance the education of economically disadvantaged children of all ages. In 1981, Title I of ESEA was revised and is now named Chapter 1 of the Educational Consolidation and Improvement Act (ECIA) (Reece, 1995; Spring, 2001). These programs still do not guarantee that students will gain the academic and intellectual skills necessary for acquiring good jobs in a modern economy.

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEA) issued *A Nation at Risk* report (Reaves, 2001; Reese, 1995; Spring, 2001). This report focused mainly on secondary education. Secondary schools curricula were strongly scrutinized and it was discovered that the curricula lost the core that connects major subjects. The idea was to re-establish the core by eliminating courses that were more connection oriented. Thus, this report recommended that five new basic subjects, including four years of English, three years of math, three years of science, three years of social studies, and half a year of computer science, be provided in all America's high schools (Reaves, 2001). Thus, according to Reaves (2001), “*A Nation at Risk, [is] the 1983 report that launched the twentieth century’s final wave of school reform*” (p. 185).

Later in 1989, President Bush and the nation's Governors laid the groundwork for the National Education Goals, also referred to "America 2000" (Reaves, 2001; Reese, 1995; Spring, 2001). “The four main features of the plan [for the National Education Goals] were the creation of model schools, national standards, voluntary national achievement tests, and incentives for parental choice” (Spring, 2001, p. 432). This plan was initiated on July 8, 1991. Upon his election in 1992, President Clinton continued with the implementation of
Bush’s Goals 2000 program (Reese, 1995; Spring, 2001). Thus, Clinton passed the Goals 2000 Educate America Act of 1994, and the federal government’s role in education was one to endorse a comprehensive approach to assist in lifelong learning for students (Spring, 2001). American school leaders, teachers and supporters were challenged to make sure students leave grades 4, 8, and 12 grades demonstrating proficiency over challenging academic subjects. In addition, schools were to promise that all students would become responsible citizens, advance their learning, and be productive employees in our nation's modern economy.

The Past Eight Years—2000-2008

Currently, some high schools are described as public arenas in which 14 to 18 year old students spend four years matriculating through a rigorous, relevant and relationship building curriculum. Presently in North Carolina, many high school principals, assistant principals, and department chairs are being trained to work as a team and to transform high schools into small Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Some high school students are encouraged to make plans to attend two-year or four-year colleges. Some even try the brand new initiatives called early college programs because they are technologically or academically driven and designed to provide students two years of college credit while they are completing high school. Some high school students dream of becoming doctors, lawyers, accountants, computer technicians, educators, entrepreneurs, and more. Others still require a high school program that will prepare them for life skills. Sizer (1992) made the following statement:

For contemporary Americans, the process of growing up and the act of “going to high school” are profoundly intertwined. Graduation is a major rite of passage and other rituals of school, from attending senior prom to taking examinations for admission to
The aforementioned quote only pertains, however, to some high school students. Unfortunately, teachers, principals, administrators, politicians and other educational supporters are failing many of today’s high school students. Failing in this case means that in some high schools, student bodies as a whole fall below the 60% proficiency requirement.

The year of 2007 marked the beginning of public recognition that high schools in North Carolina were not doing the job expected of them. In an effort to raise achievement for all students, many states and districts have reviewed, observed and put into practice a variety of reform efforts. Some of these reform efforts with effective leadership at the helm have been instrumental in positive change for high schools.

“In addition to the issue of size, researchers have focused on the high school curriculum. Twenty years ago, the federally sponsored A Nation at Risk report precipitated a shift in the structure of many high schools’ curricula when it declared that high schools were failing” (High School Reform, 2004, p. 1). On June 8, 2007, the North Carolina State Board of Education released the new high school graduation requirements. These new requirements deemed that the “Future-Ready Core Courses of Study that will prepare all students for careers and college learning in the 21st Century [are] effective with the ninth grade class of 2009-10” (Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction, 2007b, p. 1). With this new core of courses, high school students will be able to tailor their learning to prepare for life careers. High school students are now required to matriculate through the following minimum of 21 units of credit: (a) 4 mathematics; (b) 4 English; (c) 3 social studies; (d) 3 sciences; (e) 1 health & physical education; (f) 6 electives; and (g) a 4 course concentration. An occupational Course of Study for special students, The
Graduation Project, and end-of-course assessments in prescribed courses remain part of the high school curricula (Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction, 2007b) (see Table 2.1).

Rigor, relevance and relationships continue as the permeating theme for success. Rigor is “exposing students to challenging class work with academic and social support. Relevance is demonstrating how students will use their learning. Relationships are building caring and supportive connections with students, parents and communities.” (Robinson & Robinson, 2007, p. 6) As declared earlier, North Carolina has launched major efforts to reform its low-performing high schools. What follows in the next section is a review of some reform models that can be effective in improving low-performing high schools if pushed and promoted by effective school leaders.

High School Reform Efforts

In an effort to improve their high schools, principals are challenged with many obstacles, few of which are under their direct control. Well trained, skilled and caring principals, however, face and conquer many of the challenges stated in the quote below by utilizing the right leadership “characteristics” at the appropriate time. Legters, Balfanz, and McPartland (2003) remind us that “large size, rigid bureaucratic structures, uninspired teaching, fragmented and irrelevant curriculum, and highly differentiated and unequal learning opportunities have been cited as primary sources of student apathy, alienation, and lack of preparation for college or career” (p. 3). Legters et al. (2003) further argued that these problems are intensified in urban high schools with elevated poverty where these students already experience unending poor attendance, little academic attainment, and increasing rates of dropout.
Table 2.1. Summary of Units Required for Graduation under the Future-Ready Core for North Carolina High Schools as of June 8, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNITS</th>
<th>SUBJECTS</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 4 Mathematics Units | · Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II  
· Integrated Math I, II, III  
· 4th Math Course to be aligned with the student's post high school plans (At the request of a parent and with counseling provided by the school, a student will be able to opt out of this math sequence. He/she would be required to pass Algebra I and Geometry or Integrated Math I and II and two other application-based math courses.) |
| 4 English Units | |
| 3 Social Studies Units | · World History  
· US History  
· Civics and Economics |
| 3 Science Units | · Biology  
· An earth/environmental science  
· A physical science |
| 1 Health and Physical Education Unit | |
| 6 Elective Units | Two electives must be any combination of Career Technical Education, Arts Education or Second Language |
| 4 Unit Concentration | As part of this core, the State Board of Education strongly recommends that local superintendents assist students in developing a four-course concentration focused on student interests and postsecondary goals. The concentration would provide an opportunity for the student to participate in a rigorous, in-depth and linked study. The concentration would not limit a student's access to opportunities provided through community college concurrent enrollment, Learn and Earn early college, Huskins or university dual enrollment. Local superintendents or their designees would approve student concentrations. |

Adapted from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.
What reform models can motivated, well-trained principals use to improve their schools? The researcher has chosen to highlight the following popular and effective models based on a few published studies: (a) America’s Choice; (b) Coalition of Essential Schools; (c) First Things First; (d) High Schools that Work (Making Schools Work); and (e) Talent Developing High School (Legters et al., 2002).

According to Brown (2006), “while current school reform efforts use different approaches to improve teaching and learning, all depend for their success on the motivation and capacities of local leadership” (pp. 201-202). The reforming of schools has changed significantly over the years. Evolving from a one-room school house to the large organizations that our students’ presently attend was a necessity with immigration, desegregation and industrialization. Students who learned differently also needed differentiated instruction consisting of special teachers, unique curriculum, and learning environments. The following are popular high school reform models today: (a) America’s Choice; (b) Coalition of Essential Schools; (c) First Things First; (d) High Schools that Work (Making Schools Work); and (e) Talent Developing High School (Legters et al., 2002). The focus of the five models is to make high school challenging, significant, and appealing to students through a combination of increased school achievement efforts and professional employment. The annual cost per school for the reform programs stated above can range from approximately $35,000 to over $200,000. The number of high schools in the United States participating in at least one of these reform models ranges from 35 to 1300. Also discussed by Legters et al. (2002), the common theme throughout these popular high school reform models is assembling smaller academic or career focused high schools from the larger bureaucratic high schools.
In agreement with Brown (2006), Quint (2006) in her report, *Meeting Five Critical Challenges of High School Reform: Lessons from Research on Three Reform Models* reminds us that high school reformers must conquer five significant challenges for noted successful restructuring. Those challenges are “(1) creating a personalized and orderly learning environment, (2) assisting students who enter high school with poor academic skills, (3) improving instructional content and practice, (4) preparing students for the world beyond high school, (5) stimulating change” (Quint, 2006, pp. ES 3-8). This report in which Quint analyzes the effect of three reform models (Career Academics, First Things First and Talent and Development) suggests that these challenges can be best meet in small learning communities.

Thus, as administrators, researchers, and educational supporters prepare to improve high schools, many of whom are using the comprehensive school reform (CSR) model, they must acknowledge that there is a move away from “the large, bureaucratic, departmentalized, tracked structures that characterize the traditional public comprehensive high school” (Legters et al., 2002, p. 18). Consequently, this study will compare and contrast the leadership practices of principals in high schools that are beating the odds with the leadership practices of principals in high schools that are low-performing. The next section discusses in depth the research on the direct and indirect relationship between school leadership and student achievement. The researcher needed to establish a basis for the direction of this comparative study.

**School Leadership and Student Achievement**

Although effective leadership and the responsibilities of the principals were reviewed in the nineteenth and twenty centuries, the issue became a top priority with the federal
mandates of high-quality teaching in the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* of 2001. NCLB’s expansive goals are to increase the achievement levels of all students while closing the achievement gap that distinguishes race and differences of class (Darling-Hammond, 2007). NCLB requires both teachers and principals be highly qualified and have access to high-quality professional development (Carter, 2004). In the reauthorization of NCLB in 2007, some writers, educators, and researchers agree that the federal government should include more specific highly qualified standards for principals at the elementary, middle and high school levels in order to improve achievement. These standards should specifically outline the principal’s role in elementary, middle, and high school. For this study, the focus is high school because in the U. S. today there is an immense push to improve achievement at this level in order to decrease dropout rates, increase the number of students attending college, and develop productive U. S. citizens.

A review of the Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC) database revealed 4,319 documents associated with the study of the role of a school principal, most of which focused on elementary school, with only 765 focused on high schools. The fact that there is little research on the role of the school principal and high school is another reason for the focus on high schools in this study. Furthermore, of these 765, only 10 discussed the principal’s influence on instruction and only 13 discussed the principal’s influence on achievement. The dates of these documents range from the years 1982 to 2007. Educational leadership books based on grounded research are few, while the non-research based texts on the subject of leadership and achievement are plentiful. As such, the next sections focus on empirical studies completed by researchers seeking to understand how principals influence academic achievement in public schools. The section includes a discussion on (a) Evidence
from Successful Schools; (b) Quantitative Relevant Empirical Studies of Hallinger and Heck; and (d) *Leadership that Works: From Research to Results* (Marzano et al., 2005).

**Evidence from Successful Schools**

Several notable studies have been conducted to determine what practices have contributed to the success of schools with diverse and challenging populations in improving student performance on standardized tests and closing the “achievement gap.” This review summarizes several of the most extensive studies from a high school perspective.

*Gaining Traction, Gaining Ground: How Some High Schools Accelerate Learning for Struggling Students*

This study conducted by Education Trust (2005a) identified “high-impact” schools that had exhibited statistically significant growth among lower performing students. Additionally, four identified “high impact” schools were compared to three identified “average-impact” schools. For the purposes of the study, “high-impact” schools were defined as those with (a) “greater than expected” growth over three years; (b) at least average performance on state assessments in reading or math; (c) smaller than average achievement gaps; (d) a Promoting Power Index at or above the state average, as defined by John Hopkins University’s instrument for approximating graduation rates; and (e) 60% or greater low-income student population or 50% or greater non-White population coupled with 20 to 60 percent low-income population. The average-impact schools also had comparable demographics. In addition to site visits, classroom observations, administrator, teacher and student surveys, data (i.e. transcripts, schedules, assignments) was collected over the course of a year. The study team also conducted teacher and student focus groups. Three of the four
high-impact high schools are located in North Carolina. The practices at the two types of high schools were compared and the results were published based on five spheres, including culture, academic core, support, teachers, time and other resources (Education Trust, 2005a).

In comparing the practices of high-impact schools with average-impact schools, researchers found that “in practically every area studied—school culture, the academic core, teaching, etc. [they] found significant differences in the way high-impact schools operate” (Education Trust, 2005a, p. 41). For example, high impact schools focused on recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and then placing them in courses with the struggling students. Thus, department heads did not traditionally teach the Honors or AP classes in high impact schools. In addition, strong administrative leaders ensured that these teachers provided high quality instruction using the Standard Course of Study (SCOS) and research based curriculum resources based on “best practices” for struggling high school students.

**Closing the Gap: Lessons from Successful Schools**

This study conducted by the U. S. Department of Education (Billig et al., 2005) identified four high schools that narrowed or closed the gap and sustained their success over at least four years. These large comprehensive high schools serve large percentages of “minority” students. The success stories include high schools that narrowed the gap between White and Latino students and another that closed the gap completely. The other two high schools narrowed the gaps between their White, African American, and Latino students between 10 and 15 percentage points. This study also involved the use of focus groups of teachers and administrators that explored teaching and learning strategies in the content areas, culture and school climate issues, leadership for change, and the change process itself (Billig et al., 2005). These researchers of this study found that these high schools
closed the achievement gap and sustained their success over time for large percentages of minority students through: (a) positive school climates and cultures with high expectations; (b) highly qualified, dedicated and motivated teachers who believed in the academic success of all students; (c) strong, experienced leaders who made data driven decisions concerning student achievement and; and (d) collaborative and supportive school communities.

What follows next is an in-depth summary of the results found by Billig et al. (2005) in *Closing the Gap: Lessons from Successful Schools* and by Education Trust (2005a) in *Gaining Traction, Gaining Ground: How Some High Schools Accelerate Learning for Struggling Students* in researching the following areas in the high schools: (a) School Climate and Culture; (b) Curriculum and Instruction; (c) Support Systems, Family and Community Connections; and (d) Leadership.

**School Climate and Culture**

The conceptual framework for the Educational Leadership Program in the School of Education focuses on “equity and excellence” in the preparation of leadership in a “democratic society. This premise begins with the establishment of a nurturing school climate and culture. In determining, what leads to success in addressing the needs of students from “challenging” populations Billig et al. (2005) identified the following practices:

1. High expectations for student achievement. Schools exemplify high expectations by eliminating remedial classes and offering more demanding courses such as honors, Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes. Schools also encourage minority students to enroll in demanding classes through targeted outreach by counselors and teachers and/or open enrollment. Expectations are high for teachers as well and teachers are given decision-making authority to implement changes directed toward increasing student achievement.

2. Learning supports to help students meet expectations. Educators at each of the schools put into place tutoring, study skills programs, and other supports to help students become proficient in reading and math. Teachers also provide personalized attention to students on an on-going basis to support the higher
expectations. Teachers themselves receive support in the form of professional development on effective teaching strategies for reading and math.

3. Emphasis on accountability and assessment to determine when additional help is needed. Accountability is emphasized in each of the successful schools. Teachers and administrators analyze data from state and school level tests to guide changes in curriculum and instruction. Classroom assessments are often used to see which teaching strategies work best with specific populations of students. Many of these educators feel that student achievement is a joint responsibility of teachers and students.

4. Collaborative and optimistic attitude. Adults in the schools are passionate and enthusiastic about their schools and the schools’ accomplishments. They accept no excuses and consistently tackle tough challenges, saying that if they work together, they can succeed. Teachers in these schools collaborate often and share ideas for how to improve. They work with parents and community members in establishing a culture of success at the school. (p. 2)

The Education Trust (2005a) study captured similar trends. Furthermore, it also outlined the specific differences between the identified types of schools by noting that the differences with the high-impact schools was more focused on preparing students for life beyond high school while the average impact schools were only focused on preparing students for graduation. Regarding school policies, the high-impact schools policies were centered around academics while the average-impact schools focused on rules. High impact schools also exhibited more consistency regarding direction and schools. Finally, the high impact schools embraced external standards and assessment and even created them in areas in which they did not exist.

**Curriculum and Instruction**

The following themes were consistent in the arena of curriculum and instruction:

1. Curriculum alignment and standards-based instruction. All of the educators in the schools participating in these studies stress the importance of teaching the state and district content standards that reflect expectations for knowledge and skills in
the content areas. Staff from the successful schools aligned their curriculum with state and local standards and to state and district assessments. Data are used consistently in making curricular decisions. Additionally, in high-impact schools, barriers to upper level courses are removed and additional assistance is offered to support students through challenging courses (Billig et al., 2005; Education Trust, 2005a).

2. Changes in class schedules to allow more time for instruction. Administrators recognize that more time is needed to teach such critical core subjects as Algebra I. Changes in class schedules, as well as classroom practices, happen quickly when the benefits for students are seen. Although the amount of time that students spend in “academic” classes is about the same in both school types, more time is dedicated to grade-level or “college-prep” courses in high-impact schools in comparison to “support” or “remedial” courses in low-impact schools (Billig et al., 2005; Education Trust, 2005a).

3. Engaging teaching techniques. Teachers recognize that students learn better when they find their classes more interesting and personally relevant. Schools with a higher impact also stress higher expectations regardless of the student’s prior performance. Everyone takes responsibility for helping students succeed (Billig et al., 2005; Education Trust, 2005a).

These themes highlight a difference in expectations. High schools experiencing success with challenging populations put systems in place that encourage students to rise to a certain level of expectations rather than existing in a mentality of remediation.
Support Systems, Family, and Community Connections

Continuing with a focus on difference in expectations, Education Trust (2005a) found some key differences between high and average impact schools regarding support systems, including:

1. In both high- and average-impact schools, students who arrive behind get extra instructional time in English and math. High impact schools provide help in a way that keeps students on track with college-preparatory requirements. Average-impact schools provide the extra help in a way that delays entry into grade-level courses, making it harder for students to complete college-prep requirements.

2. In high-impact schools, administrators and teachers take responsibility for ensuring that struggling students get the additional help that they need . . . little is left to chance. Average-impact schools generally offer extra help to students, but make it optional.

3. High-impact schools have in place early warning systems to identify students who need help before it’s too late. Average impact schools are more likely to provide remedial help after students have faltered.

4. Counselors in all schools are involved in scheduling, but counselors in high-impact schools are considered members of the academic teams and are responsible for actively monitoring student performance and for arranging help when needed. Counselors in average-impact schools are more likely to get involved with students through referrals.

5. High-impact and average-impact schools both have partnerships with businesses and colleges, but high-impact schools use those partnerships to aid in student preparation for postsecondary opportunities, while average-impact schools tend to use their partnerships for dropout and drug-abuse prevention (Education Trust, 2005a, pp. 5-6).

The focus for the Education Trust study, *Gaining Traction, Gaining Ground: How Some High Schools Accelerate Learning for Struggling Students* remained on strategies that were within the realm of the school. It is notable that the themes did not place the over-arching focus on what should be happening within the communities and homes.
**Leadership**

Billig et al. (2005) noted the following themes were prevalent in relation to leadership:

1. Change is difficult, but necessary. Administrators and teachers said the process of change was very hard, but change was necessary in order to improve the achievement levels of Hispanic and African-American students. These educators were and are motivated to ensure that all students succeed.

2. Leadership and resources. Sometimes the teachers lead, while at other times the administrators lead the change. Regardless of who directs the process, sufficient resources are needed to provide funding and time for professional development, materials acquisition, and student support services.

3. Federal and state policies serve as catalysts. The move toward standards and accountability at the national, state, and local levels clearly serves as a motivator for change; however, the specific ways in which change occurred were based on local decisions. (p. 4)

Education Trust (2005a) also focused specifically on teachers. They found the following:

1. High-impact schools use more criteria than teacher preference to make teaching assignments, looking at factors such as past student performance and the teacher’s area of study. Teacher assignments are made to meet the needs of the students, rather than the desires of the teachers. In average-impact schools, teaching assignments are more likely to be determined by staff seniority and teacher preference.

2. School-sponsored support for new teachers in high-impact schools is focused on instruction and curriculum. Average-impact schools provide support for new teachers, but it is more personal and social in nature.

3. Administrators at high-impact high schools adjust class sizes to provide more attention for struggling students and are not averse to larger student-teacher ratios for students who are able to work more independently. Class sizes in average-impact schools are relatively uniform.

4. Principals at high-impact high schools exert more control over who joins their staff than those at average-impact schools. (p. 6)
The evidence from these studies reveals the power that exists within school buildings to make change. Nevertheless, the efforts within the school building do not exist in isolation. The politics of education and society at large indicate what is at stake.

**Relevant Quantitative Empirical Studies**

In addition, quantitative research exists to suggest that leadership styles of principals play an important part in improving diverse and challenging student populations’ performance on standardized tests as well as closing the “achievement gap.” Leithwood (2005) shared three main types of research utilized to discuss the important effects of school leadership styles on student learning. They are qualitative case-study evidence, large-scale quantitative evidence, and large-scale and quantitative studies that focus on the influence of certain leadership styles. In a quantitative study by Gaziel (2007), the relationship between a secondary principal’s instructional leadership and student achievement was studied. Gaziel found that, although studies showed that a principal’s behavior played a “pivotal role” in students’ academic achievement, there was “vagueness” surrounding the specific behaviors (p. 17). Gaziel emphasizes the importance of looking “for the indirect effect of the principal instructional leadership behaviors on student achievement and the contextual variables such as students’ social and economic status (SES) background and school size on student achievement” (Gaziel, 2007, p. 17). Next, it is relevant to review additional high school research models and studies that found positive results regarding the effect of leadership style on student achievement. This information will be helpful in comparing and contrasting the beating the odds and low-performing high schools earmarked for this study.
educational change over time? the sustainability and nonsustainability of three decades of secondary school change and continuity

through a study on reform change in high schools, hargreaves and goodson (2006) acknowledged the positive influence of effective leadership. the qualitative project entitled educational change over time? the sustainability and nonsustainability of three decades of secondary school change and continuity according to hargreaves and goodson (2006), specifically

set out to investigate the sustainability of educational change by looking retrospectively at how educational change forces have exerted their effects across eight secondary schools during three decades in two countries. in this sense, and in comparison to the existing literature, the project has analyzed change longitudinally and retrospectively, through the eyes of teachers and administrators, over a good deal longer period than the 5 years that contemporaneous studies normally allow. it has focused not only on exceptionally innovative schools whose experiences do not transfer easily to the mainstream, or on the impact of particular change efforts or reform movements in isolation from the other changes that schools experience, but also on how a diverse range of schools have generated and responded to multiple change efforts and forces—ones that are internal to the school as well as ones that are externally imposed—during a long period of time. (p. 7)

the study’s authors found that “one of the most significant events in the life of a school that is most likely to bring about a sizeable shift in direction is a change of leadership. . . . it is changes of leaders and leadership that most directly and dramatically provoke change in individual schools” (hargreaves & goodson, 2006, p. 18). therefore, one can also conclude that it is desirable for principals to remain in schools for at least five years in order for sustainable change in students’ academic achievement to occur. leithwood and riehle (2003) warn that leadership work can be done by a few different individuals; however, the “resources, abilities and proclivities” may materialize with different motives (p. 12).
In this study by Suskavrevic and Blake (1999), researchers wanted to find out if “pervasive and sustained student learning is more likely to occur in schools with strong instructional leadership” (p. 1). This quantitative study was conducted in Texas in elementary and secondary schools specifically targeting the subjects of science and math. The researchers posed the following findings:

1. No significant differences were found in the strength of relationship between either non-instructional leadership and student scores on math and science tests or the instructional leadership and student scores on the same tests.

2. The specific activities performed by the school principal that were associated with both instructional and non-instructional leadership styles have been demonstrated to be weakly, but positively correlated with students’ scores on the math and science tests. (p. 12)

Although this study did not reveal a significant correlation between student achievement and leadership styles, it did reveal a positive relationship between student achievement and the positive involvement of effective principals. Suskavcevic and Blake (1999) acknowledged the need for more research in this field by listing the following questions after completing their data analysis:

1. How is the school principal’s dominant leadership style correlated with student achievement?

2. What is the role of the school policies that promote collaboration and cooperation among teachers in examination of principal’s leadership style and student achievement? (p. 12)

**Research Studies of Hallinger and Heck**

The following models have been addressed in the study of high school leadership: theoretical causal, values-led principalship (moral leadership models), constructivist, instructional, transformational, and transactional models. Most of models fall under the self-
concept based theory. Many researchers have addressed transformational and instructional leadership; (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b, 1998) focused on approximately 50 documented studies. Gaziel (2007) gave the following summary of Hallinger and Heck’s studies:

Hallinger and Heck (1998) examined the empirical literature on principal effects that emerged between 1980 and 1995. In the 40 studies they reviewed, they found different models used to investigate the relationship between school leadership and student achievement. First, the direct effect model, which suggests that leaders’ practices, can have effects on school outcomes and that these can be measured apart from related variables. Second, the mediated effect, which assumes that leaders’ contribution and effect on school outcomes is mediated by other organizational and cultural factors. Finally, the reciprocal effect model, in which it assumed that relationships between the principals and features of the school and its environment are interactive. Finally, they concluded that 21 original studies that in nine studies no relationship was found, six studies showed mixed effect and, only six studies showed a positive relationship. (p. 18)

Thus, twelve studies show mixed or a positive relationship and nine showed no relationship. So, the Hallinger and Heck studies reveal that no effect may be more common than a positive effect when examining the relationship between school leadership and student achievement.

*School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results*

Furthermore, Marzano (2003) in the article *A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum* established that one of his factors, “opportunity to learn (OTL) has the strongest relationship with student achievement of all school-level factors” (p. 22). This is significant because the principal is responsible for making sure every classroom is led by with a highly qualified teacher and instructional resources. This is true for elementary, middle and high school.

To further support the positive relationship between a principal’s leadership style and achievement, Borman et al. (2003) and Marzano et al. (2005) completed meta-analysis studies focused on school reform, leadership style and student achievement. The former meta-analysis involved the study of the effects of 29 different comprehensive school reform
(CSR) models on student achievement. Borman et al. (2003) found that school with various economic levels using the models received positive results if the model was systematically used for at least five years. The latter meta-analysis involved 70 empirically-sound research studies, 2,894 schools, over one million students, and 14,000 teachers, representing the largest sample of principals, teachers, and student achievement scores ever used to analyze the effects of educational leadership. Marzano et al. (2005) compiled their work in the book, School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results. The researchers concluded the following, “In broad terms, our meta-analysis indicates that principals can have a profound effect on the achievement in their schools” (p. 38). This qualitative study will utilize Marzano’s 21 leadership responsibilities as a theoretical framework in order to analyze the similarities and differences between the leadership “practices” of the principals in high schools that are beating the odds and high schools that are low-performing. Therefore, the next sections focus on the legislation of No Child Left Behind for the U. S., the North Carolina accountability system, and the high schools participating in this study.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB): The National Context

As the responsibilities of a school principal become broader and more complicated, one of the most important administrative practices in hiring qualified teachers in order to increase student achievement rose to the forefront with No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Formed in 2001 as the most recent amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), NCLB’s intention is to guarantee that all children in the U. S. are able to meet the educational goals of the federal government and their individual states. NCLB encompasses four main principles: accountability for results, flexibility and local control, improved parental options, and teaching and learning tools based on educational research.
(Sattes & Walsh, 2002). NCLB significantly raises the testing requirements for states and establishes a more systematic accountability standard for each state school, with the use of yearly progress objectives for all students and subgroups of students. Included in these subgroups are those of lower socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, English language learners, and the disabled. The principal goals of NCLB are as follows:

1. All students will achieve high academic standards, by attaining proficiency or better, in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014 school year.

2. Highly qualified teachers will teach all students by the 2005-06 school years.

3. All students will be educated in schools and classrooms that are safe, drug free, and conducive to learning.

4. All limited English proficient students will become proficient in English.

5. All students will graduate from high school. (Yell & Drasgow, 2005, p. 10)

In other words, the main goal of the NCLB is to offer a more uniform set of requirements for the accountability and performance of all students which require positive expectations established by principals and teachers.

At first, NCLB required that states put new testing and accountability systems into place. The requirements of NCLB have implications for all educators and educational researchers who concentrate on K-12 education as well. These implications are a result of the legal requirements that schools exhibit steady gains in student achievement and close the achievement gap between various subgroups of students by 2013-2014. Schools failing to make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years are placed on the school improvement list. Parents of students in these schools are offered the opportunity to transfer to better performing public school in the district. According to Hursh (2007), schools
continually failing to meet AYP are required to provide students with supplemental services (tutoring, remedial classes, and summer school) in the community at the school’s expense.

Under AYP, schools must demonstrate progress in educating all students to state standards in reading and math. High schools must also demonstrate proficiency in required science and history courses. The demand to improve test scores and increase proficiency has directly and indirectly affected principals, teachers and students no matter the status of the high school. High schools must also meet goals set by their states for graduation. (Hall, 2007, p. 2)

As stated earlier, North Carolina has released new high school graduation requirements. This “Future –Ready Core Courses of Study” is designed to prepare all students for success in a four-year college, two-year college, community college or a trade of their choice. In addition, students are required to complete a graduation project which they begin discussing during their sophomore year. However, there are still differences between the ways high school principals and leadership teams choose to matriculate the students through the requirements. (See Table 2.1) These differences may be due to the sanctions of NCLB.

Thus, educators and researchers alike have reviewed the inadequacy of NCLB (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Dessoff, 2007; Nelson, McGhee, Meno, & Slater, 2007; Yell & Drasgow, 2005). As an underfunded mandate, there is much debate regarding NCLB capability to achieve its goals without more funding. High schools in most districts cannot make reasonable gains with “inadequate funding” and “unfair sanctions” that have been characteristic of NCLB’s implementation (Dessoff, 2007, p. 21). In many states, this query has led to court action. One example, the Leandro Case will be discussed later in this study. Howard Manning, the presiding judge in Leandro has pushed school leaders in high schools to improve achievement for all students.

According to Barth (1990), if schools are to improve by increasing student achievement, then principals and teachers must do business differently. Some would argue
that NCLB has stifled risk taking, halted creativity and promoted teaching to the tests in US schools, though this was not the intention of the law. Due to the leadership of state and federal departments, standardized testing and accountability remain a part of the educational norm that holds administrators, teachers and students liable for academic achievement and growth. Therefore, the next sections focus on the North Carolina context and the North Carolina accountability system.

**North Carolina Context**

As research indicates, high school principals should use data to guide their decision making in increasing achievement for all students (Billig et al., 2005; Eberts & Stone, 1988; Education Trust, 2005a; Marzano, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005; Sanders & Horn, 1994). It is important that these school based leaders focus especially on those students marginalized due to race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English language learners and disabilities. According to the Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction (2007a), North Carolina has 500 public and approximately 35 private high schools within 115 districts (p. 1). Today some high schools enroll as many as 3,000 students. High school reform movements push for smaller high schools in order to promote increased academic achievement through rigor, relevance and relationships.

Judge Howard Manning presided over the case of Leandro vs. the State of North Carolina, where the state’s poorest school districts sued for more money from the state. He made a major impact on North Carolina schools. Forty-four North Carolina high schools are facing extreme pressure to turn around poor performance on End-of-Course assessments. Nineteen of those schools have been told by Judge Howard Manning to get this year’s scores
above 60% or face severe penalties. In the ruling, Judge Manning demanded that these poor school districts have the following:

1. Public classrooms with compassionate, qualified and skilled teachers.
2. Schools with adequate resources.
3. Schools led by an experienced principal.

Judge Manning’s demands caused special “turnaround teams” to visit each of the non-proficient schools. These special teams may help if they are supportive and non-threatening.

North Carolina education officials have labeled new graduation standards as the guaranteed pathways to successful professional careers whether a student chooses the college or occupational pathways. Beginning with the class entering ninth grade for the first time in the 2006-2007 school year, students who are following the career preparation, college technical preparation, or college/university preparation courses of study shall meet the following exit standards:

1. Successfully complete a graduation project that is developed, monitored, and scored within the LEA (school district) using state-adopted rubrics; and
2. Score at proficiency level III or above on the end-of-course assessment for English, U. S. History, Biology, Civics and Economics, and Algebra I.
3. A student who does not score at proficiency level III or above on the end-of-course assessment for any of these courses but who passes the course shall be offered the opportunity to retake the assessment no later than three weeks from the receipt of assessment results.
4. If the student does not score at or above proficiency level III on the retest, school officials shall apply a review process to provide focused intervention, a second
retest opportunity, and a review of the student’s documentation to determine whether the student has met the exit standard for the course. The principal shall make the final decision as to whether the student has met the exit standard.

In the next section, the researcher will examine the North Carolina Accountability Program concerning the issue of student achievement. This section will be followed by a detailed discussion on the High School Resource Allocation (HSRA) study on which this researcher’s study is shaped and established as a secondary analysis.

**The North Carolina Accountability Program**

Established as a law in 1995, the ABCs of Public Education is North Carolina’s main school improvement program. “The high school accountability model was implemented in 1997-98” (Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction, 2008, p. 2). The goals for the program are to provide strong local school accountability and to demonstrate mastery of basic subjects. The ABCs program is enhanced or changed in some way each year to better represent school performance and ensure that its measures are just and accurate. The goal is to raise standards by providing higher expectations and encouraging students to increase academic achievement. Formulas are utilized to calculate the academic growth and achievement for all schools. Primarily based on the increase in the average score of matched student groups for two consecutive years, the system takes into account minor statistical corrections. The ABCs recognize growth and proficiency performances. Schools are rewarded based on growth in student achievement with high performing or improving schools receiving monetary rewards. The lowest performing schools are assigned school assistance teams. Margaret Spellings, Secretary of Education in November of 2005, shared a new pilot program that will permit chosen states to
use growth models to decide if their schools and districts are meeting No Child Left Behind performance targets. North Carolina is one of two states whose proposed growth model was accepted by the U. S. Department of Education. North Carolina’s high visibility accountability system is the model for the following reasons.

When considering information regarding AYP across our nation, it's important to keep in mind that each state has its own tests used to determine student achievement. There is not a national test. The rigor of state tests varies widely. Some states did not have a statewide curriculum, statewide testing programs or public reporting until responding to the new federal law. North Carolina has had a strong school accountability system in place since 1996, the ABCs of Public Education. Our state has had statewide curriculum standards and statewide testing programs and reporting on those results since 1989. Each state also has its own starting points and target goals used to measure what percentage of its students are and should be proficient. (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, ABCs/AYP: Annually Yearly Progress, p. 13)

Thus, North Carolina’s development and implementation of a thorough individual school and district level accountability program utilized throughout the state made it a model for NCLB.

Interestingly enough, the test scores used in this study are based on and rooted in the state of North Carolina’s accountability measures. Within these measures, North Carolina assumes a reasonable definition of reliability, purpose, alignment, goodness, improvement, achievement and more. But, it is still just a premise. Who really knows? How can one really measure? According to Kane and Staiger (2002) “many accountability systems that appear reasonable at first glance perform in perverse ways when test scores are imprecise” (p. 92). These authors suggest that it is hard to measure school performance with just one year’s worth of testing data. Kane and Staiger (2002) propose that results are better when districts consider trends over many years. Kane and Staiger (2002) suggest that test score measures are imperfect measures of schools’ output for at least three other reasons:
1. Test score measures may reflect factors outside of a school’s control, such as family background, that grant schools in wealthier districts an advantage, particularly when schools are rated on the basis of their level of performance.

2. Test score measures . . . are incomplete measure of school output.

3. A third score of error in test score measures is occasionally introduced by the test publishers themselves. (pp. 104-106)

According to this information accountability data such as test scores, graduation rates, dropout rates, and college enrollment rates can be more reliable with longer trends, better preliminary data, consideration of environmental factors, and better tracking databases.

**High School Resource Allocation (HSRA) Study—Secondary Analysis**

In 2002, Judge Howard Manning issued his fourth ruling in the *Leandro* decision, the lawsuit contesting how the state funds public schools. Previously, Manning ruled that North Carolina was not meeting its obligation to provide a sound, basic education to at-risk children. In this ruling, Manning said that classrooms must have a competent, certified, and well-trained teacher coupled with competent school leadership and the necessary resources. Manning placed responsibility upon the state to ensure that the constitutional guarantee is met with aggressive intervention, if necessary.

The ruling also encouraged more resources and support services for rural schools with high numbers of at-risk students. North Carolina lawmakers responded by creating the Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Fund (DSSF). In 2004 and 2005, sixteen rural school districts received DSSF money due to their status in the *Leandro* case. In 2006, the General Assembly decided to give DSSF money to all 115 school districts. In an effort to utilize a type of equity formula, the original districts received $22.5 million (the same allocation they got in 2005) and the other 99 districts split $27 million. In 2006-2007, the original districts
received between $732 and $1046 per disadvantaged student, and the other districts received only between $55 and $175 per disadvantaged student.

Though these attempts by the state to address equity issues are admirable, Judge Manning and his supporters quickly point out that people often rely on money as a type of quick fix to longstanding issues. During a December 2004 hearing, Judge Manning specifically used a school system with the fourth highest per pupil spending rate in the state to reiterate his point. After commenting favorably on elementary and middle school performance for the 2003-2004 school year, he expressed disappointment in the high school performance, indicating that 69% of North Carolina’s high schools had composite scores below 80%. Citing the one school district, Manning stipulated that ten out of fifteen high schools had composite scores below 70%, yet they have more than adequate per pupil spending. In 2004, Judge Manning targeted 44 high schools (since reduced to 35) having performance composites less than 60%. While admitting that these targeted schools (and the districts housing them) have obviously challenging student populations, with high free and reduced lunch rates and diverse student populations, Judge Manning accepted no excuses. The comparison of schools only capitalizes the issue at the foundation of the Leandro case involving whether the “problems” with public education in North Carolina (and the entire nation) result from a lack of money or poor use of existing funds. A closer comparison of the individual schools within the district also brings to the forefront questions of equity. In the spirit of Brown vs. Board of Education and the premise of NCLB, one must question how much of the “high school problem” is an issue of socioeconomic status and race.

In response to Judge Manning’s questions regarding the connection between resources and student success, Governor Mike Easley commissioned the UNC-Chapel Hill
School of Education to work with the State Board of Education and the NC Department of Public Instruction in an effort to conduct audits of high schools in all North Carolina school districts. The research identified “Beating the Odds” (BTO) high schools that succeeded with students who are struggling and compared them with low-performing (LP) high schools. The analysis included teacher backgrounds and spending patterns to determine if there were significant differences between the “beating the odds” and low-performing high schools.

In the qualitative phase of the research, interviews were conducted at identified low-performing and higher-performing high schools to determine how resources are used and how they deal with the barriers to success. This researcher’s study focuses on the comparisons between five of the BTO and four of the low-performing high schools. It should be noted that North Carolina has no high-performing high schools that can be easily compared with BTO or low-performing high schools due to dramatically different populations. The interview protocol for the qualitative piece of the study related to specific focus areas, including (a) Goal Setting and Communication of Goals; (b) Coordination of Curriculum & Instruction; (c) Teacher Recruitment, Assignment & Retention; (d) Supervision & Evaluation of Instruction; (e) Monitoring Student Progress and Providing Incentives for Learning; (f) Promoting Professional Development; and (g) Building Community (see Appendices A and B).

**Conceptual/Theoretical Framework**

**Introduction**

Figure 2.1 represents the conceptual framework for this study. This researcher will utilize Marzano et al.’s (2005) 21 responsibilities of school leaders as a conceptual framework by which to analyze the data. Since 1998, Mid-continent Research for Education
and Learning (McREL) researchers have been involved in what they refer to as “third generation” effective schools research, distinguishing it from the work in the 1980s to implement the research findings of the 1970s (Waters & Grubb, 2004).

Figure 2.1. Carmon’s Conceptual/Theoretical Framework: The 21 Responsibilities of School Leaders Framed within Four Leadership Styles

Adapted from Marzano et al. (2005)
Recently, they reviewed over 5,000 studies through a series of meta-analyses of research on the student characteristics, school practices, and teacher practices associated with student achievement. The third meta-analysis focused on the effects of principal leadership on student achievement and involved 70 empirically-sound research studies, 2,894 schools, over one million students, and 14,000 teachers, representing the largest sample of principals, teachers, and student achievement scores ever used to analyze the effects of educational leadership. The results show a significant, positive impact of instructional leadership on student achievement (i.e. the study found the average effect size, expressed as a correlation, between leadership and student achievement is .25). The analysis also identified 66 leadership practices embedded in 21 leadership responsibilities, each with statistically significant relationship to student achievement.

The 21 responsibilities are as follows: (1) affirmation; (2) change agent; (3) contingent rewards; (4) communication; (5) culture; (6) discipline; (7) flexibility; (8) focus; (9) ideals/beliefs; (10) input; (11) intellectual stimulation; (12) involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment; (13) knowledge; (14) monitoring/evaluating; (15) optimizer (16) order; (17) outreach; (18) relationships; (19) resources; (20) situational awareness; and (21) visibility (pp. 42-43). Each of these responsibilities plays an important part in the leadership style a principal uses to motivate teachers, students and parents for optimal student achievement. The researcher has chosen to refer to these 21 responsibilities as practices and frame them within four of the most prevalent leadership styles/theories in education today. (See Figure 2.1) Those styles/theories are as follows: (a) Contingency Theory; (b) Transactional/Transformational Leadership; (c) Moral/Ethical Leadership and (d)
Instructional/Pedagogical Leadership. The researcher framed the practices and styles/Theories in this manner for three reasons:

1. All principal utilize these 21 practices during different situations while managing their schools, and from the researcher’s experience as a leadership student, assistant principal and teacher, the practices materialize most frequently under the leadership style/practice in which they have been placed.

2. Researchers and authors such as Bass (1995), Burns (1978), Elmore (2000), Fullan (2001), Leithwood (1994), Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999), Marzano et al. (2005), Sosik and Dionne (1997), and more use the very name of the practice to assist in defining or explaining the leadership style/Theory under which the researcher has placed a practice.

3. This researcher has acknowledged in the forthcoming sections that some of the practices could be placed under each of the leadership styles/Theories. Thus, the researcher decided the practices placement based on professional experience, common knowledge, definitions and examples from other researchers.

The following is a brief description of each aforementioned leadership styles or theories and the responsibilities of school leaders that stand out when that particular style is described.

**Contingency Theory**

Contingency theory, one of the most popular models designed by Fielder in 1970, focused on two types of leadership styles that assist in the identification, selection and training of principals (Ott, 1996; Owens, 1998). Fiedler’s 1970 contingency leadership model revealed that leaders can be chosen from a large group of individuals with different leadership skills in different areas. Furthermore, Fiedler’s research suggests that matching the
principal’s leadership style to the school’s environment or culture may be effective for school improvement. Thus, the essence of the contingency theory is that different situations, environments, and cultures call for different leadership styles in order for change to occur. As a result, for this study, the following principal “practices” of Marzano et al. (2005) will be placed under the contingency theory:

1. Flexibility: Changes his or her leadership actions to meet the needs of present events.
2. Optimizer: Encourages and directs the most recent advancements in education.
3. Order: Sets procedures and routines for effective school operation.
4. Outreach: Is an active school promoter and ambassador.
5. Relationships: Is aware of teachers and staff personal lives and responsibilities.
6. Situational Awareness: Is aware of the happenings in the school environment and uses this information in preventing future and solving present problems.

Transformational/Transactional Leadership

Transformational leaders manage structure and purposely impact the culture in order to change it by building strong relationships and challenging workers to perform at their highest levels (Marzano et al., 2005). Conversely, transactional leaders are basically concerned with structures and purposes. These leaders invite followers into the organizational process and reward them for adhering to expectations, procedures, and goals. Again, for this study the following principal “practices” of Marzano et al. (2005) will be placed under transformational/transactional leadership because they establish a transformational and transactional leader mindset and drive in initiating change in a struggling school:
1. Affirmation: Acknowledges and rewards accomplishments and recognizes failures.
2. Change Agent: Looks for opportunities to make changes.
3. Communication: Develops strong communication with teachers, students, and parents.
5. Culture: Promotes shared beliefs with a sense of belonging and mutual respect in the community.

**Ethical or Moral Leadership**

Although this is not a theory, most recently, beliefs and ethical purpose have become central topics in leadership studies (Harris et al., 2003). The concept of moral leadership compromises three related ideas:

1. The relationship between the leader and the led is not one merely of power, but is a genuine sharing of mutual needs, aspirations, and values.
2. The followers have latitude in responding to the initiatives of leaders.
3. Leaders take responsibility for delivering on the commitments and representations made to followers in negotiating the compact between leader and followers. (Owens, 1998, p. 210)

The following four Marzano responsibilities of culture, discipline, focus, ideas/beliefs and input for principals will be framed within ethical or moral leadership. These practices are included here because they reflect and highlight ethical or moral decisions that can be qualified as extremely subjective based on a principal’s training, experiences and results with these practices. How a leader responds to these ethical or moral issues guides the feelings of trustworthiness and fairness with teachers, students and the school community.
1. Culture: Promotes shared beliefs with a sense of belonging and mutual respect in the community.

2. Discipline: Supports teachers’ instructional time by working with students who make poor choices and hurt the learning process.

3. Focus: Creates and shares clear goals and often reminds stakeholders of these goals.

4. Ideals/Beliefs: Establishes and promotes strong ideals and beliefs about teaching and learning.

5. Input: Asks for and accepts teachers’ ideas concerning the creation and execution of significant decisions and policies.

**Pedagogical or Instructional Leadership**

Like ethical leadership, pedagogical or instructional leadership is not a theory. However, it is important to utilize instructional leadership in this conceptual framework since in the last twenty years it has been considered the most accepted theme in educational leadership (Marzano et al., 2005). Smith and Andrews (1989) identified four dimensions, or roles of an instructional leader: resource supplier, instructional source, communicator, and visible participant. Most importantly, good instructional leaders find a way for all students to experience increased achievement, no matter the students’ background, race, community, socio economic status or dominate language (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003). To support this leadership style, this researcher will highlight six of the 21 leader responsibilities defined by Marzano et al. (2005) in the book, *School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results*:

1. Intellectual Stimulation: Make certain that staff is up to date on best practices and current educational research.
2. Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment: Is a direct participant in the establishing and implementing of curriculum, instruction and assessment responsibilities.


5. Resources: Makes available to teachers the necessary materials and staff development to effectively teach students.

6. Visibility: Makes it a priority to communicate and interact with teachers, students, and parents.

**Conclusion**

In utilizing Marzano et al.’s (2005) 21 responsibilities of the school leaders as a conceptual framework by which to analyze the data, some of the responsibilities can naturally found in all four theories/leadership models. In this study, the responsibilities will be referred to as “practices.” For example, although resources are listed under the pedagogical or instructional leadership style, the “practice” of distributing resources based on the needs of the students in order to improve academic achievement can be identified with the ethical or moral leadership style as well as transactional/transformational leadership style. As the analysis is completed, the researcher needs to choose clear examples to support each leadership style and its supportive “practice.” The researcher will include the data of how principal leadership affects student achievement in BTO and LP high schools.
Chapter 3 describes the method by which the research on high school principals in BTO high schools compared to high school principals in LP high schools was completed. This chapter describes how the researcher decided to analyze the factors that contributed to the increased student achievement in some challenging high schools.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research design and methods used in this study. According to Trochim (2006), the research design acted as the adhesive that holds the study together. This chapter is separated into the following sections: (a) purpose of the study; (b) major research questions and sub-questions; (c) rationale for qualitative design; (d) role of the researcher; (e) site selection and participants; (f) data collection; (g) data analysis; (h) trustworthiness; (i) limitations; (j) significance; and (k) chapter conclusion. The purpose of the study dictated what the researcher intends to investigate. The major research and sub-research questions guided the study. The rationale for a qualitative design declared whether or not the researcher has chosen the appropriate or best method of collecting data for the study. The role of the researcher established what part the researcher played in the study. A researcher can choose to be an observer, a participant, an interviewer or any combination of the three. The site selection and participants section described the process taken to identify the 30 high schools (later reduced to 24) in the original study and the reasons this researcher chose particular sites and participants for this secondary analysis. Data collection and analysis are the heart of the study. A brief paragraph on trustworthiness clarified the intentions of the researcher. Limitations and significance helped frame the study and clarify the use of particular data.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine and then compare and contrast the key leadership practices of principals in two different high school contexts: (a) Beating the Odds (BTOs) High Schools and (b) Low-Performing (LP) High Schools. This research study was framed within the 21 leadership responsibilities that Marzano et al. (2005) revealed in their meta-analysis of school leadership that works. In their study, they found that “in broad terms . . . principals can have a profound effect on the achievement of students in their schools (p. 38). The researchers discovered a “.25 correlation between principals’ leadership behavior and student achievement” (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 32). The researchers use an average correlation discovered within the meta-analysis because in educational research an average correlation remains the most universally used technique for discussing meta-analytic results.

In order to show the significance of the correlation, Marzano et al. (2005) shared an analogy that considered the average percentage of student achievement related to a principal’s leadership ability in percentages. The researchers explained that the .25 correlation “indicates that an increase in principal leadership behavior from the 50\textsuperscript{th} percentile to the 84\textsuperscript{th} percentile is associated with a gain in the overall achievement of the school from the 50\textsuperscript{th} percentile to the 60\textsuperscript{th} percentile” (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 30). In each example the principal’s leadership ability was increased by one standard deviation. If common sense is utilized, as the researchers request, it is clear that if a principal sits in the office and does nothing student achievement will not improve. In fact, the principal would probably be replaced. Therefore, it is crucial that principals increase their leadership abilities through professional development, networking, and personal learning opportunities. As the leadership abilities improve the principal should be able to provide stronger “guidance and
support” (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 34). Marzano et al. suggest that as a principal’s leadership abilities increase, so will student achievement.

Using the 21 leadership responsibilities as a theoretical framework, this study revealed what leadership factors contribute to the success or failure of high schools that serve challenging populations. It was expected that participants in this study will point to an increase in or lack of the following factors to help explain their present state: student motivation, parent participation, school finances, and/or teacher expectation and preparation. As stated earlier, this study focused on the principals’ responsibilities as they are expected to manage with zeal, confidence and excellence with an “ever-expanding range of skills and knowledge and take responsibility for practically everything in the school” (Hurley, 2001, p. 4).

This study is primarily based on literature related to the history of high schools in general, to principal leadership styles and responsibilities in particular, and to existing data from the HSRA project. In this research study, Beating the Odds (BTO) high schools are defined as high schools that serve challenging populations that are performing above expectations. Low-Performing (LP) high schools are defined as high schools serving similar populations that have been deemed failing or priority schools. These schools have composites below 60% and do not ensure that all of their children have an equal opportunity to get a sound basic education.

**Research Design: The Qualitative Secondary Analysis**

According to Van den Berg (2005), “in contrast to survey interviews [quantitative studies], qualitative interviews are seldom reanalyzed” (p. 1). The following factors attribute to the lack of secondary analysis in qualitative research: “(1) the culture of individualistic
ownership; (2) methodological skepticism; (3) doubts about the usefulness of secondary analysis; and (4) [the] assumed risk of decontextualization” (Van den Berg, 2005, p. 1).

However, Van den Berg (2005) argued that the viability of qualitative secondary analysis lies within “the research goal, the type of textual data, and the amount of available contextual information” (p. 11). Like Van den Berg, Kelder (2005) suggests that “qualitative data is capable of being revisited from multiple perspectives, and used to answer different research questions to those envisaged by the original data collector” (p. 1). Kelder (2005) discussed the importance of correctly utilizing someone else’s data with which to formulate a coherent study of your own.

The researcher has experienced several benefits from being a part of the original data collection to reuse in a secondary qualitative analysis. First, being a part of collecting the original data familiarized the researcher with the study’s context and data collection methods. Second, the researcher had easy access to most of the collected data. Third, the researcher had access to other documents related to the study. The main disadvantage to re-using qualitative data was figuring out the best way to construct the analysis with minimal research guidelines on completing a qualitative secondary analysis. There were concerns about my colleagues’ thoughts on the validity and usefulness of a secondary analysis. Therefore, I found information about the usefulness of a secondary analysis and included in this dissertation. Thus, as this study was completed, the researcher was hopeful that the information was very useful to administrators and educational supporters in North Carolina.
**Major Research Question and Sub-questions**

The following major research question guided this study: What are the leadership practices of principals leading North Carolina high schools that are beating the odds and North Carolina high schools that are failing? The sub-questions include the following:

1. What are the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are beating the odds?
2. What are the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are failing?
3. What possible effect do the leadership practices in North Carolina high schools that are beating the odds have on student achievement?
4. What possible effect do the leadership practices in North Carolina high schools that are failing have on student achievement?
5. How do the leadership practices of the beating the odds and failing schools compare and contrast with one another?
6. How might the differences between the leadership practices of the beating the odds and low-performing schools affect achievement?

**Rationale for Qualitative Methods Approach**

This study is a qualitative methods study that was part of the High School Resource Allocation (HSRA) project, from which this secondary analysis is derived. This researcher plans to utilize data from three research techniques: (a) interviewing, (b) focus groups, and (c) document review. The HSRA project’s purpose was to investigate the narratives behind the quantitative data collected on beating the odds and failing high schools in North Carolina. Creswell (2008) stated that in qualitative research the researcher “relies on the views of
participants; asks broad, general questions; collects data consisting largely of words (or text) from participants; describes and analyzes these words for themes; and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner” (p. 46). This researcher chose this method because of the voice that it gives to the participants. In addition, some of the studies this researcher encountered through the literature review (Billig et al., 2005; Education Trust, 2005a; Lambert, 2006) utilized qualitative methodology, as well.

The researcher also chose to use poetry to capture the voices of the principals and teachers. Glesne (2006) referred to this as “poetic transcription” (p. 200). Glesne (2006) shared that “the writer aspires to get at the essence of what’s said, the emotions expressed, and the rhythm of speaking” (p. 200). The use of “poetic transcription” was used to describe the organizational leadership of one beating the odds high school principal and the supportive words of the teachers of the beating the odds high schools in their description of their principals.

Descriptive data gathered through the HSRA project were used to compile background information from the study participants. The literature review presented some research on the leadership practices of high school principals, but less on beating the odds and low-performing high schools. Due to the limited number of participants available for this particular study because of the limitations of the original study, it was not practical to utilize quantitative methodology. In any case, the researcher would not be able to present the leadership stories of the beating the odds or low-performing high schools with quantitative methodology. According to Glesne (2006), “the qualitative epistemology holds that you come to know those realities through interactions and subjectivist explorations with participants about their perceptions” (p. 6).
Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the role of the researcher is “situationally” determined, depending on the context, the identities of your participants, and your own personality and values” (Glesne, 2006, p. 46). Creswell (2008) recognized researcher reflexivity as a key characteristic of critical ethnography. In this method of study, the role of the researcher was recognized as being critical to the process itself. Creswell exemplified this concept in the following passage:

As individuals who have a history and a cultural background themselves, [researchers] realize that their interpretation is only one possibility, and that their report does not have any privileged authority over other interpretations that readers, participants, and other researchers may have. It is important, therefore, for ethnographers to position themselves within their report and identify their standpoint or point of view. (p. 485)

Therefore, in gathering the data for this study, the researcher was initially a learner. As an elementary school administrator, this researcher anticipated absorbing, and analyzing a tremendous amount of information about student achievement and administration at the high school level. The following quote from Goodall (2000) expanded on my position in conducting research on high school achievement:

In many ways, the sentiment is very much like meeting someone you are suddenly and strongly attracted to, in whose voice, in whose questions, you find a path to answers you are searching for. The voice of the other in this relationship is “original” because it speaks to your heart, because you haven’t heard it before, and because you closely identify with it. (p. 141)

This researcher is continually gleaning information from research colleagues and study participants with this new submersion into the achievement of high school students.

As part of a team, the researcher was invited to participate in the HSRA Study designed to determine whether the level of resources provided to school districts and the use of those resources within the schools accounted for their failure to produce adequate student
performance. The study was interested in potential differences in how higher and lower performing schools utilize these allocations. Secondly, the leg of the study in which the researcher was actively engaged was the qualitative piece clarifying how the high priority schools differ from higher performing schools with similar demographics, and determining what improvement strategies have been selected in these schools, what evidence supported the selected strategies and whether they have been fully funded and implemented.

As a research assistant in the HSRA study, this researcher conducted principal interviews with one other researcher. In some situations, this researcher was the primary interviewer with teacher focus groups. In this qualitative study, the investigator had to “unself” herself on several levels in order to effectively conduct the research (Glesne, 2006). For starters, in the spring of 2007 when the qualitative data was collected, the researcher served as an elementary associate principal, a mother of a high school age child, and a politically minded educator. Each role gave the researcher different views about high schools, student achievement, school administration and the HSRA study. These views made the researcher reconsider the types of questions asked and the high school team members participating in this study, thus occasionally causing the researcher to ask other questions after fulfilling the obligation as a research assistant for the HSRA study. In addition, the researcher was led to check principals’ information on the high school’s website or the Department of Instruction (DPI) website.

Site Selection and Participants

Initial site selection and the identification of participants were limited by the selection and identification criteria for the HSRA Study. Within the initial study, the team identified four sets of schools, based on demographics; financial expenditures, teacher quality, and
academic performance (see Table 3.1). This was not a difficult task as there are many instances of natural grouping largely determined by the demographics of the schools.

Access

The HSRA teams (there were a mix of five teams) received access to the 30 schools (see Table 3.1) through Mike Easley, Governor of North Carolina, who had commissioned the study in conjunction with the State Board of Education and the NC Department of Public Instruction. The research teams were comprised of a primary researcher and a UNC doctoral student. Dr. Charles Thompson, the primary researcher of my team, contacted by mail (electronic and/or postal) the schools that we were charged with visiting in order to set up interviews with principals and teachers. Subsequent mailings included a letter of explanation, informational questionnaire for potential participants to complete, and a copy of the consent to participate form, which all participants completed and returned to the researchers at the visits.

In addition, the principal at each site was responsible for selecting the teachers to be interviewed. For smaller high schools, such as the trend for the BTO schools, this posed no significant challenge (see Table 3.2 for average daily membership (ADM)). With smaller faculties and an initial selection criterion for teachers from core subject areas, most of the faculty was interviewed. For larger high schools, as is the case for most of the high priority high schools, the number of teachers interviewed was a much smaller representation of the entire staff (see Table 3.1 for High Priority School ADM).

When determining access to the data for a secondary analysis, however, additional challenges arose. First, permission had to be granted for a secondary analysis. Once permission was granted, the researcher had to obtain copies of all the digital recordings from
the interviews. Due to computer error, several of recordings were no longer accessible, restricting some of the population to be included in the study.

**Steps to Acquire Participants and Sample Size**

The original qualitative study from the HSRA project began with reviewing Judge Manning’s targeted 44 (since reduced to 35) high schools with performance composites of less than 60%. In an effort to answer Judge Manning’s questions concerning the relationship between resources and student success, Governor Mike Easley requested that the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Education work with the State Board of Education and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction in an attempt to conduct audits of high schools in all North Carolina school districts. The HSRA study identified beating the odds (BTO) high schools (see Table 3.1) that do well with students who struggle academically (do in part to circumstances out of their control) and compared them with low-performing (LP) high schools (see Table 3.2).

This study focused on the comparison of five of the BTO and four of the LP high schools. Thus, this secondary analysis will be comprised of nine of the aforementioned high schools; four located in Eastern North Carolina and five located in Western North Carolina. This researcher chose only nine of the high schools due to the constraints of using existing data.

The researcher chose to use the four high schools in which she completed research and the two high schools in which a colleague participated. The other three high schools were chosen based on the availability of digitally recorded interviews and the status of the high school’s achievement performance.
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<td>45.60</td>
<td>50.90</td>
<td>51.70</td>
<td>44.50</td>
<td>1473</td>
<td>66.46</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 6</td>
<td>50.20</td>
<td>54.20</td>
<td>54.70</td>
<td>51.20</td>
<td>52.90</td>
<td>49.40</td>
<td>1214</td>
<td>67.71</td>
<td>88.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 7</td>
<td>40.20</td>
<td>42.40</td>
<td>40.70</td>
<td>48.40</td>
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<td>1151</td>
<td>64.99</td>
<td>56.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 8</td>
<td>36.70</td>
<td>39.00</td>
<td>44.90</td>
<td>42.70</td>
<td>45.50</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>1518</td>
<td>78.46</td>
<td>67.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 9</td>
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<td>52.80</td>
<td>50.40</td>
<td>53.50</td>
<td>52.80</td>
<td>42.90</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>96.43</td>
<td>98.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 10*</td>
<td>36.20</td>
<td>46.80</td>
<td>39.90</td>
<td>48.30</td>
<td>41.30</td>
<td>35.40</td>
<td>1058</td>
<td>59.17</td>
<td>81.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 11</td>
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<td>49.00</td>
<td>49.80</td>
<td>47.30</td>
<td>43.50</td>
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<td>1376</td>
<td>58.72</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>48.00</td>
<td>56.90</td>
<td>50.70</td>
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<td>43.40</td>
<td>815</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>39.90</td>
<td>47.80</td>
<td>49.80</td>
<td>46.40</td>
<td>46.50</td>
<td>57.90</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>72.70</td>
<td>94.25</td>
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<td>44.40</td>
<td>43.70</td>
<td>39.10</td>
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<td>30.90</td>
<td>854</td>
<td>58.55</td>
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</tr>
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<td>LP 15*</td>
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<td>54.00</td>
<td>50.60</td>
<td>49.00</td>
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<td>38.30</td>
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<td>79.46</td>
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<td>53.10</td>
<td>54.10</td>
<td>44.80</td>
<td>39.90</td>
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<td>47.80</td>
<td>76.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 18</td>
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<td>25.50</td>
<td>31.00</td>
<td>37.10</td>
<td>40.40</td>
<td>46.10</td>
<td>1790</td>
<td>75.36</td>
<td>87.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 19</td>
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<td>44.00</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>47.90</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>67.46</td>
<td>64.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVG</td>
<td>42.25</td>
<td>45.24</td>
<td>47.65</td>
<td>47.55</td>
<td>45.44</td>
<td>42.93</td>
<td>1111.05</td>
<td>68.92</td>
<td>79.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP 20*</td>
<td>50.90</td>
<td>56.60</td>
<td>58.20</td>
<td>59.20</td>
<td>53.10</td>
<td>42.30</td>
<td>1483</td>
<td>52.66</td>
<td>64.65</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 3.2. Summary of Demographics and Academic Performance for “Beating the Odds” High Schools in North Carolina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Performance Composite</th>
<th>2006-07 ADM</th>
<th>% Needy</th>
<th>% Black</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BTO 1</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>61.00</td>
<td>79.20</td>
<td>76.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO 2</td>
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<td>69.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTO 3</td>
<td>62.80</td>
<td>71.20</td>
<td>72.50</td>
<td>75.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO 4</td>
<td>62.40</td>
<td>67.30</td>
<td>77.50</td>
<td>78.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO 5</td>
<td>56.60</td>
<td>55.80</td>
<td>65.40</td>
<td>73.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO 6</td>
<td>51.50</td>
<td>50.30</td>
<td>60.40</td>
<td>65.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO 7</td>
<td>46.60</td>
<td>55.70</td>
<td>63.50</td>
<td>72.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO 8</td>
<td>66.50</td>
<td>68.50</td>
<td>73.10</td>
<td>71.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO 9</td>
<td>76.80</td>
<td>72.30</td>
<td>74.90</td>
<td>71.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVG</td>
<td>58.43</td>
<td>62.42</td>
<td>70.17</td>
<td>72.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sites

The target population for the HSRA project was principals and teachers in high schools serving students from challenging backgrounds (e.g. lower SES, one parent families, urban, etc.). Therefore, the target population for this secondary analysis is the same. Specifically, this study compares the leadership practices of the principals of five Beating the Odds high schools with those of four low-performing high schools. Creswell (2008) defines a target population as a “group of individuals with some common defining characteristics that the researcher can identify and study” (p. 152). There are a total 36 participants in this
research study. Nine participants are high school principals. Two principals are females and
seven are males; four African American; four white and one Native American. Their number
of years of experience as high school administrators range from three to twelve.

Approximately 26 participants are high school teachers who participated through focus
groups. The teachers teach a variety of subjects: English 1, English 4, Algebra 1, Algebra 2,
Geometry, Biology, Physical Science, Latin, etc. The teachers’ number of years of
experience teaching high school range from three months to thirty-five years (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3. Summary of Population and Sample Size (Principal and Teacher Interview
Participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Alias</th>
<th># of Principals Interviewed</th>
<th># of Teachers Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-performing (LP) High Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP School 1</td>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP School 10</td>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP School 15</td>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP School 20</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total LP Interviews</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beating the Odds (BTO) High Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO School 5</td>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO School 8</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO School 9</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO School 10</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO School 11</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total BTO Interviews</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Individual and Focus Group Interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

During data collection for a study, the researcher can have various feelings occurring
simultaneously. For example, a researcher can feel “that you are not learning enough, that
you are learning more than you can ever deal with, that you are not learning the right stuff,
and that you are learning great stuff, but you do not know where it will lead or how it will all
fit together” (Glense, 2006, p. 46). This researcher experienced all of the above feelings. The next paragraph explains the steps for the data collection of this study.

After IRB approval, HSRA teams were assigned high schools to visit. The primary researcher for each team emailed the school a letter of explanation, an informational questionnaire for potential participants to complete, and a copy of the consent to participate form. Through several emails and phone correspondences, appointments were made and site visits took place.

During site visits, principals were interviewed and teacher focus groups were conducted utilizing the thirteen question semi-structured HSRA protocol called Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (see Appendices A and B). It was developed by researcher Peter Hallinger in 1982. This protocol was used because it was specifically designed to measure a principal’s instructional leadership. In addition, it has been utilized in many studies and is still considered by experts the best-suited instrument for use in the field of education (Hallinger, 1983, 2001; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). There are six categories on the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) that are utilized in this study:

1. Goal Setting and Communication of Goals;
2. Coordination of Curriculum and Instruction;
3. Teacher Recruitment, Assignment and Retention;
4. Supervision and Evaluation of Instruction;
5. Monitoring Student Progress and Providing Incentives for Learning;
6. Promoting Professional Development and Building Community.
Each interview was digitally-tape recorded with the participant’s consent in order to gather inclusive data. As interviews were completed, the digital-tape recordings were transcribed for coding by the researcher. The researcher participated directly or indirectly with data collection at four of the high schools. Other data utilized were collected from other researchers assigned to this project. Each high school is referred to by its status of beating the odds or low performing and a number (i.e., BTO School-5, BTO School-8, LP School-1, LP School-10) (see Table 3.3).

Data Analysis

This researcher assisted in the transcription of the principal and teacher interviews to be utilized in this analysis. After this process was complete, each transcript was hand coded; then data coding and segmenting was completed for further in-depth analysis according to the conceptual framework. Crabtree and Miller (1999) referred to this analysis process as template organizing. These researchers suggested that in order to “explore a limited facet of the data [a researcher] may construct an analysis process that begins with more structure, such as that provided by a template organizing style that uses a code manual” (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 164). Creating a code scheme/manual is reasonably fast, duplicable, and simple to understand for those pessimistic of qualitative research (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Templates assisted the researcher in “categorizing [the data] into empirically based and meaningful segments” (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 177). The culmination of template organizing was reviewing the segments and making connections that are later confirmed and legitimized (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

This researcher utilized findings from the book School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results by Marzano et al. (2005) to formulate headings and sub-headings (see
Table 3.4). There are four major headings (a) contingency theory; (b) transactional/transformational leadership; (c) moral/ethical leadership and (d) instructional leadership.

Table 3.4. Summary of Headings (Leadership Styles/Theories) and Sub-headings (Practices) for Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contingency Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>optimizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>situational awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under contingency theory, the researcher discussed the practices of optimizer, order, outreach, relationships and situational awareness. Under the leadership style of transactional/transformational, the researcher described participants’ contentment with affirmation, change agency, communication, contingent rewards and culture. In reference to moral/ethical leadership, the areas reviewed were: discipline, flexibility, focus, ideals/beliefs, and input. Underneath the umbrella of instructional leadership, the following leadership practices were examined: intellectual stimulation, involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, monitoring/evaluating, resources and visibility. Some other topics surfaced to which only one or two participants
referred, usually in a few words, and sometimes this researcher choose to include that information in the study if it was relevant.

**Establishing Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness, also called research validity (Glesne, 2006), was established by peer review for this research study. The researcher had the continual support of a colleague who has reviewed the interpretation of the principal interviews, teacher focus group interviews and reviewed documents to establish trustworthiness. This colleague worked with the researcher during this entire research process and understood the conditions and limitations of this secondary analysis.

Also, trustworthiness was established through reflexivity. According to Goodall (2000), reflexive “means to turn back our self lens through which we are interpreting the world” (p. 137). The researcher appraised her role as an assistant principal, mother of high school age children and relationships with principals and other district level support staff. These relationships, whether positive, negative and neutral, played a part in the researcher’s interpretation of the data. The researcher understood that facts are individual interpretations and when examined reflexively, they reveal to us how we view the world and why we interpret it as we do (Goodall, 2000).

**Limitations of the Study**

Glesne (2006) warned, “part of demonstrating the trustworthiness of your data is to realize the limitations of your study” (p. 169). The primary limitation of this study was the use of an existing data set. The small study sample and the interview protocol were directly designed for the High School Resource Allocation (HSRA) project and may have hindered the researcher from uncovering stronger data that could reveal even more information on
high school principals and student achievement. On the contrary, the data are not intended to
be generalized or representative of all high school principals.

Additionally, the researcher is an assistant principal in an elementary school with
emerging aspirations to become a high school associate principal or principal. As a parent of
high school age children, this researcher often analyzes the behavior and responsibilities of
high school principals and teachers as they relate to the academic success of students. Some
may view that position as one of bias; however, it should be considered that it is common for
researchers to conduct research within their own professional practices with few negative
outcomes.

Significance (Implications for Leadership)

This researcher began this study with the idea of reviewing the leadership “practices”
of Beating the Odds (BTO) and low-performing (LP) high schools as practices related to
student achievement in order to share these findings with other school administrators. It is
important to know and understand how the principals of the BTO high schools that
participated in the HSRA project appear to be raising achievement for students with
challenging circumstances (e.g. low SES, LEP, one parent family, urban area, etc.). This
researcher may not have be able to thoroughly answer the research questions, but a better
understanding of how these high schools effectively and efficiently operate was revealed.

This study is significant in several ways. The literature review listed several
qualitative and quantitative studies that reveal a positive correlation between the principal
and student achievement. One of the remedies for America’s LP high schools that serve
students with challenging circumstances has been argued to be a strong, experienced
principal who recruits and retains highly qualified and motivated experienced teachers. This
study directly addressed these issues in a way that has not been attenuated before. In this study, the researcher compared the leadership practices and styles of BTO principals to LP principals. Both the BTO and LP high schools have challenging population; but it is clear that the BTO principals are having more success with all their students. How are they improving student achievement? According to the literature review, it takes “strong” administrators, teachers, parents and community leaders to raise the achievement in schools that serve students with challenging circumstances. The researcher’s study elucidated what practices administrators use in these circumstances.

In addition, this study is significant because there is clearly not enough research correlating leadership and achievement, this researcher’s study took the correlation of leadership and achievement to the next level. In order for principals to really make a difference in high schools, the current condition of high school reform needs to be ratcheted up from a leadership perspective; again this study closely looked at the principal’s work in high school reform. Other comparable studies compared high performing to average; this study is even more important in light of dropout rates and gaps in that it examined low-performing schools and compared them with the leadership in beating the odds high schools. The study addresses the following questions concerning the aforementioned comparison: How are the BTO high schools raising achievement? What is working in these schools? and What is not working in these schools? The aforementioned questions will be answered in Chapters 4 and 5.

**Conclusion**

This chapter focused on the research design and methods that were used in this study. After passing the proposal defense, this researcher went forward with the dissertation,
completing the procedures planned in these chapters. Chapter 4, an analysis of the findings of this study, and Chapter 5, a summary, recommendations and discussion of the whole study completed the dissertation.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of chapter four is to share and explain the results of this study. This chapter includes the following sections: (a) description of the “Beating the Odds” (BTO) and Low-Performing (LP) high schools; (b) utilization of Carmon’s Conceptual Framework; (c) leadership practices related to contingency theory; (d) leadership practices related to ethical/moral leadership; (e) leadership practices related to transformational/transactional leadership; (f) leadership practices related to instructional leadership; and (g) summary.

The comparison of the leadership styles and practices of the principals in BTO and LP high attempts to show how principals might be effective in raising academic achievement for all students in their schools. The major research question that drove this study was: “What are the leadership “practices” of principals leading North Carolina BTO and LP high schools?”

The research sub-questions included the following:

1. What are the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are Beating the Odds?
2. What are the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are low-performing?
3. What possible effect do the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are Beating the Odds have on student achievement?

4. What possible effect do the leadership “practices” in North Carolina high schools that are low-performing have on student achievement?

5. How do the leadership practices of the Beating the Odds and low-performing compare and contrast?

6. How might the differences between the leadership practices of the Beating the Odds and low-performing schools effect achievement?

The discussed findings originate from the research on the articulated thoughts, opinions and experiences of the nine high schools principals in the beating the odds and low-performing high schools. The findings were obtained from transcriptions of interviews from the original study of High School Resource Allocation (HSRA) Project conducted at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill by several professors and graduate students. As stated earlier, the chapter is divided into seven sections. The answer to the first five sub-questions will be articulated in these seven sections. The first section discussed below gives a detailed portrait of the high schools and their principals. This section is followed by a discussion on the utilization of Carmon’s Conceptual Framework.

**Description of the BTO and LP High Schools**

Following this paragraph is a description of the 9 high schools analyzed, compared and contrasted in this study. The high schools have been given pseudonyms to protect the identity of the school and the confidentiality of the participants. The pseudonyms are as follows: BTO High School-5; BTO High School-8; BTO High School-9; BTO High School-10; BTO High School-11, LP High School-1; LP High School-10; LP High School-15; and
LP High School-20. The summaries of each school highlight the main goals and objectives of the principals concerning student achievement as well as attempt to capture the principals’ dominant leadership style.

**Beating the Odds High Schools**

**BTO High School-5**

BTO High School-5 is the smallest high school participating in this secondary analysis with approximately 343 students. Being 84.84% needy and 88.95% Black, this BTO high school is steadily raising achievement for all students. The principal of this school is a young African-American male with one year of experience at this high school. The principal named the school’s size and strong faculty as contributions to its success with the following phrases: “the school is small enough to have a “family-oriented atmosphere” and “[we have a] strong faculty that is ready to go the extra mile.” The principal made the following statement about the high school’s goals: “Our far-fetched goal . . . is to have everyone at Level III and Level IV for each EOC area. Our realistic goal is that we have each student be more proficient than he or she was the previous year.” This principal has a direct impact on instruction by teaching demonstration classes in English which is his area of certification. He shared that he believed in democracy, but that there are times when principals have to have dictatorships. He tells his teachers that he reserves the right to make all the decisions, but 9 times out of 10, he is going to give that power to the teachers. This principal attributed his leadership style to listening and asking for help from former professors and colleagues. BTO High School-5 principal’s dominate leadership style materialized as a combination of moral/ethical and transactional/transformational leadership due to his strength in each of these areas.
**BTO High School-8**

BTO High School-8 has approximately 833 students. This school is 58.90% needy and 64.43% Black. The principal of this school is a flamboyant white male with three years of experience at this high school. The principal takes great pride in all three site based administrators being “Comer-trained” thus proclaiming strong relationships with students. This principal also takes pride in being on the cutting edge of the practice of teacher empowerment. His involvement with instruction includes actually finding the time to teach an English course. This principal named great teacher recruitment as a factor in the high school’s success. He encourages his teachers to bring in other good teachers as he proclaims, “Nothing attracts quality like quality . . . That’s where I happen to be right now with a fair amount of our staff. They recruit better than I could ever dream of recruiting for myself.” In addition, the principal made this statement about being successful: We know our clients very well and they know us. You won’t find too many people in the town of [Treyburn-pseudonym] who don’t know me. But we try to reach into home here to get that next percentage of kids along the way. BTO high school-8 principal’s leadership style materialized as a combination of instructional and transactional/transformational leadership due to his lengthy discussions on being a fore-runner in the district in this area and the examples he was able to share.

**BTO High School-9**

BTO High School-9 is an average size high school in comparison to the others in this study with approximately 710 students. The principal is a white male with 3 years of experience in this high school. Previously, he was the assistant principal at this high school. This principal lists recruiting teachers as one of his most important jobs. Supporting athletics
is a major part of this principal’s job because athletics are important to the students and the community. However, the “instructional process” is always a first priority. Regarding the culture of the high school, he states, “I work very hard to make it a very diverse faculty . . . That’s very big . . . I want the faculty to reflect the diversity or the student body.” Curricular decisions in this high school are collaborative efforts between teacher leaders, department heads and the school improvement team. BTO High School-9 principal’s leadership style materialized as a combination of the contingency theory and transactional/transformational leadership.

BTO High School-10

BTO High School-10 is the next to the largest high school participating in this secondary analysis with approximately 1,831 students. This high school is an anomaly in reference to percent needy and percent African-American when compared to the other high schools in this study. The percentage of needy is only 27.31 and the percentage of Black is 39.65. However, when the percentage of total minority (52%) is considered, a better picture of the effort put forth to raise achievement for all students materializes. The principal prides himself in being an organizational leader. This male administrator has been a principal for eleven years; all in the same high school. This principal highlights the following three mantras that help establish the culture of success in the high school: (a) Perfect practice makes perfect; (b) The right people are your most important assets; and (c) Teachers must have high expectations. Relationship building is an important part of this principal’s daily routine. He purposefully coordinates opportunities to work and converse with his assistant principals and department heads. The most prevalent leadership style of this principal developed contingency theory followed closely by moral/ethical leadership.
**BTO High School-11**

BTO High School-11 is the largest high school in this study with over 2000 students. This school is 49.77% needy and 58.2% Black. The white female principal, with 3 years of experience at this school, was specifically recruited for her proven ability to transform schools. This principal turned her previous high school from failing (approximately 57% proficient) to a School of Distinction (approximately 86% proficient) in her four year tenure. In addition to pushes for a 4x4 block schedule for BTO High School-11, she created “EOC Prep Class” sessions that involve all teachers in the high school working together to review material for the 10 EOC classes twelve to fifteen days before EOC exams in order to increase proficiency. The focus or goal for this high school according to this spirited principal is “that every student is going to achieve . . . not just achieve, but . . . they are going to achieve to the point that they are proficient.” In addition, she pointed out that the key to this high schools’ success is the teaching staff and the support staff. She declared, “it is just very, very good . . . and they pick up each other’s slack . . . and I think smart scheduling has made a difference.” She proclaims to still be a teacher at heart and operates the school like a business. This principal’s leadership styles materialized as instructional and transformational/transactional leadership.

**Low Performing High Schools**

**LP High School-1**

LP High School-1 has 1,070 students and is 61% Black and 66.17% needy. The principal stated the biggest challenges are “academic proficiency and getting students on top . . . trying to get a culture at the school that everyone believes that the student can be educated and that includes the students, community, and the parents.” The principal
discussed the school's attempt with Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) after being
questioned about general professional development for teachers.

We have had that, but remember we were a CSR school, that is a Comprehensive
School Reform and we had a CSR called Ventures. Ventures [were] an instructional
practice and we had staff development, but it was hit and miss. Teachers were playing
games with it. We did it as long as we were under the grant and we didn't get enough
buy-in of people to think that was successful.

The principal and teachers of this low-performing school seem to be fighting to believe that
these high school students have the ability to learn. The following quote highlights this
observation:

I came here at the first part of the year and someone said that I have to push my
mission to get them to buy-in and I said well I am trying. I am trying to get them to
increase reading and writing skills. Believe . . . I told my staff I’ve got some
reflection to do here.

The principal of LP High School-1 dominant leadership style materialized as instructional
and moral/ethical.

**LP- High School-10**

LP High School-10 has approximately 1,058 students and is 81.9 % Black and
59.17% needy. This novice principal is this high school’s fifth administrator in
approximately 7 years. Joining this team with no previous high school experience, one of this
principal’s top priorities is building and sustaining trusting relations. This has been a difficult
task, since this principal has spent an insurmountable amount of time in leadership
professional development. The principal discussed one of the barriers of increasing student
achievement in the high school in the following quote:

A caring competent teacher in the classroom is probably the number one barrier that
we face [in this particular area]. And so as a leader, I am steadily looking at coming up [with] ways. And again, as I am reading . . . and Professional Learning
Communities . . . and bringing people together . . . how do you make someone care
about children?
However, this principal is optimistic that he lead change, but realizes it will take time and allowing and/or helping negative, argumentative faculty to find other employment. This principal’s dominant leadership style materialized as instructional.

**LP- High School-15**

LP High School-15 has the smallest population of the low-performing high school in this study with approximately 521 students. It has the largest African-American population with 65.7% and 66.03% needy. This high school’s biggest challenge was articulated as “trying to raise staff and [students] expectation and increase high order thinking skills of teachers and students.” She also acknowledged that there was a problem with parental involvement.

The interviewer: When you came in [as principal] did someone tell you what you should do here [at the high school]
Principal: Get [the] scores up and change the perception of the school. They [the District] wanted it [the high school] to be perceives as a safe place to be.

The African-American female principal with 3 years of experience in this high school discussed the new schedule the high school is adjusting to for the 2006-07 school year. “We went from 6 periods to [a] 90 minute block schedule this year. The pacing guides have to be revised.” The staff in this low-performing high school made crucial curriculum adjustments. The dominant leadership style of this principal developed as instructional.

**LP- High School 20**

LP-High School 20 is the largest low-performing high school in this study with approximately 1,483 students. Approximately 52.66% are needy and 64.65% are Black. Only about 120 students are enrolled in the school’s International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. The white male educator has been principal at this school for 2 years. This International Baccalaureate (IB) high school is attempting to incorporate Balanced Literacy, Inquiry Based
Projects and learning focus strategies to increase all academic areas, especially reading and writing. When questioned by the interviewer about primary goals and focuses for the new school year, the principal made the following statement:

We have to continue implementing the IB and cultural arts programs and be successful, but the overriding thing that we’ve talked about with our faculty are the test scores on the EOC have to come up . . . We have made it clear that the performance on the EOC has to be our number one priority.

This principal prides himself in being a great communicator because the majority of the decisions that are made in the high school originated from the “group or committee approach.” He made the following statement:

I guess my preference is to get a lot of inputs and so forth, but there are times when we obviously say this is what we are going to have to do. I like that to be the exception, not the rule, because I like to have group input and [broader] based decision making processes.

This principals leadership style is a combination of moral/ethical and transactional/transformational leadership.

Listed above are the descriptions of the nine high schools compared in this study. What follows is an explanation for how Carmon’s Conceptual Framework was used to outline the use of the 21 leadership “practices” in the nine high schools.

**Utilization of Carmon’s Conceptual Framework Components**

Knowing the right thing to do is the central problem of school improvement. Holding schools accountable for their performance depends on having people in schools with the knowledge, skill, and judgment to make the improvements that will increase student performance. (Elmore, 2003, p. 9)

Whether a school operates effectively or not, increases or decreases a student’s chances of academic success. Marzano (2003) has shown that students in effective schools as opposed to ineffective schools have a 44 percent difference in their expected passing rate on a test that has a typical passing rate of 50 percent. (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 3)
As stated in the quotes above, it is important that the principals, teachers, students and parents perform the right work in school in order to increase student achievement. Teachers must use researched “best practices” and principals must be able to recognize those practices as well as relationship building skills in classrooms. The principals in this study utilized the 21 leadership “practices” depicted in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework in similar and different ways. The way they utilized the practices affected the high school’s culture, teachers’ and parents’ trust and confidence, and student academic achievement.

Consequently, this researcher created a table to depict the prevalence and the strength of leadership “practices” in each high school highlighted in this secondary analysis. The positive use of “practices” is marked with a “P.” The negative use of “practices” is marked with “N.” Mixed (positive/negative) use of “practices” is marked with “P/N” or “N/P” the latter suggesting that the leadership “practice” was utilized more negatively than positively. If a practice is unused or not referenced by a principal, it is marked with an “O” (see Table 4.2).

Decisions to rate a particular principal’s use of a practice with “P,” “N,” “P/N,” “N/P,” or “O” was subjective in nature, but methodical in practice. Principals may have used practices in a combination of ways including name, a synonym or an example. For instance, one of the BTO principals actually stated that she was recruited to be a change agent for the high school and she gave explicit examples of the changes implemented throughout the high school. Thus, a practice was labeled with a “P” if the principal actually used the term and/or stated how he/she used the practice and gave reasonable examples throughout the interview. On the other hand, the practice was marked with an “N” if the principal’s discussion of a practice is negative in nature and the examples provided seemed detrimental to academic
growth in the high school. “P/N” was utilized if a principal discussed the practice in a positive light, but then contradicted the positive statement with their actions which limited their perception about improving academic achievement. On the contrary, a practice was labeled with “N/P” if the reverse of aforementioned statement occurred. That is, if the principal discussed the practice in a negative light, but shared a positive example, then the label is “N/P.” Finally a practice is label with “O” if the principals failed to mention the practice by name, synonym, or an example.

From Table 4.1, the researcher gathered that all of the beating the odds and low-performing high schools attempted to utilize almost all of the 21 practices in either a positive or negative way. Some principals may have addressed a “practice” negatively, but later in the interview made some positive statements or shared a positive story about how using the “practice” works or worked in their school. Omission of practices was not common in this study.

**Leadership Practices Related to the Contingency Theory**

**Beating the Odds High Schools and the Contingency Theory**

In analyzing the BTO principals’ interview responses as it pertains to the contingency theory and the following six leadership “practices” highlighted in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) flexibility; (b) optimizer; (c) order; (d) outreach; (e) relationship; and (f) situational awareness many clear examples materialized (Marzano et al., 2005). As stated in Chapter 2, the essence of the contingency theory is that different situations, environments, and cultures call for different leadership styles in order for change to occur.
Table 4.1. *Summary of Usage of Leadership “Practices” Based on Interviews and Criteria from Carmon’s Conceptual Framework*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Alias</th>
<th>BTO 5</th>
<th>BTO 8</th>
<th>BTO 9</th>
<th>BTO 10</th>
<th>BTO 11</th>
<th>LP 1</th>
<th>LP 10</th>
<th>LP 15</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership “Practices”</strong></td>
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<td>Change Agent</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affirmation</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>N/P</td>
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<td>Culture</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>P/N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N/P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contingent Rewards</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>N/P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>N/P</td>
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<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
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<td>Focus</td>
<td>P/N</td>
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<td>Ideals/Belief</td>
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<td>Input</td>
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<td>P/N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Situational Awareness</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>N/P</td>
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<td>School Alias</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>N/P</td>
<td>N/P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optimizer</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring/Evaluation</td>
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<td>Knowledge of Curriculum Instruction &amp; Assessment</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involvement in Curriculum Instruction &amp; Assessment</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>P/N</td>
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<td>Visibility</td>
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<td>P/N</td>
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<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
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Table 4.2. *Summary of Usage of Contingency Theory Leadership Practices*

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<th>School Alias</th>
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<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
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<td>P/N</td>
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<td>Situational Awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
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<td>N/P</td>
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<tr>
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<td>P+</td>
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Order, Outreach, and Situational Awareness

In examining the principals’ responses as it pertains to order, outreach and situational awareness for the BTO High Schools, all five principals talked extensively about strategically matching teachers to appropriate courses using assessment data and teacher surveys. All of these BTO principals seemed to have a high sense of self-efficacy. According to Bandera (1986) the characteristics that attribute to self-efficacy are (a) confidence in self and others, (b) ability to organize, and (c) ability to manage prospective situations. For example, they prided themselves in being able to hire the best teachers. They discuss how hard they worked at teacher recruitment and how they expect their teachers to help duplicate themselves and guide the best teachers to their schools. BTO High School-9 principal discussing how he reaches out to perspective teachers:

What do I do? I tell them what a great place this is. You know most teachers want to teach in a [great] place. Money is not always the most important thing. Of course we are competitive. We have done a pretty good job with making ourselves competitive. We have a signing bonus and the supplement is pretty good. Teachers want to teach where they can teach, where they are appreciated, and where they are nurtured also. So, word of mouth helps me a lot.

Principal of BTO High School-5 shared how he is very honest with during recruitment and outreach:

We do team interviews—dept chair, asst principal, others. Because this is a family. Always up front, we tell them [interviewee] we are 90% minority, 79% FRL, and if you don’t have either some experience working with those populations or a strong desire to work with those populations, then this is not the place for you.

Principals are not only responsible for effectively communicating with their faculty staff, students and parents, but also the community. Outreach is important outside the school as well as in the school. These principals made extra efforts to share their visions for the school with the community. For example, the principal of BTO High School-8
communicated the following information. “We talk about it every time we are together. [We] have what we call Achievement Night; where we share our goals with the community. [In addition], we share our accomplishments and our downfalls with the community.”

In reference to situational awareness, the areas within the BTO High Schools with similarities are: (a) great teachers teaching level 1 and 2 students, (b) use of before, during and after school tutoring, (c) examples of nurturing and caring of students. These great administrative leaders have unique ways of making sure the neediest students received the best teachers. One gave an example of convincing an English IV teacher to move to freshmen English because he believed she could make a difference with her firm and fair techniques. The Principal of BTO High School 9 made the following statement about his teachers’ commitment to all students.

So what we’ve done . . . is to take some of our very best teachers—you know like [Mrs. Johnson-pseudonym] who teaches Honors English I and also teaches Co-op. I’ve got teachers who actually volunteer to teach my at risk kids. And when you have that then they’re [the students] getting good teachers.

I’ve experimented in the past with putting my lowest students with my very best teachers which that sometimes the best teachers think they are suppose to teach the top notch kids so that has been very interesting and very successful. It’s a team decision with me making the final decision. I will normally map out what I think maybe we ought to do then I’ll meet with each department and they have the opportunity to maybe change my mind. Once we meet with all departments we make the final decisions. I give them the opportunity to change my mind if they don’t like what we are doing.

All five schools utilized some form and combination of before, during and after school tutoring; at least 2 schools even have classes on some Saturdays. In most cases, except for the Saturday tutoring sessions, teachers are not paid to tutor. It is encouraged and considered a part of their job. Principal of BTO High School-5 cited how he leads by example and tutors students and acts as a substitute.
All teachers do tutoring. That is a requirement and expectation. At least 1 day a week, each teacher encouraged to go above and beyond. Last semester, English, my area... I took lowest students to work with. Sometimes if I have trouble finding subs, I will go in and teach the class that day. Kids get a kick out of that. They don’t believe that principals are teachers.

**Relationships**

In terms of specific examples of principals and teachers building significant relationships, all of the principal participants gave concrete examples of how and/or why they care about the teachers and students they support. One BTO principal shared that the relationship piece is critically important. “The kids don’t know how much you know until they know how much you care.” He went on to say that teachers need to “go the extra mile to make sure kids know you are interested in them outside the classroom. “BTO High School-8 discussed the kind of relationship he expects between the teachers and the students.

I want my students to like their teachers. I want them to teach from bell to bell of course. This is something that is important to me. And for the most part at High School B, I do not get a lot of parents coming to my school complaining about my teachers. Which before I had some problems with—with teachers who had been there a while. You know, just didn’t want to change and we struggled with some things.

Principal of BTO High School-5 continued along the same thought pattern:

Teach from your feet; not from your seat. [The principal] wants to see an active relationship going on in the classroom between teachers and students and students to students ---not just worksheets. There should be 90 minutes of rigorous learning going on in the classroom.

Principal of BTO High School-9 remarked positively about his relationship with teachers.

Any chance I see to praise them [the teachers], I’ll do it in a note. Your room looked really great today. Anything and throw it in their box. We see them [the teachers] all the time. We see them at lunch [and] when we are walking the halls. I have a very personal relationship with [my entire] faculty. I talk to them. I know what is going on with them, I know about their families and we talk a lot about things like that; kid at lot, laugh a lot, [and] have a good time.
The interview responses of the larger BTO high schools described earlier revealed many strong examples of three leadership “practices” found in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: order, relationship, and situational awareness (Marzano et al., 2005). As stated previously, the essence of the contingency theory is that different situations, environments, and cultures call for different leadership styles in order for change to occur.

In terms of specific examples of building relationships, both principals of the larger BTO High Schools gave concrete examples of how and/or why they care about students and faculty. Principal of BTO High School-10 shared the importance of struggling with change in teachers so that students would like the teachers in this high school.

I want my students to like their teachers. I want them to teach from bell to bell of course. This is something that is important to me. And for the most part at BTO High School-10, I do not get a lot of parents coming to my school complaining about my teachers. Which before I had some problems with—with teachers who had been there a while. You know, just didn’t want to change and we struggled with some things.

BTO High School-11 principal continued along the same line, jovially commenting about building a relationship with students through instructional and disciplinary circumstances.

And I get on that intercom over there and tell students you’ve got the greatest teachers in the world . . . thank a teacher today. Or I will just blast the students out for throwing the trash in the floor or that kind of thing. I like talk to them like I would if they were kids. I don’t hesitate to say, “Ya’ll know I love you . . . I really do love you guys.

As noted by the study by Educational Trust (2005a), principals at high-impact high schools exert more control over who joins their staff than those at average-impact schools. BTO High School-11 shares an example of how he begins complimenting his teachers on their teaching ability from the beginning of the school year and remains conscious of the teachers he recruits and hires.
And from the very beginning, I tell them over and over that they are the best faculty, that they are the best instructors to be found anywhere. And I started working that from my very first day in a school. And with the people hire . . . when I hire somebody, I say you are joining the top notch group of faculty, teachers in the whole [District]. And if you don’t feel like you are ready for that, then go someplace else. And we talk about that.

To further establish the importance of relationship building through a mutual understanding of natural human needs, the principal of BTO High School-11 explains how he operates his school like a business.

Well I am just good to the people. See this is what I do . . . this is how I run the business. I think it is like a business. I believe that the people who are working in the organization have to know that—if you are the leader—that you have this incredible respect for them and their needs and their family. And when something comes up and that teacher says, “I need to be out Friday and Monday,” then I never ever question or show one bit of doubt that they don’t need to be out Friday and Monday. And I just make it a . . . and I say a lot . . . You need to get your life ordered here. And you need to have great faith . . . that’s your business . . . and you need to have great love for the people who are significant. And be there for them first. And if you need that at any point in time, all I need is an email or something, and you go do . . . you go where you need to go. And then I need everything you’ve got to give to these kids here. And I think that the teachers appreciate that philosophy. I ask them to think about each other to be able cover for each other. Their departments and their teams . . . you know we are like a big family here.

Order and Optimizer

All BTO principals acknowledged the importance of being organized and an optimizer. However, one principal definitely utilized his organization skills to assist students, teachers, and assistant principals in doing the right work to increase academic achievement for students at this particular high school. He called it “organizing for success.” This permeation of organization by the principal in BTO High School-10 is captured in the free verse poem written below using the principal’s words found throughout his interview.
The Principal on Organizational Leadership

The thing we talk about is organizing for success.
I was hired.
I thought alright-the worst one of all—organization skills.
Obviously, you have to have good people skills.
And
If you are not taking care of discipline
People get upset.
It’s all about organization.

We have great teachers.
My job is to take care of them.
It is not about me.
As much as it is about the people I hire.
Perfect practice makes perfect.
The right people are the most important assets.
Significant are the expectations they have for themselves.
It’s all about organization.

It’s like the NFL draft.
Administrators choose the teachers to take care of.
It’s according to their discipline reports.
Now, you [administration] can take care of discipline because you have time.
It makes it a lot easier for teachers to teach.
It starts for us in the summer.
A full and balanced schedule for all students
It’s all about organization.

It is the culture that we’ve established.
We have a very good way in which we interview people.
I hire based on talent and ability.
Is it important that the kids like you?
I want my students to like their teachers.
Teach from bell to bell.
You’re gonna take care of every kid.
It’s all about organization.

Free Verse Poem: Renee Carmon

The principal of BTO High School-11 considered organization the key to improving

instruction as well as good teaching in the following quote: “Then we’ve got to really teach
and review and reteach and remove . . . That’s been the reason we have had some growth in test scores. Good teachers [are] the key.”

**The Low-Performing Schools and the Contingency Theory**

On the contrary, responses of the principals of the LP High Schools as it pertains to the contingency theory and the following six leadership “practices” located in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) flexibility; (b) optimizer; (c) order; (d) outreach; (e) relationship; and (f) situational awareness the examples were not as clear or positive as in the BTO High Schools (Marzano et al., 2005). LP High Schools listed fewer examples and some even had difficulty answering the questions without prompting or examples.

**Flexibility, Order, Outreach, and Optimizer**

In reference to flexibility which incorporates order, outreach and being an optimizer, the principals of these LP High Schools name teacher and other support staff recruitment as sometimes a daunting and difficult task because of lower supplements, unattractive settings (drugs, fights, weapons and gangs) and the history of a bad reputation. In addition, these high schools are plagued with low self-confidence, obvious tension, cliques, high teacher turnover and increased student & teacher absenteeism. The negative publicity has a stereotypical affect on the principals’ efforts in outreach and recruitment. LP High School-1 principal made the following statement about filling vacant positions at the school.

So recruitment is tough, but again it depends on where you’ve been. It’s no different than some other places. We have a tough time in [this] County getting qualified people. And when we get them and after a while after we have nurtured them, they decide they’ll take the money somewhere else.

Principal of LP High School-20 continued with:

It is very seldom that [if] we get a parent and student into the building and see what’s really going on; it is very seldom that we don’t get them to enroll here. That it is a problem in recruiting magnet students and is a problem in recruiting teachers. I just
interviewed an English teacher for a position that is going to be open next year. It is very promising and I think that she is interested, but her last question was I hear all these things about [the high school] and all this stuff about drugs, fights, and weapons everywhere.

LP High School principals are often disappointed when newly hired recruits decide to take teaching positions at better achieving high schools, but principals inadvertently create this mind frame within their outreach pitches. Take for instances the statement from LP High School-1 about his recruiting style.

My pitch to people is that this place is a nice place to start and tour. I take people if they give me a year or two. I want to retain, but I have people who can get it done. I say that this is an opportunity for you to start.

**Relationships**

Although the principals of LP High School-1 and LP High School-20 have discussed and internalized the benefits of building strong positive relationships with staff, students and parents; trust, confidence, and support for leadership are unevenly distributed amongst the faculty. The teachers believe that they are being blamed for the school’s failure and they students should also be held accountable. Situational awareness has been a “practice” at the forefront of these principals’ leadership goals, as their schools are on display on Manning’s list with improving student achievement as their top priority. Principals are trying new innovations such as assigning best teachers to EOC courses, while still battling the stigma of being a dumping ground for young and old ineffective teachers. If the LP High School principals become skilled at teacher placement and recruitment then some success may follow. According to Education Trust (2005a) student needs should determine teacher placement. Therefore, high-impact schools use more criteria than teacher preference to make teaching assignments, looking at factors such as past student performance and the teacher’s
area of study. Teacher assignments are made to meet the needs of the students, rather than the desires of the teachers.

Situational Awareness

BTO High School-10 and BTO High School-15 principals had difficulty with mastering situational awareness, which also encompasses order, flexibility and being an optimizer. Situational awareness seemed difficult because the principals’ approach was ineffective in persuading the majority of teachers to accept responsibility for student learning. Principals revealed problems with student/teacher relationships and delivery of the curriculum and instruction through assessment data and observation, but faltered in convincing teachers to take ownership in the state of the high school. That is admitting that “these are our scores, we can’t blame students, parents, the district or Manning.” For example: LP High School-15 principal stated that “I am trying to move the heavy hitters around to the lower areas. My conversation is for teachers to teach something that they have not taught before. I have been reviewing the scores and teacher strengths.” Education Trust (2005a), found that in high-impact schools “administrators and teachers take responsibility for ensuring that struggling students get the additional help that they need . . . little is left to chance” (p. 5).

Thus, building trusting relationships, although important is challenging in these LP High Schools because teachers and students do not trust prior and previous administration and district leaders and feel blamed for the high school’s low test scores. This is probably due to high principal turnover rates in LP High School-10. According to Hargreaves and Goodson (2006) “one of the most significant events in the life of a school that is most likely to bring about a sizeable shift in direction is a change of leadership . . . it is changes of
leaders and leadership that most directly and dramatically provoke change in individual schools” (p. 18). This change can be good or bad. If effective change that effects student achievement is occurring then it is suggested that the principal remain in the school for approximately five years. On the contrary, principals do their best to advocate for students, a responsibility they don’t take for granted. “The decisions I make have to be in the best interest of the 1,100 students here,” proclaimed LP High School-10 principal.

**Outreach**

These LP High School principals also met tumultuous challenges with recruiting and retaining high qualified teachers as stated in the previous section because of negative publicity, past and present, in the community. Principals reached out to district and community stakeholders for assistance in improving their schools in order to attract more highly qualified teachers. Principal of LP High School-10 shared how district leaders in his area are building collaborative teams to discuss their teacher shortages.

> I was meeting along with our superintendent and there were some other Members . . . school board chair . . . and so we were just in the conference room brainstorming about some of the issues and things that we see and how the state could possibly assist . . . whether it mean teacher bonuses, or . . . technology.

LP High School-10 principal also shared the following example of outreach attempts.

> And the personnel director and I have talked about it in terms of getting me out on some of those recruiting visits. She does and we have started early. She has a list of anticipated vacancies in terms of starting early. That is one of the things Judge Manning is aware of as well in terms of what he can do to assist us in that area.

As stated earlier, leadership plays a significant part in teacher recruitment. LP High School principals need to find ways to make their school more attractive, to do as “principals at high-impact high schools [and] exert more control over who joins their staff” (p. 6).
Summary

BTO and LP High School principals discussed the use of the “practices” presented in reference to the contingency theory. The BTO high school principals’ interviews revealed more positive relationships and response with situational awareness as well as outreach than LP high school principals. Table 4.3 shares the prominent strengths of the BTO high school principals and the weaknesses of the LP high school principals.

Table 4.3. BTO and LP High Schools Situational Awareness and Outreach Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational Awareness and Outreach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative culture supports the recruitment of great teachers-sense of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principals, assistant principals and department heads provide exceptional support to newly recruited teachers balancing teaching assignment with veterans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principals trust and encourage teacher referrals in recruitment and hiring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruitment is often hindered by negative perceptions and stereotypes of the school environment largely associated with students’ behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers are often assigned to classes based on experience or seniority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principals fear resignation or transfer request for veteran teachers if wishes are met</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Leadership Practices as Related to Moral/Ethical Leadership

Beating the Odds High Schools and Moral/Ethical Leadership

In examining the BTO principals’ responses as it pertains to the Moral/Ethical Leadership and the following six leadership “practices” situated in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) culture; (b) discipline; (c) focus; (d) ideas/beliefs; and (e) input, various
apparent examples manifested (Marzano et al., 2005). As stated in Chapter 2, the concept of moral leadership compromises three related ideas:

1. The relationship between the leader and the led is not one merely of power, but is a genuine sharing of mutual needs, aspirations, and values.

2. The followers have latitude in responding to the initiatives of leaders.

3. Leaders take responsibility for delivering on the commitments and representations made to followers in negotiating the compact between leader and followers. (Owens, 1998, p. 210)

See Table 4.4 for a summary of usage of moral/ethical leadership issues.

Culture, Focus, and Ideas/Beliefs

The BTO Principals established a strong sense of focus through established ideas/beliefs and an inclusive culture through the setting and sharing of goals. They set their goals by differentiating data and collecting information from the School Improvement Team (SIT). Thus, the focus is on making Annually Yearly Progress (AYP), increasing writing scores, and improving attendance rate. The goals and the possession of those goals are acknowledged and embraced across the school. Additionally, there is a powerful and planned focus on the data. This finding matches what Billig et al. (2005) discovered in high-performing schools, stating that these high schools closed the achievement gap and sustained their success over time for large percentages of minority students through: (a) positive school climates and cultures with high expectations; (b) highly qualified, dedicated and motivated teachers who believed in the academic success of all students; (c) strong, experienced leaders who made data driven decisions concerning student achievement and; (d) collaborative and supportive school communities.
### Table 4.4. Summary of Usage of Moral/Ethical Leadership Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Alias</th>
<th>BTO 5</th>
<th>BTO 8</th>
<th>BTO 9</th>
<th>BTO 10</th>
<th>BTO 11</th>
<th>LP 1</th>
<th>LP 10</th>
<th>LP 15</th>
<th>LP 20</th>
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#### Leadership “Practices”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Ideals/Belief</th>
<th>Input</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideals/Belief</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input</td>
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<td>P</td>
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Thus, the BTO principals’ goals for students include having high expectations for themselves, making the right [good] choices and taking advantage of all second and third chance learning opportunities available. The communication of success travels past the priority and results of test scores into a school environment and culture that sustains high expectations. This is another characteristic that identifies high-impact and higher performing schools (Billig et al., 2005; Education Trust, 2005a).

**Discipline**

All BTO principals had meetings with each class (freshmen, sophomore, juniors and seniors) of students at the beginning of the school year to clarify expectations. One principal showed his students he cared and gained the opportunity to continually review those expectations daily. BTO High School-5 principal made the following statement about his relationship with the students:

> Daily on the announcements we revisit the goals. Our kids, it’s almost comical, they’ll tell you. If you ask them what the goals are they would tell you because they know. High expectations and make the right decisions. We revisit it daily.

Principals demanded a safe environment for students and staff through visibility and shared discipline responsibilities amongst assistant principals. BTO High School-5 principal made the following comment about having a safe school.

> This may come as a surprise, but I am very tough. But the students know that I love them to death. I get on the bus, and I ride with them to every game. Even though my girls are not doing well now, they expect to see me there. . . . I go to the churches . . . go to a different church every Sunday. They call me the funeral buzzard. I am always going to a funeral. Because I tell the kids, if you’ve heard, I heard.

Principal of BTO high school-9 discussed how he approaches the work at his school in order to guide the atmosphere and culture at the high school.

> I have to come in here with the same attitude every day. With a positive attitude, I can’t come in here ill, hateful, and mean. I have to come in here positive. I set the
tone and I work hard and we all work hard at identifying the problem, solving the problem, talking to kids, keeping them from fighting.

BTO High School-9 principal continued with:

Secondly, would be we have a very good school climate. Kids are safe. Teachers are safe. We don’t tolerate a lot of misbehaviors as far as disrespectfulness, violence, or so forth. We have an alternative school which is very instrumental in what we do because if you are going to disturb the climate here we are going to put you there. We do not deny you an education, but you are going to go the alternative school so kids understand that they are here to learn then teachers are here to teach.”

The Larger BTO High Schools

In synthesizing the principal’s responses of the larger BTO High Schools as it pertains to the ethical/moral leadership and the following six leadership “practices” positioned in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) culture; (b) discipline; (c) focus; (d) ideas/beliefs; and (e) input, various apparent examples manifested (Marzano et al., 2005). These principals vehemently acknowledge the importance of the principal being the lead culture builder as well as the guide for permeating effective goals and beliefs in the school.

Culture and Discipline

BTO High School-11 principal suggests that high schools are failing in part because the students set the culture in the school when the principal should be the lead culture builder. Both principals articulated the importance of direct discipline in their schools. This is one of the important ways they support their teachers. Keeping students and staff safe requires a principal and the faculty to be highly visible. BTO principals of these large high schools traditionally delegate the responsibility of discipline to the assistant principals. Depending on the size of the high school there are usually anywhere from 2-4 assistant principals. Principal of BTO High School-11 discusses the team effort in the following phrase: “But the team handles most of the discipline, not the principal. They’re first line, so if it comes to me then it will go to a regional [superintendent] if someone is pitching a fit.” However, problems
comprised of sex, drugs, or weapons are immediately deferred to the principal. The principal went on to share the following statement about safety, discipline, and visibility in the school.

The kids have to see you. So, in the mornings . . . like now we are not changing classes . . . so usually the first of the morning I am dealing with stuff that has to be taken care of. There will be piles of messages . . . Then I get out into the building, and then during those 4 lunches that we have, we are very visible during that time. I try not to schedule appointments and interviews like that during the lunches for us, because then they see you there.

BTO High School-10 principal continues along the same vein concerning being available and supporting teachers and students.

I have to figure out a way to make sure they [the teachers] understand our vision. That is you’re gonna take care of every kid, work from bell to bell, you’re gonna do the right things and if you need help you ask. See how my door’s open and yet we are talking because I never close my door. I mean unless it is something very personal. I want people to see my door open and stick their heads in and say, Hey, Mr. L., How is it going today; even if I have people in here. See what I’m saying. I want that to happen in my assistant principal ship. (Principal of BTO High School-10)

The positive culture in a school begins with the hiring of staff that understand and agree with the beliefs and visions of the school. BTO High School-10 principal shared how he hired the school’s football coach because having a winning team is part of the culture of the school and because winners attract winners in athletics and academics. “We have a very good way in which we interview people. I wanted a young dynamic football coach. Don’t care if he has experience. I don’t hire based on experience. I hire based on talent and ability.” This same principal used football symbolism to describe how he fairly distributes discipline and evaluation responsibilities among the administration in his building.

What I’ve done is that I have devised a draft just like the NFL Draft. I get my assistant principals together; we put all of the names on the board and I say D. G. you have first draft choice –Who do you want? He says, “I’ll take Coach –he never turns in discipline. Okay-Round B-2nd pick who do you want-I’ll take _____________”

These BTO principals demand a safe environment for students and staff through visibility and shared discipline responsibilities. Like found in the Education Trust (2005a)
study, BTO high schools policies were mostly centered on academics, not rules and regulations.

**The Low-Performing Schools and Ethical/Moral Leadership**

In examining the LP principals’ responses as it relates to the Ethical/Moral leadership and the six leadership “practices” placed in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) culture; (b) discipline; (c) focus; (d) ideas/beliefs; and (e) input, various examples were evident (Marzano et al., 2005). While ideas/beliefs may be well specified, teacher buy-in appeared very limited. LP High School-1 principal states that he is “trying to create a culture where high achievement is expected.” LP High School-20 principal records continue implementation of International Baccalaureate (IB) and cultural arts program as a main focus with increasing test scores on the EOCs as an overarching goal. LP High School -20 principals shared information about the new IB program.

The IB is a part of the magnet school technically for internationalism and the culture arts and of course internationalism centers [on] the IB program. But, we do try to take the IB philosophy and teaching methods and fuse those across the curriculum for every student. Not just the students in the IB classes . . . It is still relatively new to us. We are still sort of learning our way through it, but very pleased with where we are right now.

**Discipline**

Discipline is a “practice” that has come under fire by many spectators of the LP High Schools. Principals of these low-performing schools name parental support as the missing link in successful disciplinary programs in the LP High Schools. These low-performing schools have mentoring programs focused on character education, internationalism, reading and writing to help keep students focused on academics. LP High School-1 principal explained his thought on preventive measures for discipline in the following quote.

I am assuming that some of the reputation that [LP High School-1] was accurate at one point in time. The word on the street is that we have 6 fights here every day and
that we have police here all the time and all of that. We do have fights here like everybody else but I worked at 2 other schools in [this District] and I don’t see any more fights here than I did at those schools. So, that hurts us to some extent. I think that we are beginning to overcome that a little bit. I think that one thing that is helping us is within this magnet school process of trying to recruit magnet students. A lot of those parents are antsy to start with; but our magnet school resource teacher is available anytime. But it is predominantly in the spring that they are interested to bringing the people in to give them tours, to let them sit in on classes, and let them meet people.

Ideas/Beliefs

LP High School-15 principal seemed to have more buy-in in regards to ideas/beliefs than the other three LP High Schools in this study. LP High School-15 and LP High School-10 principals announced an instructional focus for their troubled schools. As shared in the preceding section, the faculties seem to have low academic expectations for students and the principals are consistently “trying to raise staff expectations [of students and themselves]. On the contrary, the instructional delivery and things they do in class are just the opposite.” LP High School-10 principal shared his focus and beliefs in the following quote:

I would say for this year our goal is certainly in terms of student achievement to be at the 60th percentile, in terms of student achievement. Those EOC test scores . . . I would certainly think that we would know what those goals are. I guess personal goals of the school . . . to increase certainly . . . and I don’t know in terms of this one year, but our graduation rate is definitely a goal to make sure . . . and so within that individual goals . . . student attendance, faculty attendance . . . but all of those goals branching out into the broader goal of increasing student achievement. A personal goal, if you want to talk about goals again, having all of our positions staffed by highly qualified, certified teachers would be a goal. It certainly was not that way when I arrived, and so . . .

Interestingly enough, LP High School-15 principal raved about not having unfilled positions or a high turnover rate. She also reported that all of the teachers at this low-performing high school were highly qualified. She noted that the majority of the teachers have roots in the community so they stay; it’s the young relocated teachers that leave. However, the State Report Card revealed the following: 90% fully licensed, 96% highly
qualified, 0% Nationally Board Certified (NBCT), and a 20% teacher turnover rate. Unlike LP High School-15, LP High School-20 reported difficulty with recruiting and a high teacher turnover rate.

**Culture**

In order to improve the culture of these high schools, both principals discuss how they try to share their beliefs of positive community involvement and minimize stakeholders’ negative perceptions of the school during parent meetings and interviews. However, the schools’ bad reputations tend to overshadow the good that takes place in the school. LP High School-10 principal was charged with making her high school “a safe place to be” for students and faculty. Neither principal shared detailed information about discipline problems. However, they both have programs in place that monitor student achievement, build character and award students for a job well done. Principal of LP High School-10 shared the following information: “We are involved with character education—so we use character cards. Through this program students exhibiting the character of the month are rewarded—such as tickets to games and pizza parties. Teachers do different things in their classes.” While acknowledged as an important practice that influences change in academic achievement in the meta-analysis study (Marzano et al., 2005), character education programs combined with rewards was not a practice associated with the success in the high-impact and high performing schools in the Billig et al. (2005) and Education Trust (2005a) studies.

**Summary**

BTO and LP high school principals communicated important information concerning the leadership “practices” listed under moral/ethical leadership. BTO high school principals were significantly more positive and creative in describing the processes used to share the high school’s ideas/beliefs and focus as well as establishing a culture for learning than the LP
high schools. Table 4.5 shows the importance of effective goal setting and communicating a common language throughout the school community.

**Table 4.5. BTO and LP High School Principals—Culture, Ideas/Beliefs, and Focus Comparison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture, Ideas/Beliefs and Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal setting effectively led by principals and buy-in established by the communication of goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal setting and communication concerning academic growth is based on data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are committed to goals and this often guides school improvement at departmental and classroom levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders share a common language concerning goals—much like an orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal clearly articulates the integration of goals focusing on racial/socioeconomic statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal settings led chiefly by principals; but insignificant to a portion of stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal setting is largely based on performance measures and external pressures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers feel an incredible amount of anxiety to meet external demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers and principals do not take ownership of the future of their high schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers use demographics of the high school as a cause for not meeting goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership Practices Related to Instructional/Pedagogical Leadership**

**Beating the Odds High Schools and Instructional/Pedagogical Leadership**

In evaluating the BTO principals’ responses as it pertains to instructional/pedagogical leadership and the following six leadership “practices” in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) intellectual stimulation; (b) involvement in curriculum, instruction and assessment; (c) knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment; (d) monitoring & evaluation; (e) resources; and (f) visibility various apparent examples were articulated (Marzano et al.,
Instructional leadership, not just by the principal but by a wider cast of individuals in both formal and informal leadership roles, can play a central role in shifting the emphasis of school activity more directly onto instructional improvements that lead to enhanced student learning. (p. 1)

Involvement in and Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

All five Beating the Odds high school principals named hiring skilled teachers as an important part of instructional leadership. For example, the principal of BTO High School-9 made the following statement: “I guess the priority is great teachers. I have great teachers who are very passionate about what they do. They are very energetic. Curriculum knowledge is very strong.” As discussed in the successful study by Education Trust (2005a), high impact schools focused on recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and then placing them in courses with the struggling students. This principal of BTO High School-9 honed in on the importance of being the lead learner in the school as an instructional leader:

I have to be the instructional leader; so I want to know what’s going on in the classroom and plus I have to develop a relationship with the kids. I constantly talk to the kids. We all do; all of my assistant principals do, and I do. Anybody can sit up here and sign papers all day. That’s not why I am here. It’s not what I enjoy either.

I enjoy being out there and being around the kids and stopping them from fighting and listening to their drama. A lot of the time you can avoid stuff like that by being out there. You can just sense it and know what’s going on. It’s almost like coaching. You can feel it in the morning when energy is high and it’s going to be one of those days.

In discussing involvement in curriculum, instruction and assessment; knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment; and monitoring and evaluation, these BTO principals acknowledge that they do not make all of the curriculum decisions alone.
Table 4.6. *Summary of Usage of Instructional/Pedagogical Leadership Practices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Alias</th>
<th>BTO 5</th>
<th>BTO 8</th>
<th>BTO 9</th>
<th>BTO 10</th>
<th>BTO 11</th>
<th>LP 1</th>
<th>LP 10</th>
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<td><strong>Leadership “Practices”</strong></td>
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<td>Monitoring/Evaluation</td>
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<td>Visibility</td>
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The teachers and specifically the department chairs assist in making curriculum decisions. Teachers are given opportunities for input and leadership positively acknowledges their ideas. Although leadership occasionally has to make decisions without teacher input, teachers and the principal verify that these times are infrequent, but essential. Billig et al. (2005) highlights the difference that such collaborative spirit in “closing the gap” efforts, noting particularly the collective responsibility and unwillingness to accept excuses for failure.

Leadership in the BTO high schools also attempts to match strengths and preferences with student needs, while considering teacher desires. Education Trust (2005a) clarifies that high-impact schools consider several factors in effort to match students and teachers.

BTO High School-9 principal articulated this process as follows:

It’s a collaborative type of effort with leaders, teacher department heads, and also the school improvement team. However, there are some things that I definitely say, this is what we need to do and the direction that we need to go, but for the most part people are going to buy into what you share with them if you can share with them why you need to do that. I listen. They are the experts. They know what they are doing or I wouldn’t have hired them to start with or they wouldn’t be here if they didn’t perform.

Consequently, BTO High School-9 principal explains how he plays a part in the curriculum process in the assignment of teachers:

Principal: We take our new teachers and so many times you take new teachers and you stick them to teaching 6 classes a day of pre-algebra. [That’s] the lower level classes. It’s killing them. We try to offer our teachers some classes where we might have a first year teach teaching some upper level classes along with some other classes that we need teaching. So what happens is that they are not overwhelmed.

Interviewer: You are distributing those most challenging students across teachers. [You’re] not just assigning your new people to teach the most challenging classes.

In the BTO High Schools, teachers use the NC Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) as an instructional guide and adhere to pacing guides aligned to the NCSCOS. During the summer, leadership engages in concentrated collaboration to work on prioritizing the
curriculum, creating detailed pacing guides and create reading lists. These BTO principals make it their priority to visit classrooms on at least a weekly basis, even daily when they are performing classroom walkthroughs. They encourage creative, inclusive and engaging teaching techniques which have also been identified as a best practice among high-impact schools (Billig et al., 2005; Education Trust, 2005a).

BTO High School-9 principal describes what he looks for when he visits a classroom below:

Principal: I am looking for instructional practices. I am looking to see if they have the curriculum aligned with the standard course of study. We do a thing called focused instruction. So there should be an essential question on the board everyday or on the active board that tell students the objective for the day turns it into a question. Like in Biology it might say: What is the structure of DNA? That is what they are suppose to learn that day and then if I look at their lesson plans it should match that objective and Standard Course of Study and it should be on the pacing guide somewhere where they are supposed to be. I look to see if the essential question is there, I look at the word wall to see if it has been updated. I’m looking for varied instructional practices; lectures, small groups, collaborative pairs, whatever. The pace of the class is very important. I can stand to listen to somebody talk long myself. 10 minutes is a max. That is why I hate meetings. I hate them. We are so used to going, going, going and then to have to listen to somebody talk. I hate it; so you know the kids hate it too. Fast paced. Something worked into the lesson plans to where kids can move, get up and go in pairs or whatever. Just to make sure the curriculum is being taught.

Interviewer A: Do you try to give the teachers some feedback then or later on during the day?

Principal: Yes, if it is an evaluation of course we will come in and talk if it is just a walk through I’ll drop them a note. I try to do that a lot anyway.

**Intellectual Stimulation**

In order to promote the appropriate professional development and stimulate teachers intellectually, the BTO principals have crucial curriculum conversations with staff that include analyzing data as well as reviewing the school’s system for monitoring and evaluating students. BTO High School-11 principal shares her beliefs about professional
development. “I believe professional development is necessary if it is relevant and there is a real purpose and some kind of outcome that we expect to happen.” Effective professional development implemented in these high schools included information on classroom management, organization, engaging students, reading strategies, and ESL inclusion practices. In reference to data analysis, the sharing of data and the appropriate use of data, BTO High School-11 principal involves everyone and labels these times of working together as invaluable professional development. The ultimate goal is to convince district leaders that this is the right way to be responsible with monetary resources. The focus is on professional development that is geared toward the needs of the students.

The most important professional development is the professional development that we do here. Those of us who understand with the new folks coming on board what we do to make a difference in the kids test scores . . . in the kids learning. That is the most important because everybody’s got to get into the same book here, so we have to teach each other, first of all, what the test scores mean . . . why are they important . . . how do we use them . . . how do we divide kids . . . because that takes a lot of people doing that . . . the computer does not do that. We do that hands-on . . . papers and names. And then they’ve got to learn how to work in a group. The dynamics of the group rise and fall until it kind of settles and people feel free to share and talk . . . and then the person who refuses to say a word sometimes that lead teachers will say, “Well I just can’t bring them on board.” And then I will work with that person . . . and say we really need you . . . we hired you because we need you to contribute. So that lead teacher really does a lot . . . it is not on paper as professional development but it is daily professional development in how are we going to put this lesson together . . . this is the objective, how are we going to do it . . . so everybody comes to the table with ideas . . . We have them come with activities . . . or one person has . . . for example, in math they will give the same 5 question test and they’ll bring the test results back and it has been disaggregated as to how many kids got number 1 right, how many got number 2, how many missed number 3 and what did they put instead of the right answer. We break it down . . . way down. And see, I see that as professional development.

As stipulated in the aforementioned quote and explanation, staff development in the BTO high schools is definitely based on what students need to be successful. Teachers also have the opportunity to participate in some self-selected activities. The department chair of
the BTO schools share information with the teachers in their department about upcoming staff development activities of interest. Principals permit teachers to attend the workshops or sessions they need to increase knowledge in their subject matter, sharpen their planning skills and delivery techniques. Current educational trends and/or knowledge of research-based practices that are proven to increase student achievement usually guide the principal and teacher selections. As the instructional leader, the principal leads site-based professional development at least once per month through faculty meetings or common planning periods. The BTO High School principal is devoted to effective professional development. For example, BTO HighSchool-9 principal declares that, “It is very important for faculty to know . . . that I am the instructional leader; . . . that I understand good teaching.”

In addition, BTO High-School-10 shared the success he has had with staff development for new staff:

And we have that kind of staff development for all of our new people. So this brain research is great stuff in that you really understand how the brain works and how kids thinks and why they react and why they go into self-defense mode and what not. So it’s all very interesting and fun stuff. As far as the pacing guides they kind of expect the principals to take care of those things. Our IRT teacher, the one thing I do when I hire a teacher and let’s say I have her teach algebra 1, I’m going to give her all of the algebra I stuff as soon as possible because I want her to start planning during the summer rather than her come three days before school and you now and know she’s scrabbling.

The principal of BTO High School-10 acknowledged that he set the tone of the school as an instructional leader and that he enjoys visiting the classrooms to monitor student achievement. He made the following statement:

There is always an emphasis on the SCOS. But, what [this] County is really into is dealing with creating great classrooms, brain research and how to teach and things that are important like creating a great climate and organized lesson and those kinds of things.
The principals in these BTO high schools accept that there is a lot of work to do and that it gets very difficult some days. However, they continue to work hard and expect their assistant principals, teachers and students to work hard, too. They lead by example and they love the work. In implementing standards-based instruction, the curriculum is aligned and data is used consistently in making curricular decisions, as observed in high-impact schools (Billig et al., 2005; Education Trust, 2005a). BTO High School-10 principal made the following statement about the process of scheduling, the impact it has on students and the part his assistant principals play in this procedure.

It starts for us in the summer. And what we do differently at this high school than probably most high schools is that we—me and the rest of the assistant principals myself go through every registration form ourselves. You see, starting school it is unacceptable . . . for even one student to even be short one class . . . And I’ve been to schools and on the first day of school and they have a 150 kids in the auditorium because they don’t have schedules or they have long lines . . . We also start establishing relationships. We eat lunch together. We talk. And then every assistant principal understands about scheduling. We go through every schedule and after we go through every schedule we make sure that kids are signed up for what they’ve asked for and for what they are eligible to take. For example if I’ve got a student who has signed up for Chemistry, but yet failed geometry . . . the prerequisite for geometry is Algebra 2. After we get the schedules then I make the assistant principal go through and mark the core classes So, we balance every schedule. Now, what happens when you balance their schedule, well it is much easier for a kid to do well because they are not overloaded.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

In reference to monitoring students’ progress and providing incentives for learning like in the contingency theory, the areas with similarities in the 5 BTO high schools are: (a) great teachers teaching level 1 and 2 students; (b) use of before, during and after school tutoring; (c) teaching of pre- sections of the more difficult EOC courses; and (d) examples of nurturing and caring of students. These BTO high school leaders designed and implemented ways of ensuring that the students requiring the most understanding and a supportive
environment receive the finest teachers. BTO High School-8 principal gave an example of how he “deliberately distributed Nationally Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) across” two English teams. He added, “I don’t want anybody saying that I had my best and brightest teachers with best and brightest kids.” He believed these NBCT could make a difference because they seem to have a better understanding of the subject matter they teach, why they teach it, and how to effectively delivery instruction. BTO High School-10 elaborates on the details of the process of meeting the need of the level 1 and 2 students.

We do it in math. And all students who come to me that have scored a level 1 and level 2 or they’ve just failed English I. We put them in our success class. The key in what we do is my success teacher is one of my very best English teachers . . . [students] consistently 90 to 100 percent on the EOC’s. I realize in order for me to be successful in helping those students; I’ve got to put great teachers in those positions . . . I’ve got teachers who actually volunteer to teach my at risk kids. And when you have that then they’re [the students] getting good teachers. I tell you . . .

The importance of a nurturing environment is certainly prevalent in the BTO high schools. As stated early, “students don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care.” The principal of BTO High School-9 made the following statement about his teachers’ commitment to all students.

There is a nurturing atmosphere here with teachers. The reason we are difficult is not the diversity it’s the poverty. That’s what makes us a difficult school. Our teachers are very nurturing. They form relationships with kids. I work very hard to make it a very diverse faculty. That’s very big I want the faculty to reflect the diversity of the student body. White Principals have white Principal teachers they can talk to & our African American Principals have African American Principal role models. That’s been important in the relationships that our teachers try to cultivate. The sincerely care. It’s not we talk this stuff a lot of times but these teachers sincerely care in get involved in their lives a lot of times.

BTO High School-11 principal made the following statement about data, curriculum and scheduling. His teachers show they care my observing students and desegregating the data to see what their academic needs actually are. “My scheduling will drive the school. But
anyway, we take tons of historical data on each child coming into the 9th grade, and then
going to the 10th . . . 11th.” One BTO high school shared how the school team reviewed
middle school data.

How we get our kids to perform is largely [by] assessing them where they are. [The] teachers [are] very good at figuring out what our kids’ deficiencies are. [They] look at middle school data as soon as we have any access to it. Hard to do this year because of delay in math scores, so looked at 7th grade data. Try to teach them as freshmen just above their head, so they are reaching for it but it’s very attainable.

Education Trust (2005a) indicates several criteria that high-impact schools use to assistant with increasing student achievement:

High-impact schools use more criteria than teacher preference to make teaching assignments, looking at factors such as past student performance and the teacher’s area of study. Teacher assignments are made to meet the needs of the students, rather than the desires of the teachers. In average-impact schools, teaching assignments are more likely to be determined by staff seniority and teacher preference. (p. 6)

*More on Monitoring and Evaluation*

Another notable example of how involved these principals are in curriculum and monitoring and evaluating students was shared by BTO High School-8 principal. Like BTO High School-5 principal, he teaches a section of English although “it takes a great deal of his time. This happened in the transition of reclaiming AP courses from a nearby community college in order get the “best and brightest” students more engaged and recommitted to the high school in their junior and senior year. Moreover, the goal was to end the “consumeristic mentality” among these student leaders.

Also, in order to monitor and evaluate student progress, BTO High School principals and teachers use benchmark tests in each End-of-Course (EOC) subject area. One principal uses a student services management team, while another uses guidance counselors and
department heads to assist with monitoring student progress. BTO High School-8 principal stated the following about teachers working with the neediest students.

You really need to know who your twos are that have a potential for being threes and who your low threes are who have a potential for being twos. If you give a teacher a class of kids who ought to be performing better than they are, you have to figure out what’s holding up that performance.

The principal of BTO High School-9 articulates how he monitors and evaluates students.

We have data on every kid. [We use] Eboss. It will predict the probability in [a student] making a 3 on [the] EOC for Biology. [The goal is to] move the student from here to here. We try to preach that to our teachers and they appreciate that. So that has been one of the reasons that we’ve made high growth in the last 7 years . . . because that’s our philosophy. Even in the proficiency level we have been able to maintain in the 70’s and its getting more and more difficult because the state is making it more and more difficult, but at the same time we have had success because we really worked hard in that area. We want growth. We want growth. We use Eboss to schedule kids.

Principals and assistant principals evaluate data and monitor growth at the individual student level. BTO High School-9 commented on his involvement with monitoring student achievement. He stressing to the teachers that they can make a difference and they must.

We have the data on every kid. I can tell you right now what Joe has to make in Biology to make high growth. There is Eboss (?). It will predict the probability in him making a 3 on EOC Biology. He might have a 20% chance of making a 3 if the teacher looks at that normally the teacher is like there is no way I am going to get a 3 out of him. What I really preach is I don’t care if he has a 20% chance of making a level 3, he can make growth.

BTO High School-9 continues on with more words of encouragement and non-negotiable tasks to teachers.

You tell me in Biology and I am a Biology teacher that he is reading on a 4th grade level and I have to get a 3 on a EOC. I mean come on, that is going to take a minor miracle because I can’t teach him to read in 90 days, but I can move him from here to here. We really try to preach that to our teachers and they appreciate that. So that has been one of the reasons that we’ve made high growth in the last 7 years because that’s our philosophy. Even in the proficiency level we have been able to maintain in the 70’s and it’s getting more and more difficult because the state is making it more and
more difficult, but at the same time we have had success because we really worked hard in that area. We want growth. We want growth.

**Resources**

All BTO schools utilize some combination of before, during, and after school tutoring, and one school even has classes on some Saturdays. In most cases, except for the Saturday tutoring sessions, teachers are not paid to tutor. It is encouraged and considered a part of their job. The principal of BTO High School-5 cites how he leads by example and tutors students and acts as a substitute.

All teachers do tutoring. That is a requirement and expectation. At least one day a week, each teacher encouraged to go above and beyond. Last semester, English my area . . . I took lowest students to work with. Sometimes have trouble finding subs, I will go in and teach the class that day. Kids get a kick out of that. They don’t believe that principals are teachers.

There is a deliberate focus on the basics in the majority of the BTO highs schools noted by the reality that a large percentage of students in these schools are enrolled in introductory classes or participate in Freshmen Academies or Success Academies. For instance, Introduction to Biology, a remediation course to prepare for Biology I, maybe taken in the first or second semester of ninth grade. If students pass the introductory course, they are able to take Biology I the following semester. English I, Algebra I, English II, and Physical Science also offer introductory classes. These introductory classes are crucial since many students enter high school reading at the fourth- and fifth-grade level. These are the students that some principals and teachers say should have been retained in 8th grade at the proficiency gateway. On the contrary, the implementation of these remediation classes reduces opportunities for electives. The principal of BTO High School-9 discusses how he assists in helping lower level students become proficient.
Principal: We use Eboss to schedule kids. If you’ve got a 20% chance of being successful in Biology then I am probably going to want to put you with this teacher. I would say probably my best Biology teacher. So we try to be detailed about scheduling where we put kids based on data.

Interviewer B: Now are those students that you have identified via Eboss as students who are having some challenges, and you put them with the best teacher, are they with the best teacher together?

Principal: The whole room like that you mean?

Interviewer B: Yes

Principal: No, they are not all together. I really believe that kids pull kids up sometimes. I’ve seen that happen so many times. Another way we use that is we have taken our EOC courses and for our really low kids have made them year long. So Biology we may have Intro to Biology and then Biology based on the fact that they may need more exposure to the curriculum so we use Eboss for that too. So no, we don’t. We try to mix it.

Interviewer B: So they may be in the Intro Class, but when they get into the Biology you may have some higher level Biology students and some lower, but the Intro class is what your 1’s and 2’s?

Principal: Normally.

BTO high schools use Leandro monies they receive to assist with monitoring student academic achievement. BTO High School-5 shared that . . . “We are a Leandro district. So we do have a pot of money for that. Just by virtue of having that money, we are required to know who our Level 1 and Level 2 [students] are. And so, we identify those students very early on.”

Teachers agreed with the principals’ focus, “That is the primary administrative focus. They want to see . . . While we can’t guarantee every child scores a three or four; we should be able to guarantee that every child grows in a given academic year.”

Visibility

Principals are not only responsible for effectively communicating with their faculty staff, students and parents, but also the community. Visibility is important outside the school
as well as in the school. These principals made extra efforts to share their visions for the school with the community. For example, the principal of BTO High School-5 communicated the following information. “We talk about it every time we are together. [We] have what we call *Achievement Night*; where we share our goals with the community. [In addition], we share our accomplishments and our downfalls with the community.”

In addition, the establishment of genuine professional learning communities (PLCs) has assisted in this school community building practice in at least 3 out of 5 of these BTO High Schools. Billig et al. (2005) indicates that teachers in high-impact high schools possess:

- Collaborative and optimistic attitude. Adults in the schools are passionate and enthusiastic about their schools and the schools’ accomplishments. They accept no excuses and consistently tackle tough challenges, saying that if they work together, they can succeed. Teachers in these schools collaborate often and share ideas for how to improve. They work with parents and community members in establishing a culture of success at the school. (p. 2)

**The Low-Performing High Schools and Instructional/Pedagogical Leadership**

In reviewing the LP principals’ responses as it refers to instructional leadership and the following six leadership “practices” positioned in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) intellectual stimulation; (b) involvement in curriculum, instruction & assessment; (c) knowledge of curriculum; monitoring and evaluation; (d) resources; and (e) visibility, some “practices” were stronger than others (Marzano et al., 2005). While teachers in these low-performing high schools are battling low morale and seeking trusting relationships, there are definitely some extraordinarily talented and committed teachers in each of these schools.

**Involvement in and Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

The principals at the LP High Schools expect their teachers to utilize the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCS), pacing guides, and assessments to assist in increasing student achievement. Although, these resources are present they are not
meticulously followed or understood because it is often a new requirement or implementation process in the low-performing high school. In addition, the EOC foundation courses systematically followed in the BTO High Schools are used inadequately or randomly in some of the LP High Schools. LP High Schools implement some form of the 4x4 block schedule that is preferred and religiously followed in the BTO schools with more regular courses than Honors and AP. LP High School-1 principal shared his perspective of regular and exceptional students.

... We do tracking in all high schools. You do AP courses and you do Honors; you do tracking. You need the regular kids there and then you have some exceptional students. We are doing some tracking. Schools like mine need to find where we have a rare group of students with a teacher that has the philosophy [Allow the student to be successful by helping them grasp important concepts even though they make minor mistakes on assessments] and belief and show that the class can be successful.

In order to better handle academic, social and behavior transitions, LP High Schools are beginning to implement “Freshmen Academies.” Due to limited resources and buy-in from teachers, parents and students, LP High Schools limit the number of second chance learning opportunities in the form of before and/or after school and during school tutoring, computer-based School Island and Saturday Academies.

**Monitoring, Evaluation, and Visibility**

In reference to monitoring and evaluation, due to demands of Judge Manning, there is an increase in visibility through classroom observations and feedback in LP High Schools. Principals use the traditional method for teacher evaluation as well as walk-throughs and crucial conversations. Principals made it clear to teachers what they were looking for in order to increase student achievement. Principals wanted to see objectives and agendas for lessons on the board, great student engagement, more hands-on instruction and less worksheets and lecturing. Teachers at the LP High Schools appear to externalize the responsibility for
learning outcomes instead of being proactive and embracing every opportunity to increase skill and productivity in order to increase student achievement. Although principals profess to analysis and share student data from benchmark testing, EOC and other assessments, the effective usage of these tools is minimal. Matter of fact, these principals and teachers struggle with doing what is best for children. LP High School-1 principal shares his heart concerning this injustice.

In education sometimes we are hypocritical. We say some things and do some others. We know that this kid needs the best teacher that is out there that means the best skills. A teacher that has all the pedagogy down and one that has the relationship down. Those are the ones that should teach the difficult kids. But, you don’t get that teacher wanting to teach the difficult kids. They feel like after a while I need to teach this honor kid. You run into that situation and with us we have some of that, but because we don’t have but so much honors you still have to teach the regular kids and your results are quite different.

These LP High School principals are certainly involved in instruction. Some instructional practices, tutoring, and student and teacher motivational strategies that have been implemented have been successful. LP High School-15 made high growth during the 2006-07 school year. When asked by an interviewer about what actually gets taught in the classrooms, LP High School-15 principal responded with the following statement:

The North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) is the driver. Teachers plan units together during their common planning time. It has changed from previous years where they just taught what they liked.

She continued with the statement below:

I have been reviewing the scores and teacher strengths. For Example: Calculus, Geometry, Algebra,—EOC teachers are certified to teach other math, but they may have taught calculus every year [since Mrs. McCray has been principal-3yrs]—This [the trying to teach another subject in the area a teacher is certified]. Mrs. McCray suggested that she may give [EOC teachers] the math dept, the information with parameters and let them make the decision.
All four principals are making an effort to ensure that teachers make instructional changes that will help increase students academic proficiency. However, some LP principals acknowledge that they are more teacher-oriented than student-oriented such that some instructional decisions are clearly not best for students. LP High School-10 principal shared:

We try to make sure that the students have a voice in terms of what happens in the school . . . to lead a paradigm shift and it is probably tougher at this high school level. I think based on my own data it is clear that we are more teacher centered than student centered. And so we are looking at mechanisms, again, whereby teachers have the time to self-reflect and understand in terms of getting at student achievement . . . we are going to have to shift that principle to become more student centered.

He continued with more instructional information about the changes that he is trying to make.

We do more of the lecture type teaching here . . . not everybody, don’t get me wrong. But, I have been here long enough to be in classrooms and collect the data. And, I want to see more student engagement, more authentic student engagement in class work. And so we are looking at mechanisms, whereby to get our teachers to understand that it doesn’t have to be all about them. You don’t have to do everything. Even though it is high school . . . there has to be a level of commitment from the student and engagement from the student. So all desks don’t have to be in straight rows . . . you don’t have to be . . . lecture and question and answer. And it is in a 90 minute class period. That is tough anyway. And, so, trying to provide the staff development for our teachers to understand that that principle has to shift . . . Engagement, that authentic engagement that you are looking for in terms of how to deliver the Standard Course of Study to get the outcomes that you need is critical in the high school. And so, that is something that is a top priority as I look at the instructional piece.

**Intellectual Stimulation**

As shared in the aforementioned quote, intellectual stimulation or professional development is just as important in LP high schools as BTO high schools. The principal of LP High School-10 utilizes teachers Individual Growth Plans (IGP) to assist with planning professional development. ‘‘I use the teachers’ growth plans. I look at and ask teachers for
areas where they want to strengthen themselves.” She continued on with how she has used some of the high schools resources to provide teachers more support.

Also, we have an Academic Coach available through [Principal’s Executive Program] PEP. Recently, we had a seminar on black males. This academic coach meets with teachers, does walk-throughs, and meets with the principal. Teachers are open to suggestions. They don’t mind. Professional Development priorities are at the district level.

In addition to staff development opportunities depicted on the teachers’ IGPs, principals encourage the staff to attend workshop in their content areas and visit other schools. Teachers do not always take advantage of these opportunities. The LP principals do offer on-site professional development as the funds are available.

Some professional development is geared toward learning how PLCs work, but the majority of professional development in these struggling schools is barely attended or goes unimplemented. Some LP High School principals expect participation in curriculum-based professional development that can be unfocused, disjointed, and sometimes incompatible to teachers’ subjects; however they are assessed on their implementation of the entire curriculum tools discussed. Teachers would like more site–based professional development that meets the needs of their students and relates directly to their courses.

**Summary**

BTO and LP high school principals talked extensively about instructional/pedagogical leadership. As stated in the literature review, principals are expected to be lead learners as well as better instructional leaders in the twenty-first century. Again, BTO high school principals discussed more positive views in reference to instruction/pedagogical leadership. Tables 4.7 through 4.9 depict the summary of the usage of curriculum,
monitoring, and evaluation and intellectual stimulation leadership “practices” by BTO and LP high school principals.

Table 4.7. BTO and LP High Schools Curriculum Comparison

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<tr>
<td>• Principal actively involved in the coordination of curriculum with active engagement by teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teachers follow the guide of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study with a focus of meeting student needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers have a take charge attitude concerning the curriculum and continually foster creativeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal and teachers agree to strategic assignment of students to classes based on teacher performance and style (top teachers have challenging classes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principals, department heads and district lead coordination of curriculum with minimal input from teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on NCSCOS, but allow pressures of EOC tests interfere with adequately and effectively teaching the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers lack of feeling of control over the curriculum and little to no room for creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• While there is an abundance of accessible data, decisions are not always based on the results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership Practices Related to Transformational/Transactional Leadership

Beating the Odds High Schools and Transformation/Transactional Leadership

In analyzing the BTO principals’ responses as it pertains to transformational/transactional leadership and the subsequent four leadership “practices” located in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) affirmation; (b) change agent; (c) communication; and (d) contingent rewards many clear examples were captured from the voices of the principals (Marzano et al., 2005).
### Table 4.8. BTO and LP High Schools Monitoring and Evaluation Comparison

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

- Principals encourage the use of formative and summative assessments which teachers found significant
- Periodic progress reports widely distributed and students’ needs monitored
- Principals directly involved in monitoring students’ process through consistent review of data and conversations with teachers and students
- Principals encouraged the use of benchmark testing, but not completely developed or used to modify instruction
- Periodic progress reports unevenly distributed
- Principals indirectly involved with monitoring students’ progress by occasional review of data; conversations with teachers materialized as punitive

### Table 4.9. BTO and LP High Schools Intellectual Stimulation Comparison

#### Intellectual Stimulation

- Professional Learning Communities are in the developing and advanced stage
- Traditional professional development opportunities evident, well-attended and seen as meaningful
- Important professional learning takes place within the school community
- Common planning times/periods and summer planning efforts are effective in planning for student success
- Professional Learning Communities are in the beginning stages
- Traditional professional development opportunities not consistent, well attended or seen as meaningful
- Professional learning is loosely coordinated and often from district level or contracted sources
- There is a move towards site-based professional development
- Common planning times are few and not effectively utilized
With considering transformational/transactional leadership, as stated in Chapter 2, it is important to note and remember that “transformational leaders not only manage structure but they purposely impact the culture in order to change it. Conversely, “transactional leaders are basically concerned with structures, emphasizing organizational purposes rather than people” (Harris et al., 2003, pp. 16-17). Transformational leaders are culture builders. The principals in these BTO High Schools utilize affirmation, communication and contingent awards to help them be effective change agents in the high schools.

**Affirmation and Contingent Rewards**

In regards to affirmation and contingent rewards, some of the BTO High School principals have access to Leandro money for recruitment and retention, but acknowledge that “money as all the data shows isn’t the motivator.” However, the ABC bonus money really helps. BTO High School-9 expressed some interesting points regarding “gaming the system”:

You can play with ABC scores. You can’t play with AYP. But you can manipulate your ABC scores for a year or two. By that I mean, you can keep people from taking certain things for a year or two, but eventually they are going to have to take them. But with AYP, you can’t manipulate that because all tenth-graders are tested. That’s a true sign of how you are doing.

Principals of BTO High Schools celebrate all major teacher accomplishments with food, flowers, balloons and sometimes a “happy gram.” Although BTO High School-8 principal did not share a long list of incentives, he did share the following alternative incentive plan:

I don’t have a list of incentives, but I am very open to you are a mother and you need to go to your child’s honor roll assembly I am going to make that happen for you. If you go above and beyond and stay after to tutor kids then on a workday you can stay at home if you want to. I think them knowing that I am going to work with them in situations when they need to be off or leave early I think those are the biggest incentives that you can possibly get. If you have been doing a great job the last 2 or 3 months and I have noticed it. I might just say take the rest of the afternoon off or something. I don’t have a list that if you do this then you get that.
Table 4.10. *Summary of Usage of Transformational/Transactional Leadership Practices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Alias</th>
<th>BTO 5</th>
<th>BTO 8</th>
<th>BTO 9</th>
<th>BTO 10</th>
<th>BTO 11</th>
<th>LP 1</th>
<th>LP 10</th>
<th>LP 15</th>
<th>LP 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership “Practices”</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Agent</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmation</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P+</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>N/P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent Rewards</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>N/P</td>
<td>P/N</td>
<td>P/N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All 5 BTO High School principals viewed athletics as a major part of the high school’s culture and a means of motivating students to excel at academics. Students at these high schools are taught that being a part of athletics is a privilege, not a right. The principal of High School-8 shared the following view of athletics within high schools.

The athletics is a big part of this school. It’s not what we are about, but as principal I am very in tune to the fact that it means a lot to our community & our kids. So I support that, but not at the expense of the instructional process. But, we absolutely support athletics & we have a lot of success with that.

**Communication**

In the large BTO high schools effective communication, affirmation, and the creative use contingent rewards for students and staff all work together to assist the principals in leading change. Principal of BTO High School-10 shared one of the tools (movies) he used to communicate expectations to his teachers.

Practice does not make perfect. If you watch *Sister Act*, [its] kind of a motivational thing; they had a choir that was horrible, but they practiced all the time. So, we know practice does not make perfect. I have actually got a video. [So now we believe that] Perfect practice makes perfect.

BTO High School-10 received an award based on the NC Working Conditions Survey despite its size.

We were awarded the Real Deal from the Governor. You guys know about that, right? That’s where the teachers do a working condition survey anonymously throughout the state. They then choose the top 30 schools. They visit each school and they choose the top ten. Then you are awarded. We were the only comprehensive high school to ever be awarded and the first school with over 700 kids.

These principals communicated to teachers and students their expectations in many ways. All used some kind of retreat or meeting during the summer to thoroughly plan for the next school year.
The Low-Performing High Schools and Transformation/Transactional Leadership

Analysis of the LP principals’ responses to interview questions as it pertains to transformational/transactional leadership and the following four leadership “practices” situated in Carmon’s Conceptual Framework: (a) affirmation; (b) change agent; (c) communication; and (d) contingent reward, revealed interesting information that hinders potential change (Marzano et al., 2005). It is very difficult for teachers and students to believe that they can increase student achievement if the principal is finding it difficult to change. BTO High School-1 principal hesitantly made a statement about change in his high school.

I am hoping that the DuFour training that we went to when we were talking about building a learning community will give [the teachers] the boost and we will be able to do that. Teachers now are depending on me and other administrators [that] we bring stuff to the table. We do some of this action research. We are trying. We are where we don’t have anything to lose. It’s not working this way, so let’s try it this way. But, Dr. T. it has been a hard thing to change if your paradigm believes something else. That is what happens with change. Change is difficult and especially in education. It is almost impossible.

Communication and Change Agent

High School principals are charged to effectively communicate through faculty meetings, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and other avenues. All of LP High Schools in this study are creating PLCs, however their development is not at the level of BTO High Schools. Professional development is mandatory for all principals in LP High Schools; however this necessity sometimes interferes with effective communication. The principals of LP High Schools are required to attend professional development to discuss strategies for school improvement. Although, it is difficult for these principals to frequently be out of the building; they share the benefits of appropriate professional development as a process for change with their assistant principals, department chairs and teachers.
How a principal establishes communication with teachers, students, parents and stakeholders is an important part of effective change. The LP High Schools principals were not able to effectively communicate to stakeholders the new direction the high school must take in order to improve EOC proficiency and get off Judge Manning’s list. However, it was clear that low-performing high schools needed to make learning a primary goal.

**Contingent Rewards and Affirmation**

Contingent/rewards and affirmation are not always the motivation teachers and students desire or need to help them believe that they can make a difference in academic achievement in the high schools. Principals of LP high schools claim to have few resources in order to reward teachers for a job well done or provide quality staff development, but do their best to utilize the resources they are granted effectively. For example: Principal of LP-20 High School made the following statement about incentives for teachers.

The school system provides us with some funds. The funds in the magnet school assistance grant will run out this year, but for the last 3 years we have had a pretty large budget for staff development. Now a lot of that from the grant [used] to send teachers to IB training, which is a very expensive thing to do. But we have used some of that . . . money to purchase the learning focus materials that we are going to use next summer. So there has been quite a lot of money in the grant which has allowed us to use the local money that we get a little bit more effectively because we didn’t have to dip into it for $2,000 to send somebody to IB training. Unfortunately that is ending this year.

Transformational/transitional leadership is the administrative style that LP High School-15 and LP High School-10 had the most difficulty utilizing in order to motivate change in the school through the faculty and students. The leadership “practices” of affirmation, communication, and contingent reward are present, but weak. The high schools had not developed a theme that flowed throughout the school and community. These low-performing schools recognized the accomplishments and failures of faculty and students, but seem to
believe that because change has been difficult for their schools that change is almost impossible in education. Low Performing high schools are grateful for teacher supplements, but complain that they do not measure up to the teacher supplement of neighboring counties. They also express the need to provide incentives so that teachers do not revert back to their traditional ways of delivering instruction. LP High School-15 principal shared her thoughts on the situation. “We have to provide some incentives so they [teachers] don’t slip back. Incentives like ABC money . . . [We] use Leandro money to give bonuses to teachers who tutor students after school and the students make a level 3 or 4 on the tested E.O.C.”

Summary

BTO and LP high school principals discussed the usage of “practices” referenced under transformational/transactional leadership. The BTO high school principals acted as transformational/transactional leaders in many appropriate situations. This was the weakest area for the LP high school principals. Table 4.11 compares the BTO and LP high school principals’ usage of the “practices” of affirmation and contingent rewards.

Table 4.11. BTO and LP High Schools Affirmation and Contingent Rewards Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmation and Contingent Rewards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students receive a variety of positive reinforcements (A/B Honor roll recognition, passes to athletic events, off-campus passes, extra points for attending course refresher opportunities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal relationships with students is very evident (group/class discussions, athletic events, community events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals encourage teachers to relate instruction to student experiences events, community events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals encourage teachers to relate instruction to student experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals and teachers share negative views of students and their home environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals’ effort to disaggregate scores evident, but little teacher involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student experiences are rarely related to instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

The principals discussed their leadership styles in some form or fashion throughout the interviews. As depicted in each school’s introductory paragraph the leadership style of each principal changed according to the needs of the teachers and the students, but they all had dominant styles. The principals in BTO High Schools 5, 8, and 9 schools acknowledged that there is a lot of work to do and that it gets very difficult some days. However, they continue to work hard and expect their assistant principals, teachers and students to work hard, too. They lead by example and they love the work. Like the BTO high schools referenced above, BTO High School-11 and BTO High School-10 summarized the keys to their successfulness as great teaching staff, cooperative support staff and creative scheduling. The principal of BTO High School-11 articulated it best:

But the key here is the teaching staff and the support staff. It is just very, very good. And they pick up each other’s slack. And I think smart scheduling has made a difference. Putting the teachers that are really powerful people where it matters most. And I think we have actually trained some teachers to become powerful teachers by virtue of the team planning and that type of interaction.

It is not ironic that the principals proclaim that the success of the school is due to great teachers and the teachers say that it is because of great leadership. As noted earlier, “According to the Wallace Foundation, school leadership is second only to teacher quality among school-related factors that have an effect on student learning” (Carter, 2004, p. 30). In agreement with the Wallace Foundation, Crawford (1998) stated, “almost all educational reform reports have come to the conclusion that the nation cannot attain excellence in education without effective school leadership” (p. 8). There is much research to support the position that exceptional leadership is one of the keys to recruiting and retaining well-trained
and confident teachers as well as well-taught and academically successful students (Beck & Murphy, 1994; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Crawford, 1998; Fullan, 2006; Marzano et al., 2005).

Utilizing the gifts and talents of their teachers and students, these BTO High School principals are conquering the five significant challenges needed for successful restructuring discussed by Quint (2006) in her report, Meeting Five Critical Challenges of High School Reform: Lessons from Research on Three Reform Models. These focused principals are “(1) creating a personalized and orderly learning environment, (2) assisting students who enter high school with poor academic skills,(3) improving instructional content and practice, (4) preparing students for the world beyond high school, (5) stimulating change” (Quint, 2006, pp. ES 3-8).

Although the low-performing school’s principal and staff are reading and learning about what it takes to increase student achievement through proven professional development opportunities, they cannot seem to sustain their momentum. According Elmore (2003), “these [low-performing] schools lack agreement and coherence around expectations for student learning, and they lack the means to influence instructional practice in classrooms in ways that result in student learning” (p. 9). Although Elmore was referring to one elementary and one middle school, this researcher concludes the same for these four low-performing high schools.

The phrases “I’m trying to,” “I am attempting to,” “It’s difficult to,” and “It’s hard to do in this environment” were entangled and entrenched in many of the LP High School principal answers to the questions and solutions to raises student achievement to make these high school students proficient. It is as though the stakeholders (administration, teachers, students and parents) in low-performing high schools have difficulty believing that they have
the power to change the direction that their school is heading. Principals seemed to be forced
into being change agents. The LP High School-1 attempt as a CSR school has not at the date
of this study proven to be effective in improving student achievement. According to the data
in Table 2, this high school’s rate of proficiency has actually decreased during the inception
of the CSR model of Ventures. The school proficiency rate went from approximately 53.70%
during the 2004/05 school year to 39.50% during the 2006/07 school year. Confirmed by
Marzano et al. (2005), meta-analysis reach this finding helps establish the fact that even
when you believe that you have chosen the “right work” for a school “rigid [or in this case of
LP High School-1, a sloppy] adoption of a CSR model does not appear to be a fail-safe
method of improving student achievement” (p. 81).

Chapter Summary

If there ever was a time when the principal could ride in alone on a white horse, like
John Wayne or Joan of Arc, and save a troubled school, those days are certainly over.
I know of no administrator who doesn't need help in fulfilling his or her impossible
job description. Parents, students, community members, universities, business
partners, the central office—all have the potential to become wonderful resources for
the principal. But the most reliable, useful, proximate, and professional help resides
under the roof of the schoolhouse with the teaching staff itself. (Barth, 2001, p. 445)

The above quote highlights a major finding in this study. The BTO high schools named
creative, optimistic and relentless teachers who are consistently honing their craft to meet the
needs of the diverse group of students that they have been charged to teach in the twenty-first
century as their number one reason for successful student achievement. Unlike the LP High
School principals, the BTO High School principals took advantage of every opportunity to
communicate their goals and beliefs to teachers, students, parents and stakeholders. The BTO
High School principals recognized that they were change agents and went about the business
of transforming the culture of their schools, while the LP High principals remained less
confident in their ability to initiate change. Instead the principals of these low-performing high schools proclaim to be “trying” or “working on” buy-in from teachers. Interestingly enough, experiencing the lack of support is not completely these principals fought. Teachers, parents and students find it difficult to trust the current principal when the four or five that led before exhibited a “this is my temporary home attitude” and showed minor interest in the professional and personal needs of faculty and students.

The LP High School principals can really learn from the BTO High School principals. Although, the cultures of these high schools are quite different, the twenty-one leadership “practices” discussed in this study can be effectively utilized in each school with sustained time and effort. School based administrators must recognize that they lead by example concerning relationship building, instructional practices, goals and objectives and communication style. Students, teachers and parents emulate their ideas/beliefs whether positive and negative.
CHAPTER 5
OVERVIEW, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Recently, this researcher listened to a statement made by Marge Scherer, Chief Editor of the magazine, *Educational Leadership*. She eloquently compared the excellent athletic skills of the athletes of the 2008 Olympics to the mediocre academic skills of many of our students in the twenty-first century. She suggested that “many of the questions about Olympics connect to the theme of realizing excellence in our schools, although the stakes are even higher and issues more complex in schools than in the sports arena” (Scherer, 2008, p. 7). She elaborated on the definition of excellence in sports and education, compared the past, the present and the future of the excellence of education and how leading nations have “recently found more creative ways to unleash potential” (Scherer, 2008, p.7). In addition, she passionately connected excellence in schools to motivation, challenge, support, recognition, rewards, focus, imagination and finally purpose. Marge Scherer (2008) concluded with the following quote:

> Purpose acts as the moral north star on the route to excellence. It offers a steady beacon for inspiring and directing students’ best efforts over the long haul, within the classroom and beyond. When you have a purpose, you know that everything you do counts, even if you don’t win a medal. (p. 7)

Thus, educational purpose for students, parents, teachers and principals guides and directs the depth of excellence in our public schools. By the time elementary and middle school students navigate their way to high school the purpose for learning, teaching and
engagement through the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCS) should be well established. Students should be able to expound on the fact that they are building life-long skills as they matriculate through the educational system. However, researchers have discovered that this is far from the truth. As in this study, this researcher found that students, parents, teachers and administrators all articulate definitions for purpose in education. The principals and teachers discussed the thoughts of parents and students in this study. All believe that their goals and purposes are right. On the contrary, if all groups take the time to actively listen to each other, stakeholders would find that each group’s definition for purpose in education is quite similar. Everyone must carefully guide the “moral stars” in our public school system. How does each group (students, teachers, principals and parents) define the purpose of education? What does each group see as effective education?

All students, particularly high school students want school to be intellectually challenging as well as academically challenging. These students want school to be enjoyable, stimulating and engaging. They expect teachers to impart crucial concepts through all the courses and electives that engage them the most. In other words, high school students hunger for authentic relationships.

Engagement within the school context is also about relationship. Student engagement can be described as the student’s relationship with the school community: the people (adults and peers), the structures (rules, facilities, schedules), the curriculum and content, the pedagogy, and the opportunities (curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular). There are many ways in which a student may engage with the school community; the degree to which a student is “engaged” in school is dependent on the quality, depth, and breadth of the student’s relationship with these various aspects of the life and work of the school. (Yazzie-Mintz, 2006, p. 1)

Students want teachers to utilize new technologies in the classroom. Computers, digital cameras, iPods, smart boards and much more are available to enhance students learning and engage them in our global world. Some students proclaim to be bored because
of teachers’ instructional styles. Most veteran and some beginning teachers are definitely more comfortable with lecture and worksheets or at least it appears this way in some low-performing schools. Students should share these needs through school governance programs. On the other hand, many teachers seem to focus on instruction/curriculum before relationships instead of simultaneously working on both. Some forget that “students don’t know how much you know until they know how much you care,” as stated by one BTO principal. In high school, teachers must teach the SCOS in order to prepare students for End-End-of-Course (EOC) exams to show proficiency according to the No Child Left Behind legislation. Teachers attempt to make the SCOS intellectually stimulating as well as academically challenging for students. However, with increasing class size, decreasing preparation time and endless remediation time because of low performance in schools, teachers find this task difficult to accomplish, especially in high schools. However, more creative, technology-oriented, student-centered teaching is found in the BTO high schools. This teaching style appears to be an anomaly in low-performing high schools. In other word, teachers really do want the same thing that students want, but with students taking more responsibility for their own learning. Teachers do understand that their job is to increase student achievement; test scores and principals are present to remind them of this responsibility daily.

Principals say that the purpose of education is to increase achievement for all students. Great principals, such as the BTO principals in this study want skilled teachers to provide excellence in education daily. In order to effectively support teachers, principals need access to unlimited educational resources and strategies including current technology. Marzano et al. (2005) remind us that “one of the more obvious characteristics of effective
teachers is that they have at their disposal a wide array of instructional strategies” (p. 89).
Clearly, principals must coach teachers into doing the “right work” in their classrooms that
directly benefits students. So, what do principals really believe is the purpose of education? It
is to support teachers so that they can utilize “best practices” to improve academic
achievement for all students. These “best practices” should engage students and be
academically challenging and intellectually stimulating.

Parents simply want teachers and principals to care about the education of the
individual child. This care manifests itself in various ways based on the status of the student
in the school. Students who are identified as academically gifted (AIG), special needs (EC),
and English Language Learner (ELL) have different, but similar needs. All parents want their
children whether elementary or high school age to be challenged beyond their identified level
and enjoy learning at school. Most parents have some idea of what their child needs to be
successful. Parents want teachers and principals to understand that just because they are not
able to consistently volunteer, attend parent teacher organizational meetings, participate in
field trips or read every letter that comes home; it does not mean that they care any less about
their child’s education. LP high schools have difficulty with parental support. According to
this researcher’s personal and professional experience, the purpose of education for most
parents is defined through how successful their children are in school. Parents want their
children to excel academically, behaviorally, socially and physically.

Therefore, as this researcher reviews the definitions of the purpose for education, it is
clear that all stakeholders want increased academic achievement for all students. This
increase in achievement occurs as strong principals lead teachers to do the “right work” in
their schools and classrooms. The twenty-one leadership practices examined in this
comparison study of principals in BTO and LP high schools highlight the difference an effective principal can make in the pursuit of excellence in education.

Overview

In this study, the leadership practices of nine high school principals in five BTO and four LP high schools in North Carolina are analyzed through the use of Carmon’s Conceptual Framework; borrowing from the twenty-one leadership responsibilities in the book, *School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results* (Marzano et al., 2005). These responsibilities are referred to as “practices” in this study. Carmon’s Conceptual Framework was used to review the principals’ experiences with the practices in each high school. Once this initial level of analysis was completed, principal use of practices and student achievement data for each high school was compiled. What do these results really mean? How might the differences between the leadership practices of the BTO and LP schools affect achievement? After answering the aforementioned question, the researcher continues with a critique of Carmon’s Conceptual Framework, followed by the implications for policy and practice and finally recommendations for further study.

_How Might the Differences between the Leadership Practices of the “Beating the Odds” And Low-Performing Schools Affect Achievement?_

The differences between the leadership practices at the BTO and LP High Schools affect student achievement in many ways. Due to the fact that this secondary qualitative study was developed from the interview questions from Hallinger’s Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIRMS), it is important for the researcher to return to the seven areas evaluated to clearly answer the above question. The findings in this researcher’s study point to differences in the use of leadership practices in the schools that can indirectly
increase or decrease academic achievement for students. These differences are depicted in Table 5.1. The differences between the leadership practices of the BTO and LP High Schools affect achievement in many ways. Some of the more prominent differences involving principals’ supervision of teachers are listed below.

1. Teachers’ instructional planning and delivery is cooperative, collaborative, student-centered and effective. (BTO)

2. Teachers’ instructional planning and delivery is teacher-centered and ineffective. (LP)

3. Teacher turnover is decreased by a positive and inclusive culture. (BTO)

4. Teacher turnover is increased by a negative and non-inclusive culture. (LP)

5. Teacher recruitment is significantly easier because of a supportive and collaborative environment. (BTO) Teacher recruitment is more challenging because of negative school environment realities and perceptions. (LP)

6. Teachers, students, principals and parents celebrate successes and acknowledge failures through a school theme that permeates the school’s culture and increases students’ positive attitude toward learning. (BTO)

7. Teachers, students, principals and parents try to celebrate successes and try to utilize failures to revitalize students’ and teachers’ positive attitudes toward learning, but the latter has stunted the school’s culture. (LP)

8. The percentage of students’ proficient is higher probably because of the principal’s stronger use of the twenty-one leadership practices. (BTO) The percentage of students’ proficient is lower because of the principal’s weaker use of the twenty-one leadership practices which are affected by internal and external challenges. (LP)

In the literature review, Mizell (1994) reminds us that teachers, students, and parents desire and require leaders who recruit and maintain the best teachers to build supportive and collaborative programs and environments that increase student learning through the best instructional practices. This was a major finding in the comparison of the BTO and LP High Schools in this study.
Table 5.1. Summary of the BTO High Schools and the LP High Schools Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BTO High Schools</th>
<th>LP High Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal Setting and the Communication of Goals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Goal Setting led chiefly by principals; but insignificant to a portion of stakeholders</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goal setting effectively led by principals and buy-in established by the communication of goals</td>
<td>• Goal setting is largely based on performance measures and external pressures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goal setting and communication concerning academic growth is based on data</td>
<td>• Teachers feel an incredible amount of anxiety to meet external demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers are committed to goals and this often guides school improvement at departmental and classroom levels</td>
<td>• Teachers and principals do not take ownership of the future of their high schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stakeholders share a common language concerning goals—much like an orchestra</td>
<td>• Teachers use demographics of the high school as a cause for not meeting goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal clearly articulates the integration of goals focusing on racial/ socioeconomic statistics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5.1. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervision and Evaluation of Instruction</th>
<th>BTO High Schools</th>
<th>LP High Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Consistent and reliable supervision is provided by principals and assistant principal</td>
<td>• Principals and assistant principals more visible due to negative characteristics of the environment, especially inadequate performance of students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supervision is differentiated based on the needs and development of the teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining Visibility</td>
<td>• Teachers comfortable with others visiting and observing classrooms</td>
<td>• Principals required to attend school improvement professional development and district meetings leading to decreased presence in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teachers’ instructional planning and/or delivery areas needing improvement were non-punitively addressed</td>
<td>• Principals more focused on management issues than instructional needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Principals teach courses-provide model lessons for teachers or delegate responsibility to mentor or strong teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring Student Progress</td>
<td>• Principals encourage the use of formative and summative assessments which teachers found significant</td>
<td>• Principals encouraged the use of benchmark testing, but not completely developed or used to modify instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Periodic progress reports widely distributed and students’ needs monitored</td>
<td>• Periodic progress reports unevenly distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Principals directly involved in monitoring students’ process through consistent review of data and conversations with teachers and students</td>
<td>• Principals indirectly involved with monitoring students’ progress by occasional review of data; conversations with teachers materialized as punitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring Student Progress</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Principals indirectly involved with monitoring students’ progress by occasional review of data; conversations with teachers materialized as punitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Referenced in the concluding statement of this chapter, the teachers in the BTO High Schools admired as well as supported the changes and support of their principals.

This finding supports the proclamation by the Wallace Foundation that “school leadership is second only to teacher quality among school-related factors that have an effect on student learning” (Carter, 2004, p. 30). According to the meta-analysis conducted by Marzano et al. (2005), as a principal’s ability to effectively use the twenty-one leadership practices increases so will student achievement. In addition, this study shows that as a principal learns to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Providing Incentives for Learning</th>
<th>BTO High Schools</th>
<th>LP High Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students receive a variety of positive reinforcements (A/B Honor roll recognition, passes to athletic events, off-campus passes, extra points for attending course refresher opportunities)</td>
<td>• Principals and teachers share negative views of students and their home environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal relationships with students is very evident (group/class discussions, athletic events, community events)</td>
<td>• Principals’ effort to disaggregate scores evident, but little teacher involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principals encourage teachers to relate instruction to student experiences</td>
<td>• Student experiences are rarely related to instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promoting Professional Development and Building Community</th>
<th>BTO High Schools</th>
<th>LP High Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Professional Learning Communities are in the developing and advanced stage</td>
<td>• Professional Learning Communities are in the beginning stages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Traditional professional development opportunities evident, well-attended and seen as meaningful</td>
<td>• Traditional professional development opportunities not consistent, well attended or seen as meaningful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Important professional learning takes place within the school community</td>
<td>• Professional learning is loosely coordinated and often from district level or contracted sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Common planning times/periods and summer planning efforts are effective in planning for student success</td>
<td>• There is a move towards site-based professional development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Common planning times are few and not effectively utilized</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creating Trust</th>
<th>BTO High Schools</th>
<th>LP High Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers have high trust in principals’ ability to lead</td>
<td>• Teachers trust diluted by high teacher turnover, autocratic &amp; penalizing leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principals respected and revered; teachers fight for success as not to let principal down</td>
<td>• Teachers blame principal for faculty divisions due to discipline problems and accountability responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
effectively shift leadership styles according to the environmental situation, teachers become more comfortable with managerial and instructional changes that can increase student achievement. From the literature, Tomlinson and Allan (2000) agree that as principals increase their knowledge and utilization of leadership practices, the teachers’ instructional skills will grow; thus, increasing individual student success followed by increased academic achievement for all students.

Fullan (2006) reminds us that, “principals make a difference or not through teachers individually and collectively by enabling them to work together inside and outside the school” (p. 1). The instructional work that teachers do is paramount to students’ success. Therefore principals must have an open, meaningful and trusting relationship with teachers and students. The researchers in the study by Billig et al. (2005) also found that highly qualified, dedicated, and motivated teachers who believed in the academic success of all students assisted in raising achievement for all students and closing gaps between White and minority students. This comparative study shows through the LP High Schools how student achievement can be negatively affected when teacher-principal and teacher-student relationships are weak and non-constructive (see Table 5.1). The acknowledgement of the importance of instructional leadership in this study is not unusual. Since the1980s, instructional leadership has been considered the most acknowledged theme in educational leadership (Cuban, 1988; Greenfield, 1987; Hallinger, 1992; Marzano et al., 2005).

Through the use of Hallinger’s PIRMS, principal interviews revealed the differences between the leadership practices of BTO and LP High Schools (see Table 5.1). While there are elements of both the BTO and LP High Schools that are worthy of celebration like those of the high-impact and average-impact schools in the Education Trust (2005a) study; the
BTO High Schools principals are well on their way to supporting more recent trends regarding twenty-first century teaching practices and student engagement in the classroom. The LP High School principals require more support in the form of recruitment and resources from district leaders, the Principal Executive Programs (PEP) and universities. Is the support from the district level helpful or hurtful? In areas where a principal needs to use his or her power as an administrative leader in order to change the environment in a high school, the external support or power at the district level may have been hurtful in some situations in the LP High Schools.

The BTO High School principals are good models for the LP High School principals. What more can these LP principals do to help teachers and students accept ownership for the lack of academic achievement? What more can the LP principals and teachers do to build stronger relationships with the high school students they guide and teach daily? Reviewing the successes of the principals in the BTO High Schools in Table 5.1 and thoroughly evaluating their leadership styles and use of the 21 leadership practices could be an encouraging beginning. As in the Billig (2005) and Education Trust (2005a) studies, the BTO and LP High Schools comparative study, revealed the power that exists within school buildings to impact change.

**Critique of Framework in Relationship to Findings and Literature**

This dissertation can prepare this researcher as well as other aspiring principals for the work of successfully raising academic achievement for all students. It was expected that participants in this study would point to an increase in or lack of the following factors to help explain their present state: student motivation, parent participation, school finances, and/or teacher expectation and preparation. This study was primarily based on literature related to
the history of high schools in general, to principal leadership styles and practices in particular, and to existing data from the HSRA project as shared in the table above. It has already been established that leadership, although mostly indirectly, affects student achievement. There remains a paucity of literature on leadership and student achievement, especially in high schools. However, this study and others like it will add to the available literature.

Carmon’s Conceptual framework encompasses the 21 leadership practices from Marzano et al. (2005) and four of the most recognized leadership styles or theories currently recognized in education according to various researchers: (a) contingency theory; (b) moral/ethical leadership; (c) transformational/transactional leadership; and (d) pedagogical/instructional leadership. This researcher studied various definitions of the 21 leadership practices and matched them with the leadership styles/theories. In reviewing the findings from the data, various themes relating to the practices reoccurred more often than others under the umbrella of the leadership styles/theories.

The common themes of this study include: (a) teachers as academic achievement resources; (b) principals as change agents; (c) school environment as instructional centers; and (d) prep courses and second chance opportunities as ways to monitor and evaluate achievement. These themes as possible ways to change schools in order to increase student achievement are associated with the existing literature on principals and student achievement. Quint (2006) in her report, *Meeting Five Critical Challenges of High School Reform: Lessons from Research on Three Reform Models* reminds us that high school reformers must conquer five significant challenges for noted successful restructuring. Those challenges are “(1) creating a personalized and orderly learning environment, (2) assisting students who enter
high school with poor academic skills, (3) improving instructional content and practice, (4) preparing students for the world beyond high school, (5) stimulating change” (Quint, 2006, pp. ES 3-8).

**Teachers as Academic Achievement Resources**

Earlier the researcher established that according to the Wallace Foundation, school “leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school (Leithwood et al., 2005, p. 5). The resource that delivers instruction is the teacher. Of the study participants, both BTO/LP principals were adamant about the need for strong teachers. The LP high school principals and teachers positioned the problem of recruiting strong teachers as an internal and external problem. Internal due to the difficulty of firing tenured weak teachers because of the fear of being unable to replace them and external because of how the public views low-performing high schools often reporting more of negative than positive events to the media. However, the BTO principals were much more successful in recruiting and retaining effective teachers. In these high schools the principals used their administrative powers to motivate teachers to improve their teaching style and delivery or find another place to teach. These principals and teachers took ownership of instructional operations and opportunities in the school building. The BTO High School principals utilized their skilled teachers as recruiters. Principals in BTO high schools raved that great teachers recognize great instructional practices.

**Principals as Change Agents**

According to Carmon’s Conceptual Framework, a change agent is a principal who looks for opportunities to make change. These changes must take place at the appropriate time and with the right work. The researcher placed this particular practice under the
leadership style of transformation/transactional leadership. However, one of the major findings of this study is the fact that a principal being a change agent permeates or affects all of the leadership styles and practices. Marzano et al. (2005) suggest that “the responsibility of Change Agent refers to the leader’s disposition to challenge the status quo” (p. 44). All of the study participants, especially the BTO principals, expressed a need to foster change through all of the categories used in the PIRMS interview protocol. Some of the principals in both the BTO and LP high schools acknowledged that they were hired to be change agents. The BTO High School principals appeared to make the most changes with Moral/Ethical and Pedagogical/Instructional leadership while the LP High School principals were less successful in sustaining changes in these areas.

Recognizing the need to change the status quo at the right time within the right area is what made the BTO High Schools successful with student achievement. The BTO principals had the “will” to be change agents unlike the LP principals who discussed external and internal factors that prevented them from being the change agents needed in the low performing school. As BTO High School-10 principal articulated, “It’s all about organization.” This finding made the researcher rethink the original definition of “change agent” and its initial placement only under the umbrella of transactional/transformational leadership. The practice of “change agent” could have been placed under all four leadership styles/theories. As stated earlier, it is important for principals to know what to change, when to change it and how to change it. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) remind us of importance of the practice of change agent in the quote below:

The literature is replete with examples of bright, powerful, well-intentioned leaders who fail in their leadership initiatives because they simply did not understand what they needed to know, how to proceed with implementation, or when they needed to use various practices and strategies. (p. 13)
The principal’s power to be a change agent in the LP high schools seemed to be stifled by influential veteran teachers who were fighting to retain their jobs and district level leaders who understand high school reform in theory, but not in practice.

**School Environment as Instructional Centers**

The BTO High School principals treat their schools as instructional centers. This is not coincidental, since for the last twenty years instructional leadership has been considered the most accepted theme in educational leadership (Marzano et al., 2005). Although neither principals nor teachers referred to the high schools as such, within the guidelines of Carmon’s Conceptual Framework, the BTO High Schools did an excellent job performing the practices established under Pedagogical/Instructional Leadership. The researcher was able to clearly identify strong examples of the following practices: (a) intellectual stimulation; (b) involvement in curriculum, instruction and assessment; (c) knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment; (d) monitoring and evaluating; (e) resources; and (f) visibility. Some of the BTO High School principals even declared themselves as instructional leaders. These principal practices were properly placed under the leadership style of Pedagogical/Instructional Leadership. Consequently, the BTO High School principals successfully acted as instructional leaders as well as managers, politicians, arbitrators, paper pushers, and scapegoats as the literature suggests.

**Prep Courses and Second Chance Opportunities as Ways to Monitor and Evaluate Students’ Achievement**

Also, falling under Pedagogical/Instructional Leadership is the leadership practice of monitoring and evaluating. According to Marzano et al. (2005), monitoring and evaluating
refers to the practices and achievement of teachers as well as students. The following quote provides clarification:

Specific behaviors and characteristics associated with [monitoring and evaluating] and identified in our meta-analysis are the following:

- Continually monitoring the effectiveness of the school’s curricular, instructional and assessment practices
- Being continually aware of the impact of the school’s practices on student achievement. (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 56)

The monitoring and evaluating of students’ achievement in the BTO High Schools is definitely data-driven. Principals and teachers utilize benchmark tests to monitor and evaluate student progress in each End-of-Course (EOC) subject area. The principal exams and distributes the results for data driven decision-making throughout the year. Based on the results of these tests, principals and teachers decide what prep or second chance opportunities students need to be proficient. Teachers are encouraged to provide many tutoring opportunities for students such as, before and after school, during lunch, at Saturday academies and during three-week refresher courses. In addition, the principals receive weekly assessment information on individual students, especially the lower-performing students or those in danger of failing. Billig et al. (2005) and Education Trust (2005a) emphasize the importance of early warning signs and intervention and the participation of leadership in working with the students. The theme of principals evaluating and monitoring the individual growth of students permeates the work of the BTO High School principals.

It has been assumed in this study that the work of Marzano et al. (2005) is accepted and acknowledged by most researchers as an authentic and credible piece of research. Even though some researchers do not acknowledge the .25 correlation between principals and student achievement as significant; the use of the 21 leadership practices within Carmon’s
Conceptual Framework shows a positive association between effective leadership and student achievement. Albeit, this association is based on the instructional work of highly qualified, dedicated and motivated teachers who believed in the academic success of all students.

**Implications for Policy**

The results of this study may assist policymakers in creating policies to adjust the way educational supporters as well as school-based leaders themselves develop and operate to ensure academic success for all students. The discussions of leadership practices revealed two key themes, including the need for better leadership preparation programs for aspiring administrators and more effective ways of evaluating, critiquing, and sustaining principals’ leadership abilities. I found these themes particularly interesting for potential further policy development.

**Leadership Preparation Programs**

Universities must take more responsibility in training aspiring principals for the work of raising achievement for all students. Professors should take a closer look at the course offering and practicum opportunities ensuring no dearth of school improvement and student achievement activities. Leadership programs could be less theoretical and more practical. The focus needs to be especially placed on those hoping to lead high schools because this is students’ last opportunity to prepare for a productive and independent life in the 21st century. Aspiring principals must understand the expectations as well as their developing and distinguished skills. Maybe Eiseman and Militello’s (2008) proposal for “opportunities known as Knowledge and Skill Application Laboratories” are the answer to “increasing aspiring principals’ readiness to serve” (p. 1). These laboratories incorporate most of the 21 leadership practices discussed in this study. Additionally, familiarizing aspiring principals
with the evaluation instrument discussed in the subsequent section may prove to be helpful. Polices on what universities must include in programs can change the way our high schools are led in the future to better meet the needs of all students.

Evaluating Principals’ Leadership Abilities

For the 2008-09 school year, some principals and teachers in North Carolina are subjected to a new evaluation instrument. The North Carolina School Executive: Principal Evaluation Process includes a section called The Rubric for Evaluating North Carolina Principals/Self Assessment Form. It was developed by Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McRel). This rubric is the main tool required to evaluate the practices of novice to veteran principals. The rubric emphasizes the following seven standards:

- Strategic Leadership
- Instructional Leadership
- Cultural Leadership
- Human Resource Leadership
- Managerial Leadership
- External Development Leadership
- Micro-political Leadership

A separate instrument is being developed for assistant principals. Although the educational system is overdue for new evaluation instruments, the validity of these new instruments is still being debated. Orange County Schools, the district in which this researcher works is part of the 2008-2009 pilot. Principals complete self-evaluations using the instrument, subsequent to visits and conversations with superintendents about their job proficiency. This researcher suggests that there is a piece missing in the evaluation of high school principals. Principals may benefit from the perspectives of teachers and students. Although teachers get an opportunity through the North Carolina Teachers’ Working Condition Survey, based on my
professional experience with this instrument teachers are unsure of whom some of the survey questions are referring: district leaders or site-based leaders. Therefore, the results are unreliable. Principals could benefit from yearly input from teachers. Some principals have solved this problem with self-developed performance instruments. In addition, students should have an opportunity to critique the performance of their teachers and leaders much like the system implemented for college students in universities.

**Implications for Practice**

In order to illustrate the application of best leadership practices for increasing achievement in our LP High Schools, it is necessary to highlight crucial findings from this study. The four main points for practitioners that rose to the forefront as a result of this study, are as follows: (a) recruiting skilled teachers is crucial; (b) dedicated, stable, and enthusiastic principals with flexible leadership styles make a difference; (c) unlocking and doing the right work is important; and (d) effectively utilizing people, material and monetary resources is key.

There are no fail-safe solutions to educational and organizational problems. This is as true in the area of leadership as it is in other areas of educational effectiveness. However, research findings that are organized, accessible, and easily applied by practitioners can enhance the likelihood of effective education leadership. (Marzano et al., 2003, p. 14)

**Great Teachers**

The title of this dissertation is *High School Principals in Beating the Odds Schools: Using Successful Leadership Practices to Increase Student Achievement*; after acknowledging the important work of the teachers throughout in this study, the title should probably be revised as *High School Principals in Beating the Odds Schools: Using Successful Leadership Practices with Highly Qualified Teachers at the Forefront to Increase*
Student Achievement. This researcher cannot stress enough the need to have great teachers in classrooms to propel the success of all students. The BTO High School principals did the work necessary to recruit the right faculty members unlike the LP High School principals who tried to do the right work. When it comes to teacher recruitment there is a visible difference between “trying” and “doing.” LP High School principals must stop using the excuses of little power, big politics and internal and external problems in teacher recruitment. They must do a better job at creating and highlighting the positive characteristics of their school, faculty and students. Universities, district leaders, principals and established teachers themselves have an important role in recruiting and retaining the great teachers students require in the twenty-first century.

Dedicated Principals

One important factor that may affect student achievement that materialized in analyzing the data from this study is the turn-over rate of principals in both the BTO and LP schools. Two of five or 40% of the Beating the Odds school principals were promoted or secured positions at the Central Offices level, while only one of the four or 25% of the principals in the LP High Schools took other positions (see Table 5.2). It takes 3-5 years to reform a school. Principals are just not staying that long. Supporting principals in the change process is a necessity because Crawford (1998) reminds us that, “almost all educational reform reports have come to the conclusion that the nation cannot attain excellence in education without effective school leadership” (p. 8).
Table 5.2. Summary of Where These Principals are Now

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BTO High Schools Principals</th>
<th>Remained at HS</th>
<th>Another HS</th>
<th>Central Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BTO- HS 8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO- HS 10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO -HS 5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO-HS 11</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTO-HS 9</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP High Schools Principals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP-HS 1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP-HS 20</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP-HS 10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP-HS 15</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*The Right Work*

As stated earlier, it is important that the principals perform the “right” work in order to increase student achievement. Sometimes it is difficult for principals to disturb the status quo when school traditions are involved; even though the traditions have not been effective in raising student achievement. Marzano et al. (2005) suggest “(a) using a Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) model, and (b) designing a site-specific approach” (p. 77). LP High
School-1 reported the use of a CSR model. The high school has since abandoned the model because of lack of buy-in from teachers. The teachers refused to follow the program whole-heartedly. LP High School-1 principal shared, “teachers were playing games with it. We did it as long as we were under the grant and we didn’t get enough buy-in of people to think that was successful.” This situation was very real for this principal. However, if the right CSR model was chosen for this high school, the results might have been different. Although choosing the “right” work is important, choosing the appropriate way to determine the “right” work is even more important.

**Effective Use of Resources**

BTO and LP High School principals utilized various resources to assist in increasing academic achievement for all students. The BTO High School principals were more successful with effectively utilizing their resources than the LP High School principals (see Table 5.1). LP High School Principals should have crucial conversations with successful high school principals as well as district leaders on effective ways to use allotments, people, materials, grants and monies. The quantitative part of the High School Resource Allocation (HSRA) Study, the study that this researcher’s qualitative secondary study is related to, found that North Carolina high schools that are low-performing and/or the allocation of the resources within those high schools does not account for their failure to produce adequate student performance. So, if the problem is not the allocation of resources, then it maybe the effective use of those resources. This study alluded to this problem. Fullan (1993) explains that “those individuals and organizations that are most effective do not experience fewer problems, less stressful situations, and greater fortune, they just deal with them differently” (p. 91).
Recommendations for Further Study

In Chapter 3, the limitations and delimitations of this study were summarized for the reader to recognize the restrictions within which the study was planned and completed. Given there was only limited qualitative data available, thoughts for further study at the nine identified sites are broad. Additional study on these nine high schools in the area of proficiency rates, principal turnover rates and the effect of district administration on site based administrators would extend research on raising achievement for all students.

Additional qualitative research utilizing Carmon’s Conceptual Framework could specifically address issues of site-based leadership styles. Modeling the work of this study, incorporating the interviews of assistant principals, students and parents perspectives would provide immense empirical knowledge to drive improvement of student achievement at the high school level.

Future study could also especially benefit from the development of a more comprehensive theoretical framework utilizing Carmon’s Conceptual Framework. This includes considering which “practices” go where in the model. The application of a polished conceptual framework inclusive of the 21 leadership “practices” to secondary analysis data, however, may be debatable if utilized within a secondary analysis data set that does not include all of the original data (i.e. digital recordings or full transcriptions). The researcher recorded this problem as a limitation for this study as all the digital recordings were not obtainable for all the schools in the preliminary sample.

Although this study focused on the leadership practices of principals in high schools, updated leadership research is needed on elementary and middle schools in North Carolina. As the concept of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) travels from high school to
middle school and finally to elementary schools, the need for administrators to lead as change agents in order to refocus the goals and beliefs and culture of the schools is critical.

**Conclusion**

Is it unfair to isolate a principal’s leadership style as a main reason for outstanding student achievement? This researcher believes that the results of this small study have shown an indirect correlation between the presence of an effective principal and the successfulness of schools with challenging populations. In fact, it seems that the principals’ leadership styles have a direct effect on the teachers who have a direct effect on student achievement? The BTO high school teachers in this study are well taken care of and fueled from the compliments and the empowerment of the principals. One of the teachers said it best: “It’s sort of like a concert; everybody’s singing together.”

Finally, BTO and LP principal may be right after all when they stress the importance of hiring great teachers and doing everything it takes to support classroom instruction. The principals of these BTO schools have cultivated top-notch teachers who care about the success of every child. Although, this researcher did not utilize the teacher interview data in this study, it is appropriate to give the persons who directly influence student achievement at least a small voice in this study. Below are a few great quotes from the teachers. Teacher of BTO High School-5 clamored about her positive experience at a small high school with a big hearted principal and dedicated teachers.

“...North Carolina to work! We have a smaller population with a different population. Even with a small population, we get the job done. Just because we’re small does not mean we do not work hard.

Still another teacher at BTO High School-5 articulated the school’s main goal for students which goes beyond graduating from high school and permeates these high school students’
future in the world. “Produce productive citizens is the main goal . . . our goal is to train them emotionally, spiritually, socially and physically, academically.” And still a teacher from BTO High School-10 who has experience some difficulty in teaching or witness a colleague rebound from an unsuccessful year, shared information about the extensive support at her high school:

If you are a teacher that needs some help in instruction, he is going to try to get teachers to work with you and give you all the help you need. He will give you everything you need to be successful.

Unlike teachers at the LP High Schools, teachers in BTO High Schools had many positive things to say about their principals. The Researcher has arranged those characteristic in an acrostic poem. These skilled teachers play an important part in the effectiveness of the principals in these high schools as they strive to increase academic achievement for all students.

_The Teachers on Leadership_

Organized
Understands
Really data driven

Principal that hires quality people
Really sharp
“It’s sort of like a concert, everybody’s singing together.”
No child gets left behind
Comfortable environment in which to work
It’s all about our culture
Plans ahead in the summer
All about distributing discipline equitably
Likes to take care of his teachers
Supportive and honest

In an attempt to broaden and deepen the art of school leadership as it relates to the 21 leadership “practices” and student achievement, this experience of working with the book, _School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results_ by Marzano et al. (2005) has
definitely ignited an interest in further work in this field. As this researcher strives to help increase student achievement as an assistant principal and a future principal, it is important to be prepared for the work ahead.
Appendix A

Interview Protocol (Principals)

1) Grand Tour Question:
   - What would you say are your biggest challenges in this school? How are you addressing those?

   Student Population:
   Free & Reduced Meal:
   Black:
   White:
   Hispanic:
   Multi-Racial:
   Asian:
   Per Pupil Expenditure:
   Cohort Graduation Rate:
   SAT:
   SAT Participation:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002-03</td>
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2005-06: School Designation: Growth: AYP:

2004-05: School Designation: Growth: AYP:

2) Goal Setting and Communication of Goals:
   - Is there a set of specific goals for this school overall? If so, what are they?
   - How were these goals set?
   - Do your staff members know what the goals are? How do they know?
   - Do your students know what the goals are? How do they know?
   - Have the goals just been established, or have they been in place for several years?
   - What are the next challenges that you will be working to overcome?

   [Goals instructional? Defined in terms of EOC results or other measurable outcomes? Data used to set goals? In written form? Stressed in opening orientation, faculty meetings?]

3) Coordination of Curriculum & Instruction:
   - How are curricular decision made here?
   - Do you get involved in curriculum matters? Why/why not?
   - How do teachers decide what to teach in your school?
   - Has this changed in the past few years?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Licensed Teachers</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>School District</th>
<th>North Carolina</th>
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<tr>
<td>Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers</td>
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<td>Teachers with Advanced Degrees</td>
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<td>NBCTs</td>
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</table>

3.5) **Teacher Recruitment, Assignment & Retention:**
- Do you have problems recruiting teachers? If so, how do you address them?
- How do you decide who teaches what?
- How do you address teacher retention issues?
- Do you provide any type of incentives for your teachers? If so, what and why?
- How do you encourage and support them? How do you acknowledge their performance? Has this changed over the past few years?

[Self-motivated, self-starter teachers? Do you do anything to get them going and keep them working hard?]

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>School District</th>
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<tr>
<td>05-06 School-level turnover rate (85 teachers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>04-05 School-level turnover rate (88 teachers)</td>
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</table>

**Andrews Years of Teaching Experience:**
- 0-3 years:
- 4-10 years:
- 10+ years:

4) **Supervision & Evaluation of Instruction:**
- Do you get out into classrooms on a regular basis? Why/why not?
- If so, what do you look for when you’re there?
- Do you get a chance to talk with the teachers about what you see during those visits?
- Has your attention to instruction changed in the past few years?

[Formal evaluations of teachers? Any connection of teacher evaluations to student learning, achievement, test scores?]

5) **Monitoring Student Progress and Providing Incentives for Learning:**
- To what extent do you get involved in monitoring students’ academic progress?
- What sorts of things do you do?
- Do you do anything special to recognize or reward high student achievement here?
- What is your drop-out rate and how do you address issues regarding drop-outs?
- How are students assigned to teachers?
- Has your attention to student progress changed in the past few years?

[Concrete behaviors reflecting expectations? Formative assessments? Benchmarks? Emphasis?]
6) Promoting Professional Development and Building Community:
- How do you handle professional development here?
- Is the schedule set up so that teachers who teach the same subjects have times when they can meet with each other? Do they?
- Do you think much comes of these sessions?
- If one of your teachers was doing a poor job, would the other teachers call him/her on it? Why/why not? Has this changed over the past few years?
[Shared planning times? Who, how, when, where and why? Principal part of the team? Why/why not? How? How are norms set and developed? Shared purpose and collective responsibility for learning?]

7) Maintaining Visibility:
- Do you get out around the school very much? When and why?
- What activities do you attend? Why?
- What do you do when you attend activities like that?
- Has your visibility changed over the past few years?
[Participate in extracurriculars? Cover for teachers absent or late? Teach classes? Tutor students?]

8) Creating Trust:
- Do your teachers wholeheartedly support your efforts to bring about improvement? Why/why not?
- Do you take an active interest in trying to help teachers personally and professionally? How?
- Has this changed recently?
[Benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness?]

9) Protecting Instructional Time:
- Do your teachers complain much about things that cut into the time they have for instruction?
- Is there anything you do about this issue?
- What do you do to provide a safe, orderly environment?
- Any change in this over the past few years?
[Minimize interruptions? Student absence for extracurriculars? Discourage student and teacher lateness and absences?]

10) Others:
- Is there anything else that you like to share about your school—about the teachers, students, parents, and/or the community?
- Does the district hinder or facilitate your success in any way? If so, how?
[District barriers or supports?]

* Be somewhat skeptical, actively looking for ways that the school may be “gaming the system.”
Appendix B

Interview Protocol (Teachers)

1) Grand Tour Question

- What would you say are your biggest challenges in this school? How are you addressing those?

  Student Population:
  Free & Reduced Meal:
  Black:
  White:
  Hispanic:
  Multi-Racial:
  Asian:
  Per Pupil Expenditure:
  Cohort Graduation Rate:
  SAT:
  SAT Participation:

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</table>


2) Goal Setting and Communication of Goals:

- Is there a set of specific goals for this school overall? If so, what are they?
- How were these goals set?
- Are the school’s goals clear to you? If so, how do you know what they are?
- Do your students know what the goals are? How do they know?
- Have the goals just been established, or have they been in place for several years?

[Goals instructional? Defined in terms of EOC results or other measurable outcomes? Data used to set goals? In written form? Stressed in opening orientation, faculty meetings?]

3) Coordination of Curriculum & Instruction:

- How are curricular decisions made here?
- Does the principal play any role in shaping the curriculum or tracking whether and how it’s implemented? Why/why not?
• How do you decide what to teach?
• Has this changed in the past few years?

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<th>Fully Licensed Teachers</th>
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</table>

3.5) Teacher Recruitment, Assignment & Retention:
• How does the principal recruit teachers?
• Who and how do you decide who teaches what?
• What is your teacher turnover rate?
• Does the principal provide any type of incentives for teachers? If so, what and why?
• How does he encourage and support you? How does he acknowledge your performance?
  Has this changed over the past few years?
[Self-motivated, self-starter teachers? Do you do anything to get them going and keep them working hard?]

<table>
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<tr>
<th>05-06 School-level turnover rate (107 teachers)</th>
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<th>School District</th>
<th>North Carolina</th>
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<tr>
<td>04-05 School-level turnover rate (105 teachers)</td>
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</table>

Smith Years of Teaching Experience:

4) Supervision & Evaluation of Instruction:
• Does the principal come to your classroom very often? Why/why not?
• What does he seem to be looking for when he does?
• Does he talk with you about what he sees?
• Has the principal’s attention to instruction and changed in the past few years?
[Formal evaluations of teachers? Any connection of teacher evaluations to student learning, achievement, test scores?]

5) Monitoring Student Progress and Providing Incentives for Learning:
• Does the principal give much attention to monitoring students’ academic progress?
• If so, what sorts of things does he do?
• Do you do anything special to recognize or reward high student achievement here?
• What is your drop-out rate and how do you address issues regarding drop-outs?
• How are students assigned to teachers?
• Has this changed in the past few years?
[Concrete behaviors reflecting expectations? Formative assessments? Benchmarks? Emphasis?]
6) Promoting Professional Development and Building Community:
- How do you handle professional development here?
- Is the schedule set up so that teachers who teach the same subjects have times when they can meet with each other? Do you?
- Do you think much comes of these sessions?
- If one of your teachers was doing a poor job, would the other teachers call him/her on it? Why/why not?
- Has this changed over the past few years?

[Shared planning times? Who, how, when, where and why? Principal part of the team? Why/why not? How? How are norms set and developed? Shared purpose and collective responsibility for learning?]

7) Maintaining Visibility:
- Does the principal get out around the school very much? When and why?
- What activities does he attend?
- What does he do when he attends activities like that? Why?
- Has his visibility changed over the past few years?

[Participate in extracurriculars? Cover for teachers absent or late? Teach classes? Tutor students?]

8) Creating Trust:
- Can you trust that the principal will do what he tells you s/he will do?
- Does the principal care about you as an individual?
- Does the principal take an active interest in trying to help teachers improve their knowledge and skill?
- Has this changed recently?

9) Protecting Instructional Time:
- Does the principal try to protect the time you have for instruction?
- If so, what sorts of things does he do?
- What do you wish he would do?
- What types of things are done to provide a safe, orderly environment?
- Any change in this over the past few years?

[Minimize interruptions? Student absence for extracurriculars? Discourage student and teacher lateness and absences?]

11) Others:
- Is there anything else that you like to share about your school—about the principal, teachers, students, parents, and/or the community?
- Does the district hinder or facilitate your success? If so, how?

[Barriers and/or supports?]

* Be somewhat skeptical, actively looking for ways that the school may be “gaming the system.”
Appendix C

IRB Application

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS
Institutional Review Board

APPLICATION FOR IRB APPROVAL OF
HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH
Version 2-Nov-2006

Part A.1. Contact Information, Agreements, and Signatures

Title of Study: High School Resource Allocation Project: EDUC 07-0113

Date: 1/17/07

Name and degrees of Applicant: Gary Henry, Ph.D.
Department: School of Education Mailing address/CB #: 3500 Pager:
Phone #: 962.6694 Fax #: 962.1533 Email Address: gthenry@unc.edu

Name of funding source or sponsor:
__ not funded __ Federal X State __ industry __ foundation __ UNC-CH
__ other (specify): Sponsor or award number: Task order is included in the Appendix.

List all other project personnel including co-investigators, and anyone else who has contact
with subjects or identifiable data from subjects.
Kirsten Kainz, Ph.D. Project Director, kkainz@email.unc.edu
Kathleen Brown, Ph.D., Qualitative Investigator, brownk@email.unc.edu
Charles Thompson, Ph.D., Qualitative Investigator, thompsonchar@ecu.edu
Deborah Eaker-Rich, Ph.D., Qualitative Investigator, eakerric@email.unc.edu
Elizabeth Cunningham, J.D., Qualitative Research Assistant, ecunningham@lexcominc.net
Adrienne Sgammato, M.S., Graduate Student on Quantitative Team, sgammato@email.unc.edu
Pan Yi, M.S., Graduate Student on Quantitative Team, panyi@email.unc.edu
Cary Gillenwater, M.A., Graduate Student on Qualitative Team, cgillen@email.unc.edu
Aaron Cooley, M.A., Graduate Student on Qualitative Team, aacooley@email.unc.edu
Warnele Renee Carmon, M.Ed., Graduate Student on Qualitative Team, wcarmon@email.unc.edu
Alvera Lesane, M.Ed., Graduate Student on Qualitative Team, ajlesane@email.unc.edu
Cicily McCrimmon, M.Ed., Graduate Student on Qualitative Team, camccrim@email.unc.edu
Chris Scott, M.Ed., Graduate Student on Qualitative Team, cescott@email.unc.edu

Include email address for each person who should receive electronic copies of IRB correspondence to PI: Kirsten Kainz - kkainz@email.unc.edu
Include following items with your submission, where applicable.

- Check the relevant items below and include one copy of all checked items 1-11 in the order listed.
- Also include two additional collated sets of copies (sorted in the order listed) for items 1-7.
→ Applications will be returned if these instructions are not followed.

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<tr>
<th>Check</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total No. of Copies</th>
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<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td>1. This application. One copy must have original PI signatures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td>2. Consent and assent forms, fact or information sheets; include phone and verbal consent scripts</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>3. HIPAA authorization addendum to consent form.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4. All recruitment materials including scripts, flyers and advertising, letters, emails.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5. Questionnaires, focus group guides, scripts used to guide phone or in-person interviews, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td>6. Protocol, grant application or proposal supporting this submission; (e.g., extramural grant application to NIH or foundation, industry protocol, student proposal).</td>
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<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td>7. Documentation of reviews from any other committees (e.g., GCRC, Oncology Protocol Review Committee, or local review committees in Academic Affairs).</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>8. Addendum for Multi-Site Studies where UNC-CH is the Lead Coordinating Center.</td>
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<td>9. Data use agreements (may be required for use of existing data from third parties).</td>
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<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td>10. Only for those study personnel not in the online UNC-CH ethics training database (<a href="http://cfx3.research.unc.edu/training_comp/">http://cfx3.research.unc.edu/training_comp/</a>): Documentation of required training in human research ethics.</td>
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<td>11. Investigator Brochure if a drug study.</td>
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**Principal Investigator:** I will personally conduct or supervise this research study. I will ensure that this study is performed in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and University policies regarding human subjects research. I will obtain IRB approval before making any changes or additions to the project. I will notify the IRB of any other changes in the information provided in this application. I will provide progress reports to the IRB at least annually, or as requested. I will report promptly to the IRB all unanticipated problems or serious adverse events involving risk to human subjects. I will follow the IRB approved consent process for all subjects. I will ensure that all collaborators, students and employees assisting in this research study are informed about these obligations. All information given in this form is accurate and complete.

________________________________________    ________________
Signature of Principal Investigator                  Date

**Faculty Advisor if PI is a Student or Trainee Investigator:** I accept ultimate responsibility for ensuring that this study complies with all the obligations listed above for the PI.

________________________________________    ________________
Signature of Faculty Advisor                  Date
**Department or Division Chair, Center Director (or counterpart) of PI:** (or Vice-Chair or Chair’s designee if Chair is investigator or otherwise unable to review): I certify that this research is appropriate for this Principal Investigator, that the investigators are qualified to conduct the research, and that there are adequate resources (including financial, support and facilities) available. If my unit has a local review committee for pre-IRB review, this requirement has been satisfied. I support this application, and hereby submit it for further review.

______________________________  ____________________________
Signature of Department Chair or designee  Date

______________________________  ____________________________
Print Name of Department Chair or designee  Department

**Part A.2. Summary Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Are the following involved?</strong></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.2.1. Existing data, research records, patient records, and/or human biological specimens?</td>
<td><em>X</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>A.2.2. Surveys, questionnaires, interviews, or focus groups with subjects?</td>
<td><em>X</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>A.2.3. Videotaping, audiotaping, filming of subjects (newly collected or existing)?</td>
<td><em>X</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>A.2.4. Do you plan to enroll subjects from these vulnerable or select populations:</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. UNC-CH students or UNC-CH employees?</td>
<td>__</td>
<td><em>X</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Non-English-speaking?</td>
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<td>c. Decisionally impaired?</td>
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<td>d. Patients?</td>
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<td>e. Prisoners, others involuntarily detained or incarcerated, or parolees?</td>
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<td>f. Pregnant women?</td>
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<td>g. Minors (less than 18 years)? <strong>If yes,</strong> give age range: to years</td>
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<td>A.2.5. a. Is this a multi-site study (sites outside UNC-CH engaged in the research)?</td>
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<td>b. Is UNC-CH the sponsor or lead coordinating center?</td>
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<td><strong>If yes,</strong> include the <a href="#">Addendum for Multi-site Studies where UNC-CH is the Lead Coordinating Center</a>.</td>
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<td><strong>If yes,</strong> will any of these sites be outside the United States?</td>
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<td><strong>If yes,</strong> provide contact information for the foreign IRB.</td>
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<td>A.2.6. Will there be a data and safety monitoring committee (DSMB or DSMC)?</td>
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<td>A.2.7. a. Are you collecting sensitive information such as sexual behavior, HIV status, recreational drug use, illegal behaviors, child/physical abuse, immigration status, etc?</td>
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<td><em>X</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Do you plan to obtain a federal Certificate of Confidentiality for this study?</td>
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<td>A.2.8. a. <strong>Investigational</strong> drugs? (provide IND # _______)</td>
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<td><em>X</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Approved drugs for “non-FDA-approved” conditions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>All studies testing substances in humans must provide a letter of acknowledgement from the <a href="#">UNC Health Care Investigational Drug Service (IDS)</a>.</td>
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<td>A.2.9. Placebo(s)?</td>
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</table>
A.2.10. **Investigational** devices, instruments, machines, software? (provide IDE # ______) __ X __

A.2.11. Fetal tissue? __ X__

A.2.12. Genetic studies on subjects’ specimens? __ X__

A.2.13. Storage of subjects’ specimens for future research? __ X__

If yes, see instructions for Consent for Stored Samples.

A.2.14. Diagnostic or therapeutic ionizing radiation, or radioactive isotopes, which subjects would not receive otherwise? __ X__

If yes, approval by the UNC-CH Radiation Safety Committee is required.

A.2.15. Recombinant DNA or gene transfer to human subjects? __ X__

If yes, approval by the UNC-CH Institutional Biosafety Committee is required.

A.2.16. Does this study involve UNC-CH cancer patients? __ X__

If yes, submit this application directly to the Oncology Protocol Review Committee.

A.2.17. Will subjects be studied in the General Clinical Research Center (GCRC)? __ X__

If yes, obtain the GCRC Addendum from the GCRC and submit complete application (IRB application and Addendum) to the GCRC.

### Part A.3. Conflict of Interest Questions and Certification

The following questions apply to all investigators and study staff engaged in the design, conduct, or reporting results of this project and/or their immediate family members. For these purposes, "family" includes the individual’s spouse and dependent children. “Spouse” includes a person with whom one lives together in the same residence and with whom one shares responsibility for each other’s welfare and shares financial obligations.

A.3.1. Currently or during the term of this research study, does any member of the research team or his/her family member have or expect to have:

(a) A personal financial interest in or personal financial relationship (including gifts of cash or in-kind) with the sponsor of this study? __ yes X_ no

(b) A personal financial interest in or personal financial relationship (including gifts of cash or in-kind) with an entity that owns or has the right to commercialize a product, process, or technology studied in this project? __ yes X_ no

(c) A board membership of any kind or an executive position (paid or unpaid) with the sponsor of this study or with an entity that owns or has the right to commercialize a product, process, or technology studied in this project? __ yes X_ no

A.3.2. Has the University or has a University-related foundation received a cash or in-kind gift from the Sponsor of this study for the use or benefit of any member of the research team? __ yes X_ no

A.3.3. Has the University or has a University-related foundation received a cash or in-kind gift for the use or benefit of any member of the research team from an entity that owns or has the right to commercialize a product, process, or technology studied in this project? __ yes X_ no
If the answer to ANY of the questions above is yes, the affected research team member(s) must complete and submit to the Office of the University Counsel the form accessible at http://coi.unc.edu. List name(s) of all research team members for whom any answer to the questions above is yes:

Certification by Principal Investigator: By submitting this IRB application, I (the PI) certify that the information provided above is true and accurate regarding my own circumstances, that I have inquired of every UNC-Chapel Hill employee or trainee who will be engaged in the design, conduct or reporting of results of this project as to the questions set out above, and that I have instructed any such person who has answered “yes” to any of these questions to complete and submit for approval a Conflict of Interest Evaluation Form. I understand that as Principal Investigator I am obligated to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest that exist in relation to my study are reported as required by University policy.

Signature of Principal Investigator ____________________________ Date ______________

Faculty Advisor if PI is a Student or Trainee Investigator: I accept ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the PI complies with the University’s conflict of interest policies and procedures.

Signature of Faculty Advisor ____________________________ Date ______________

Part A.4. Questions Common to All Studies

For all questions, if the study involves only secondary data analysis, focus on your proposed design, methods and procedures, and not those of the original study that produced the data you plan to use.

A.4.1. Brief Summary. Provide a brief non-technical description of the study, which will be used in IRB documentation as a description of the study. Typical summaries are 50-100 words. Please reply to each item below, retaining the subheading labels already in place, so that reviewers can readily identify the content.

Purpose: The purpose of the High School Resource Allocation project is to evaluate the effects of school expenditures on high school student achievement in North Carolina, accounting for characteristics of students, teachers, and principals within schools.

Participants: This evaluation primarily will rely on extant data from records of school expenditures and student test scores and background characteristics obtained from the NC Department of Public Instruction. Additionally, personnel from 48 of the 359 traditional public high schools in North Carolina will participate in interviews to provide supplementary information on the context for spending and instruction within schools.

Procedures (methods): Primarily, this study will rely on quantitative analysis of extant data. For the purpose of complementary qualitative analyses, university researchers will interview a subset of teachers and principals at schools modeled in the quantitative analyses. A copy of the interview protocol is contained in the Appendix.
A.4.2. **Purpose and Rationale.** Provide a summary of the background information, state the research question(s), and tell why the study is needed. If a complete rationale and literature review are in an accompanying grant application or other type of proposal, only provide a brief summary here. If there is no proposal, provide a more extensive rationale and literature review, including references.

On March 3, 2006, Judge Howard Manning issued a letter to the North Carolina Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Chairman of the State Board of Education. In his letter, Judge Manning cited the chronic low performance on state tests for students in 44 high schools in North Carolina. Additionally, he provided a comparison of expenditures in schools with low and high performing students in 2005. This letter prompted responses from the NC Department of Public Instruction and the Governor’s Office. As a result, Governor Easley commissioned an evaluation of student performance in high schools in relation to school expenditures, accounting for characteristics of the students and teachers in those schools.

A.4.3. **Subjects.** You should describe the subject population even if your study does not involve direct interaction (e.g., existing records). Specify number, gender, ethnicity, race, and age. Specify whether subjects are healthy volunteers or patients. If patients, specify any relevant disease or condition and indicate how potential subjects will be identified.

For the quantitative analyses, extant data on student achievement and school expenditures in 359 schools will be used. There were approximately 400,000 students attending traditional public high schools in North Carolina during 2005.

For the qualitative analyses, principals and teachers - approximately ten teachers who teach courses assessed by NC End of Course tests in each school - from 48 schools will be interviewed. The 48 schools in our qualitative sample represent three groups: 1) 37 high schools from Manning’s list of 44 that continued to have low-performing status in 2006; 2) two high schools from Manning’s list that improved their performance in 2006; and 3) nine schools that were high performing in 2005 yet served student populations similar to the low-performing schools.

A.4.4. **Inclusion/exclusion criteria.** List required characteristics of potential subjects, and those that preclude enrollment or involvement of subjects or their data. Justify exclusion of any group, especially by criteria based on gender, ethnicity, race, or age. If pregnant women are excluded, or if women who become pregnant are withdrawn, specific justification must be provided.

Data from students attending charter schools will not be included.

A.4.5. **Full description of the study design, methods and procedures.** Describe the research study. Discuss the study design; study procedures; sequential description of what subjects will be asked to do; assignment of subjects to various arms of the study if applicable; doses; frequency and route of administration of medication and other medical treatment if applicable; how data are to be collected (questionnaire, interview, focus group or specific procedure such as physical examination, venipuncture, etc.). Include information on who will collect data, who will conduct procedures or measurements. Indicate the number and duration of contacts with each subject; outcome measurements; and follow-up procedures. If the study involves medical treatment, distinguish standard care procedures from those that are research. If the study is a clinical trial involving patients
as subjects and use of placebo control is involved, provide justification for the use of placebo controls.

For the quantitative study, analyses will be conducted on extant data obtained from the NC Department of Public Instruction.

For the qualitative study, UNC researchers will send a letter to principals declaring the study purpose and requesting a visit to the schools (this letter is contained in the Appendix). Following the letter, UNC researchers will call the school principal to determine a visit date. While visiting the schools, researchers will conduct a semi-structured interview with principals and a set of teachers. UNC researchers will record the interviews to create summary statements at a later date. Interviews will occur once during Spring, 2007.

A.4.6. **Benefits to subjects and/or society.** Describe any potential for direct benefit to individual subjects, as well as the benefit to society based on scientific knowledge to be gained; these should be clearly distinguished. Consider the nature, magnitude, and likelihood of any direct benefit to subjects. If there is no direct benefit to the individual subject, say so here and in the consent form (if there is a consent form). Do not list monetary payment or other compensation as a benefit.

No direct benefits to participants are anticipated.

A.4.7. **Full description of risks and measures to minimize risks.** Include risk of psychosocial harm (e.g., emotional distress, embarrassment, breach of confidentiality), economic harm (e.g., loss of employment or insurability, loss of professional standing or reputation, loss of standing within the community) and legal jeopardy (e.g., disclosure of illegal activity or negligence), as well as known side effects of study medication, if applicable, and risk of pain and physical injury. Describe what will be done to minimize these risks. Describe procedures for follow-up, when necessary, such as when subjects are found to be in need of medical or psychological referral. If there is no direct interaction with subjects, and risk is limited to breach of confidentiality (e.g., for existing data), state this.

No risks to participants are anticipated.

A.4.8. **Data analysis.** Tell how the qualitative and/or quantitative data will be analyzed. Explain how the sample size is sufficient to achieve the study aims. This might include a formal power calculation or explanation of why a small sample is sufficient (e.g., qualitative research, pilot studies).

For the quantitative study we plan to conduct hierarchical analyses of student achievement on End of Course (EOC) tests. The hierarchical models will parse variation in student performance due to student characteristics from variation due to school characteristics. The unique effects of student and school characteristics will be estimated to evaluate the role of current expenditure patterns and policies. Sample sizes - which range from 30,000 to 112,000 students per specific EOC - are more than adequate to find small effects.

For the qualitative analysis, interviews with principals and teachers will be analyzed to see common patterns that can illuminate and refine the quantitative findings. Rather than using individual quotes (as is the case in some qualitative reports), summary reports of the qualitative findings will be used. These summary reports will complement the quantitative analyses such that maximum policy-relevant information is available for the final report.
A.4.9. **Will you collect or receive any of the following identifiers?** Does not apply to consent forms.

__ No  __X__ Yes  *If yes, check all that apply:*

a. __X__ Names  
b. ___ Telephone numbers  
c. __X__ Any elements of dates (other than year) for dates directly related to an individual, including birth date, admission date, discharge date, date of death. For ages over 89: all elements of dates (including year) indicative of such age, except that such ages and elements may be aggregated into a single category of age 90 and older  
d. ___ Any geographic subdivisions smaller than a State, including street address, city, county, precinct, zip code and their equivalent geocodes, except for the initial three digits of a zip code  
e. ___ Fax numbers  
f. ___ Electronic mail addresses  
g. __X__ Social security numbers  
h. ___ Medical record numbers  
i. ___ Health plan beneficiary numbers  
j. ___ Account numbers  
k. ___ Certificate/license numbers  
l. ___ Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers (VIN), including license plate numbers  
m. ___ Device identifiers and serial numbers (e.g., implanted medical device)  

n. ___ Web universal resource locators (URLs)  
o. ___ Internet protocol (IP) address numbers  
p. ___ Biometric identifiers, including finger and voice prints  
q. ___ Full face photographic images and any comparable images  
r. ___ Any other unique identifying number, characteristic or code, other than dummy identifiers that are not derived from actual identifiers and for which the re-identification key is maintained by the health care provider and not disclosed to the researcher
A.4.10. **Confidentiality of the data.** Describe procedures for maintaining confidentiality of the data you will collect or will receive. Describe how you will protect the data from access by those not authorized. How will data be transmitted among research personnel? Where relevant, discuss the potential for deductive disclosure (i.e., directly identifying subjects from a combination of indirect IDs).

**Quantitative Data**
Data from the NC Department of Public Instruction are stored on a secure server at UNC accessed by password on computers in locked offices in the School of Education. Only members of the quantitative team (Gary Henry, Kirsten Kainz, Adrienne Sgammato, Pan Yi) have access to unique passwords. Reports of quantitative data will focus state level analyses and will not provide information on individual participants.

**Qualitative Data**
The interviews, with participant permission, will be audio taped. Participants may ask that the audio recorder be turned off at any time during the interview. Although the qualitative data team member conducting the interview will know the name(s) of the interviewed participant(s), to maintain confidentiality, participants will not be identified by name on any tapes or in any reports. Audio recordings of interviews will be used only for the creation of summary reports. Audio-tapes will be stored in locked offices. The researcher conducting the interview and the participants will be the only people who will have access to the individual on the audio recordings.

A.4.11. **Data sharing.** With whom will identifiable (contains any of the 18 identifiers listed in question A.4.9 above) data be shared outside the immediate research team? For each, explain confidentiality measures. Include data use agreements, if any.

- [X] No one
- [ ] Coordinating Center:
- [ ] Statisticians:
- [ ] Consultants:
- [ ] Other researchers:
- [ ] Registries:
- [ ] Sponsors:
- [ ] External labs for additional testing:
- [ ] Journals:
- [ ] Publicly available dataset:
- [ ] Other:

A.4.12. **Data security for storage and transmission.** Please check all that apply.

For electronic data:
- [X] Secure network
- [X] Password access
- [ ] Encryption
- [ ] Other (describe):
- [ ] Portable storage (e.g., laptop computer, flash drive)
  
  *Describe how data will be protected for any portable device:*
For hardcopy data (including human biological specimens, CDs, tapes, etc.):
- X Data de-identified by research team (stripped of the 18 identifiers listed in question 7 above)
- X Locked suite or office
- Locked cabinet
- Data coded by research team with a master list secured and kept separately
- Other (describe):

A.4.13. Post-study disposition of identifiable data or human biological materials. Describe your plans for disposition of data or human biological specimens that are identifiable in any way (directly or via indirect codes) once the study has ended. Describe your plan to destroy identifiers, if you will do so.

Quantitative Data

Following the creation of final analysis data sets, all data will be de-identified. Previous data with sensitive identifiers will be returned to NC DPI.

Qualitative Data

Audiotapes will remain in a locked office for the duration of the study, after which time they will be destroyed.

Part A.5. The Consent Process and Consent Documentation (including Waivers)

The standard consent process is for all subjects to sign a document containing all the elements of informed consent, as specified in the federal regulations. Some or all of the elements of consent, including signatures, may be altered or waived under certain circumstances.

- If you will obtain consent in any manner, complete section A.5.1.
- If you are obtaining consent, but requesting a waiver of the requirement for a signed consent document, complete section A.5.2.
- If you are requesting a waiver of any or all of the elements of consent, complete section A.5.3.

You may need to complete more than one section. For example, if you are conducting a phone survey with verbal consent, complete sections A.5.1, A.5.2, and possibly A.5.3.

A.5.1. Describe the process of obtaining informed consent from subjects. If children will be enrolled as subjects, describe the provisions for obtaining parental permission and assent of the child. If decisionally impaired adults are to be enrolled, describe the provision for obtaining surrogate consent from a legally authorized representative (LAR). If non-English speaking people will be enrolled, explain how consent in the native language will be obtained. Address both written translation of the consent and the availability of oral interpretation. After you have completed this part A.5.1, if you are not requesting a waiver of any type, you are done with Part A.5.; proceed to Part B.

Principals and teachers who participate in interviews will be provided with consent forms prior to the interview. Staff from the nine high-performing and two improved schools will receive Form A of the Consent Form: staff from the 37 low-performing schools will receive
Form B (both are contained in the Appendix). All principals and teachers in the study speak English.

Part B. Questions for Studies that Involve Direct Interaction with Human Subjects

→ If this does not apply to your study, do not submit this section.

B.1. Methods of recruiting. Describe how and where subjects will be identified and recruited. Indicate who will do the recruiting, and tell how subjects will be contacted. Describe efforts to ensure equal access to participation among women and minorities. Describe how you will protect the privacy of potential subjects during recruitment. For prospective subjects whose status (e.g., as patient or client), condition, or contact information is not publicly available (e.g., from a phone book or public web site), the initial contact should be made with legitimate knowledge of the subjects’ circumstances. Ideally, the individual with such knowledge should seek prospective subjects’ permission to release names to the PI for recruitment. Alternatively, the knowledgeable individual could provide information about the study, including contact information for the investigator, so that interested prospective subjects can contact the investigator. Provide the IRB with a copy of any document or script that will be used to obtain the patients’ permission for release of names or to introduce the study. Check with your IRB for further guidance.

Because this is an evaluation of high school performance commissioned by the state, high school principals are aware of the potential for upcoming interviews. UNC researchers will send a letter to clarify the study purposes and help principals prepare for interviews. This letter is attached in the Appendix, as is a script for follow-up contact by telephone.

B.2. Protected Health Information (PHI). If you need to access Protected Health Information (PHI) to identify potential subjects who will then be contacted, you will need a limited waiver of HIPAA authorization. If this applies to your study, please provide the following information.

a. Will the information collected be limited only to that necessary to contact the subjects to ask if they are interested in participating in the study? NA

b. How will confidentiality/privacy be protected prior to ascertaining desire to participate? NA

c. When and how will you destroy the contact information if an individual declines participation? NA

B.3. Duration of entire study and duration of an individual subject’s participation, including follow-up evaluation if applicable. Include the number of required contacts and approximate duration of each contact.

School staff will participate in a single interview that will last 60 to 90 minutes.

B.4. Where will the subjects be studied? Describe locations where subjects will be studied, both on and off the UNC-CH campus.
Interviews will be conducted at high schools where staff are employed.

B.5. **Privacy.** Describe procedures that will ensure privacy of the subjects in this study. Examples include the setting for interviews, phone conversations, or physical examinations; communication methods or mailed materials (e.g., mailings should not indicate disease status or focus of study on the envelope).

Interviews will be conducted in private, quiet settings such as offices, classrooms, or other agreed upon locations of the participants’ choosing.

B.6. **Inducements for participation.** Describe all inducements to participate, monetary or non-monetary. If monetary, specify the amount and schedule for payments and how this will be prorated if the subject withdraws (or is withdrawn) from the study prior to completing it. For compensation in foreign currency, provide a US$ equivalent. Provide evidence that the amount is not coercive (e.g., describe purchasing power for foreign countries). Include food or refreshments that may be provided.

There is no compensation associated with participation in this evaluation.

B.7. **Costs to be borne by subjects.** Include child care, travel, parking, clinic fees, diagnostic and laboratory studies, drugs, devices, all professional fees, etc. If there are no costs to subjects other than their time to participate, indicate this.

There is no cost to subjects other than their time.

Part C. **Questions for Studies using Data, Records or Human Biological Specimens without Direct Contact with Subjects**

→ *If this does not apply to your study, do not submit this section.*

C.1. What records, data or human biological specimens will you be using? (check all that apply):

- Data already collected for another research study
- **X** Data already collected for administrative purposes (e.g., Medicare data, hospital discharge data)
- ___ Medical records (custodian may also require form, e.g., HD-974 if UNC-Health Care System)
- ___ Electronic information from clinical database (custodian may also require form)
- ___ Patient specimens (tissues, blood, serum, surgical discards, etc.)
- ___ Other (specify):

C.2. For each of the boxes checked in 1, how were the original data, records, or human biological specimens collected? Describe the process of data collection including consent, if applicable.

Test scores and school expenditures are collected and compiled by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as part of a public reporting mandate. There is no consent process involved.
C.3. For each of the boxes checked in 1, where do these data, records or human biological specimens currently reside?

Data stored at the NC Department of Public Instruction have been released via CD to researchers at UNC and are stored on a secure server.

C.4. For each of the boxes checked in 1, from whom do you have permission to use the data, records or human biological specimens? Include data use agreements, if required by the custodian of data that are not publicly available.

There is no formal agreement for data use other than the attached contract contained in the Appendix.

C.5. If the research involves human biological specimens, has the purpose for which they were collected been met before removal of any excess? For example, has the pathologist in charge or the clinical laboratory director certified that the original clinical purpose has been satisfied? Explain if necessary.

__ yes __ no __ not applicable (explain)

C.6. Do all of these data records or specimens exist at the time of this application? If not, explain how prospective data collection will occur.

__ yes __ no If no, explain
REFERENCES


