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**HIGH SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING AND RENEWAL: AN EXPLORATORY
AND COMPARATIVE STUDY OF STRUCTURAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL
INTEGRATION STRATEGIES APPLIED BY SUCCESSFUL
LEADERS OF TURNAROUND HIGH SCHOOLS**

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by

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Treatise

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Dedication

This treatise is dedicated to all the students, educators, and community members at the various schools in which I have worked. They have inspired me and have taught me a great deal about myself as an administrator in public education. Their dedication and commitment have taught me to continue being a supporter of their work, and thus, have made me the person who I am today.

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**High School Restructuring and Renewal: An Exploratory and Comparative Study
of Structural and Instructional Integration Strategies Applied by
Successful Leaders of Turnaround High Schools**

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2012

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This study examined the perspectives of central office personnel, principals, and teachers involved in the school transformation process. This study was guided by the two main questions: (a) What strategies (structural and instructional) do high school principals implement to lead a successful turnaround of a school? and (b) Which strategies seem to be perceived as most effective by principals, teachers, and superintendents, when measured by multiple school effectiveness indicators?

A qualitative case study design was used in an in-depth comparative inquiry of two high schools, which met the criteria of turnaround schools. Data collected were inclusive of interviews, documentations, and historical artifacts to provide insights into the school planning and decision-making process. In addition, the role of the principal and its impact in the selection and implementation of specific strategies were investigated and analyzed against a research-based conceptual framework developed by the researcher, exploring the following components: (a) Principal's Leadership Role, (b) Structural Integration Practices, and (c) Instructional Integration Practices.

A three-fold investigation was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of schools undergoing restructuring. This three-fold investigation was designed to: (a) Review and summarize extant research related to high school restructuring models that relate to school turnaround, (b) Collect research findings that identify effective instructional and administrative leadership practices adopted by principals to accomplish a successful school turnaround, and (c) Conduct a comparative study of two Texas urban high schools that experienced school turnaround.

This research study revealed that a principal's leadership role in effectively implementing strategies has a great impact on the school transformation and renewal process of school turnaround. In addition, the perceptions of central office staff and teachers, principals' structural and instructional practices chosen by schools, demonstrated the utilization of specific strategies school leaders may adopt to ensure a successful turnaround.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A Call to Action

In an era of intense educational accountability, the current national discourse on public education offers educational policymakers and school leaders unique opportunities to develop “school-wide reform strategies that would benefit even the most disadvantaged students by raising standards, implementing challenging curriculum and assessing learning” (Kuo, 2010, p. 39). A critical area receiving extraordinary attention in the K-12 continuum has been the American secondary schools. In particular, the high schools of our country’s most diverse and highly populated urban cities have not been able to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) 2001 Act. Many urban secondary schools have been labeled as failing, causing them to have sanctions for failure to perform (Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Price, 2010). Although current literature in this field identifies a number of promising high school redesign models, the quest for “ensuring that the nation’s high schools adequately prepare students for life after graduation remains elusive” (Kuo, 2010, p. 39).

According to Elmore (2007), many schools still do not engage students in rigorous instruction, as it is not evident across all types of schools. Moreover, there seems to be a continual disconnect between what “educational policies prescribed and what seems to happen in schools and classrooms in response to these policies” (Elmore, 2007, p. 3). The performance consequences and public sanctions brought on by high-stakes testing accountability systems have placed immense pressure on educators and public education policymakers (Mintrop & Sudenrman, 2009). Rather than focusing on getting

more students to learn at higher levels of learning, most “local reform initiatives are typically characterized by volatility, jumping nervously from one reform idea to the next over relatively short periods of time and superficially choosing reforms that have little impact on instruction and implementing them in shallow ways” (Elmore, 2007, p. 2). Such federal and state intervention measures have driven schools to a *teach to the test* mentality, that has watered-down the curriculum taught at the schools, resulting in further escalation of the school’s demonstrated inability to improve over time (Raynor, 2007).

The installation of the national standards for adequate performance, such as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), has resulted in thousands of high schools designated as failures (Price, 2010; Wallace Foundation, 2010). Schools that fall within this performance category for five consecutive years receive warnings of eventual school closures and sanctions, with several options for school restructuring requiring oversight of external management providers or choosing a complete turnaround. This reform intervention has resulted in the designation of such campuses with the popularized label as turnaround schools.

In 2010, Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, announced that there were over 5,000 schools nationwide labeled with this designation, urging educators, to rethink their practices (David, 2010). That same year, federal educational reform addressed the educational crisis by allocating turnaround monies to address low-performing schools. President Obama’s administration set aside \$4.5 billion to spur innovation by rewarding states that promote charter schools, adopt rigorous learning standards, tie teacher pay to student achievement, and intervene in chronically low-performing schools (Banchemo,

2010). President Obama and Vice President Biden created an “Innovative School Fund” to help “state, local and private funding to broaden the numbers of public school choices available to students, and provide designs to ensure efforts are appropriately tailored to ensure the educational and economic success of underperforming students” (Obama, 2010, para. 3). Their goal was to create a portfolio of successful public schools that were inclusive of the following innovative redesigns: (a) Montessori schools, career academies and theme-focused schools; (b) International Baccalaureate (IB) program, or focus on workplace internships or world languages; (c) Hands-on student learning in engineering and advanced manufacturing; (d) A focus on the arts or on technology; (e) A focus on Early College High Schools aimed at having dramatic gains in student achievement and graduation rates (Obama, 2010, para. 3).

In order to address innovative school reform, school districts must ensure that quality principals lead schools to turnaround and restructure schools labeled as failing under NCLB. Turnaround principals must be innovative and willing to implement research-based practices to be able to move their campuses to the next level of reform.

Significance of the Problem

The literature addresses how these types of school reform have transformed schools by using effective strategies and “bring both career and academic experiences into a high-quality secondary school experience” (Kuo, 2010, p. 396). Many schools falling short of meeting academic improvement expectations, indicate the need to identify specific turnaround restructuring strategies that focus on structural and instructional integrations in order to provide educators with frameworks for school turnaround. As

school district leaders continue to seek improvement strategies for their schools, school districts must focus their efforts in a deeper understanding of lessons learned from prior restructuring efforts that are inclusive of instructional and structural integrations to influence educational conditions for students in public urban settings. Most importantly, districts must staff their schools with innovative leaders who can accomplish the transformation efforts of school turnaround.

Statement of the Problem

In the midst of intense educational accountability, many American high schools continue to struggle, with more than 5,000 schools currently labeled as failing under the No Child Left Behind Act enacted in 2001 (Price, 2010; Wallace Foundation, 2012). This condition presents monumental challenges to school districts, especially urban school systems serving high concentrations of culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged student populations. The magnitude of this challenge is embedded in principal leadership effectiveness and the scope and quality of necessary school restructuring and renewal strategies selected to reverse the performance conditions of this significant number of underperforming American high schools (Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Wallace Foundation, 2012). The research in this field points to a limited number of urban high schools that have reversed their condition through effective school restructuring and the redesign of traditional high school instructional delivery systems (Kuo, 2010; Kowal & Hassel, 2005). Most recently, these schools have been labeled in the literature as turnaround schools. The limited research in turnaround schools presented a need for additional inquiry identifying effective school improvement practices that focuses on

school leadership and the types of school restructuring and renewal strategies (Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010; Wallace Foundation, 2010).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to review and summarize extant research related to high school restructuring models or school turnaround and collect data from the research, in order to identify effective specific practices principals should adopt to accomplish an effective turnaround. A review of extant literature on effective innovative turnaround practices by school principals focused on structural and instructional integrations. The effective turnaround models served to identify practices that incorporated research-based strategies and provided rigorous instructional programs identifiable as college-readiness and career-readiness through innovative high school redesigns. The goal of these models was to achieve positive student outcomes for high school students.

Research Questions

In order to gain an understanding of school turnaround and how principals' interaction with both structural and instructional components affect student outcomes, the following questions were used to expand the research in this area and to understand how the principal's ability to effectively use strategies, creates a synergy in school transformation.

1. What strategies (structural and instructional) do high school principals implement to lead a successful turnaround of a school?

2. Which strategies seem to be perceived as most effective by principals, teachers, and superintendents, when measured by multiple school effectiveness indicators?

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework developed by the researcher was used to analyze the interaction among three categories that were important to ensure principal-led synergy in an effective transformation. The categories include: Effective Leadership, Structural Integrations, and Instructional Integrations (Armstead, Bessell, Sembiente, & Plaza, 2010; Elmore, 2007; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Kuo, 2010; Kyburg, Herthberg-Davis, & Callahan, 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Yukl, 2010).

Criteria for Successful High School Turnarounds

The criteria to achieve a successful turnaround was identified by positive outcomes when schools achieved the following measures: (a) higher number of students enrolled in rigorous instructional programs such as AP/IB and Dual-Credit; (b) higher course completions; (c) higher college-entry exam scores such as SAT Reasoning Test and the ACT exam; (d) lower-dropout rates; and (e) higher numbers of students passing state exams (Armstead et al., 2010; Elmore, 2007; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Kyburg et al., 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Significance of the Study

This research and study is important because of the need to identify effective research-based strategies to ensure a successful turnaround. The research findings will

add to the limited body of literature currently found in school turnaround. The goal was to help identify structural and instructional strategies perceived as most effective by the schools in which a turnaround took place. Moreover, the findings will be summarized and analyzed to gain a deeper understanding of their effectiveness on school turnaround, in creating positive student outcomes, when measured on the school's state exams, inclusive of college-readiness, and dropout rate indicators.

High Points of Literature Review

Over the last three decades, there have been many advances in research identifying structural and instructional qualities contributing to improved student achievement. This is evident due to increased graduation rates in smaller learning communities and comprehensive school reform models that have shown promise in education reform efforts (Armstead et al., 2010; Neubig, 2006). Innovative turnaround principals have been able to reinvent their schools to provide students with “optimal learning environments” by addressing both structural arrangements and curricular programs offered at their schools. High school principals can begin the transformation process by redesigning their schools into Smaller Learning Communities, College-Career Academies, or Early College High Schools, while integrating rigorous academic programs such as: Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Dual-Credit, Career and Technology Programs, and Project-Based Learning approaches (Roderick, Nagaoka, & Coca, 2009).

The literature addresses how these types of school reform encourage accommodation of effective strategies and “bring both career and academic experiences

into a high-quality secondary school experience” (Kuo, 2010, p. 396). Because there are many schools that have not met academic improvement expectations, there is a need to identify specific turnaround/restructuring strategies that focus on academic programs and support systems that can provide educators with frameworks for school turnaround. Therefore, identifying key strategies for school turnaround/restructuring are necessary to increase academic achievement and to ensure academic programs fit the needs of the school community. Moreover, success or failure should not be measured just on state assessments, but also on college-readiness indicators, and other measures such as increasing graduation rates and the number of students enrolling in college after high school.

Heck and Hallinger (2010) found that recent studies identify variables, including staff motivation, organizational structure, and school culture that affect the outcomes desired within an organization due to the changing state of the organization itself. Heck and Hallinger (2010) described how collaborative leadership focuses on “governance structures and processes that foster shared commitment to achieving school improvement goals, broad participation and collaboration in decision making, and shared accountability for student learning outcomes” (p. 228). Therefore, school leaders within an organization must understand how to distribute responsibilities among different people within the organization and empower team members to achieve the vision (Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Yukl, 2010). Moreover, leaders must understand that capacity building is essential to ensure professional learning and changes within the organization to improve teachers’ expertise, which ultimately affects student outcomes (Elmore, 2007; Fullan, 2006; Heck

& Hallinger, 2010). Heck and Hallinger (2010) asserted “that collaborative leadership was indeed an initial driver of change in school improvement capacity” (p. 246). This is mainly because of the effect it had on the organization as a whole when the structural changes took place.

As a result, the challenges of meeting academic improvement expectations as delineated under NCBL 2001, indicated the need to identify specific turnaround/restructuring strategies that focus on school leadership practices that encompass both structural and instructional integrations. As school district leaders continue to seek improvement strategies for their schools, school districts must focus their efforts in a deeper understanding of lessons learned from prior restructuring efforts that are inclusive of instructional and structural integrations to influence educational conditions for students in public urban settings. Most importantly, districts must ensure to staff their schools with innovative leaders who can accomplish the transformation efforts in school turnaround.

Overview of Methodology

A qualitative approach was used to gain a deeper understanding of school turnaround. Multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents were collected, and analyzed in order to investigate the influences of school turnaround efforts and their influence on student learning outcomes. A variety of approaches and methods were utilized to answer the research questions of the study.

A qualitative case study design was formulated to ensure that there was an intensive, in-depth examination of two high schools to explore the perspectives of the Superintendent or Designee, two principals, eight teachers (one per core content/per

school), on school turnaround. The case studies examined the principal leadership/ synergy and how this impacted the implementation of innovative turnaround practices addressing the following areas: (a) Effective Leadership, (b) Structural Integrations, and (c) Instructional Integrations.

Further investigation among the turnaround practices within the conceptual framework was studied to gain a deeper understanding of how principal leadership approaches contributed to the intended success of turnaround innovations. In addition, it was important to understand how high school principals perceive their role in affecting student learning when acting on structural and instructional integrations to create synergy among the three types of innovative practices: (a) Effective Leadership, (b) Structural Integrations, and (c) Instructional Integrations.

Data Collection

The data collected were inclusive of structured and non-structured interviews, analyses of documents, historical data and student achievement data to understand the context of the schools before, during, and after a turnaround took place. Interviews were conducted during a five-month period with superintendents (designees), principals, and teachers. To ensure that the case study design and data collection were rich with respect to the purpose of school turnaround, the superintendents (designees) were interviewed first, to fully understand the context of the school, prior to interviewing the principals and teachers. Principals' and teachers' perspectives of turnaround efforts at the two schools were investigated to gain a deeper understanding of how the turnaround affected the school climate and culture to achieve higher levels of student performance. The data were

organized around the participants' experiences in school turnaround that explored effective practices within a framework that provided students "optimal learning environments" and provided students with rigorous academic environments, in order to achieve school turnaround/restructuring.

Following the interviews, the data were analyzed and divided into 11 categories of effective strategies of school turnaround. In addition, observation notes and school brochures were collected during site visits to gauge the communication/climate/expectations for each campus and to understand the context of the sites in which the research took place.

All of the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed as part of the research study. The questions were open-ended and semi-structured in order to provide participants with an opportunity to pose questions or shift directions to better understand their complex perspectives and experiences.

Data were gathered from the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), AP/IB Data from the Texas Education Agency, and/or College Board in order to analyze the impact of the school reform efforts at each campus. Other tests measures, such as SAT/ACT/AP/IB, were included to analyze effectiveness of student achievement.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study was limited to two similar turnaround high schools in which the research was conducted. Some assumptions used in the study relied on effective school models as defined in the literature. In addition, what were considered effective models were limited by data that had been collected by state and federal agencies in order to

define “effectiveness.” Assumptions were made that the schools participating in the study understood and implemented high school turnaround or restructuring, due to the fact that they were labeled at Stage 5 AYP. The data were limited to participants in the study.

Definitions

Career academies: The term career academies refers to school redesign in Grades 9 through 12, typically serving between 150 and 200 students and distinguished by three features: (a) they are organized as small learning communities to create a more supportive, personalized learning environment; (b) they combine academic, career, and technical curricula around a career theme to enrich teaching and learning; and (c) they establish a partnership with local employers to provide career awareness and work-based opportunities (Kemple, 2008).

Comprehensive school reform models: The term comprehensive school reform models addresses the needs of an entire school and typically involves an external entity providing assistance with implementing a particular school model or process, or both.

Early college schools: The term early college schools refers to an initiative coordinated by the Jobs for the Future. They focus on serving underrepresented populations in postsecondary institutions, providing a program of courses that enables students to earn an associate’s degree or two years of college credit, compressing the years needed to obtain a postsecondary degree (Jobs for the Future, 2004).

High school restructuring: The term high school restructuring refers to the initiative, which is called the Study of High School Restructuring that redesigns high

schools into small, theme-based academies to produce graduates ready for the demands of the 21st century. The central goal of the challenge is to determine whether it is possible to develop and to institutionalize high school reform nationally by investing in specific urban areas through intensive intervention. For example, The Houston A+ Challenge (HA+C) strategy undertook work in four areas: (a) Restructure large comprehensive high schools into small learning communities; (b) Install a literacy framework across the core curriculum; (c) Create an adult advocacy program to mentor and to help each high school student; and (d) Create new knowledge about the challenges and issues related to the restructuring of high schools in urban areas.

Instructional integrations: The terminology includes a variety of approaches that can be used by schools and leaders to ensure that “learning of students and efforts of staff to improve such learning, continuously adjusting their own decisions and actions in response to this evidence” is accomplished (Leithwood et al., 2010, p. 105).

Smaller learning communities: The term smaller learning communities (SLC), reflects a variety of school reform configurations including small schools such as: academies, schools-within-schools, and magnet schools ranging from 600-900 students.

Structural integrations: Structural integrations is an approach used by school leaders to incorporate structures into their schools by providing the structures necessary to personalize learning environments for students (Neubig, 2006). According to Leithwood et al. (2010), restructuring is essential in *turnaround* schools “so that

teacher collaboration is possible and likely” (p. 134); this includes “creating common planning times for teachers, establishing team and group structures” (p. 135) that can enhance the instructional initiatives of a school restructuring effort.

Turnaround: The term turnaround refers to a specific restructuring option under the NCLB Act that can result in district-managed replacement of a school leader and staff relevant to the school’s failure (NCLB, 2002).

Organization of the Treatise

This treatise is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study. It includes background information on the research problem, the statement of the problem, the research questions, the purpose of the study, and the definitions of key terms. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature. The first portion of the review follows the historical development of the current turnaround models available and effective strategies in school reform. The second portion contains the relevant persistence literature addressing Effective Leadership, Structural Integrations, and Instructional Integrations. Chapter 3 describes the methods used in the study. It includes the purpose, the research questions, the population, the sampling procedures, analysis of data, and the limitations of the study. Chapter 4 reports the data. Chapter 5 contains a summary of the results, a discussion of the results, and the recommendations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

School Reform Movement

Over the past four decades, education policy in the United States has progressively moved toward having a strong focus on school-wide reform, inclusive of assessments, standards, and accountability to measure students' performance (Bodilly, Glennan, Kerr, & Galegher, 2004). According to Elmore (2007), "performance-based accountability has stimulated an unprecedented demand for new knowledge of curriculum, pedagogy, and organizational improvement at the school and system levels" (p. 3). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was first passed by the federal government in 1965, which created formula-based grants to state and local education agencies for the education of elementary and secondary students in low-income areas who were identified as having low academic achievement (Kuo, 2010). In 1994, Congress and the Clinton Administration began to change the focus of Title I programs through the Improving America's Schools Act (Stedman, 1994), which reauthorized ESEA.

In order to address school-wide improvements, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$145 million in 1998 for reforms under the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRSD) program (Kuo, 2010). The CSRSD-supported program was designed to change many aspects of school operations by requiring the use of research-based strategies, comprehensive and aligned activities, and measurable goals and benchmarks. Consequently, between 2000 and 2004, Congress responded to nationwide concerns and authorized the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program. During that

time, “more than \$500 million were appropriated to encourage local education agencies to implement SLCs, career academies, and schools-within-schools” (Kuo, 2010, p. 391). Simultaneously, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 was at the founding stage, and it emphasized the assessment, accountability, and time-lined improvement and sanctions that would be imposed on schools that did not meet AYP targets in a timely manner. In 2002, NCLB required that schools that failed to meet the accountability standards for five consecutive years, must engage in restructuring to improve student learning and outcomes. Districts had several options delineated in the federal law to include the following consequences for their failure to meet performance standards:

1. Reopen the school as a public charter school.
2. Replace “all or most of the school staff (which may include the principal) who are relevant to the failure to make adequately yearly progress.”
3. Contract with “an outside entity, such as a private management company, with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the school.”
4. Turn the “operation of the school over to the state educational agency, if permitted under State law and agreed to by the State.”
5. Engage in another form of major restructuring that makes fundamental reforms, “such as significant changes in the school’s staffing and governance, to improve academic achievement in the school and that has substantial promise of enabling the school to make adequate yearly progress.” (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002)

As a result, many districts began to explore these options, showing innovations, successes, and failures since NCLB (2001). Currently, many schools continue to struggle in their efforts to provide rigorous learning environments. On September 23, 2011, the U.S. Department of Education published a “Flexibility Document” for states to seek waivers to NCLB 2001 addressing the next steps:

In order to move forward with state and local reforms designed to improve academic achievement and increase the quality of instruction for all students in a manner that was not originally contemplated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a state educational agency (SEA) may request flexibility, on its own behalf and on behalf of its local education agencies (LEA’s), through waivers of ten provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements. (p. 1)

In addition, the new “Flexibility Document” for NCLB, published on September 23, 2011, identified the need for school districts to ensure college and career readiness for all students. In order to receive the flexibility waivers under NCLB for 2014, the SEA must address four principles inclusive of reforms designed to improve *College-and Career-Ready Expectations* for all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). More importantly, states must focus on the “adoption of rigorous academic content standards to prepare all students for success in college and careers in the 21st century” (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, p. 5). In addressing the lowest-performing schools, school districts must address the following intervention guidelines regarding turnaround efforts, if they are to receive the flexibility waivers:

Meaningful interventions designed to improve the academic achievement of students in priority schools must be aligned with all of the following “turnaround principles” and selected with family and community input:

- providing strong leadership by: (1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the SEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget;
- ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by: (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs;
- redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;
- strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards;
- using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;
- establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs; and
- providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement. (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, p. 1)

As school district leaders continue to seek improvement strategies for their schools, they must focus on restructuring efforts that are inclusive of instructional and structural integrations, in order to influence educational conditions for students in public urban settings. Most importantly, district superintendents must staff their schools with innovative leaders who can accomplish the transformation of school turnaround.

Effective Leadership Practices

School principals are perhaps the most important component in ensuring an effective turnaround. Price (2010) asserted that principals can significantly affect student academic achievement since they are able to facilitate positive learning environments and empower teachers, staff, families, and students in the school community. A recent study conducted by the Wallace Foundation (2012) asserted that “principal leadership remains the central source of leadership influence” (p. 4). These researchers found that effective principals demonstrate key responsibilities, as follows:

- *Shaping a vision of academic success for all students, one based on high standards.*
- *Creating a climate hospitable to education in order that safety, a cooperative spirit and other foundations of fruitful interaction prevail.*
- *Cultivating leadership in others so that teachers and other adults assume their part in realizing the school vision.*
- *Improving instruction to enable teachers to teach at their best and students to learn at their utmost.*
- *Managing people, data and processes to foster school improvement. (Wallace Foundation, 2012, p. 4)*

Creating a Vision for School Turnaround

Principals can begin by creating a vision for school turnaround. This involves engaging the school staff in discussions that promote high levels of expectations for students in their schools. School teams that have a sense of purpose and provide a framework of values can achieve greater motivation because they view themselves as members of the school organization, rather than silos within a bureaucracy (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Heck & Hallinger, 2010). Seven factors analyzed by Hallinger and

Murphy (1986) encompassed the following: “clear school mission, tightly coupled curriculum, opportunity to learn, instructional leadership, home-school cooperation and support, widespread student rewards, and high expectations” (p. 330). Their research found that faculty of highly effective schools guided students to have higher self-expectations than did faculty of less effective schools, regardless of the students’ socioeconomic background. Moreover, the opportunity to learn is magnified in classrooms where the instruction is engaging, resulting in increased student achievement (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Jordan, McPartland, Legters, & Balfanz, 2000). Even in lower socio-economic settings, highly effective principals coordinate practices with policies to guide the school team toward a shared vision of improved performance (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). Regardless of the social context of the school, an effective “principal can promote instructional effectiveness by developing school-wide norms” (p. 332).

The Principal as a Change Agent

Principals have the ability to enact change. More specifically, principals can influence the members of the school community to embrace structural models in order to implement innovative programs. In order to effectively coordinate change that brings about innovation coupled with academic gains in student achievement, effective principals can transform schools even in the most diverse and low-socio economic settings. School leaders can certainly make a strong difference; however, research in the “understanding of the characteristics that distinguish high-performing school leaders from the rest is very limited” (Kowal & Hassel, 2005, p. 17). Many schools that have not

met academic improvement expectations need to identify specific restructuring strategies that focus on academic programs and support systems to provide educators with a framework for school turnaround.

Fischetti and Smith (2010) encouraged school leaders to think more radically and with a great sense of urgency to influence the mainstream conversation about American secondary education and helping failing schools. The literature addresses how these types of school reform models “bring both career and academic experiences into a high-quality secondary school experience” (Kuo, 2010, p. 396). Dailey, Smerdon, and Means (2006) observed that early models of high school redesign were missing a specific curriculum or pedagogy. However, successful models typically incorporate curriculum revisions as a key strategy to increase student achievement. Moreover, rather than simply measuring progress on minimum expectations such as state assessments, successful schools also focus on college-readiness indicators to gauge the academic success of students when they leave the high school setting (Murphy & Hallinger, 1985).

Kuo (2010) argued that although questions remain regarding particular design components,

American high schools, and indeed the country itself, are at a crossroads. Economic, technological, and international trends pose new and exciting opportunities for re-envisioning what American high schools might look like, especially for students in urban centers and from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. (p. 390)

These models offer solutions, hope, and confidence for school leaders to use as a framework for school turnaround.

Parental and Community Engagement

Principals play an important role in opening doors to parents so that they can become part of the school community and help their children as they navigate the educational system. Too often, parents of minority students do not understand how to engender college-career readiness in their children. The Commission on the Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans recommended setting new and higher expectations for Hispanic students by helping parents navigate the educational system and implementing nationwide awareness on college preparation during high school years (Lozano, Watt, & Huerta, 2009). High school principals must ensure that the school community understands the expectation for students to enter college preparation classes. According to VanSciver (2006), the percentages of students of color and economically disadvantaged students enrolled in AP courses does not equal to the percentages within their local school's population.

Torrez (2004) found that many Latinos were still not enrolling in advanced courses. She found that a significant factor was the lack of parental communication on the type of courses available to them. "Most parents of Latino students do not know what college preparatory courses are needed for their children in grades 9-12 to meet admission requirements to the four-year institutions" (Torrez, 2004, p. 56). Even though the Latino parents considered a four-year college/university to be important for their children, they assumed that their children were being prepared for college, when in fact, their children were being placed in a high school curriculum that did not meet the prerequisites required for entrance into four-year colleges (Torrez, 2004).

Structural Integration Practices

Structural integration practices can enhance student learning environments for students in high school. There are many ways in which principals can bring about structural changes. This is important because the current scheduling practices for most schools in the traditional system are often inflexible and designed to offer little support for students outside of the classroom (Neubig, 2006). For example, most traditional comprehensive schools do not make it a point to connect learning in order to implement innovative scheduling practices (Neubig, 2006). On the other hand, models of high-performing schools have been able to implement innovation in their scheduling to offer students more personalized learning environments by offering career-academies/smaller learning communities within large comprehensive schools. They focus their efforts on advising students and offer programs of interest to all students (Neubig, 2006).

Organizational Design

Principals who established school reform models, including structural support systems such as SLCs, have seen an increase in the number of students attending college, lower dropout rates, and an overall climate change (Armstead et al., 2010). High school principals have been able to design and implement a variety of models to create a sense of belonging at their schools. Such structural arrangements have allowed turnaround schools to personalize students' learning environments to maximize learning. Such models include Smaller Learning Communities (SLCs), Early College High Schools (ECHSs) or College Career Academies (CCAs). The models create a sense of purpose for the entire campus and allow students to have choices that are of interest to them in high

school. However, “school staff members need to be strongly committed to organizational reforms if they are to fulfill new roles with initiative and vigor and to take advantage of the new opportunities arising from revised structures” (Jordan et al., 2000, p. 163).

Smaller learning communities. To help restructure schools, school leaders can draw from lessons of the SLC model, taking into account instructional integrations needed to improve this model. In a report published by the U.S. Department of Education (2010), extensive research about SLCs was conducted and their findings were published about how the program was developed, designed, and implemented. This report provides an opportunity for practitioner educators, politicians, and scholars to reflect on the effectiveness of SLCs.

The Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program was established in response to growing national concerns about students too often lost and alienated in large, impersonal high schools, as well as concerns about school safety and low levels of achievement and graduation for many students. Authorized under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (Title V, Part D, Subpart 4, Section 5441[b]), the SLC program was designed to provide local educational agencies with funds to plan, implement, or expand SLCs in large high schools of 1,000 students or more. The SLC legislation allows local educational agencies to implement the most suitable structure or combination of structures and strategies to meet their needs. (U.S. Department of Education, 2010, p. 1)

SLCs are perhaps most common in urban settings because schools had to show reform efforts in order to comply with federal accountability standards under the No Child Left Behind Act 2001. However, several critics of SLCs question their effectiveness in implementation, practices, and utilization of funds. Critics argued that the large comprehensive high school is a well-established institution in the United States and that SLCs did not provide a better education (Kuo, 2010; Ravitz, 2010). An SLC can be any school environment that purposefully reduces the number of students enrolled to

maximize teaching and learning experiences for students (Holland & Farmer-Hinton, 2009). As leaders explore SLCs, they must keep in mind that the ongoing challenge of high school reform is to take it from the margins to the mainstream, and apply the lessons learned from innovative models to transform traditional high schools in order to remain competitive for the 21st century. In addition, SLCs can create and support a culture that maximizes social networks within the school community due to the staff's knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses (Armstead et al., 2010; Holland & Farmer-Hinton, 2009).

Early college high schools. Another type of model used in school restructuring is the ECHS. This innovative approach has proven to be an effective restructuring effort that focuses on ensuring that all students are college-bound. Edmunds et al. (2010) conducted an empirical study of the early college principle related to increasing rigor for high school aged students. In order to measure the progress of long-term outcomes, they “identified intermediate measures associated with continued enrollment in high school and/or success in college” (Edmunds et al., 2010, p. 352). Enrollment and success in college preparatory courses are the most significant indicators to measure the effectiveness of the ECHS model's implementation. Patterns of courses taken by students in these programs indicated that a “larger percentage of ECHS students were progressing more rapidly through a college preparatory track of study, compared to control-group students” (Edmunds et al., 2010, p. 355). Their results “showed that the ECHSs are providing a more accelerated course load to a wider range of students than the traditional high school” (Edmunds et al., 2010, p. 356). Their findings indicated that Middleton

ECHS was successful in executing the model effectively, including the *three R s* (Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships). Moreover, “the school had created a college-going culture that gave students access to college preparatory courses as well as specific training in what they needed to do to be ready for college” (Edmunds et al., 2010, p. 363). The results revealed that students were engaged in practices with relevant and rigorous instruction, were administered quality assessments, and were provided with academic and social support activities. These factors resulted in a learning environment characterized by a positive climate. This climate created better relationships among teachers and students. Consequently, principals or the “designers of smaller learning communities and of small schools should simultaneously consider multiple components, such as the curriculum, instruction, academic and affective support for students, teacher collaboration and support, and establishing logistical supports” (Edmunds et al., 2010, p. 364).

Academies (schools within schools). An innovative approach gaining a lot of momentum is the high school College Career Academy model. This type of model has integrated both college and career programs to attract students and prepare them for college and the workforce. Principals can create an academy structure by “subdividing a large building into several self-contained academies” (Jordan et al., 2000, p. 166). The most important factor is that incoming freshmen are assigned to a success academy consisting of several teams of teachers who share the same 150 to 180 students and have a common planning period in order to provide support to the freshman students (Jordan et al., 2000). In the upper grades, students can be divided into different Career Academies (between 250 and 350 students), depending on the choices made by students on the career

themes selected during their 9th grade year. The study conducted by Jordan et al. (2000) looked at the Talent Development High School (TDHS Model) at Patterson High School to address overall problems at the school including curricular and climate issues related to student engagement and motivation. The restructuring was a consequence of not meeting the state standards and the academy model was an option given to the school. Patterson High School became the first pilot for the TDHS model, which included the following academies: “Arts and Humanities, Business and Finance, Sports Studies and Health/Wellness, and Transportation and Engineering Technology” (Jordan et al., 2000, p. 166). Key factors include:

- Every student is a member of one of the Academies;
- Each Academy has its own principal;
- Guidance counselors are provided for each Academy;
- Academy selects a color scheme and has numerous signs at the entrance, at stair landings, and throughout its hall space that announce the Academy name and any mottoes it uses. (Jordan et al., 2000, p. 166)

A recent example of a charter school takeover or turnaround was in Los Angeles. Green Dot, a company that operates charter schools, restructured a low-performing school into academies (Dillion, 2010). The school was known for fights, gangs, and violence. Some of the students remembered having a climate of low expectations, which resulted in the school being rated as one of the lowest in Los Angeles. A student remembered “a teacher who read newspapers in class instead of teaching” (Dillion, 2010, para. 9). In 2008, only 15% of students in Locke High School passed state math tests. Only two years after Green Dot took over, the school had experienced success. The

success was evident due to a decrease in gang violence, fewer students dropping out of school, and test scores improving. Educators may learn from this educational restructuring model, Locke High School, and others are demonstrating academic success with new innovative redesigns that engage students in school to ensure college readiness.

Many other redesigned urban high schools in the public school system have transformed into optimal learning environments by offering rigorous academic choices for high school students. Public school administrators must learn from successful high school models that provide rigorous programs to students and have been able to draw students to their schools by enhancing their academic offerings to attract and engage students to be college and career ready.

Flexibility to Personalize Learning Environments

Turnaround principals must also create academic structures for tutorials and flexible schedules to address courses needed to close achievement gaps. For example, students who enter school with deficiencies are provided with extra tutoring time or an additional class of core-content instruction to help them become proficient during their 9th grade year (Armstead et al., 2010; Neubig, 2006). It is important for schools to address achievement gaps early on so that students can be on track for college-preparatory requirements. Keeping students together as a small learning community helps students understand academic expectations and provides both teachers and students with structures to offer additional “extended opportunities that did not exist under the old system” (Neubig, 2006, p. 43).

As a result, both teachers and students benefit since teachers become more familiar with students' strengths and weaknesses, and students are placed in appropriate courses and are given academic support throughout high school. The goal of SLCs is to help high school students by creating a more personalized learning environment so that they can be successful when they take advanced courses and are not afraid to seek help from the school community. In addition, Holland and Farmer-Hinton (2009) described how school structures allow faculty and staff to develop a culture in which there are formal and informal conversations that promote college-going expectations.

Building a Collaborative Culture

The turnaround principal understands the importance of building collaboration among staff. The principal must encourage teachers to work collaboratively in order to design curriculum that is research-based and serves as an exemplar of the content they teach. DuFour and Eaker (1998) emphasized clarifying specific knowledge of what the curriculum covers so teachers, students, and parents understand the expectations.

Teachers should design curriculum that serves as an exemplar of their subject area, is results-oriented, and focused on significant learning essentials for the content (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). The process of collaboratively reviewing the curriculum enables teachers and other team members to focus on objectives used to monitor student achievement.

Teachers who track classroom-level progress demonstrate greater commitment to continuous improvement (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Thessin & Starr, 2011).

In this continuous improvement, teachers take ownership over the process of teaching and learning. Teachers who recognize their obligations by accepting personal

and professional responsibility to the larger learning community gain teacher leadership development (Barth, 2001; DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Teachers who are involved in sharing their experiences with others become globally aware of their profession by sharing their experiences, successes, and challenges and bringing suggestions across the grade levels and fields of expertise (Thessin & Starr, 2011). Mullen and Hutingner (2008) found that the principal's role is important in protecting the time allotted to prioritize student learning and sending the message that teacher growth and student learning are the focus. Moreover, principals must ensure that "teachers are provided with access to current research on their subject content, instructional methods, and effective practices" (Mullen & Hutingner, 2008, p. 281). For example, principals can initiate conversations with teachers about their goals in the classroom and can use support teachers, mentors, coaches, and master teachers in study groups to enhance a teacher's continual professional development (Mullen & Hutingner, 2008; Thessin & Starr, 2011).

Instructional Integration Practices

The role of the turnaround principal related to instructional integration practices is critical to achieve a successful turnaround. The principal is the instructional leader at the campus and must be aware and in-touch with ensuring that teachers understand the importance how instruction may impact student learning outcomes. The principal can ensure instructional innovations by monitoring student assessment data, having high standards for students, focusing on a rigorous curriculum, and ensuring that students have the support systems needed to be successful.

Assessments

School leaders play an important role in use of data; they provide teachers with collaborative time to engage in dialogues and guide them in order to promote a culture that uses appropriate assessments to improve student learning (Coburn, Honig, & Stein, 2009; Lachat & Smith, 2005; Wayman, Brewer, & Stringfield, 2009). The role of principals in teacher data use is very important not only for overseeing the organization, but to create a climate that fosters conversations to “help analyze student data, identify areas of teacher learning and student need, schedule time for uninterrupted meetings, and assign resources to support teachers’ ideas” (Mullen & Hutinger, 2008, p. 277). Copland (2003) described how teachers learn to use the data and develop a culture that results in professional collaboration and a trusting environment; this process results in “reciprocal accountability” (p. 379).

It is important to understand how the principal’s role is crucial in ensuring collaboration among teams. The research pointed out that principals who were involved in the process, such as working directly with specific teachers around informal structures, had a positive impact in improving pedagogy and in helping teachers “to think about their instruction in light of this information” (Wayman et al., 2009, p. 14). The principals centered their conversations around four main themes ranging across: “(1) early conversations prior to implementation of a data initiative, (2) conversations about instruction and practice, (3) collaborative conversations, (4) conversations resulting in teacher leadership” (p. 14). Such conversations can allow teachers to review student data in different ways to inform teachers on their practice. The role of the principal in ensuring

success for students involves getting teachers to collaborate and engage in a culture where the goal of the campus is to help students achieve success after they have failed (DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

There are five key processes to building school capacity to enable a school to reach higher levels of teaching and learning leading to sustained school improvement. The key factors in building school capacity include: “(a) understanding the target; (b) teaching the indicators; (c) assessing the indicators; (e) monitoring individual student progress; and (f) intervening when students are not succeeding” (Hickey, as cited in Anderson & Anderson, 2005, p. 525). For example, it is important for teachers to understand all specific instructional targets or expected outcomes within given subject-matter knowledge. Moreover, teachers need to prioritize curriculum objectives and understand how the curriculum is aligned with state, district, and building priorities. To increase student achievement, teachers must monitor students’ individual progress in an ongoing basis to provide students with specific support needed to be successful. Unfortunately, most schools do not monitor individual student progress against indicators assessed or compare student achievement directly to the curriculum taught to students. Anderson and Anderson pointed out that teachers focus only on grading assignments, even when these assignments are not relevant to students’ progress toward actual curriculum goals. Moreover, “data collected are rarely used to inform instruction and to make adjustments responsive to needs of individual learners” (Anderson & Anderson, 2005, p. 525).

Standards

Schools should focus on college/career readiness standards, rather than minimal state and federal requirements and clearly define a message of high expectations. A turnaround principal understands the importance in setting high standards beyond the minimum expectations by ensuring high standards in curricular offerings. Since 2002, the AP Incentive Program was established under No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001). As a result, “Federal initiatives continue to play an increasingly important role in the adoption of AP courses as a model of rigorous curriculum for high school learners” (Kyburg et al., 2007, p. 181). Therefore, school leaders should expand their thinking about who can complete advanced course work and involve all stakeholders in discussions about how to improve educational equity (Ndura, Robinson, & Ochs, 2003). Kyburg et al. (2007) suggested that modifications must address curriculum, instruction, and scaffolding of teaching strategies, so that students can experience a sense of success and develop a readiness to take on new challenges. School leaders must change inequitable policies, mandates, and guidelines in order to establish an educational system that can lend itself to educational equity for all students, regardless of their ethnicity, cultural background, or socio economic status (Daniels, 1998). Principals can focus on school-wide reforms that embrace a challenging curriculum.

Rigorous Curriculum—A Focus on College-Career Readiness

There are many who might argue that college-career readiness programs have no business in a school labeled as failing under NCLB. However, most failing schools are located in urban areas and serve students from low-socio economic backgrounds (Price,

2010). In an effort to ensure a rigorous learning environment, principals can transform their campuses by focusing on instructional programs in which minority students can easily enroll in advanced-level courses. Research has shown that school leaders who have high expectations actually help schools elevate academic levels for all students and provide equity and access to students who previously did not participate in college-readiness programs (Roderick et al., Coca, 2009). Principals can begin the process of restructuring their schools by addressing the curriculum taught to students.

Kyburg et al. (2007) examined how schools, teachers, and students in high poverty environments responded to the offering of advanced courses such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate (AP/IB) and the extent to which this created optimal learning environments. Their study included classroom interviews with 9 administrators, 4 counselors, 43 teachers, and 75 students in three urban high schools. Their findings revealed the powerful effect on student achievement and “that the classroom and school experiences for students result from a complex web of interdependent relationships and factors” (Kyburg et al., 2007, p. 192). The two key factors that seemed to be integral to creating nurturing environments included: “(a) a pervasive belief that students could succeed, which resulted in instructional and group support; and (b) scaffolding to support and challenge able students” (Kyburg et al., 2007, p. 173). Most importantly, all levels of the organization (e.g., a school district) must engage in ensuring that students are supported from the superintendent’s level, all the way down to the teacher level (Kyburg et al., 2007). As a result, “the teacher-student interaction occurs within a building environment where the principal and staff espouse

the philosophy that minority students can achieve provided they have access to attentive support when needed” (Kyburg et al., 2007, p. 193).

A study conducted by Moore and Slate (2008) analyzed the demographic characteristics of students enrolled in AP courses that led to examining which students were successful in such courses. Moore and Slate found that there is still a disparity between the enrollment of White students and various minority groups enrolled in AP courses. Although “AP enrollment continues to grow, a disparity is still present between enrollments of White students and various minority groups” (Ndura et al., 2003, p. 63). According to Moore and Slate, fewer than 12% of Latino students enrolled in these courses. Moore and Slate (2008) also found that “The College Board and the Advanced Placement programs might make it difficult for students to enroll in AP Courses” (p. 57). Sometimes, schools may create barriers (i.e., previous grades, teacher approval) that prevent students from enrolling in AP classes (Conley, 2005).

Cavazos and Cavazos (2010) conducted a qualitative study with nine Latino college students to determine their experiences with their high school teachers. The data revealed that some students encountered high expectations by educators, while others encountered low expectations. The expectations were dependent on whether students enrolled in AP courses versus non-AP courses. Overall, “high academic expectations appeared to play an important role in helping the participants pursue higher education” (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010, p. 101). In addition, minority students in AP programs might perceive themselves at a disadvantage: lack of “college knowledge” or lacking aspiration to attend college in comparison with their White peers. This is mostly because they are

unprepared to face challenges such as taking their SAT exams, applying for financial aid at the right time, and in general accomplishing the tasks needed to get into college (Kyburg et al., 2007). High expectations are important, but at the same time, students need to be provided with guidance of college know how and mentoring during their high school years so that they can be guided in pursuing higher educational goals (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010).

Another type of advanced course work that is being used to promote college-readiness in high schools is the International Baccalaureate Program (IB). The IB Program is a “collection of individual courses, is a pre-university program of study...originating in Europe” (Kyburg et al., 2007, p. 176). According to Kyburg et al. (2007), “IB students are expected to complete a course of study following specific requirements that include study in both the humanities and sciences” (p. 176). The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO, 2012) currently works with about 140 countries and believes that:

- Students gain rigorous and balanced academic preparation, an ability to draw on knowledge and understanding of various cultures and histories, and the experience of learning how to think critically and apply what they have learned in different contexts and across disciplines.
- The IB understands that success in higher education and beyond involves thinking critically and creatively. The IB Diploma Programme’s challenging curriculum educates the whole student, developing the capacity for inquiry,

research, and problem-solving, as well as essential skills for communication and collaboration.

Academic Support Systems

In order for schools to develop students' academic ability, principals must guide teachers to ensure that students receive academic and support systems to ensure success in more rigorous courses. A "school culture must be committed to recognizing the importance of holding high expectations for all learners, while at the same time providing support structures" (Kyburg et al., 2007, p. 206). To increase students' success in college readiness courses, "teachers provided the necessary leadership to support initiatives such as study groups to help students" (Kyburg et al., 2007, p. 199). In effective college-going schools, teachers maintain high academic standards, while at the same time they recognize that some students might require more or different kinds of support to nurture their achievement if there are any gaps that might be evident (Kyburg et al., 2007). Consequently, principals must ensure that: (a) students are provided with appropriate academic support systems, (b) schools have high expectations of all students, and (c) supervisors proactively monitor teachers so that students may achieve at higher levels of learning. The variables within the support system are very complex, and "these interactions dynamically influenced one another and the environment that students and educators encounter on a daily basis" (Kyburg et al., 2007, p. 192). Effective schools have strategically addressed students' needs by ensuring that students can be provided with specific intervention programs such as Advancement Via Individual Determination

(AVID), a college preparatory program that aims at helping minority students with social and academic support classes (Lozano et al., 2009).

Discussion

There are currently several clear examples in current research literature of how school turnaround efforts and structural models affect teaching and learning. Many school reform efforts have proven to show promise and have established specific, research-based approaches with specific strategies to prepare students to be college-bound. Moreover, school turnaround models that have set a culture of high expectations, including the offerings of rigorous academic courses to minority students, have been able to implement structural practices that support effective teaching and learning. Structural models such as Early College High School and the Themed-Academies that provide rigorous instruction are setting examples of higher expectations for minority students. Most of these schools present proof of their instructional success in the number of students taking more AP/IB Exams, having a college-going culture, and providing students with the support systems to have access to college admissions. These models can serve as a ‘road-map’ to restructuring high schools. However, the key component involves having an effective and innovative principal to initiate the changes and to make sure that there is coordination and follow-through as implementations take place.

Conclusion

While there is limited knowledge on best practices of school turnaround or schools that have undergone restructuring implementations, research has identified some models that set the framework for restructuring of charter and public urban schools. Most

importantly, these innovative approaches to school restructuring have proven that, despite the challenges, successful schools provided students with programs preparing them both for college and the workforce. The current accountability system under the NCLB 2001 Act, has focused on a standards-based curriculum, rather than making sure that students become engaged in the learning process, leaving little room for making courses more attractive to high school students. However, the new NCLB 2014 Waiver has called for college-readiness programs and innovation to prepare students for the 21st century. Schools that restructure to focus on enhancing students' experiences in high school to include both structural and instructional integration will be more likely to meet the new standards under the new "NCLB 2014" (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

So in order to transform the educational environments for students in high school, the turnaround principal must use innovative practices that include structural and instructional integrations. The principal must bring about change by having high expectations and the leadership ability to create the transformation. The structural and instructional innovations should be inclusive of college/career pathways such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual-credit, and career-focused academies. In addition, the students should be provided academic interventions to ensure a college/career-going culture is set as a standard and becomes part of the school culture. As a result, the principal's ability to create a balance among the leadership practices, structural, and instructional integrations, creates the synergy for high school transformation, which leads to an effective turnaround and higher levels of student achievement over time.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework was presented to illustrate relationships among three categories that were important in showing how a turnaround principal interacts with each category to ensure an effective transformation/turnaround. The conceptual framework was developed by the researcher based on effective turnaround practices found in the literature. The categories include: (a) Principal's Leadership Role, (b) Structural Integration Practices, and (c) Instructional Integration Practices.

Figure 2.1 illustrates multi-directional interactions that appear to create positive student outcomes. This framework was applied to the study to understand the perceptions of faculty and staff during and after a school turnaround and to provide some insight into the school reform efforts (Armstead et al., 2010; Elmore, 2007; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Kuo, 2010; Kyburg et al., 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Yukl, 2010). The relationships were examined initially; some showed one-way influence, others showed two-way demonstrated in current educational research findings.

Elements of Effective Turnaround

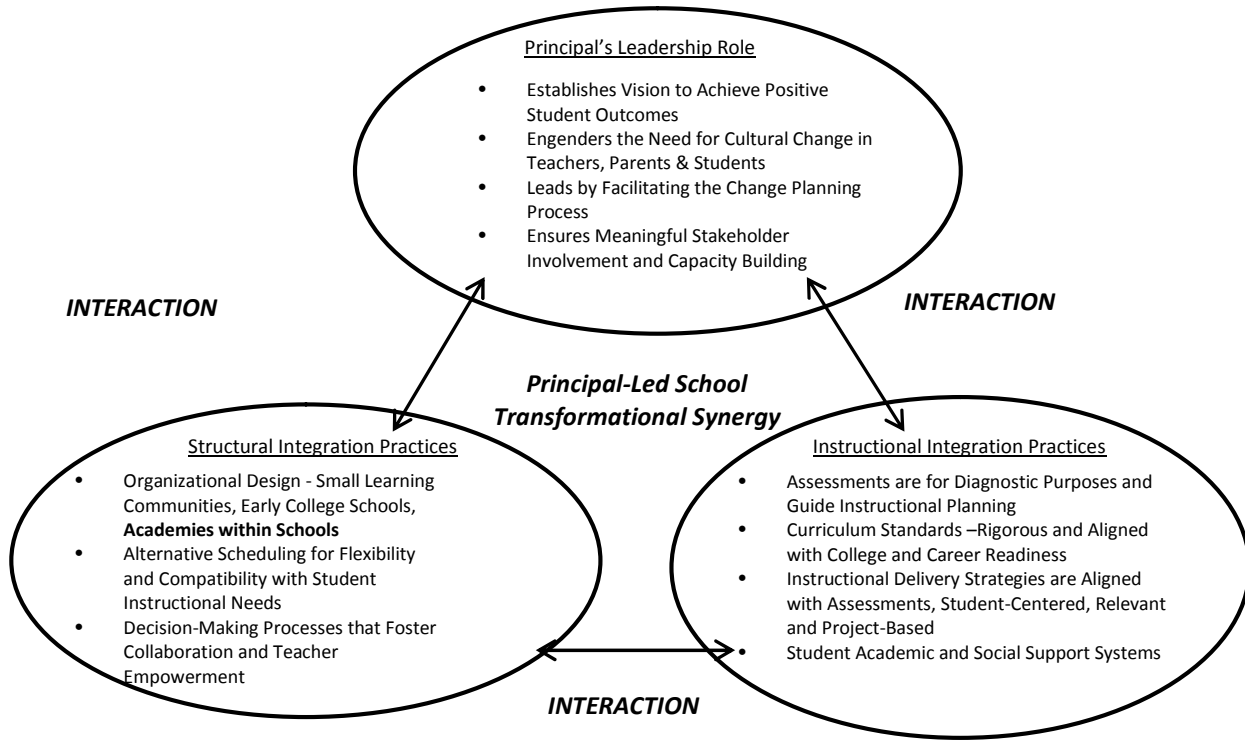


Figure 2.1. Conceptual framework depicting research-based practices associated with school restructuring and renewal.

Note. The categories include: Principal Leadership Roles, Structural Integration Practices, and Instructional Integration Practices (Armstead et al., 2010; Elmore, 2007; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Kuo, 2010; Kyburg et al., 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Yukl, 2010).

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Design

This chapter focused on the methodology utilized to conduct the research related to school turnaround. The chapter is divided into several sections in order to explore the questions related to the research. The research conducted is a qualitative study, utilizing an interpretivist approach. A qualitative case study design was formulated to ensure an intensive, in-depth examination of two high schools to investigate the perspectives of superintendents (designees), two principals, and eight teachers (one per core content/per school). The case studies examined the principal leadership/synergy impact implementation of innovative turnaround practices and respective outcomes measuring student success. Further investigation among each of the categories within the conceptual framework was explored to gain a deeper understanding of how principal leadership approaches contributed to the intended success of turnaround practices.

The chapter includes: (a) the problem and the research questions, (b) analytical paradigm, (c) the need for a qualitative study, (d) multiple-case studies, (e) procedures and instrument for data collection, (f) the sites where the study was conducted, (g) ethical considerations, (h) the participants who were interviewed, (i) how the interviews were conducted and a timeline, (j) the sources of data, (k) reliability and validity, (l) data analysis, (m) assumptions and limitations, and (n) the researcher's role and biases.

Problem Statement

In the midst of intense educational accountability, many American high schools continue to struggle, with more than 5,000 schools currently labeled as failing under the No Child Left Behind Act enacted in 2001 (Price, 2010; Wallace Foundation, 2012). This condition presents monumental challenges to school districts, especially urban school systems serving high concentrations of culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged student populations. The magnitude of this challenge is embedded in principal leadership effectiveness and the scope and quality of necessary school restructuring and renewal strategies selected to reverse the performance conditions of this significant number of underperforming American high schools (Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Wallace Foundation, 2012). The research in this field points to a limited number of urban high schools that have reversed their condition through effective school restructuring and the redesign of traditional high school instructional delivery systems (Kuo, 2010; Kowal & Hassel, 2005). Most recently, these schools have been labeled in the literature as turnaround schools. The limited research in turnaround schools presents a need for additional inquiry identifying effective school improvement practices that focus on school leadership and the types of school restructuring and renewal strategies (Leithwood et al., 2010; Wallace Foundation, 2010).

Research Questions

The following questions were used to expand the research in this area and to understand how the principal's ability to effectively use strategies creates a synergy in school transformation.

1. What strategies (structural and instructional) do high school principals implement to lead a successful turnaround of a school?
2. Which strategies seem to be perceived as most effective by principals, teachers, and superintendents, when measured by multiple school effectiveness indicators?

Analytical Paradigm

While conducting the research, I was able to draw upon various ontological and epistemological foundations. Ontology mostly deals with the nature of reality. These different types of realities were meaningful to understanding the research (Willis, 2007). Willis described how epistemology is concerned what we can know about reality and how we are able to know it. For example, the goal of postpositivist research, basic or applied, is to find the truth about something. “Postpositivists do not believe you can find truth from one study, but each study is part of a broader effort to get closer and closer to the truth through a series of research studies” (Willis, 2007, p. 74). There are five basic foundations in dealing with this type of research: (a) Nature of Reality, (b) Purpose of Research, (c) Acceptable Methods and Data, (d) The Meaning of Data, and (e) Relationship of Research to Practice (Willis, 2007). Therefore, a postpositivist study would research methods that bring the researcher closer to knowing what the reality is.

Need for Qualitative Study

According to Willis (2007), a critical theorist needs an external reality and methods to empower people who might feel oppressed. They are very uncomfortable with the socially constructed reality of interpretivism, while the postpositivist seeks

universal truths. Interpretivists believe in an understanding of the context, in which any form of research conducted, is critical to the interpretation of gathered data (Willis, 2007). As I studied school turnaround efforts, I used an interpretivist approach. As a result, this allowed me to gain an understanding of how people feel about a particular situation, and gave me an opportunity to understand their perspective on what it means to be part of a school turnaround effort to create an “optimal learning environment” for students. According to Willis (2007), “interpretivists and critical theorists understand that both the data collection techniques used and the participants selected will influence the meaning and understanding developed by the research, multiple sources of data often are used” (p. 203).

Multiple Case Studies

A qualitative case study design was formulated to ensure an intensive, in-depth examination of at least two high schools to explore the perspectives the superintendents (designees), principals, and teachers on school restructuring and turnaround. The case studies served to examine how principal leadership characteristics may have an impact on the implementation of innovative turnaround practices and respective outcomes measuring student success. It was important to clarify the interactions among each of the categories within the conceptual framework and to gain a deeper understanding of how principal leadership approaches contribute to the intended success of turnaround innovations. In addition, it was important to understand how high school principals perceive their role in affecting student learning when acting on structural and

instructional integrations to create synergy among the three types of innovative practices: (a) Effective Leadership, (b) Structural Integrations, and (c) Instructional Integrations.

I began my research by requesting a meeting with the superintendents to gauge their understanding of school restructuring, or redesign and their perception on school turnaround. Knowing that there were many variables that might affect their perception of reality and how they view the schools undergoing a turnaround, it was important to meet with the central office leadership. For example, superintendents might not be aware of the efforts made by teachers, while the teachers might not feel supported by the superintendent and the central office administration. However, because the study was conducted in one of the largest urban district in the state of Texas, the superintendent, directed his Chief of Staff to delegate the questions to be answered by central office administrators who were in charge of school improvement. When meeting with the principals of the two schools, close attention was given to what principals perceived as effective practices when a school is restructured or turned-around. The same was true of the teachers. Since they all have different realities about what an effective strategy might have been, to ensure a successful turnaround (creating positive student outcomes and/or optimal learning), their perspectives were important and useful in this study. According to Willis (2007), interpretivists do not have a problem with standards that guide research; they simply do not believe those standards are in any way universal.

The qualitative methodology of the case studies was heuristic. Heuristic “case studies illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomena under study” (Merriam, 1988, p. 13). According to Merriam (1988), “using case studies can bring new meaning,

because it can expand the reader's experience, or confirm what is known" (p. 13). At the same time, the ethnography was of importance, since I was able to draw upon the practices of Herodotus, a Greek historian, who developed a detailed story of their culture and lifestyle (Willis, 2007). Ethnography allowed me to do the fieldwork necessary, interview, and use other means of data in authentic (e.g., real-world) environments. Therefore, the study was conducted in a natural environment (school-site), rather than in an artificial, contrived setting.

Procedures and Instruments for Data Collection

The data collected included structured and non-structured interviews, analyses of documents, historical data, and student achievement data to understand the context of the schools before, during, and after a turnaround took place. Interviews were conducted during a four-month period with superintendents (designees), principals, and teachers: (a) Principals' perceptions on their implementation of structural and instructional practices were explored; and (b) Teachers' perceptions were explored to grasp a deeper understanding of factors ranging from perceptions about principal leadership, restructuring efforts, academics, teacher support, and their impact on the parents/students' understanding of "college readiness" and/or how that affects a "college-going" culture.

In addition, student achievement data from the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) were disaggregated and analyzed to gain a deeper understanding of efforts made by staff to increase student achievement. This was important to determine if the strategies on school turnaround had an overall impact in reaching students who have

historically been underrepresented (e.g., having equity and access to rigorous courses at each of the campuses).

In order to analyze the context, the data were divided into 11 categories of effective strategies of school turnaround. The data were organized around the participants' experience in school turnaround that explored effective practices within a framework of Effective Turnaround Practices in order to achieve school turnaround/restructuring. A personal journal and school brochures were collected during site visits to gauge an understanding of communication/climate/expectations for each campus.

All of the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed as part of this research study. The questions were open-ended and semi-structured in order to provide participants with an opportunity to pose questions or shift directions and to better understand the complex perspectives and experiences among participants.

Data were gathered from the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), AP/IB Data from the Texas Education Agency, and/or College Board to analyze the impact of the school reform efforts at each campus.

Sites

The schools were selected based on data from the AEIS Reports and AYP Reports available on the Texas Education Agency Website. Schools that had not met Adequate Yearly Progress for five consecutive years were identified to be part of the two case studies. The study was conducted at two public high schools in Texas who had missed AYP and were considered at Stage 5 or higher, had received warnings for failure to

perform, and/or were entering planning phases of restructuring or had been restructured.

Both School A and School B are located in a large urban area, and serve minority students. Table 3.1 is a snapshot of the student profile data for the campuses under study.

Table 3.1

Student Profile Data for Campus A and B for 2010-2011

Schools	School A Principal A	School B Principal B
Student Enrollment	2,142	932
Free-Reduced Lunch	73%	72%
At-Risk	79%	82%
Limited English (LEP)	15%	2%
Students by Program		
Career & Technical Education	64%	69%
ESL	15%	2%
Gifted and Talented	5%	3%
Special Education	12%	23%
Title I	100%	100%
Honors Classes	43%	32%
High School Completion Rates	86.2%	80.1%

Criteria for Successful High School Turnarounds

For the purpose of this study, the criteria to achieve a successful turnaround was identified by positive outcomes when schools achieved the following measures: (a) higher number of students enrolled in rigorous instructional programs, such as AP/IB and Dual-Credit; (b) higher course completions; (c) higher college-entry exam scores, such as SAT Reasoning Test and the ACT exam; (d) lower-dropout rates; and (e) higher numbers of students passing state exams (Armstead et al., 2010; Elmore, 2007; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Kyburg et al., 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Ethical Considerations

Prior to conducting the research, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at The University of Texas at Austin approved this study. As a researcher, I understood the need to ensure that participants and sites were not placed at risk when conducting the research study. All interviews were confidential, and names of districts or people were not disclosed. This allowed “the participants to retain ownership of their voices and exert their independence in making decisions” (Creswell, 2009, p. 90). Permission and approval to conduct research was requested in writing to the school district, prior to conducting the research. Participation in this study was strictly voluntary.

Participants

Participants were as follows: A minimum of four teachers (math, science, social studies and English/Language Arts) from each school were selected to participate in the research study; the principal from each campus and the superintendent of schools were invited to participate. All campus-based participants were invited based on principal recommendation and participation was strictly voluntary. Each participant was selected based upon the assumption that they were familiar with the programs offered at the school. The identified participants were asked to respond as freely as possible in order to obtain a reality perspective of what was perceived as effective transformation of school turnaround.

Interviews

The use of pre- and post-interviews were conducted in order to understand the impact of school turnaround on student learning outcomes/environment/school climate. I

was able to explore each individual's understanding of what he/she perceived as effective strategies utilized by principals during a school turnaround for students and their personal experiences. The pre-interview provided information about the participants and their perception of how the school was being restructured and/or turned around. The post-interview questions provided a comparison of what school turnaround actually meant for them and what they experienced after the school turnaround efforts took place at the beginning of the year. In addition, all participants were asked to participate in the pre- and post-interviews to ensure that there was a rich level of data collected. The data were used to gauge progress on goals, perceptions, and other issues that might arise at a campus that was undergoing a turnaround. The events and dates for data collection are listed in Table 3.2.

Sources of Data

Raw Materials: field notes, tapes, site documents, journals

Interviews Questions and Responses (from all participants)

Transcripts

Newspaper Articles (if available)

Audio Recordings (several meetings will be audio recorded)

Academic Excellence Indicator System of Texas (AEIS)

ACT/SAT Data

School Budgets (from campuses, including Federal Grants)

Table 3.2

Data Collection Timeline

Date	Event	Data Collected
June-July 2012	<p>Superintendents, Central Office Research and Evaluation Department) and Principals will be contacted to introduce research study and identify expectations for participation in the research study</p> <p>Introductory Interviews took place for Superintendent (designees) and Principals.</p> <p>Principals began to select participants (teachers).</p>	<p>Personal Journal Field Notes</p>
August 2012	<p>Introductory Interviews were held with teachers.</p> <p>Follow-Up Interviews were held with Principals and</p>	<p>Field Notes Pre-Interviews</p>
September 2012	<p>Follow-Up interviews were conducted with superintendents (designees), principal and teachers</p>	<p>Audio recordings and personal journal Post-interviews</p>
September-October 2012	<p>Data from interviews will be coded and analyzed.</p> <p>Each of the categories was explored within the conceptual framework to gain a deeper understanding of how principal leadership approaches contribute to the intended success of turnaround innovations.</p> <p>Student progress and achievement data were utilized to understand the context and effectiveness of the school turnaround efforts in comparison with prior years, before and after school turnaround</p>	<p>TAKS ACT/SAT College Readiness Data from AEIS Budgets for Schools</p>

Reliability and Validity

The data were checked for accuracy while conducting the qualitative study. Two professionals were hired to ensure reliability with the transcription of the recordings, as well as addressing validity. Careful analysis took place when coding, by constantly comparing data with codes, so that there was not a shift in the meaning during the process. As a researcher, it was important to actively incorporate multiple strategies by triangulating different data sources of information to build a coherent justification for themes (Creswell, 2009).

Data Analysis

The data were collected and analyzed using two different approaches:

1. A thematic conceptual matrix was used after visiting campuses, interviewing participants, and surveys. They were sorted by conceptual themes and were clustered to define the specific problems in high school restructuring/turnaround.
2. An effects matrix was used to understand how the school structures and how the instructional integrations were used to explain the “ultimate” outcomes, which would be student learning. The specific organizational changes were identified in the coded write-ups of filed notes, and research questions (Appendix A).
3. The original questions to teachers, principals, and superintendents (central office) were used as well as the follow-up questions. The protocol questions can be found in the appendix section as follows: (a) Appendix B: Protocol

Questions for Superintendents (Central Office); (b) Appendix C: Protocol Questions for Principals; and (c) Appendix D: Protocol Questions for Teachers. The primary changes and spin-offs were collected to understand the “structural changes that lead to procedural changes and, in turn, to climate/attitudinal changes” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 139).

Assumptions and Limitations

This study was limited to two similar turnaround high schools in which the research was conducted and the number of participants. Some assumptions used in the study relied on effective school models as defined in the literature. In addition, what were considered effective models were limited by data that had been collected by state and federal agencies in order to define “effectiveness.” Assumptions were made that the schools participating in the study understood and implemented high school turnaround and restructuring. In addition, although attempts were made to obtain two campuses with comparable demographics and schools who qualified for Title I Programs, it must be noted that School A is twice the size as School B. The data were limited to participants in the study.

Researcher’s Role and Biases

As I conducted my research, I had an understanding of how school turnaround efforts have affected people perceptions of effective strategies used by principals during a school turnaround. As a researcher, I acknowledged potential biases that might exist, having served as a principal of an urban high school for over six years and being a current doctoral student at The University of Texas at Austin in Educational

Administration. As an interpretivist, it is important to “recognize biases and values to the best of your ability and to acknowledge them” (Willis, 2007, p. 210). A journal was kept to reflect upon biases that I might encounter throughout the study. Moreover, my goal was to search for patterns, themes, and relationships in the case studies of the two high schools. The perceptions of how people viewed the impact of how the restructuring/ redesign of their high school has created better conditions for students helped me understand the findings with an interpretivist view.

The goal was to understand how people view certain changes and how those changes affect their perception, transformation, and implementation as a principal engages in a turnaround. In addition, it was important to understand which strategies were perceived as most effective, by those who were involved with the work of turnaround on a daily-basis. Willis (2007) asserted, that “our beliefs about the nature of knowledge, our epistemology, profoundly influence our approach to education” (p. 49). By using a qualitative method and having an interpretivist approach, my hope was that my research would provide important information to determine the value of education in today’s school reform efforts. Further, this will allow me to provide other educators with an understanding of how leadership practices, instructional and structural integrations create greater gains in student achievement, when a principal enacts change or a turnaround.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

In keeping with the research methodological procedures explained in Chapter 3, the purpose of this chapter is to: (a) organize and analyze interview information of the subjects and (b) gather and analyze other information gleaned from existing documents and pertinent artifacts in the two target schools. Guided by the two research questions that establish the focus of this study, this chapter comprises a three-fold approach for analysis of the data. First, it chronicles the events and actions as perceived by the subjects interviewed at the two schools and the central office. Secondly, it synthesizes document-based information that tells the story of how the transformation process of two schools intended to positively affect student performance outcomes. Thirdly, the participants' responses and document information were organized around the three components and their respective categorical elements within the conceptual framework that guided the data gathering and analysis for this study.

These components were: (a) leadership, (b) structural integrations, and (c) instructional integrations (Figure 2.1). The data were further sorted and coded to facilitate contrast between the two schools under study. In order to establish comparison between schools, this third approach also involved the creation of a side-by-side matrix. This contrast distinguishes by preponderance of evidences the successful practices reported, documented, and observed in each of the two schools.

Case Study Overview

The schools selected for this study (Schools A and B) met the NCLB criteria for turnaround schools candidacy. They were established as at-risk targeted schools for not meeting Federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards for six consecutive years and were labeled at Stage 5. It is important to note, that at the time the schools were selected for this study, they were showing some measurable progress in student achievement. Interviews included the following participants: (a) two high school principals, (b) eight teachers, and (c) two central office administrators who oversaw the operations of the campus.

The performance information pertaining to each of the two campuses is provided at the end of this chapter. This included student achievement data from the Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and corresponding Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Reports.

Research Question 1

What strategies (structural and instructional) do high school principals implement to successfully turnaround a school? The first question focused on the principals' leadership role in the design and implementation of both structural and instructional practices.

Structural and Instructional Integration Practices

The interviews and school documents were examined and organized to align with the elements dealing with structural and instructional integration components identified in the conceptual framework guiding this study. Practices within the structural component

include the creation and implementation of (a) Small Learning Communities (SLCs), Early College Schools, Academies Within Schools; (b) Alternative scheduling for flexibility and compatibility with student instructional needs; and (c) Decision-making processes that foster collaboration and teacher empowerment. The instructional integration component may include such practices as: (a) assessments that are conducted for diagnostic purposes and guide instructional planning, (b) curriculum standards that are rigorous and aligned with assessments, (c) instructional activities that are student-centered, relevant, and project-based, and (d) academic and social support systems that address student academic and social development and emotional needs.

Data Analysis and Findings for School A

School A is a public high school located in the southwest section of a large urban district in the State of Texas. The school serves students in grades 9-12th. The district is one of the largest urban districts in the United States. The principal and four teachers were interviewed during this study. The interviews included an introductory interview and a follow-up interview. Schools that do not meet AYP are subject to Title I school improvement requirements and must submit improvement plans to the Texas Education Agency. These plans were examined and analyzed to track successful actions taken by the principal and to identify successful leadership, structural, and instructional strategies.

School A Structural Integration Practices

Organizational design. With regard to the element of organizational design, the data revealed that several school-wide initiatives were selected and being implemented at the time of the study.

Document review. According to the School Improvement Plan (SIP), the master schedule was to be redesigned to provide common planning time for curriculum level teams (CLT). Due to the confidentiality of participants in this study, per IRB Guidelines, the school improvement documents will not be identified. This was done in order to allow smaller teams of teachers who teach the same subject matter to spend time discussing curriculum, analyzing data, and adjusting instructional plans based on data. The documents revealed that although “the master schedule provided common planning for entire departments, it was not structured to meet the instructional needs of all students.” As a result, the principal redesigned the master schedule to ensure that “curriculum level teams” had common planning times to be able to talk about data, collaborate and discuss student intervention strategies.

In addition, the principal reorganized previously established administrative teams. This was done by assigning one administrator as Dean of Instruction to lead all of the academic initiatives on the campus. The goal was to have a stronger focus on instruction and develop a strong foundation for curricular initiatives at the campus.

Principal interview. The principal stated at the beginning of the school year there would be a commitment to ensuring the provision of planning time for “PLCs and SLCs time built in the master schedule.” The principal further stated that “re-designing” the master schedule was necessary in order to bring about school improvement.

Through the PLC, we do a lot of work there...I think that we have strong PLCs. This year to make the master schedule work better, we’re having teachers work in their content teams or their SOCs, and those are the teachers we want them, on a weekly basis talking about how they’re teaching. When we do meet as departments, we want to make sure that the teachers have a good take-away.

Alternative schedules to personalize learning needs. Interview data revealed that the school was able to offer alternative scheduling for flexibility and compatibility to support students' instructional needs. Overall, the school's organizational design included an eight period day with an advocacy period built in once a week. This was intended to provide students with an opportunity to develop more personalized relationships with teachers, resulting in improved support systems for students. In addition, the school also has a 9th Grade Academy.

Document review. Review of the documents indicated that the campus' 9th Grade Academy is "housed" adjacent to the main building. This is to ensure that first year 9th graders receive additional support and personalized environments by dividing students into teams. In order to align efforts toward college-career readiness in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades, students are encouraged to pursue Career and Technical Education. Therefore, the upperclassmen were assigned to a grade-level administrator and a counselor based on an alpha-split.

Principal interview. As the principal described, "we have a PGP, which is a personal growth plan for kids." The principal mentioned that initially he was not seeing results. Consequently, this year, the principal wants the following to occur: "We want to go ahead this year and specifically set some goals and using our advocacies, which is like a homeroom...basically every three weeks, using progress report data, compilation of data, discipline reports and attendance reports."

Advocacy periods are a way to ensure students receive additional support systems. During this time, "students go there once a week," this is an opportunity for the

teachers to watch the students, looking at scores” to help students feel that they have a support system in place. The principal described the following regarding advocacy for students:

So, the advocacy teacher can individually go to each kid and say, “This is your goal and you’re doing great; keep it up.” Or go to another child and say “You’re still on track to meet your goals, but I’m concerned that you’ve already missed five days and it’s only the third week of school.”

Collaboration/teacher empowerment. The school’s attempt to ensure collaboration and decision-making was evident in the interview data; but according to the principal, challenges emerged due to turnover of staff from year-to-year.

Document review. The SIP addressed that a Continuous Improvement Monitoring and Evaluation was necessary and the following actions would occur: “Fulltime Collaboration with the districts, Teacher Development Specialist (TDS) on coaching classroom teachers, implementation of best strategies, and modeling effective instructional practices that are measured by the Teacher Appraisal Development System are necessary.”

Principal interview. One of the challenges described by the principal in building teams was in regard to teacher turnover as follows:

A lot of times, cause of the turnover, the teams don’t stay developed, you’re going through a continual process. We lost some good people this year, we had two late resignations; they were good. One was a debate coach and the other was one of my content specialists, so I have to figure out a way to replace.

Instructional Integration Practices

Using data to drive instruction. It was reported that in order to improve the instructional planning decision-making process, collaboration among staff occurred

during the PLCs to discuss student data and use for assessments to plan instruction. The principal's interview and document review gave insight into how data are used to drive instruction.

Document review. The SIP Actions indicated the following initiatives: "Campus administrator and teacher leaders will use Campus Online to analyze student test data and work with teachers to develop instructional strategies and personalized intervention plans." The focus on using assessments to guide instruction was evident and the documents indicated a plan to have one administrator assigned to a core PLC for planning, monitoring, and evaluation. The monitoring of each PLC called for collaboration between administrators and department chairs in order to establish "PLC SMART goals, plan out agendas for weekly meetings and continuous, targeted professional development opportunities."

Principal interview. The principal described that this year it will be different. For example, the data will be used for "looking at results, then how are we going to change what's happening in the next four five weeks of teaching to respond to the data we got." The data will be used as ongoing conversation when they "meet as departments, we look at the data, and again how are we going to respond...so we should have three benchmarks right up until Christmas." This ongoing conversation about data should be "good solid diagnostic."

During PLCs, the expectation is for teachers to look at data, for example:

Here's your data, this is what we've got, we're not going to talk about if the test...the quality of the test is not what we're talking about. We're looking at the results, then how are we going to change what's happening in the next four or five weeks of teaching to respond to the data we got. The cycle goes around again—

another benchmark, meet as departments, we look at the data, and again how are we going to respond.

However, the principal described plans to change the way teachers work with data this year versus last year:

We had 13 benchmarks...but it was so often and too frequent because we really didn't have time to digest it, so we were jumping through these giant hoops and doing all this work and losing class time, and when it got right down to it, we couldn't really get down to the granular level of the child and the kid's scores.

The hope is that when teachers look at data, the teachers understand the type of students in their class and how they will go about addressing instructional needs for the students. The principal wants "to make sure the systems are there...that every teacher is looking at those scores and really understands." The goal is for the teachers to say:

"Okay, these are my 180 kids, these are my LEP kids, these are my Special Ed kids, 80% of them are going to be economically disadvantaged, how are they doing?" The goal is for teachers to reflect on their practice and to see how they will address this challenge.

For example, as a teacher: "You have 14 kids in this class that are LEP and half of them are failing; we've talked about LEP strategies and we're not seeing them yet. Why are we not seeing them? Do you need to go to another training?"

Curriculum standards. Curriculum standards were evident by the district's effort in the redesign of the curriculum to align the Student Expectations (SE's) to the new STAAR state exam. In addition, the data revealed that PLCs would be used to ensure that teachers "intensively study the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and Student Expectations (SEs) to ensure that standards are being taught with more depth and clarity."

Document review. The SIP Needs Assessment revealed that the campus needed to focus on the following areas in order to ensure academic success for students:

- A continued focus on alignment of taught and tested curriculum through implementation of the district's curriculum, more student-centered instruction, and more authentic student engagement.
- Each professional learning community will intensively study the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and student expectations (SE) to ensure state standards are being taught with more depth and clarity.
- Campus administrators will continue observing and participating in teaching and learning including focused walk-throughs documenting evidence of student friendly objectives, interactive word walls, high student engagement, high expectations for all students, and evidence of a complete lesson cycle.
- Administrators will continue to work collaboratively with teachers who exhibit instructional deficiencies on the creation and implementation of prescriptive plan of action that aids them in meeting the instructional needs of the campus.

Principal interview. The principal expressed that the district has not had a viable curriculum until this year and expressed the following challenge:

In a district that does not have a clarified curriculum...what develops is schools that are easy to staff and don't have teacher turnover, the teachers develop the curriculum themselves and it works. The curriculum works, it's been developed, and teachers understand what the curriculum is....So, in a school that's harder to staff, if the district doesn't have a curriculum, then you have to have a brand new teacher, who's not only having to learn how to teach but also learn what to teach.

Instructional delivery strategies. The data provided information with the schools' effort to train teachers in instructional delivery strategies through various methods such as placing a strong emphasis on a student-centered instruction, varied instructional delivery methods, and student interactions, in order to engage students in the learning process.

Document review. The SIP revealed that the school’s primary focus should be “improved teaching and learning” and “a renewed focus on instructional delivery supports for implementation strategies that reflect the best practices for successful public and urban education.” The primary goal to ensure that the entire staff be responsible for: “Offering an equitable curriculum that encourages students at all levels to extend their learning through General Education, Career and Technical Education, English as a Second Language, Special Education, and Advanced Academic programs.”

In addition, the SIP stated the need for additional staff development opportunities in order to ensure an instructional focus for the school:

- All teachers will be trained on effective ELL Strategies through the John Sediwitz Excel Lence training and campus administrators will perform targeted walk-throughs focusing on the observation of these strategies in teachers’ instructional delivery and their lesson plans.
- All teachers will continue to study TEKS and SE’s to develop an instructional calendar, lesson plans and assessments that are aligned. Administrators will continue to participate in subject area PLCs to ensure that the campus instructional goals are being met.

Principal interview. One strategy that the principal described in order to help teachers with their instruction was to give feedback regarding their instruction and to help them understand they must do something different. The principal described the actions taken when giving feedback:

So, you go in, you do observations, and if you do observations and you don’t talk to the teacher or you don’t say anything to the teacher, then it was worthless...So, feedback is just feedback; it’s a one-time event, like “Hey, I saw this today in your class...and I really thought it was great”...that’s positive. “I saw something basically half of your class, my English speaking kids, were great but in the back of the room not asleep, in dress-code, doing everything right, is your ESL kids and they’re not learning anything, they’re not participating. We have to do something different.”

In addition, the principal stated that “the ESL strategies, we believe, are good, solid strategies that will be good for our Special Ed kids, so for being successful with our ESL kids we should automatically grab our Special Ed. Kids in there too.”

Student academic and social support systems. In order to provide students with social support systems, the school has counselors to help students and teachers during the advisory period. Although the school used to have the AVID program, the school is looking at ways of providing students with support systems. In order to support students, the data showed evidence of students receiving academic support systems.

Document review. The following information was found in the SIP Document with regard to academic support systems:

The campus has a 9th Grade Academy that is “housed” in learning cottages adjacent to the main building. In an effort to align with the district’s focus of college and career readiness, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students are encouraged to pursue a Career and Technical Education coherent sequence of courses based on their career interest. Additionally, upperclassmen are assigned to counselors based on an alpha split, are also two administrators assigned to each class as grade level administrators.

In addition, the SIP called for the school to make a concerted effort in closing achievement gaps. The significant achievement gap between minority and non-minority students on college readiness standards is an area that will be addressed by using the following strategies by “continuing to work with a partnering higher education institution to strengthen the college-readiness infrastructure.”

In order to reach the High School AEIS Goal of having 25% or more of students enrolled in Advanced Courses/Advanced Placement at the school by the end of 2013, the SIP called for the following action steps:

- Formative: Each semester, the number and percent of students enrolled in at least one advanced course/AP will be reviewed.
- Summative: At the end of each school year, the percent of students completing at least one advanced course in high school will be reviewed to see if the objective was met.
- Strategy: Inform parents and students about graduation requirements and college/career readiness skills and programs. Guide students to appropriate testing, classes, and programs.

The High School AEIS Goal for SAT/ACT is to have 80% of graduates take the exam. The SIP addressed the following:

- Formative: After the first semester, the number of students taking the SAT-1 at least once will be reviewed.
- Summative: At the end of the school year, review the number of students taking the SAT-1 at least once to determine if the objective was met.
- Strategy: Inform parents and students about graduation requirements and college/career readiness skills and programs. Guide students to appropriate testing, classes, and programs.

It was noted that the school's attendance rate was low, with an average daily attendance of 92%; this was a campus-wide concern that requires immediate attention and will be addressed using the following strategies:

- Immediate parent contact after three consecutive absences
- Home visits to students identified as habitually truant
- System designed to reconnect students to school

Principal interview. During the interview, the principal was asked to reflect strategies employed to support students academically. The principal responded by stating:

On a campus like mine that has 26% mobility can be challenge. Last year we did pull out tutorials two years ago and this last year we tried doing a nice period,

basically during the day, every day, and we had some buy-in issues with teachers....What I'll do is for my teachers who have their SLC time, I'm not going to touch that but I am going to take maybe 45 minutes to an hour of that other chunk of 450 minutes when they are off and I'm going to send them six kids in their own room, and the kids are going to come up with specific "this is where I'm low, these are the objectives or standards I'm having problems with, and this what I need help with. Work with me." We're going to focus on our tenth grade more than anything else, because of AYP. That's just something we have to beat. I mean, the AYP thing has been...since there's been AYP, the school made AYP one time, and that was the year right before I came in.

With regard to the AVID program to support students in preparation for college and career readiness, the principal expressed the following concern and the actions to be taken if the school were to have an AVID program:

We used to have AVID but because of the cost and loss of funding, we had to let it go. I'd love to find a way to bring AVID back and phase it in through all four years. If I can get some money for AVID, we phase it in, and freshmen would be AVID and then we'd have freshmen and sophomores AVID, and I would train my teachers over a four-year process so it's a whole campus.

Consequently, because there is not an AVID program, the principal mentioned that:

I have do have a committee, and they're coming up with study skills, or kind of that AVID-based or type, and they're basically saying this is how we're going to be organized, and this is how we're going to have kids take notes.

As far as AP or Advanced courses, the principal stated the following, when asked to reflect on AP Courses:

I have to have 15 AP courses. Well, that's fine, and I agree we need to push our top kids more, but of those 15 AP courses I have probably four or five that only have six or seven kids, so you're talking about a whole teacher, one full period, six/seven kids, and what does that do to the class ratio and that kind of thing. So, there are issues associated when the district makes those declarative, everybody's got to have 15, and we expect you to grow the number of kids taking a test. Well, we did that, but our passing percentage that was at 15% is now down to 6%.

The principal believes that the use of a graduation lab was an effective strategy to reach out to students who would otherwise not be able to graduate. The principal stated:

We do have APEX, we do have a grad lab...we do winter academy, which is two weeks during the winter holiday. Kids can come in and recover lost credits. Then we have spring break academy and they can recover lost credits.

When asked about having courses to support the state assessment, the principal described the following challenge and reason why the TAKS prep course was no longer offered:

The kids that were in the regular math class, on level with their peers, were out-performing the kids that were in the TAKS math class...another thing we found was a lot of our kids that were in the TAKS prep were more prone to skip that TAKS prep class...This year there's not one TAKS prep up on that board.

Data Analysis and Findings for School B

School B is a public high school located in the southwest section of a large urban district in the State of Texas, and it's located in the same district as School A. The school serves students in grades 9-12th. The district is one of the largest urban districts in the United States. The principal and four teachers were interviewed during this study. The interviews included an introductory interview and a follow-up interview. Schools that do not meet AYP are subject to Title I school improvement requirements and must submit improvement plans to the Texas Education Agency. These plans were examined and analyzed to track successful actions taken by the principal and to identify successful leadership, structural, and instructional strategies.

School B Structural Integration Practices

Organizational design. Data from the interviews with the principal and teachers revealed a strong foundation for organizational design to school transformation. The

school's plan addressed the need to "plan/implement programs to encourage and accept concept with a school vision, using Professional Learning Communities" and to have AVID and Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) as a foundation for all students.

Document review. The SIP identified the lack of collaborative instructional planning by the campus. As a result, the following actions were taken:

Establish Professional Learning Community Structure and Instructional Leadership Team meetings. Such as: (1) Professional development on use of protocol packet; (2) Monitored by campus leadership; and (3) Use and be actively engaged in the Collaborative Curriculum Group.

In addition, the PLC would have to ensure that agendas, sign-in documents, and completed protocol packets are monitored every three weeks.

Principal interview. In order to achieve this vision, the principal created a smaller learning community by re-assigning the administrative team. The principal mentioned, "I have five assistant principals or five administrators—I don't call them administrators, they're deans...we are not a big enough school to run as a house model, cause we've only got 800 kids." As a result, "I created a very unique structure that I've never seen anywhere, in any school district I've been around, and I've been around a few."

Alternative schedules to personalize learning needs. In addition, the school's focus on the AVID program to meet the instructional needs of students was evident throughout the interviews. The interview data showed that the initiative has already started.

Document review. The SIP stated the following strategies to ensure a cohesive approach to creating personalized schedules for students to meet their academic needs:

- Establish AVID methodologies across the curriculum.

- Implement reading and writing interventions through the use of Read 180 and Nehaus.
- Create double dose classes that strategically place students who have failed EOC.
- Provide tutoring two days a week for 9th and 10th grade students through pull-out during elective classes.

Principal interview. The principal mentioned that “we’ve already started to see those best practices being implemented into the classrooms, and we’re only five days into it.” The principal mentioned that the school has gone from “a block schedule to an eight-period day schedule.” The goal is to have teams across the campus by next year 2013-2014. In addition, alternative schedules and flexibility for students to meet their instructional needs was evident by providing students with additional opportunities to earn credits if they had failed a course.

Collaboration/teacher empowerment. The data revealed that collaboration among teachers took place during the PLC times and at other times during the school year. The main goal to use collaborative times was to ensure student success as evidenced in the document review and principal interview.

Document review. In order to ensure collaboration among content areas, the SIP called for using “the High School Collaborative Curriculum, lesson plans, scope and sequence.” This is a district-wide effort to ensure cross-campus collaboration among the core-content areas. In addition, the SIP documents included the following strategies for Teacher Collaboration/Empowerment:

PLC meetings will be used as an opportunity for teachers to rehearse and perfect instructional strategies related to the present learning objectives. This will occur by random selection and feedback will be provided to the presenting teacher.

Coaching will also be provided in more prescriptive form for teachers in need of assistance. The coaching model will be implemented with timelines and specific expectations for corrective action. Instructional specialists have been hired in the areas of mathematics, science, social studies and literacy. All content area teachers will receive Kilgo training and utilize Marzano's instructional design questions in lesson planning. At least 40% of the instructional staff will be trained on AP instructional strategies.

Principal interview. In order to establish a culture that fosters collaboration and teacher empowerment, the principal described the following:

Weekly meetings with key people on the team; my cabinet meetings, we meet twice week formally and with department chairs once a week; and then through the PLCs because the administrators are required to be at PLC meetings from 8:00 to 8:30 a.m. during that 30 minutes.

In addition, the principal described how the consultant will work with teachers to ensure capacity building among the teacher leaders:

The consultant that I brought in to work with my leadership team this past year, he's not only working with my leadership team but also with the department heads, and we're trying to work towards building what we call teacher leaders. That's the capacity piece for me because a lot of teachers are very compliant, for the most part they're going to try to do what you ask them, and what I want to create is where our teachers are leaders. They don't have to be told what to do, they get there and they get after it without having to be prodded or pushed.

Instructional Integration Practices

Using data to drive instruction. Use of data to inform instruction is important to ensure that teachers are reviewing and planning to ensure success of students. The data revealed the following practices:

Document review. The SIP called for the following strategies to be utilized in order to use data as a means to improve teaching and learning:

- Common assessments will be administered weekly to determine student mastery of specific objectives and to develop intervention needs.

- Assessment results will be publicly displayed by teacher, grade level, and department in an effort to motivate, stimulate, and challenge our teachers and students to strive for improved performance.
- This high level of data analysis will permeate the school culture and drive all decisions and actions. The most significant outcome of data analysis is the development of individual student interventions and next steps for student improvement.
- Data analysis meetings will occur through grade level and department PLC meetings. When students are not learning, it represents negative value added to students' learning and the failure of teachers to meet performance expectations.
- Administrators and instructional specialists will observe instruction at least 4-5 times per week and document teachers' successes in implementing effective and efficacious strategies and protocols.

In addition, the SIP addressed the following, the use of the following types of assessments and specific use of professional learning communities to address data talks.

- Use of EVAAS (Education Added Value Assessment) projections, CBAs (Common Benchmark Assessments), formative assessments—to identify students who need intensive intervention and create updated departmental Smart goals.
- Leadership-driven professional communities and leadership data talks on a weekly basis.

Principal interview. The principal reflected on the school's performance measures and pointed out that because the school is majority-minority (about 95% Black), the school needs to focus on math and special education, versus the specific ethnic groups. The principal mentioned that the school has a data guru who helps facilitate the data collection and analysis.

In addition, the principal feels very confident about using data to guide instruction. The principal mentioned:

The data we're using now, we've got some initial data right now that we'll start with and I'm confident that the structure for monitoring the kids are doing is in place, and I think everybody understands how that will operate. I'm very excited about it.

Curriculum standards. The data revealed the use of the district's curriculum and training to ensure that teachers understood curriculum standards. In addition, the campus used additional resources to provide teachers with training on college-career readiness standards such as Advanced Placement and Laying the Foundation.

Document review. Review of the SIP indicated the need to implement higher-level questioning techniques in the classrooms. This included the use of protocols, lesson plans, and documentation of monitoring by a campus administrative team. Throughout the year, the campus is to focus on the following strategies to ensure curriculum standards are aligned and taught:

- Implement Writing Inquiry Collaboration Organization and Reading (Advancement Via Individual Determination methodologies) strategies.
- Professional development for all staff on WICOR/AVID strategies, Costa's 2nd level and higher questioning techniques, Cornell Note Taking and AVID "tutorology."

Principal interview. The principal was asked to reflect on the curriculum being offered at the campus. The principal pointed out that that district has realigned its curriculum to be more rigorous and STAAR Ready. For example:

The district does a good job of putting together an alignment package that we brought in. Our people were involved in that process and I think all of our teachers have got genuine lessons that they can look at. We give them model lessons for everyday with the TEKS and with SE's and with this curriculum that the district put together, everything's aligned.

Instructional delivery strategies. Interview data revealed that instructional delivery strategies are aligned with college and career readiness. Not only is the school providing the AVID program, but the expectation is that teachers look at the way they teach in order to increase the rigor in their classroom, so that eventually more students are enrolled in the pre-AP/AP Program at the school.

Document review. In order to ensure that teachers are able to deliver instruction in an effective manner, the SIP focused on the following strategies to increase effective instruction in the classroom:

- Professional Development on effective use of scope and sequences utilizing Kilgo and AVID pedagogy.
- Professional Development over Collaborative and KILGO (5E Model) Learning Cycle.
- Adjust PLC (Professional Learning Community) protocol.
- Participation in Collaborative Curriculum.
- Professional development on effective use of time.
- Professional Development on questioning techniques (Costa's 2nd level and higher) and utilization of Marzano vocabulary skills.

Evidence would be documented through the Professional Development participation documents/e-Train transcripts, Walk-through, and formal observation documents that measure High School Collaborative Assessment results and higher levels of engagement.

Principal interview. According to the principal, there is a need to have effective teachers in order to increase rigor in the classroom:

If you want to raise rigor of those kids, if you want to give them a chance to be successful on the state assessment, then you better have somebody in front of those kids that knows the content and can look at the objectives and understand what those objectives are and how to use appropriate pedagogy to get that message across to the kids where they understand it.

Consequently, the principal mentioned, “one thing I’m expecting from all staff members is that they get their AP certification, even if they don’t teach AP so we have a better understanding of that high level rigor.”

In addition, in order to increase the overall school’s performance, the principal met with the teachers during the summer, stating:

We called them summer planning academies, and those were in addition to specific and very targeted professional development that we would...and I don’t like to pay a bunch of money to bring people in, but what I like to do, to engage my staff, is to send them and then they come back and they train the teachers. That’s always worked the best for me as far as professional development.

Further, the principal has a leadership coach who will help the campus with additional support. The principal described how this will work:

I have a leadership coach that works with my cabinet this year in building a team environment. This upcoming year that group will include other leaders such as department chairs, heads of departments, directors, key support people. And then in year three, he will work with the entire campus and will include the teachers.

Student academic and social support systems. Evidence of academic support systems for students was evident by the campus SIP and principal interview. The school’s focus on AVID provided evidence of interventions and guidance for students wanting to reach higher levels of success, inclusive of college-career readiness goals.

Document review. The SIP document addressed the following concern: “Current 9th and 10th graders are not being successful on STAAR assessment, due to a lack of consistent and/or effective instruction, lack of engagement and lack of foundational skills

in reading and writing.” The SIP identified the need to ensure that students were given additional opportunities to learn by providing the following types of programs and interventions:

- Read 180 Intervention teacher for all 10th Graders who did not pass the End of Course exam.
- Implement Nehaus Reading/Writing (Grade 9).
- Implementation of double-does reading/writing classes with ELA classes.
- Collaborate with academic advisors to target 9th grade and AVID students who have not mastered STAAR with pullout sessions from elective classes twice weekly.

Principal interview. In order to provide students with Academic and Social Support Systems, the principal described the following strategies:

Part of my restructuring is I got rid of all counselors and have academic advisors now, and that’s all they do is advise on schedules, the PGPs. Their job is to get them enrolled in colleges and get them to the college-readiness component. The actual counseling, I’ve hired Communities in Schools, who have provided me with an LTC that will come in and actually do the counseling piece.

In addition, the plans for the next upcoming years are as planned:

Not this year but next year, we’ll have what is called a freshman seminar class, which is a semester class...we’re going to teach our freshman how to be successful in school—study skills, coping skills, conflict resolution type skills so that they know how to navigate school.

When asked about additional support systems, the principal mentioned that:

AVID and the PBIS model that we’re bringing in. All the teachers have been trained with the PBIS behavior management plan and I’m seeing that. Every class I go in, I mean we’re very structured with the classrooms. We laid out exactly what we expect the rooms to look like and how we expect teachers to interact with the students. So, I’m very excited about it.

Research Question 2

Which strategies seem to be perceived as most effective by principals, teachers, and superintendents, when measured by multiple school effectiveness indicators? The second question aimed to yield strategies that were deemed most essential and effective in the change process as perceived by the various stakeholders including principals, teachers and central office administrators.

Principal's Leadership Role School A

Establishing the vision. Data from Campus A revealed several actions that the principal took in order to establish a vision and to begin the process of turnaround. The interviews and documents pertaining to school improvement provided information that describe the principal actions and perceptions from the staff at the campus with respect to school vision.

Principal interview. The initial interview with the principal revealed the need to establish a vision for the campus, but the principal expressed that the district did not have clear expectations, creating a barrier to implementing a clearly articulated vision for the campus.

In addition, the principal expressed discontent and emphasized that “failing schools need more” and the fact that there have been budget cuts created a challenge for his campus, expressing that “when I arrived, my budget was 12.1 million dollars and now it’s down to 8.4 million dollars, and those were all personnel positions.” In addition, the principal expressed a lack of support to accomplish a turnaround expressing that in the

past there were “content specialists in every core area and all those content specialists did was work with teachers on curriculum.”

Teacher interviews. Although the principal saw a need to establish a vision, it was evident that there many staff members were not aware of the vision for the campus. Evidence from interviews revealed that only one teacher felt that the school had a vision to expect positive student outcomes. As one teacher described, the principal “is making a concerted effort...making the rounds to make sure that we’re actually going to be doing this.” In addition, the goal is to ensure that students are given “a firm footing, base foundation, and set right expectations” when speaking about 9th grade students.

Another teacher described mixed emotions about the vision. As one teacher described: “It’s a lot of hard work and you have to step up to the challenge, and not everybody is going to do that.” Data from the interviews revealed the challenges principals and teachers faced at the campus. One teacher mentioned that “when you have a failing school, you need to get somebody who is experienced, especially a school as big as School A with the population and the challenges that we have.” This was revealed by one teacher stating, “You can control what goes on in your classroom; you can’t control what goes on in the student’s home....You can’t control what goes on around you, whether administration is ineffective or effective.”

Documents obtained from the campus indicated that the principal had established goals for the campus and was beginning to co-create the vision/mission of the campus. The principal’s actions and documents indicated an effort in collaboration and developing a team of teachers who could work on the transformation of the campus. This included

working with the Site-Based Decision-Making Committee and the Alumni Group to ensure that this does happen.

The principal as a change agent. In order to ensure that the vision is carried out according to plan, the data revealed that the principal took responsibility as the change agent and saw the need to engender the cultural change in teachers, parents, and students.

The interview data with the principal and teacher, revealed the following:

Principal interview. The principal stated:

I'm responsible for the programs that are taking place in the organization, or the developing and working with teachers, working with other administrators, working with department chairs, to develop what is the program as far as how do we go forward, how do we teach, how do we organize our curriculum, what are we looking for when we do go inside rooms to give teachers feedback.

In addition, in order to provide teachers with feedback, the principal described how the administrative team will work in supporting teachers:

They (teachers) have to define and have very clear goals that can be measured. They have to be smart goals. All the S-M-A-R-T pieces have to be there. The next step is the administrator is going to collect data, and that's going out and having observations...the next piece is analyze the data, review goals and, in the middle of all this is regular feedback...this system is going to be the big piece for how we're going to work with teachers.

Teacher interview. One teacher described that in order to transform failing schools, there has to be “buy-in from the teachers.” The teacher stated:

The teachers have to buy-in to the program, but what is going on here—is got to eventually help the school. As foreign as the methods may be to achieve those goals, we have to do a buy-in because the goals are ultimately worth it to do something that puts us outside of our comfort mode, and that's basically...a cross-teaching discipline.

Leading the change planning process. The data revealed that the principal had a focus in ensuring the change planning process. This was evidenced by the various actions and teams that were created to ensure planned initiatives were carried out systemically.

Principal interview. In order to facilitate the change planning process, the principal initiated several committees to involve teachers in this effort at the beginning of the year. In addition, the principal mentioned that a lot of the work is through the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The principal stated that:

I think we have strong PLCs. This year to make the master schedule work better, we're having teachers work in their content teams...and those are teachers we want them on a weekly basis, talking about how they're teaching. When we do meet as departments, we want to make sure that the teachers have a good take-away.

Teacher interviews. Teachers expressed that the principal had initiated the change planning process. This was evident through interview data. According to one teacher, the principal had begun the implementation of school improvement committees and work in the PLCs. In order to involve teachers in the planning process, teachers were invited to share ideas to "help students develop study skills, study habits, and basic expectations." In addition, the school expects that all teachers meet and work on a weekly basis. One teacher described that:

We have department meetings, we have CILT meetings...I don't know which administrator spearheaded this...almost on a weekly basis so that everyone understands that we're all on the same page and everyone knows...Now that is pretty different...here compared to last year.

Expectations are different this year. According to another teacher, "the principal is requiring a lot of professional development that teachers either attend her on campus or through the e-train."

Meaningful stakeholder involvement. Evidence of stakeholder involvement was evident by the actions that the principal took to involve parents, community, and alumni groups. The efforts by the school were revealed by the participants' experiences.

Principal Interview. The data revealed that there was an effort to involve parents by the principal, but the data revealed several barriers to creating meaningful stakeholder involvement. According to the principal:

We always have a great turnout at open house...we always do. However, mixed emotions were expressed since after open house is hard to get them back in...the first PTO meeting will be very large, 60/70, and then the next one maybe 30, maybe 20.

Another barrier and concern according to the principal is the community at-large:

The perception is a piece that's a big challenge...I have community members that live in the zone of my school and they perpetuate the myths and they refuse to even come an really look and consider the school for their child.

Teacher interviews. One teacher at the campus mentioned that "when the neighborhood does not put their best and brightest into the neighborhood school, then the trend starts to decline and we've experience that...over the past 20 years." As a result, the data suggested that the campus must focus on developing a consistent way to ensure community and parental involvement can be addressed in order to develop capacity-building and transformation.

The data also revealed that the school is looking at the community for additional support. One teacher mentioned, "we're fortunate because our community is knocking on the door with a heavy fist." Part of creating additional support systems is that "we have the 'School A' Area Improvement Corporation, which are all the businesses nearby and they want to see the school improve." The teacher added:

The “School A” Area Realtors Association is involved...when the school gets better the home values go up...people want to move in to “School A” now but they’re not yet sending their kids here...that’s the key part of the strategy we need.

The goal would be that by having additional support, the school could eventually mobilize the community toward achieving more community involvement in the school improvement process.

Principal’s Leadership Role School B

Establishing a vision. Interviews revealed that the principal at School B had developed a three-year comprehensive plan and had started implementing the plan since last year. The plan is inclusive of the following areas: (a) Safe and Secure Environment, (b) Curriculum and Instruction, (c) Professional Learning Communities, (d) Staff Development, (e) Collaboration, and (f) Communication.

Principal interview. The principal described that the strategies used in the plan as “not rocket science...ideas, just merged...and manipulated around to meet the specific needs of the school.” The principal described how the plan was successful in a prior school turnaround. It was mentioned that

The biggest thing in turning this school around is as a principal you’ve got to stay the course...you can’t allow things to knock you off your track...meaning, I’ve got a three-year plan and you’ve got to be able to navigate those challenges.

Moreover, the principal believes that “a lack of belief, incompetence from the staff and students and a lack of structure or systems in place to create an environment for learning” is one major factor in causing a school to be failing.”

Teacher interviews. One teacher mentioned the principal's expectations for teachers at the campus and reflected on a prior experience with a turnaround. According to the teacher:

The principal expects us to teach the whole period, and do it. The district, if they'll let him run the school, will end up with a successful school on their hands. My last school, we had a change in administration, and the teachers were delighted. At that time, we had so many layers of...we had an area superintendent and an area principal, and one would come in and tell us to do A, and the second day they would come and say no, don't do that, do B. And the poor principal... and they're pulling him out of the building. Three or four days a week he was somewhere else in meeting instead of on-campus being the active leader he should have been. Had they left him alone, we would have turned that school. Didn't happen.

The principal as a change agent. The role of the principal in initiating the change was evident by the actions taken by the principal. The data revealed the principal's role and the teachers' understanding of expectations and the need to bring about cultural change.

Principal interview. Evidence of the principal's understanding for engendering cultural change is described as follows:

Normally, what I have found in the schools that I've been at...that need improvement is that the kids don't believe in themselves, the staff doesn't believe that the kids are able to what you're asking them to do...it's a question of belief or lack of belief in themselves, whether it be a confidence issue or, but normally as a building leader, one of my primary functions, I believe is to put people in a position where they actually believe that they can do what you're asking them to do.

Teacher interviews. Data from interviews revealed that teachers understand what is expected from them in order to ensure positive student outcomes. For example:

I know what they expect from the teachers is to keep teaching and doing what they're doing: have the rigorous questions, have the classrooms be inviting. You need the classrooms to be inviting and warm atmosphere because I know when

I've seen them come in my classroom...So, I do imagine they want a sense of urgency from teachers and just to keep teaching.

Facilitating the change planning process. In addition, the principal understands that school transformation is an ongoing process and that “if you want sustainable change and you want that school fixed, and you want it turned around and you want it to be sustainable, then you are looking at a minimum of three years.” So, in order to ensure the transformation, the principal understands the role in the change planning process.

Principal interview. The principal described a prior experience in school turnaround as follows:

I went in and started getting rid of people because you either do it as a dictator or you do it collaboratively—I did the dictator routine. Yes, I fixed it, we fixed it, we turned it around but the climate and culture of the building at the four-year mark was so...everybody walked around like they were scared to death of their job.

As a result of the principal's prior experience, it was interview data that revealed the principal believed that collaboration to school turnaround is a better approach. After that experience, the principal described how this changed him and described that:

I changed completely, 180, my approach to it...and did some professional development for myself, personally, from a leadership standpoint...it was about leadership style...the whole approach...was one of servant leadership and trying to build people's capacity from the teachers to the parent groups to students.

In addition, the principal understood that in order to ensure a transformation, stakeholders must be involved in the process and capacity building. The principal mentioned his involvement with the community and parents. For example, “I meet with the community about once a month...they call them civic groups and they are very active.” As for the parents, “they work odd hours, they're very low-income people, and if

they don't work, they don't get paid, so trying to get them to find a time when they're off or them up there can be a chore."

Teacher interviews. Teacher interview data revealed that even though parental involvement might be a challenge, parents were concerned mostly with failure of courses.

One teacher mentioned the following with regard to parental involvement:

I've noticed a lot of attempts by the school to have the parents come to the school and discuss issues...I can say they do try to get the parents to come to the school and see what's going on with the school...but I don't think it's as successful as it should be...the parents are more interested in "did my kid pass" to get credit, yeah to graduate.

Another teacher at the school mentioned:

I try to establish relationship with parents...we have a real, real, real big problem with just making contact with parents...we have a lot of invalid phone numbers...so the one's I do connect...I try to establish a relationship and let them know, hey if this was my daughter, I would want to know what is going on with her so I can help her.

Overall, the school had a plan to include meaningful stakeholder involvement and capacity building, according to the data, which revealed that the principal understood that this element was crucial to school transformation.

Structural Integration Practices at School A and B

Organizational design. The data revealed that both schools had structures in addressing the organizational design element. This was evident in the schools' structures at both campuses and the teachers' perceptions on how organizational design impacted student learning outcomes.

Teacher interviews School A. One teacher at School A seemed to have a positive view of the SLCs, saying that "trying to break it (meaning the school) into small schools

is a good idea in theory because a lot of the kids feel alienated because they don't feel it's personalized to them." However, data did reveal that the school has a 9th Grade Academy, and it has been in operation for a while. The main goal is to ensure that students have sense of belonging. As one teacher described, "The 9th Grade Academy has been here, and the whole concept behind it...we wanted to take away the influence of the upper classmen and give them their base foundation of what the rules are, what the expectations are."

Teacher interviews School B. One teacher described how the principal has guided the learning communities at the campus by establishing specific meeting times and collaborative periods:

Our learning communities within our departments. We've been given a little more I guess, structure and a specific format to follow, you know, specific departments. I see a lot of concentration on that. Within those learning communities, we are expected to collaborate. This year was my first year to attend what we called the collaborative. And that's not just our school but with selective other (district high schools).

Alternative schedules to personalize learning needs. The teachers' data revealed strategies aligned to creating alternative and personalized learning environments for students. This was evident in the teacher interviews and the actions taken by the schools.

Teacher interviews School A. The teacher's role in supporting alternative schedules for students as an effective practice was evident and supported by the following statement:

I figure out who the ones are that need the extra help, and basically work with them either individually or in the form of another little power-point and I make it

even simpler than this with pictures and do something like that, and this went over pretty well.

Teacher interviews School B. One teacher at school B discussed that “I try things to see what works like small learning groups, groupings, peer tutoring; I even offer extra tutoring after school.”

Another teacher described how an alternative schedule is done through the APEX and Twilight labs for students who are 16, 17, and are still in 9th grade. This is a way for students to catch up on credits and be able to graduate.

Collaboration/teacher empowerment. The data revealed that teachers were engaged in collaboration and the schools provided time for teachers to discuss curriculum, student needs, and data. As a result, the interviews revealed the teachers’ perceptions on the use of collaboration and its effect on teacher empowerment at both schools.

Teacher interviews School A. One teacher mentioned that “the principal tries to identify great teachers and tries to put them in leadership positions.” This in a way to ensure that there is collaboration and teacher empowerment. As one teacher mentioned that the principal is “teacher friendly” and “remembers the classroom” and understands the challenge. Therefore, the teacher’s perceptions were revealed, suggesting that the principal “understands that teachers need time to be together with each other, they need time to plan.” Despite the challenges, interview data revealed that there is a culture of collaboration. One teacher described that the principal supported the PLCs. One teacher described the PLCs as “adults coming together, sharing ideas together by grade level or the same content.” The teacher’s own experience was described as follows:

Like for instance, I'm on the senior level team...I've been, I'm the leader on that team because I have high compliance with the district curriculum and so if you're a person with high compliance on your team...then they can lift up the other people.

Teacher interviews School B. The AVID training was perceived by teachers as providing them with empowerment, a new approach to collaboration among staff. One teacher described the training as follows:

My biggest thing is to do the AVID...the interactive notebook...I feel like that will work because it's organization, and it's ownership...those kids take ownership of that buy-in that they have. So that's going to be my focus is to give them ownership...I really feel like, with the AVID training, I went to a lot of those practices that they had that I'm going to use...they also had ways that we can relate to real-world situations instead of just having them write...I feel like the more creative they are, the more ownership they will take.

Instructional Integration Practices, Schools A and B

Using data to drive instruction. The use of data to drive instruction was evident during the interviews. Both schools used data for diagnostic purposes and to help students with their instructional needs. The data revealed the teachers' perceptions with regard to how data were disaggregated and used for instructional purposes.

Teacher interviews School A. One teacher described the use of data by the campus improvement team but also described how assessments are used to measure gaps in learning prior to instruction. The teacher described how data from a pre-test will be used to help students as follows:

We do a pre-test for all our kids...this happens to be one I just gave for class right now. Forty-eight questions, most of these are STAAR-level questions from last year and I just gave it to these kids today, and I told them not to sweat it, it's not going to be for a grade, this is just to see where you are and what kind of tools you're come with and see where I need to help you.

Teacher interviews School B. As far as using data for diagnostic purposes and guiding instructional planning, the interviews revealed that teachers perceived the use of data as a positive strategy. According to one teacher:

From the beginning of the school year the principal had a plan on how we were to do the data...he called it PSE Protocol Packet and basically what we did was disaggregate the data and come up with strategies, and segregate the sub-populations...by groups from male and female...we did that a couple of times and then went off and saw our own PSEs with the department chairs...so, he basically modeled and showed us how to do it before we met and broke off in our own little groups.

According to another teacher, the high school collaborative has been beneficial.

The teacher described it as:

The kids basically take the benchmark every two weeks and from there it broke the course down by objectives, so what I would do is look at which objectives were testable and which ones they scored the lowest in.

Another teacher also mentioned the following with regard to the collaborative:

Assessments are a must and again as I mentioned, the collaborative previously, that's the main focus of the collaborative. Every two weeks we give an assessment. We collaborate on what expectations should be on a specific test and we diagnose or we kind of look at the data after the test to see what areas we may need to go back and refocus or say, "reteach."

Curriculum standards. In addition, in order to address curriculum standards that are rigorous, the district has been focused on redoing their curriculum guides so that they are aligned to the new STAAR Test. The interview data revealed that teachers were more confident in the district's curriculum to assure them that they would meet their instructional goals.

Teacher interviews School A. Teachers described their perception as follows with regard to the new curriculum:

My confidence level is a lot higher, the district has an all new curriculum this year, and I spent two weeks in training studying, so, like, right behind you, that's my curriculum wall and these are all the strategies we learning for the English Language Learners, the ELLs.

As far as the curriculum standards that are rigorous and aligned with college and career readiness, the district mandates for all campuses to have AP Courses. However, the interview data revealed that some teachers struggled with the concept of having students enroll in these courses. A teacher described how students were given access to AP course work as follows:

What we do is roughly take the top 25% and put them in Honors regardless of their skill level...there's a lot of different opinions on that ...I tend to agree with it, that you need to expose them to the rare and help lift them up because we have a lot of kids that go to college and it's a shock to them because we're using all thee interactive cooperative learning strategies and doing all this pair and share and think-alouds and we're doing things that they will not see in college.

Another teacher described some challenges with the new STAAR Test, which is more rigorous and reflects on what was done last year:

We were supposed to focus more on readiness standards than supporting standards, but a majority of what is tested on STAAR course is readiness, so we're front-loaded heavily on readiness standards...I had an 88% pass rate for my...class.

As a result, the data suggested that more teacher training and support might be needed to address curriculum standards that are aligned with college and career readiness standards.

Another teacher described training this past summer and how the district "rolled out all of the new, all new scope and sequence for English IV" and that "when you have a new curriculum it kind of puts everyone on an equal ground to start off with."

However, one teacher mentioned that they feel like confident teachers at higher levels of rigor, for example:

I try to like relate it to the real world as much as possible...as opposed to purely abstract x's and y's. I think, you know, if I can relate it to the real world (speaking about math) if you can relate it to money especially, that seems to prick up their ears and they seem to listen a little bit better and concentrate more.

Teacher interviews School B. When asked about reflecting on curriculum standards, one teacher mentioned that the school has been working on aligning the standards with the district collaborative:

They (standards) are aligned and the collaborative...that's what they worked on this summer...developing alignment, structure. I mean rigidly aligned curriculum and lesson, sample lessons that teachers should use, could use to actually meet those career readiness for our kids. They made certain that they focus on or point out those readiness standards versus supporting (standards) and of course, they all lead towards college bound (standards).

Another teacher mentioned that the biggest barrier might be “that a brand new teacher or teachers who did not know the curriculum as well as they probably should have” were not understanding the “readiness versus supporting” standards. By having the curriculum, the district provided teachers with “model lessons” that were “prescribed for you.” This was done so that everyone understood that the STAAR test was more rigorous.

Instructional Delivery Strategies. The evidence of instructional strategies was evident during the interviews. The teachers described their perceptions on how they delivered instructional strategies to increase student engagement in the learning process. Both campuses showed effort in specific instructional strategies to develop a deeper understanding of student expectations and concepts.

Teacher interviews School A. In order to address instructional strategies to increase rigor, a teacher described the instructional strategies used to help students understand the concepts. The teacher stated that “I don’t use a textbook, they don’t take notes, they answer STEM questions, I don’t do anything for more than 20 minutes, I use a lot of technology.” In order to scaffold the learning and ramp the curriculum from low-level to a higher-level, the teacher described the following teaching strategy to increase rigor:

I start with something that is knowledge-based, lower-level, send them to something, come back and we talk about it, and then we go and amp it up with a level of inquiry and a level of step-up...and just really make it fun.

However, it was evident that a culture of college expectations seemed to be lacking within the culture of the school. The teacher mentioned that:

I set my expectations very high and I let them know that they can do, and they do, they achieve, but I have a very different climate and probably a different education philosophy than anybody else here on this campus.

Teacher interviews School B. One teacher described that the AVID strategies are used and incorporated throughout the curriculum. For example:

They incorporate all of that (college-readiness standards) and to me it helps the teacher and the students a lot more as well as to figure out if there’s a weakness in the reading and the writing. AVID is a college career readiness (program) and some of the students actually have AVID classes, so the AVID teacher helps them with tutorials, with their classes and it helps them incorporate those different elements.

Student academic and support systems. Evidence of student academic and support systems were described by both campuses. The strategies used at each campus were described and the impact on the academic achievement of students. Both campuses,

created various opportunities for students to be afforded additional time and tutorials to meet the needs of the diverse student body.

Teacher interviews School A. The teacher interviews revealed some of the same concerns and perceptions regarding support systems. One teacher mentioned having the “Winter Academy.” In this academy, the “idea where the kids could do credit recovery in a one week, intensive period and that help us a lot with our graduation rate.” In addition, ongoing tutorials were provided to students throughout the year in order to address curricular gaps. However, the teacher mentioned that “getting them to tutorials is difficult...we did some, we put tutorials into the schedule last year, but we had a very high absentee rate because the kids knew it was not for credit.”

On the other hand, a teacher teaching a more rigorous course mentioned that students in AP and Pre-AP attend tutorials before and after school. The teacher mentioned having “a high attendance rate.” A 9th grade teacher mentioned the importance of helping students understand expectations and that it is important that “all the kids are used to and understand Cornell Note System and we start them early here, that’s what they’ll use in college.” As a result, the data revealed that students in more rigorous courses took advantage versus the students in regular courses and the different expectations depending on the type of courses that students take.

Teacher interviews School B. One teacher described the AVID program’s implementation as follows:

The AVID students are going to have their AVID class and teach them about organization, and the principal is going to put in...the freshman orientation class that they will have to take in the first semester where they teach them about

organizational skills, how to handle conflict and how to handle it in a positive manner.

In addition to AVID, another support system for students is the WICOR. A teacher described the programs available.

It's about getting kids to read and write on daily basis, the Cornell note-taking, the organizational skills...then the credit recovery...I know (the principal) is going to make some changes to what's been done in the past.

Data Analysis Leadership, Structural, and Instructional Integrations

Principal's leadership role. Central office administrators described their perceptions of specific strategies implemented at each of the turnaround campuses. In addition, they described their expectations for the low-performing campuses with regard to the principals' leadership role and the impact on student achievement.

Central office Administrator A. With regard to leadership, principals who work in low-performing campuses work closely with school improvement offices. In addition, it was reported that:

The school improvement officers work closely with the superintendent who is working with Dr. Roland Fryer at a lab at Harvard University, he's done a lot of work with turnaround charter schools. We're implementing what works...they've had a lot of training, with the Harlem, and The Children's Zone.

In addition, it was reported that "principals work closely with their communities" but the "superintendent makes the decision about the staff for the turnaround"

Central office Administrator B. It was reported that the central office staff has expectations to ensure that schools are successful by ensuring that principals are effective in their roles as principals. It was reported that an expectation is to get the principals to "get out of the box."

I expect them to challenge themselves...look for those things that people deem risky, look for those things that you know feel internally work for kids. The only way you're going to get any real success is through innovation of failure. It's through that that you're going to see what's going to create that synergy that keeps you moving forward. I have no failure from trying to bring in new ideas. The problem is you've got to learn from them. I think, when people fail, they scrap it and bring in something else in without reflecting on what it is they've done in regard to the first piece. And I want my principals to push hard, and push me hard, and also to think that it's not always about "I need more money."

There are a number of ways on how we can get things done and it is not always about the money. For example if a principal needs money to pay for tutoring, the principals are asked if they have to reach out to the community for support. The following guiding questions were reported as examples to prompt principals to reflect on their leadership role:

Are you reaching out to your community for people who are engineers and science people who are accountants? Are you reaching out to your kids who graduated and got to college and come back? There are a number of ways that you can get out of the box and provide that and what does the master schedule look like?

Structural integration practices. Structural integration practices were reported by central office administration to have an impact on student learning. The district also had a vision for certain campuses to implement specific strategies such as PLCs, SLCs, Early College High School models, and 9th Grade Academies to help support student learning across each of the campuses. Central office administrators described their perceptions and their impact on student learning.

Central office Administrator A. It was reported that the district's expectation as far as setting structures at the campus is left up to the principals. However, principals do receive training for professional learning communities, in addition to working with the

school improvement officers, who work with a small group of principals to ensure that PLCs are set up appropriately at each campus.

It was also reported that the district has plans to implement several models such as Early College initiatives and “Twilight High Schools.” Twilight high schools help students who are behind on credits. “We have Twilight high schools where kids need to work during the day that go to school late” and “a program we call High School Ahead...for middle school students who are behind.”

Central office Administrator B. The data revealed that principals are supposed to be creative and innovative in their approaches when restructuring their campuses. The school district has several schools that use the Apollo Program; however, the ones that do not have this program are left to use creativity in their structural approaches. As a result,

A lot of it has to come from that creative piece from principals and I’ve seen principals create for example, we’ve gone to an Apollo program and we have this huge investment with our campuses. I’ve seen other principals go and create, not to the full scale...but create and start to emulate that program.

Another way to ensure the school day is to create programs such as Early College and small learning communities to ensure students are on the right track. The expectation is that the school should:

Truly be making it an opportunity for a kid to get all the way through in a sequence of courses that yield an internship...or a certificate for that child to get out so they can do something without entering that small academy. Academy is not designed just to be small and to know who the kids are. So, alternative scheduling for flexibility, I think that’s important.

Instructional integration practices. Instructional practices were described by central office administrators, which indicated the district’s perceptions on specific instructional goals for the campuses. The district expects campus leaders to ensure

academic success of students by ensuring use of the district's curriculum and by providing training to teachers on an ongoing basis. In addition, administrators described the need to monitor and implement these practices by campus principals.

Central office Administrator A. The instructional practices described by the central office include having additional reading classes for 9th graders. In addition, the central office has hired math teachers to work with students "one on two, one on three" for math tutoring. It was reported the "we have seen big strides with our math" and there is "a lot of training like last year during the two-week break" where "we trained the teachers" and they received compensation.

The data revealed that the central office has a new appraisal and development system, that all teachers are appraised twice a year.

Principals conduct a trial review with an HR present partner in their school improvement officer...when they review the performance of every teacher on that campus. Our goal is to exit low-performing teachers, hire higher performing teachers. So if you're not getting student results and you haven't over a period of time, then we exit you. It's about moving kids, that's their job.

Within the school day, we extend the school days for the schools and for the secondary schools; we also extend it, the school year, when we start a week early. We had to get legislative approval to do that.

Central office described specific support systems and programs principals are expected to implement at the high school level, to achieve performance measures:

We put in graduation labs using APEX software where kids can recover credit. We've hired grad coaches for every high school. We also have a drop out retrieval committee and they meet weekly and then review every student in danger, who's at risk and in danger of dropping out. The district has actually decreased, improved graduation rate and decreased the dropout rate every year for the last four years.

The focus on college-career readiness courses is an expectation for every campus across the district. All campuses are expected to offer at least 15 AP courses. The district monitors the participation of students in these advanced placement courses as follows:

We monitor the number of students that are in accordance. We administer the Key Step Assessment at 8th grade, we administer the PSAT to all 9th, 10th, and 11th graders and we also pay for the SAT for all the 11th graders.

With regard to Academic Support Systems, programs like AVID are dependent on the principal taking the initiative and it is not implemented district-wide.

We do have AVID; it's one of the programs we're looking to expand. We also have a program that we're working with the community college. At a number of our campuses, our students are provided an extended graduation plan. In the summers, they take dual credit courses as well as during the school year. They don't graduate at the end of four years, they graduate the following August with ultimately a two-year associate.

Central office Administrator B. It was stated that “turnaround schools must focus on the use of data” to ensure success for students. In addition, the data should be used to guide programs to be offered and to address the academic needs of students.

How you monitor your students for constant feedback, it's like going to the doctor. If I go to the doctor and he tells me that I need to lose weight, and we all understand the data, yet I never do anything about it and I come back and ask him to weigh me again and I weigh the same, I say “well, it's not working, what you told me.” If I'm not doing something to help me impact that, it's a problem, so what are we doing around the data collection?...I've seen a campus come out of Stage 5 by focusing on those ends and taking their kids who are excelling and getting them in and out of a building through a variety of internships and creating programs for kids to get that opportunity through experience...incorporating more of a college-going culture.

The next section provides a comparative analysis of both schools and the level in which each of the conceptual framework components were utilized according to participants' responses.

A Comparative Analysis of Schools

The qualitative data collected through interviews were coded to illustrate for utilization of the conceptual framework elements present for each of the components. If the data showed a presence of the strategy with support from the respondents, a positive sign (+) was used to tally such presence. If the data revealed a negative affirmation from the respondents, a negative sign (-) was used to demonstrate a practice that was not fully supported by participants in the study. If no data were available for any of the elements, a slash designation sign was used (/), indicating that the component was not evident. If participants had a mixed or conflicting perceptions of particular components, then a diamond designation was applied (<>). The data showing evidence of component utilization can be found in Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3. The complete profiles and academic results from the Academic Excellence Indicator (AEIS) can be found in Table 4.4.

Utilization Components Summary

The data presented in the previous tables showed that the principals did utilize components found in the framework of effective school turnaround practices. Both schools varied in implementation practices and frequency as perceived by the different role groups interviewed. It was observed, that when comparing both schools, School B seemed to have a higher level of utilization. For example, the perceptions among participants indicated that during the school transformation process, principals should maintain a balance among the three major elements under study: (a) principal's leadership role, (b) structural integration practices, and (c) instructional integration

practices. These perceptions support the research literature about the role of the principal in creating school transformational synergy.

Table 4.1

Evidence of Framework Components—Principal Interviews

Schools	School A	School B
Data	Principal A	Principal B
Components		
<i>Principal's Leadership Role</i>		
Establishes Vision to Achieve Positive Student Outcomes	+	+
Engenders the Need for Cultural Change in Teachers, Parents	/	+
Leads by Facilitating the Change Planning Process	<>	+
Ensures Meaningful Stakeholder Involvement and Capacity Building	+	+
<i>Structural Integration Practices</i>		
Organizational Design	+	+
Alternative Scheduling	+	+
Decision Making Process	+	+
<i>Instructional Integration Practices</i>		
Assessments for Diagnostic Purposes	+	+
Curriculum Standards—Rigorous and Aligned with College and Career Readiness	<>	+
Instructional Delivery Strategies	<>	+
Student Academic and Support Systems	<>	+

+ = positive evidence
 - = negative evidence
 / = not addressed
 <> = mixed perception

Table 4.2

Evidence of Framework Components—Teacher Interviews

Schools	School A	School B
Data	A B C D	A B C D
Components		
Principal's Leadership Role		
Establishes Vision to Achieve Positive Student Outcomes	-, <>, +, <>	<>, +, +, +
Engenders the Need for Cultural Change in Teachers, Parents	<>, -, -, +	<>, +, +, +
Leads by Facilitating the Change Planning Process	+, -, +, +	<>, +, +, +
Ensures Meaningful Stakeholder Involvement and Capacity Building	+, +, +, <>	<>, +, +, +
Structural Integration Practices		
Organizational Design	<>, <>, -, +	-, +, +, +
Alternative Scheduling	-, +, <>, +	-, +, +, +
Decision Making Process	<>, <>, +, +	-, +, +, +
Instructional Integration Practices		
Assessments for Diagnostic Purposes	<>, +, +, <>	-, +, +, +
Curriculum Standards—Rigorous and Aligned with College and Career Readiness	<>, +, <>, +	-, +, +, +
Instructional Delivery Strategies	+, +, <>, +	-, +, +, +
Student Academic and Support Systems Utilization	+, +, <>, +	-, +, +, +

+ = positive evidence
 - = negative evidence
 / = not addressed
 <> = mixed perception

Table 4.3

Evidence of Framework Components—Superintendent Designees (Central Office)

Data Components	Central Office A Administrator A	Central Office B Administrator B
<i>Principal's Leadership Role</i>	<>	+
Establishes Vision to Achieve Positive Student Outcomes		
Engenders the Need for Cultural Change in Teachers, Parents	<>	+
Leads by Facilitating the Change Planning Process	<>	+
Ensures Meaningful Stakeholder Involvement and Capacity Building	-	<>
<i>Structural Integration Practices</i>		
Organizational Design	+	<>
Alternative Scheduling	+	<>
Decision Making Process	<>	<>
<i>Instructional Integration Practices</i>		
Assessments for Diagnostic Purposes	+	+
Curriculum Standards—Rigorous and Aligned with College and Career Readiness	+	+
Instructional Delivery Strategies	+	+
Student Academic and Support Systems Utilization	+	+

+ = positive evidence
 - = negative evidence
 / = not addressed
 <> = mixed perception

The first component dealing with the principals' leadership role depicts four elements including: (a) establishing a vision to achieve positive student outcomes, (b) engendering the need for cultural change in teachers, parents, and students, (c) leading by facilitating the change planning process, and (d) ensuring meaningful stakeholder involvement and capacity building. Schools that exhibited three or more out of four elements were considered "high utilization," while two out of four were deemed as "moderate," and schools with one out of four were labeled having "low utilization."

The second component dealing with structural integration practices depicts three elements: (a) organizational design—small learning communities, Early College schools, academies within schools, (b) decision-making process that fosters collaboration and teacher empowerment. Schools that exhibited three out of three elements were considered as having "high utilization," while two out of three were considered moderate, and one out of three were considered to have "low utilization."

The third component dealing with instructional integrations of schools that exhibited three or more out of four elements were considered "high utilization, while two out of four were deemed as "moderate," and schools with one out of four were labeled having "low utilization."

A contrasting analysis between the two schools revealed the following:

Evidence of Framework Components for Principals

The principal at School A indicated a positive affirmation on 6 out of the 11 components, while the principal at School B showed a positive affirmation on 11 of 11

components. The principal at School A had a mixed perception on 4 of the 11 components, showing a lower level of utilization and or implementation.

Evidence of Framework Components for Teachers

Teacher interviews indicated that School A, showed that 7 out of 8 components were at a medium level of utilization, and three components were at a low utilization level (see Table 4.2). Moreover, School A did not show evidence of using any of the components at a high level. School B exemplified its efforts by showing evidence of 11 out of 11 components used at a range between medium and high implementation levels. This difference in level of utilization demonstrates variances between schools. These variances between schools were also evident in the analysis of the central office administrators' responses.

The data presented in Table 4.4 represents achievement data for both campuses, inclusive of TAKS, NCE's Non-Special Education Students, Stanford, PSAT and SAT scores for years 2007-2008; 2008-2009; 2009-2010; and 2010-2011. A contrastive review of student performance data for both campuses shows the measurable progress attained by both schools.

Conclusion

Data analysis for this study revealed how the principal's role in school transformation is important in enacting change and creating synergy within the transformation process. The principals' strategies utilized during school turnaround provide insight into which strategies principals used to create a turnaround. Secondly, the participants' responses provided a deeper understanding of which strategies were

perceived as most effective during this process and how their alignment was within the conceptual framework components. Moreover, the data revealed the level of utilization of the framework components among the two schools and the evidence of research-based strategies during a turnaround. In Chapter 5, the data will be reviewed and discussed in order to draw conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further study.

Table 4.4

Achievement Data for Both Campuses

School A- TAKS All Students English	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	2010-12 % Commended
Reading- % Pass					
9th grade	72	74	85	80	16
10th grade	77	78	80	84	10
11th grade	85	91	90	85	12
Mathematics-% Pass					
9th grade	35	37	57	54	8
10th grade	43	43	60	67	7
11th grade	64	66	87	80	8
Science-% Pass					
9th grade					
10th grade	46	36	62	70	10
11th grade	66	72	87	83	13
Social Studies- % Pass					
9th grade					
10th grade	80	85	90	91	38
11th grade	93	95	97	96	42
School A- TAKS All Students Magnet	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	2010-12 % Commended
Reading- % Pass					
9th grade	95	91	97	94	17
10th grade	93	100	97	97	13
11th grade	100	200	100	97	31
Mathematics-% Pass					
9th grade	63	57	74	78	6
10th grade	69	69	80	81	13
11th grade	92	91	92	83	20

Table 4.4 (continued)

School A- TAKS All Students Magnet	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	2010-12 % Commended
Science-% Pass					
9th grade					
10th grade	66	71	91	87	13
11th grade	96	88	92	94	23
Social Studies- % Pass					
9th grade					
10th grade	97	100	97	100	55
11th grade	100	100	100	100	69
School A- Stanford Achievement Test Non-Special Education Students NCE's					
Reading					
9th grade	44	41	42	44	37
10th grade	45	44	40	44	40
11th grade	52	49	49	47	42
Mathematics					
9th grade	52	50	51	51	48
10th grade	44	46	45	52	49
11th grade					
Language					
9th grade	48	45	43	42	38
10th grade	45	45	40	40	40
11th grade	52	50	48	45	42
Enviro./Science					
9th grade	42	42	43	49	44
10th grade	44	42	43	44	47
11th grade	46	50	46	50	49
Social Science					
9th grade	39	44	37	45	41
10th grade	44	46	44	47	46
11th grade	53	50	52	52	49

Table 4.4 (continued)

School A- Stanford Achievement Test All Students Magnet	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
Reading					
9 th grade	57	52	55	56	51
10 th grade	58	55	53	56	50
11 th grade	62	59	55	57	53
Mathematics					
9 th grade	60	55	53	61	52
10 th grade	55	50	56	59	57
11 th grade	51	52	51	52	51
Language					
9 th grade	62	59	57	51	49
10 th grade	55	55	54	51	47
11 th grade	59	59	54	60	51
Enviro./Science					
9 th grade	51	53	53	56	53
10 th grade	54	52	52	53	55
11 th grade	52	54	52	58	53
Social Science					
9 th grade	47	51	44	53	52
10 th grade	53	49	51	58	51
11 th grade	58	55	56	55	57
School A College Bound					
PSAT	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
% Total Tested	57.0	65.2	70.3	68.2	87.2
Math Average	37.6	36.9	36.5	37.1	36.3
Verbal Average	36.2	36.4	33.8	34.1	33.7
Writing Average	35.4	36.5	35.5	34.4	32.6
SAT-1	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
% of Seniors Tested	41.5	43.7	43.7	44.3	50.3
Math Average	428	438	423	437	426
Verbal Average	427	436	415	424	412
Writing Average	426	424	416	419	413
SAT-1	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
% of Seniors Tested	16.7	12.3	15.7	30.1	19.2
Math Average	17.3	16.2	16.7	17.7	16.9

Table 4.4 (continued)

School B- TAKS All Students English	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	2010-12 % Commended
Reading- % Pass					
9 th grade	69	72	82	66	7
10 th grade	76	84	75	86	4
11 th grade	83	89	91	88	9
Mathematics-% Pass					
9 th grade	29	32	37	38	2
10 th grade	32	51	36	48	2
11 th grade	62	68	85	75	5
Science-% Pass					
9 th grade					
10 th grade	26	32	34	43	1
11 th grade	64	72	88	76	5
Social Studies-% Pass					
9 th grade					
10 th grade	69	83	76	81	12
11 th grade	91	97	98	94	37
School B- TAKS All Students Magnet					
Reading-% Pass					
9 th grade	96	92	97	*	*
10 th grade	97	100	94	100	10
11 th grade	100	95	100	100	29
Mathematics-% Pass					
9 th grade	85	86	82	*	*
10 th grade	72	86	81	76	10
11 th grade	85	83	100	96	18
Science-% Pass					
9 th grade					
10 th grade	69	69	72	81	5
11 th grade	90	90	97	96	14
Social Studies-% Pass					
9 th grade					
10 th grade	100	100	100	100	33
11 th grade	100	100	100	100	61

Table 4.4 (continued)

School B- Stanford Achievement Test Non-Special Education Students NCE's	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
Reading					
9 th grade	47	48	40	40	34
10 th grade	47	47	42	37	39
11 th grade	55	52	45	49	45
Mathematics					
9 th grade	54	52	47	43	41
10 th grade	45	50	46	43	40
11 th grade	50	49	43	46	41
Language					
9 th grade	48	48	41	37	31
10 th grade	42	45	41	37	36
11 th grade	52	47	45	45	42
Enviro./Science					
9 th grade	43	46	42	43	41
10 th grade	42	42	42	38	39
11 th grade	48	48	48	47	48
Social Science					
9 th grade					
10 th grade					
11 th grade					
School B- Stanford Achievement Test All Students Magnet	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
Reading					
9 th grade	57	60	55	53	*
10 th grade	59	56	52	50	59
11 th grade	62	62	52	58	55
Mathematics					
9 th grade	60	67	60	54	*
10 th grade	59	61	57	56	49
11 th grade	58	60	51	55	50
Language					
9 th grade	57	60	56	50	*
10 th grade	53	53	50	50	51
11 th grade	59	57	52	54	56

Table 4.4 (continued)

School B- Stanford Achievement Test All Students Magnet	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
Enviro./Science					
9th grade	51	59	56	59	*
10th grade	52	52	54	54	58
11th grade	54	56	51	54	54
Social Science					
9th grade	47	60	40	49	*
10th grade	60	52	49	54	45
11th grade	61	58	53	57	50
<hr/>					
School B College Bound					
PSAT	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
% Total Tested	80.0	80.8	84.4	83.7	77.7
Math Average	35.3	34.9	36.4	36.4	34.5
Verbal Average	33.6	33.6	33.4	32.2	31.9
Writing Average	33.2	34.5	35.3	34.4	31.7
SAT-1	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
% of Seniors Tested	39.9	36.4	36.4	39.8	49.3
Math Average	394	400	403	395	385
Verbal Average	378	388	403	376	374
Writing Average	393	387	401	366	375
SAT-1	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
% of Seniors Tested	10.0	6.5	14.7	7.7	8.5
Math Average	15.6	15.3	15.6	14.8	14.7

Chapter 5: Findings, Implications, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

In today's high stakes accountability, American schools that do not meet adequate state and federal performance standards are labeled as low-performing. After successive years of failure, severe sanctions are imposed, leading to possible school closures. Since the installation of NCLB in 2002, many school leaders continue to search for answers to turnaround low-performing campuses. Schools that failed to meet accountability standards for five consecutive years must engage in state-approved restructuring efforts, guided by several options delineated in the federal law (NCLB, 2002). This has caused many school systems across the country to seek and employ new types of reforms necessary to improve the school's overall performance and meet the accountability standards.

This study was founded on research in this area and has identified three aspects of the school that when carefully redesigned and carried out in concert with student instructional needs, show promise for significant and sustained improvement. These are: (a) the structure and organization of the school, (b) instructional delivery strategies that are student centered and focused on high academic standards, and (c) strong and influential school leadership (Armstead et al., 2010; Elmore, 2007; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Kuo, 2010; Kyburg et al., 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Yukl, 2010). Specifically, this chapter discusses and presents the findings, implications, conclusions and recommendations for further study.

The purpose of this study was to identify effective practices in the three forementioned components associated with effective school turnaround. It aimed at finding change strategies grounded in the organizational structure, nature of school leadership, and in the curriculum and instructional programming of the school. The data were gathered via perceptions of principals, teachers, central office administrators and the review and analysis of pertinent school planning documents. The following questions guided the research inquiry aspects of this study:

Research Questions

1. What strategies (structural and instructional) do high school principals implement to successfully turnaround a school?
2. Which strategies seem to be perceived as most effective by principals, teachers, and superintendents, when measured by multiple school effectiveness indicators?

A conceptual framework (Figure 2.1) developed by the researcher, was used to analyze the interaction among three categories that are important to ensure principal-led synergy in an effective transformation. The categories include: (a) Effective Leadership, (b) Structural Integrations, and (c) Instructional Integrations.

A qualitative methodology was used in this study to gain a deeper understanding of school turnaround planning and implementation process. Multiple forms of data, such as interviews and documents were collected and analyzed to investigate the influences of school turnaround efforts and their impact on student learning outcomes. A qualitative case study design was applied to gain an in-depth examination of two high schools and to

explore the perspectives of central office personnel, two principals, and eight teachers (one per core content/per school) on school turnaround. The case studies examined the principal leadership/synergy impact implementation of innovative turnaround practices addressing the following areas: (a) Effective Leadership, (b) Structural Integrations, and (c) Instructional Integrations.

Discussion of Findings

It was evident that the strategies implemented by principals at both campuses were in alignment with the requirements set forth by the School Improvement Plans. Although the implementation levels of the strategies varied, each principal enacted changes necessary to begin the school transformation process when applying structural and instructional integration practices. Each principal was responsible for leading the change at the campus and used the School Improvement Plan to guide his or her work.

Both campuses showed evidence of applying structural and instructional integration components during the school transformation process. Key elements were also evident in the principals' vision to achieve positive student outcomes, leading by facilitating the change planning process, ensuring stakeholder involvement, and capacity building among staff members. In addition, the central office staff interview data revealed that the district had a vision for the campuses undergoing the turnaround. However, the data indicated the presence of gaps in communications and role expectations for principals. For example, one of the central office leaders interviewed stated that,

There are expectations that we have for making sure that schools are successful, that leaders are successful, and teachers and students also have success in meeting their metrics both for the state and the district that we used to monitor all relevant pieces of the process.

However, at the campus level, it was found that principals felt that it was a “hands-off” approach with no specific direction. This revelation identified the need for central staff to be clear on expectations for principals and have a plan that is focused on specific strategies, so that campus level staff can have a clear vision of what the district expects from principals, teachers, and the school community.

Evidence of Structural Integration Practices and Instructional Integration Practices were also found to be present in varying levels at both campuses. School B showed to have a higher utilization of the elements related to structural integration practices that aligned with: (a) organizational design, (b) alternative scheduling for flexibility and compatibility with student instructional needs, and (c) decision-making process that fosters collaboration and teacher empowerment. Conversely, School A showed to have a slightly lower utilization of Structural Integration Practices, with evidence mostly on organizational design, and less evidence of decision-making process and alternative scheduling for students. While both schools showed evidence of Structural Integrations, School B’s data indicated a higher reliance on the school principal working in collaboration with teachers to lead the transformation process.

As for the Instructional Integration Practices, both schools had evidence of the elements being used: (a) assessments for diagnostic purposes, (b) curriculum standards, (c) instructional delivery strategies, and (d) student academic and support systems. While both schools showed varying degrees of these practices in place, the data revealed that School B had a clear understanding of the practices and had a specific plan to carry out the instructional elements. School A’s interview data revealed that while there was a plan

in place, the teachers had not been convinced for the need to implement these strategies. As one teacher stated, “the biggest challenge is the buy-in from the teachers...the teachers have to buy-in and ultimately do something that takes them out of their comfort zone.” The data revealed that both schools organized their school improvement instructional strategies around common curriculum standards and new curriculum planning guides with higher expectations, and more rigorous measures aligned to college and career readiness. It was found that teachers at both campuses participated in professional development sessions during the summer on effective teaching practices and curriculum alignment with the new state assessments. In addition, both campuses also had a plan for addressing student special academic needs with the implementation of social support systems. For example, it was found that School B implemented the AVID program school-wide.

Finding 1: Principal’s Leadership Role

Establishing the vision. The principal’s leadership role in the school transformation process is critical in ensuring an effective turnaround. At both campuses, the principal’s actions and practices were important and essential in setting the vision and course of action. This included the development and implementation of specific action steps for involving faculty in the realization of the vision. Both principals were engaged in consistent articulation of the vision to ensure clarification of short and long-term goals. The principals also facilitated the initial review and analysis of school performance indicators resulting in effective school improvement plans. Both principals were

instrumental in facilitating the creation of school organization structures that ensured that the school visions and school improvement plans were in alignment.

School A. The principal at School A focused on training teachers and staff by meeting with them at the beginning of the year on the campus goal-setting process. More importantly, the principal understood that in order to make progress over time, different stakeholders would need to be involved. The principal worked with teams of teachers to begin the buy-in process and met with the Site-Based Decision-Making Committee monthly to articulate a plan that would set guidelines and a clear understanding of the vision for the schools. However, one specific challenge that emerged was related to the principal's lack of communication with the central office staff. This was expressed in the principal's lack of understanding of his role in a turnaround school and lack of communication from central office with regard to what support systems would be given to the campus to help support teachers and new programs that would be implemented.

School B. The principal at School B had confidence in strategic planning for turnaround that was clear and evident in the action steps taken. The principal clearly articulated the process that was to be taken to co-create and establish a vision for the campus. Moreover, due to prior experience in other turnaround schools, the principal understood the challenges that would emerge and knew how to navigate a large urban system. This also included an understanding on how to work with climate issues that would pose a challenge and re-assure the staff that the vision could be achieved, regardless of prior failures with student performance. A significant factor was the principal's willingness to encourage the staff to think differently about the data and

achieve the goals incrementally and to determine which staff would be in charge of the specific action steps for achieving the vision. The three-year comprehensive plan was specifically tailored to meet the needs of the campus. The principal's understanding to include specific areas in the plan ranged from professional development of teachers to safe and secure environments, curriculum needs, collaboration, and communication with staff. The principal's role, therefore, included a multi-step analysis of understanding the staff and community and tailoring a plan to create a vision to achieve positive student outcomes. Many of the actions were research-based strategies found in the literature addressing the leadership component, such as understanding long-range planning, acknowledging stakeholder involvement, and obtaining buy-ins from staff to achieve a turnaround.

The principal as a change agent. To effectuate the cultural change in teachers, parents, and students, both school principals implemented planned group discussion sessions of the different stakeholders focusing on beliefs pertaining to student learning and teacher/parent/student expectations.

School A. Principal at School A placed much importance in his or her role as a change agent. The principal instituted school practices that provided teachers with feedback on their observed teachings and related training. Other creative strategies utilized by the principal pertained to the differentiated assignment of administrative team members to help support and guide teachers in ongoing professional pedagogical development. This specific strategy resulted in a teacher support system facilitated by observations and ongoing coaching.

School B. The principal at School B also shared similar reflections with multiple sets of strategies aimed at instructional improvement with a plan for planning. These strategies constituted implementation features of a three-year plan. This included the involvement of administrators, teacher leaders, and community members in conceptualizing and developing the most desired implementation strategies. The principal stated that his goal was to create a realizable vision for the campus by implementing multiple strategies that had worked at a previous campus. The principal made repeated references to servant leadership and the need to build sustained capacity in teachers, parents, and students. In addition, teachers expressed a deep understanding of their expectations in the classroom as teachers and believed that the principal had high expectations and confidence in their role as teachers. The teachers felt supported and nurtured. This strong relationship between the teachers and the principal was a key factor in developing a culture in which teachers could trust getting out of their comfort zone and could begin developing a culture of learners.

Leading the change planning process. In leading and facilitating the change planning process, both school principals realized the need to create specific goals to move the campus forward. The goals delineated in the school improvement plans demonstrated the principal's ability to manage different types of activities to ensure the successful implementation of the plan. While each of the plans varied in the activities, the principals described which strategies were deemed most appropriate for each of their faculties.

School A. One The principal at School A planned activities on an ongoing basis with teachers to systemically implement the change planning process. The use of

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) was found to have a positive effect in strengthening teachers' perceptions on the school's need to change and to begin implementing new programs and building capacity among staff. The teachers expressed that the principal met with the campus leadership teams and that it had made a big difference in their understanding of expectations, roles, and responsibilities for the larger learning community. Moreover, this enabled teachers to understand how they would be held accountable and how this would help the school as whole. This specific strategy that the principal took enabled teacher leaders to emerge and help the principal in the getting teachers to believe in the need to change, versus resisting change.

School B. The principal at School B stressed the importance of having a clear understanding of the different strengths and weaknesses of teachers and expectations from central office administration. The principal believed that clear communications between central office and the principal with respect to the strategies for school restructuring and academic instructional enhancement were a key factor in school turnaround. For example, he stated "you've got to jointly determine the causes for school failure and be able to establish and ongoing communication with central office in order to have sustainable change." The principal mentioned that there were two approaches for turning a school around. "You either do it as a dictator or you do it collaboratively" and in addition, you must "be able to determine from your school board and your higher ups, like school improvement officers, high school chiefs, assistant superintendents, and so forth...how much time is needed to turn the school around."

Meaningful stakeholder involvement. To ensure meaningful stakeholder involvement, both principals emphasized the need to engage staff and community in understanding the school's vision and how to accomplish school transformation.

School A. At School A, the principal called upon the community to support the school by meeting with the Alumni Group on a monthly basis. Since the Alumni were concerned about the school's performance and wanted the school to be successful in the future, the principal understood that this key community group would be vested in helping the school in the long-term goals. However, the principal mentioned that a barrier to engage other community members was also critical and expressed that the community at-large needed to be aware of the good things that were happening, in order to build momentum and dispel the myth "that the school is broken and that there is no hope." Moreover, the teachers also were aware that more community involvement was needed and expressed a desire to have the business community help support the school and gain respect to become "a place where the neighborhood parents would want to send their children." Building a better image for the school was found to be a key goal and could only be achieved by involving outside resources to help transform the perception of the school.

School B. The school principal at School B recognized the fact that parental and community involvement "is important" to ensuring a successful turnaround. However, the school's accountability rating and the urban setting created some barriers to engage parents in the school. The principal mentioned "what I found in the nine months that I've been here is that we have an extremely strong alumni group" but that "the parents of a lot

of our kids are not as involved as the alumni”...“I meet with the community about once a month. They call them civic groups and they are very active,” and the principal recognized the fact that this is an area that needs to be addressed. In addition, it was mentioned that a major challenge for parents is their work schedules. Besides the odd hours of their work schedules, their low-income status made it difficult for them to leave work and risk losing income; “they work odd hours, they’re very low-income people, and if they don’t work, they don’t get paid, so trying to get them to find a time when they are off or get them up there can be a chore.”

As a result, the findings indicated that while both campuses were at different levels of implementation, the role of the principal was crucial. Moreover, the implementation levels of the specific elements under the principal leadership role component significantly impacted the transformation process and perceptions of the principal leading the turnaround.

Finding 2: Structural Integration Practices

The principal’s role integrating structural components proved to strengthen the school’s transformation process. This was done by redesigning the school day, to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration. Both principals implemented various structural change strategies to bring about school transformation. Although elements of organizational redesign were evident at both campuses, the implementation levels were at different stages of implementation. It was found through the principals’ interviews that they were at different implementation levels.

Organizational design. For example, both schools had elements of organizational design and each principal selected specific approaches tailored to the campus needs. The overall implementation was evidenced in the different structural designs selected and implemented by each principal and delineated in the school improvement plans to effectively address student learning needs.

School A. For example, at School A, the principal emphasized the importance of having a 9th Grade Academy that focused on providing students with a more personalized learning environment by addressing needs of students through team collaboration. In addition, the teachers' perception of the Smaller Learning Community (SLC) Model received positive praises and support throughout the school and 9th grade teachers. Teachers described the "ultimate goal of the 9th Grade Academy was to help teachers build relationships with the students they served and to build a sense of community." In addition, the SLCs' structure would "help students feel that someone cared for them as they transitioned to high school." The additional planning time and team structure in 9th grade was noted to have a positive effect on establishing a sense of community for students and teachers.

School B. School B had plans to incorporate similar research-based strategies to support and nurture 9th graders as they navigated through their high school experience. The principal of School B explained his approach to the school's restructuring around a "school-within-a school" redesign model fashioned after a previous experience at another high school. He stated, "I merged those concepts together that I created for a 3A school...with five assistant principals whose roles were primarily redefined as

instructional leaders.” According to the principal at School B, a “lack of student-centered structures and corresponding systems in place” can cause a school not to “create an optimal environment for learning.” It was also stated that in order to ensure successful transformation, the principal must engage teachers and school staff in ongoing professional development addressing changes in both structure and individual teacher responsibilities and the use of PLCs throughout the campus.

Alternative schedules to personalize learning needs. Both school principals implemented strategies and developed personalized learning environments for students. It was found that both schools focused on interventions for students at risk through various programs. This specific component was found to be a key factor in ensuring students’ success in learning.

School A. The principal at School A understood the need to personalize schedules for students. The key strategy involved having an advisory period once a week, to ensure that teachers could meet with students and support them as advocates in their learning. During this advisory period, each student developed a Personal Growth Plan (PGP) to set specific academic goals. It was evident that this was a concerted effort to ensure that students needs’ were addressed on an ongoing basis; and by having an advocacy period, there was a way to ensure students were being supported in a more personal level and that struggling students were provided interventions. In addition, the principal ensured that each grade level was assigned a specific administrator and counselor based on an alpha-split in an effort to create a more personalized setting and thus being able to work with students and to develop college-career goals.

School B. It was found that the school's focus on the AVID Program was welcomed by teachers as a powerful tool that identified students with their academic needs. In addition, the training school-wide regarding the AVID program was described as having a positive impact on student study skills and ownership. In addition to the AVID program, another intervention that was regarded to have a positive effect on students was to provide struggling students with specific interventions such as additional tutoring, Read 180, Nehaus, and providing double classes in math for students who failed EOC.

Collaboration/teacher empowerment. Both School A and School B principals described teacher empowerment efforts through the creation of structures, such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), thus allowing teacher collaboration during ongoing planning and instructional decision-making. Principals indicated that the PLCs' goal was to foster collaborative faculty in planning within the content area departments with responsibility to prepare students for standardized testing and developing meaningful learning experiences through a relevant, integrated, and aligned curriculum.

School A. It was found that the school provided teachers with collaboration and decision-making. However, the principal cited that teacher turnover caused a challenge for teambuilding. The principal expressed that it was difficult to develop teams due to a lack of continuity and having to start over, which was cited as a barrier to moving to the next level, whether it would be implementing programs or curriculum for the campus. However, the School Improvement Plan mentioned the need to continually coach

teachers in the classroom and have support for teachers to gain a deeper understanding of best practices and modeling lessons during PLCs.

School B. The principal at School B described how he created a collaborative culture by meeting with teachers in the summer, prior to school starting. For example, “we called them summer planning academies...that are very targeted professional development” to ensure “trying to get the staff on board. I’ve got a leadership coach that works with my cabinet this year in building a team environment.” The principal described “this upcoming year that group will include other leaders such as department chairs, heads of departments, directors, and key support people.”

The principal further emphasized the importance of getting the staff to buy-in to the process. One of the strategies applied emphasized options for teachers to leave or stay at the school. It was communicated to the staff that “each one of you has an opportunity to get onboard with what we have to do, and we’re going to do this collectively, and you’re either going to buy-in or not.” Consequently, the teachers could make a choice of whether they wanted to remain at the campus or continue the second year. It was also stated that department chairs would be retrained in their redefined leadership roles. According to the principal, the goal of School B was to pretty much have a staff of teachers who were competent, onboard, and all of their actions made things happen in concert with the school plan.

In summary, while the utilization levels of the elements within the structural integration practices were evident at both campuses undergoing the turnaround, it was evident that the depth of implementation levels varied. While School A had begun the

implementation of many of the elements, the buy-in from the teachers seemed to be lacking to fully implement the school improvement plan with regard to the structural integration component. As a result, the need to provide more professional development in this area would be beneficial, so that teachers have a clear understanding of how the structures within the school can positively affect student outcomes. As for School B, the principal's knowledge level in structural integrations and implementation of the elements seemed to be perceived by teachers as positive changes. The principal's role in implementation of structural integrations and communication to the teachers about the changes was found to be a fundamental piece to begin the transformation process and gain momentum in the turnaround of the campus.

Finding 3: Instructional Integration Practices

The use of instructional integration practices by both Schools A and B, was a key factor in ensuring continuous improvement for the school. Specifically, the use of data to inform and strengthen the schools instructional programs were evident in the school improvement plans and goals set forth by each campus.

Using data to drive instruction. To address the need to use assessment for diagnostic purposes, both School A and School B principals indicated the use of assessment data analysis to guide instructional practices and ongoing planning. For example, specific time was designated for teachers to collaborate in the mornings to discuss and plan instruction. It was evident that the use of data was used; but again, ongoing training was needed so teachers could better use data to inform their instructional practices.

School A. The principal at School A emphasized the use of data to be a critical element to ensure the school improvement process. The principal described that by looking at results, the role of the administrative team would include meeting with departments and having conversations with teachers about how to use the data to drive instruction. In addition, how the teachers responded to the data would be monitored in an ongoing basis. In addition, the School Improvement Plan (SIP) called for the use of PLCs for planning, monitoring, and evaluation. The SIP specifically called for the use of SMART goals and for the use of data to develop instructional strategies and personalize intervention plans for students.

School B. School B principal described how the teachers utilized data to drive instruction. Moreover, the principal emphasized the importance of the teachers' understanding on how to use data. The principal organized training and assigned specific administrators to help support teachers in the use of data. The school improvement plan specifically addressed the need have teachers utilize the data to improve teaching and learning. For example, the use of common assessments administered on a weekly basis would be beneficial to determining the specific objectives students have mastered, and consequently, the teachers could develop specific interventions for students.

Curriculum standards. To address curriculum standards, both schools showed evidence of how they worked with teachers in developing better lessons to increase the rigor in the classroom in order to address the new curriculum.

School A. The principal at School A mentioned that a key strategy would involve having teachers understand the curriculum and having teachers know “how to use

appropriate pedagogy to get the message across to the kids where they understand it.” The principal believed that teachers must understand, “curriculum knowledge, systems, and structures.” The principal at School A initially described one of the biggest challenges to meet expectations had been “not having a clear and common curriculum” by the district. The principal at School A addressed the need for the district to have a more cohesive curriculum plan, citing that “the district does not have a sufficiently defined strategy on how to teach English Language Learners.”

School B. The principal at School B further believed that part of this responsibility was to “organizing curriculum, making teachers aware of what our goals are.” Overall, both principals described the importance of the teacher and ensuring that curriculum standards were rigorous and aligned to state assessments, aimed at college and career student readiness. The principal also shared the following beliefs in order to address instructional planning at the campus:

The teacher’s quality is essential and crucial in the instructional improvement process. If you want to raise rigor...if you want to give students a realistic chance to be successful on the state assessments, then you better have somebody in front of those kids that has mastered the content and can design instructional objectives aligned with the curriculum.

The principal at School B praised the district by stating that the curriculum had been realigned to the new state assessments. It was further stated that:

Our people were involved in the process, and I think all our teachers have got genuine lessons that they can look at....We give them model lessons every day...with TEKS and the Student Expectations (SEs) and with this curriculum that the district put together, everything is aligned.

The presence of campus-refined curriculum standards was evident for the first time at both campuses at the beginning of the year. Interview data also revealed that the

district had provided teachers with curriculum and instruction training during the summer. According to the central office personnel, the targeted schools “are expected to follow the district’s managed curriculum.” In addition, it was stated that the targeted schools were required to

offer a minimum of 15 AP courses....We monitor the number of students enrolled in those courses and administer the Rey Step Assessment at 8th grade...we administer the PSAT to all 9th, 10th, and 11th graders....we also pay for the SAT for all the 11th graders.

It was further found that both schools participated in a district collaborative model based on data and instructional alignment that was implemented through the PLCs and the District Collaborative Teams. In addition, “teachers work on their content teams and have teachers in their SLCs talk about how they are teaching in alignment with campus-developed benchmarks.” To that end, the principal stated: “We really want to go ahead and use data for the SLCs. We’ll be benchmarking five times. Last year we benchmarked 13 times. But this year we are reducing the number of benchmarking events.”

Interview data suggested some tension between the district and campus expectations. The campuses indicated that the district’s expectations require both campuses to encourage more students to take AP courses in order to grow the number of students taking the test. School A principal stated concern regarding the impact on increased student-teacher ratios within non-AP classes and indicated that “the percent passing means more to me than the number of students taking the test”... “we are going to listen to the teachers”... suggesting that if teachers believed students could not handle the curriculum, the students would not be enrolled in the course.

Instructional delivery strategies. A key factor in school improvement was found in the principals' leadership to communicate expectations for instructional strategies. This was done by training teachers on understanding the curriculum they taught and how to engage students.

School A. The principal at School A determined that a key strategy to ensure better instructional delivery strategies could be accomplished by providing training opportunities for teachers in student-centered instruction, instructional delivery methods, and student engagement. In addition, the SIP clearly stated that the primary goal of the campus should be to ensure that the school has a focus on ELL strategies and that the teachers understand the TEKS and SES to develop an instructional calendar, lesson plans, and assessments that are aligned.

School B. The principal at School B clearly stated that the most important strategy for his campus would be an alignment to the college and career-readiness standards. The principal emphasized that a key strategy would be to incorporate the AVID program school-wide and to have an emphasis in professional development on the effective use of scope and sequence utilizing the Kilgo and AVID pedagogy. In addition, the principal's key strategy in developing teachers' understanding of higher levels of thinking and rigorous instruction was to make sure all teachers got certified in AP strategies for the content they taught. Moreover, the overall campus goal was to build a college-going mindset and begin to have more students involved in the AP Program.

Student academic and support systems. To support students and to establish a school environment of academic learning, each school principal selected specific

strategies aligned to the needs of their campuses. School A and School B had school-wide initiatives being implemented and addressed both academic and social needs of students. However, each campus was at different levels of implementation and needed to continue building support systems to enhance student learning. These were inclusive of improving safety, discipline, academic, and other non-academic factors to impact student achievement, including students' social, emotional, and health needs.

School A. The principal at School A expressed the need to have the AVID program; but because of the budget cuts, the program was lost. However, the principal mentioned that a new committee of teachers was created to plan and develop alternative student support services. The principal also mentioned that a major focus would be providing staff with more training, so that staff could understand how to identify and support students with social-emotional needs. Moreover, the principal believed that community engagement, could help the school by having business partners help the school. In addition, the school would also look for outside agencies to help students needing social-emotional support, including mentoring and internship programs for students.

School B. School B's principal key strategy was the use of a school-wide approach to addressing student academic needs and social support systems. This was done by implementing the AVID program, implementing PGPs, and providing academic advisors for students. One key strategy involved having freshman students enroll in a semester long class or "seminar" geared on learning about college-readiness components. Part of this restructuring effort by the principal was hiring a new staff member who was

responsible for working with students in the community and at school to address social barriers they might face.

In summary, it was found that while both campuses implemented the instructional integration practices, the level of implementation varied, and it was found that the principal's role in the implementation of each element was directly related to the goals and expectations set forth by each campus principal. In addition, the support and training for each of the elements was also a key factor in ensuring that the teachers had a clear understanding of the elements with the instructional integration practices.

Implications

As more and more schools, especially those in urban settings struggle to meet accountability standards under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), it will be imperative for school leaders to employ effective strategies that impact student learning outcomes. This study examined how a principal goes about a turnaround and which strategies were employed and which strategies were perceived as most effective by participants. There are two implications associated with the study. One is associated with meeting Adequate Yearly Progress and the other implication pertains to creating a better learning environment for students in urban settings, so that they are college-career ready.

The first implication is the fact that schools are measured based on student achievement data. Failure to make Adequate Yearly Progress, under NCLB 2002, creates a culture of high-stakes accountability. The reform measures that have been enacted by school districts across the nation have created a culture in which many teachers teach to the test in order to meet these accountability measures. However, a principal who

employs effective strategies, both structural and instructional, can create a culture that is focused on student learning. This can be done by leading the school so that high expectations are evident across the campus. The principal's leadership role is of extreme importance in ensuring that there is a vision to achieve positive student outcomes, while integrating organization designs that create a climate in which schools use data to ensure students are being adequately given the opportunity to be successful.

The second implication deals with schools having to create more rigorous learning environments for students, that are inclusive of college-career readiness standards by redesigning schools to be more attractive to the diverse needs of learners. To create more rigorous learning opportunities, school leaders must select specific strategies that address curriculum standards and use of data to address students' educational needs. In addition, the schools must focus on viable curriculum and train teachers to develop lessons that are engaging and relevant. Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education, set aside \$3.5 billion dollars for innovative grants (Banchero, 2010; David, 2010). The goal was to ensure that districts would turnaround low-performing schools. Most recently in 2011, the U.S. Department of Education published the "Flexibility Document" for NCLB 2014. In order for schools to receive the waiver, State Education Agencies (SEA) must address four principles inclusive of reforms designed to improve *College- and Career-Ready Expectations* for all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). In addition, it will be important for states to realign their curriculum so that there is a focus on the "adoption of rigorous academic content standards to prepare all students for success in college and careers in the 21st century" (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, p. 5).

Conclusions

School restructuring and renewal, has been a way for schools to implement reform strategies since the 1994, when Congress and the Clinton Administration began to change the focus of Title I programs through the Improving America's Schools Act (Stedman, 1994), which reauthorized ESEA. Since more than 5,000 schools were found to not meet Adequate Yearly Progress under NCLB 2002, in 2010, schools district leaders must continue to search for reform initiatives that are grounded on research and lessons learned from prior reform efforts and apply strategies that are effective in the transformation process. In order to meet these challenges, school leaders must focus on school leadership practices that encompass both structural and instructional integrations. In addition, school districts must focus on engaging in a collaborative approach to ensure that schools are able to meet the challenges, by providing support to the schools that are in need of reform. In Texas, a recent House Bill No. 1158, has been proposed to be enacted by the Legislature that calls for school principals to obtain additional training and course work in order to be eligible to lead a campus that has failed to meet performance measures.

In addition, because of the great emphasis on college-career readiness, and to be able to receive federal funding for school turnaround, schools need to consider redesigning their program offerings to ensure that they are able to meet the new challenges under NCLB 2014. This can be done by ensuring that the strategies employed by turnaround principals are in alignment with the new NCLB 2014, which include the following areas:

- ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction
- redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration, strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards
- using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement
- providing time for collaboration on the use of data
- addressing non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs; and providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement. (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, p. 1)

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 This study examined the principal's role in the transformation process and the participants' perceptions. It is important to understand that the principal should lead the interaction among three categories to ensure principal-led synergy creating an effective transformation. This would include having Effective Leadership, Structural Integrations, and Instructional Integrations to ensure a successful turnaround. The study of these two schools showed that there were specific strategies planned and implemented that aligned closely with the conceptual framework that guided the inquiry.

At both campuses, the principal's leadership role was crucial in ensuring the school transformation process by involving the community at large in order to establish a vision that would bring about positive student outcomes. At both schools, the principals began the transformation process by bringing teams of teachers together to discuss needs for the campus and developed school improvement plans that were aligned to the districts

and state expectations. Teacher involvement in the decision-making process was a key component to ensure buy-in in the transformation of school turnaround.

Both schools showed that significant changes were made in the schools' organizational structure to more effectively facilitate teacher planning and collaboration. The organizational redesigns included dividing the school into smaller learning communities and providing a 9th Grade Academy for students to personalize learning for students entering high school. In addition, the decision-making process was evident as collaborative teams were implemented to ensure cohesive implementation of the school improvement plans. In addition, although both schools were in the same district and had similar demographics and number of students enrolled in Title I Programs, it must be noted that one School A was twice the size as School B, which could have some impact in the level of implementation and variances of the each of the components.

To address instructional needs, both campuses provided teachers with collaborative time and discussed data during PLC time to ensure that teachers could address curricular issues on an ongoing basis. In addition, professional development opportunities were also a significant factor in ensuring the school transformation process. The goal of professional development was to ensure that teachers felt confident with the new state assessment standards geared toward college-career readiness. Both campuses provided teachers with professional development opportunities to further develop their content knowledge in the subjects they taught. Moreover, the schools were able to provide students with academic support systems to ensure that students' individual academic needs were addressed by providing time to help students who were struggling.

The study also explored the participants' perceptions on which strategies seemed to be most effective. Although the levels of utilization of the components varied at the two campuses, it was evident that both campuses used the majority of the strategies within the conceptual framework. Moreover, the participants' responses provided some insight about their level of comfort and understanding of each of the practice components. Overall, both schools seemed to perceive the majority of the strategies as essential as evidenced in the school improvement plans and in their responses pertaining to school transformation.

Consequently, the goal in using these research-based practices by the principal would result in a successful turnaround, resulting in the following: (a) higher number of students enrolled in rigorous instructional programs such as AP/IB and Dual-Credit, (b) higher course completions, (c) higher college-entry exam scores such as SAT Reasoning Test and the ACT exam, (d) lower-dropout rates, and (e) higher numbers of students passing state exams (Armstead et al., 2010; Elmore, 2007; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Kyburg et al., 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Recommendations for Future Research

This study examined how a principal employs both structural and instructional integrations to be able to enact change and be able to transform a low-performing campus. The goal was to identify effective strategies that can bring about better student learning outcomes. In addition, the study also examined the perceptions of teachers and central office administrators involved in the school transformation process. Moreover, the strategies employed by the principals were tracked against the conceptual framework to

identify which strategies seemed to be perceived as most effective. Overall, the participants in this study expressed their experience and their efforts in creating better learning environments for students.

Due to the limitations of this study, future research in this area is needed to ensure the reliability and sustainability of the participants' responses. The conceptual framework examined in this study, also needs to be explored to gain a deeper understanding of the components with a larger sample. In addition, it was found that while both schools were making applications of the research-based practices, there was a considerable level of frustration expressed by the principals to have a clear understanding of their role expectations by the central office. Therefore, it is recommended that further research be devoted to explore this area to further support the school turnaround efforts by principals. This multi-case study was limited to the state of Texas and future research extended at other Stage 5 campuses would allow for further understanding on school turnaround.

APPENDIX A
LIST OF CODES

Table A1. List of Codes

INNOVATION PROPERTIES	IP-OBJ	3.1
IP: OBJECTIVES	IP-OO	3.1.1
IP: ORGANIZATION	IP-ORG/DD,LS	3.1.1
IP: IMPLIED CHANGES—CLASSROOM	IP-CH/CL	3.1.4
IP: IMPLIED CHANGES— ORGANIZATION	IP-CH/ORG	3.1.5
IP: PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT (IV-C)	IP-DEV	3.1.1, 3.3.3, 3.3.4
INTERNAL CONTEX	IC (PRE) (DUR)	3.2, 3.3, 3.4
IC: ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES	IC-PROC	3.1.1, 3.24, 3.3, 3.4
IC: INNOVATION-ORGANIZATION CONGRUENCE	IC-PIT	3.2.2
SITE DYNAMICS AND TRANSFORMATIONS	TR	3.4
TR: CHANGES IN INNOATION	TR-INMOD	3.4.1
TR: EFFECTS ON ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES	TR-ORG/PRAC	3.4.3
TR: EFFECTS ON ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE	TR-ORG/CLIM	3.4.3
TR: EFFECTS ON CLASSROOM PRACTICE	TR-CLASS	3.4.2
TR: IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS	TR-PROBS	3.4.1
TR: CRITICAL EVENTS	TR-CRIT	3.4.1
TR: EXTERNAL INTERVENTIONS	TR-EXT	3.4.3
TR: EXPLANATIONS FOR TRANSFORMATION	TR-SIZUP	3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3
TR: PROGRAM PROBLEM SOLVING	TR-PLAM	3.4.1, 4.4.2, 3.4.3

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS FOR SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
(CENTRAL OFFICE)

Interview #1—Introductory Interview

1. Tell me about your role as a Superintendent in a Urban School District
 - a. How long have you been a superintendent?
 - b. How long have you been in this district?
2. Tell me about your experience as a Superintendent?
 - a. What do you view as a challenge in transforming failing schools?
 - b. What areas are of challenge when it comes to *school turnaround*?
 - c. What specific strategies do you employ when a school is failing?
3. What type of innovative leadership practices do you expect from principals leading a *school turnaround*?
 - a. Can you describe what type of innovative school redesigns/restructuring efforts you currently have in your district? In schools labeled as *turnaround* schools?
 - b. Can you give some examples of what type of training principals received when they taking-over a school before restructuring and to begin a *turnaround*?
 - c. How are parents/community involved in the process when a school is going through a *turnaround*?
4. What are your expectations of principals in a turnaround school?
 - a. Can you describe the structural strategies expected to be implemented by principals to achieve an *effective turnaround*?

- b. Can you describe the type of instructional strategies expected to be implemented by principals to achieve an *effective turnaround*?

Interview #2—Follow-up Interview

1. How do your expectations match your experiences?
 - a. How do you feel your campuses will do this year, based on the expectations you set forth at the beginning of the year?
 - b. What data will you use to measure progress?
2. What challenges do you anticipate this year in meeting expectations?
 - a. How will you handle these challenges?
 - b. What restructuring will occur based on these challenges?
3. What type of innovative leadership practices have been implemented by the schools going through turnaround?
 - a. Can you describe any new innovative practices in school redesigns/restructuring that have occurred?
 - b. Can you describe the type of leadership practices that have been/being implemented by *turnaround* principals?
 - c. Can you describe any additional training that has occurred with principals of *turnaround schools*?
 - d. How were parents/community involved in the process when the school was going through a *turnaround*?
4. Have the principals in turnaround schools met your expectations to achieve a successful *turnaround*?

- a. Can you describe the types of structural strategies have been implemented by principals to achieve an *effective turnaround*?
- b. Can you describe the type of instructional strategies have been implemented by principals to achieve an *effective turnaround*?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Interview #1—Introductory Interview

1. Tell me about your role as a Principal in a Urban School District
 - a. How long have you been a principal?
 - b. How long have you been in this district? School?
2. Tell me about your experience as a principal?
 - a. What do you view as a challenge in transforming failing schools?
 - b. What areas are of challenge when it comes to *school turnaround*?
 - c. What specific strategies do you employ when a school is failing?
3. What type of innovative leadership practices do you employ as a principal leading a school turnaround?
 - a. What type of innovative school redesigns/restructuring do you currently have in your district? School?
 - b. Describe the training that principal receive by the district, before taking-over a school and restructure to begin a *turnaround*?
 - c. How are parents/community involved in the process when a school is going through a *turnaround*?
4. What expectations are set by the district of principals in a turnaround school?
 - a. Can you describe the type of structural strategies you employ to achieve an *effective turnaround*?
 - b. Can you describe the type of instructional strategies you employ to achieve an *effective turnaround*?

Interview #2—Follow-up Interview

1. How do your expectations match your experiences?
 - a. How do you feel your campus will do this year, based on the expectations you set forth at the beginning of the year?
 - b. What data will you use to measure progress?
2. What challenges do you anticipate this year in meeting expectations?
 - a. How will you handle these challenges?
 - b. What restructuring will occur based on these challenges?
3. What type of innovative leadership practices have you implemented to achieve an effective turnaround?
 - a. What type of innovative school redesigns/restructuring have occurred?
Which ones were most effective?
 - b. How much training has occurred with principals in *turnaround schools*?
Which ones were most effective?
 - c. How have parents/community been involved in the process when a school is going through a *turnaround*?
4. What are your expectations as a principal in a *turnaround school*?
 - a. Can you describe which type of structural strategies have been implemented at your campus to achieve an *effective turnaround*? Which ones were most effective?

- b. Can you describe which type of instructional strategies have been implemented at your campus to achieve an *effective turnaround*? Which ones were most effective?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS

Interview #1—Introductory Interview for Teachers

1. Tell me about your role as a Teacher in a Urban School District
 - a. How long have you been a teacher?
 - b. How long have you been in this district?
2. Tell me about your experience as a teacher?
 - a. What do you view as a challenge in transforming failing schools?
 - b. What areas are of challenge when it comes to *school turnaround*?
 - c. What specific strategies does your district expect and which strategies do you employ when a school is failing? Which ones were most effective?
3. What type of innovative leadership practices do you see taking place at your campus by the principal in leading the turnaround?
 - a. Can you describe what type of innovative school redesigns/restructuring do you currently have in your district? School? In your classroom? Which ones were most effective?
 - b. What type of training do you believe principals should receive by the district prior to taking-over a *turnaround*? Where they effective?
 - c. How are parents/community involved in the process when a school is going through a *turnaround*? Where they effective?
4. What expectations are set by the district of principals in a turnaround school? For teachers?

- a. Can you describe the type of structural strategies do you employ to achieve an *effective turnaround* at your school? Which ones were most effective?
- b. Can you describe the type of instructional strategies are used at your campus to achieve an *effective turnaround*? Which ones were most effective?
- c. How do feel you contribute to an effective turnaround?

Interview #2—Follow-up Interview

1. How do your expectations match your experiences?
 - a. How do you feel your campus will do this year, based on the expectations you set forth at the beginning of the year?
 - b. What data will your campus use to measure progress?
2. What challenges do you anticipate this year in meeting expectations?
 - a. How will you handle these challenges?
 - b. What restructuring will occur based on these challenges?
3. What type of innovative leadership practices have you seen implemented by your principal to achieve an effective turnaround?
 - a. Can you describe what type of innovative school redesigns/restructuring have occurred?
 - b. Can you describe what type of training has occurred with teachers in an effort to ensure an effective *turnaround*?

- c. How have parents/community been involved in the process as the school is going through a *turnaround*?
4. What expectations are set by your principal in an effort to achieve a turnaround?
- a. Can you describe which structural strategies have been implemented at your campus to achieve an *effective turnaround*? Which ones were most effective?
 - b. Can you describe which instructional strategies have been implemented at your campus to achieve an *effective turnaround*? Which ones were most effective?

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VITA

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