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Leading through change: A study of the role of central office leadership in the process of secondary change

Dirk A. Halupnik
University of Northern Iowa

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LEADING THROUGH CHANGE: A STUDY OF THE ROLE OF CENTRAL OFFICE

LEADERSHIP IN THE PROCESS OF SECONDARY CHANGE

An Abstract of a Dissertation

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Approved:

_____
Dr. Robert Decker, Committee Chair

_____
Dr. Michael J. Licari
Dean of the Graduate College

Dirk Alan Halupnik

University of Northern Iowa

August, 2013

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to more fully understand the actions of district level leaders in a major change effort and their effects on the change process. Furthermore this study aimed to provide additional information about the factors that school district central office administrators confront when making the decision to add another high school and the actions taken by these administrators to lead the district through this process so that other school districts and leaders may learn from this.

The methodology for this study was a qualitative case study approach in which central office leaders in a district that had recently gone through this process were interviewed using a semi-structured interview technique. Five research questions framed this study.

1. What were the antecedents and major factors used to determine the need for a second high school?

2. How did district leaders plan for change?

3. How did district leaders lead the community through change?

4. What impact has this process had on the district leaders?

5. What new challenges has this process brought about?

The findings in this study showed that Jackson central office leaders demonstrated significant attention to leading through change. Key change leadership strategies were used effectively by the district level leaders in Jackson as they moved through the transition planning process to a two high school system. Effective communication created a link between the vision for the future of Jackson and the importance of the

work. Stakeholders were involved in the planning process at every step. District leaders took responsibility for the plans and they took action. Through this they also remained flexible, adjusting the pace of the work as necessary. Ultimately, a process was put in motion to address change. The areas of relationships, communication, culture, and community involvement were key focus areas in the change process in the Jackson school district. These areas along with continued growth and equity will continue to be areas of concentration for the district leaders. Despite the fact that each of the participants has undergone professional changes, the district leaders demonstrated a remarkable overall positivity concerning the transition process.

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Dr. David Else, Committee Member

_____
Dr. Tim Gilson, Committee Member

_____
Dr. Cherin A. Lee, Committee Member

Dirk Alan Halupnik

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The participants at the site of this study volunteered their time, opened up their lives, and shared their stories with me. For this I am ever grateful.

Most importantly I want to thank my family for their encouragement and unwavering support. My wife and two sons have been there for me every step of the way and I know that I am the luckiest husband and father in the world.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

High school students in a growing Midwestern suburban public school district

attended school in a sprawling building originally built in the early 1970s. Over the last

40 years, this building has undergone additions and renovations and ballooned to almost

400,000 square feet. Ten years ago there were just over 1,000 high school students in the

district. In two years from now there will be well over 2,000. Classroom space became

limited and the district continued to add students at a rate of more than 300 new students

per year. City developers estimated that steady to rapid population growth over the

course of the next 10 years would continue. Questions began to be asked in the

community as the student numbers continued to increase. How would the district

continue to deal with all of these new students? Could the district prepare students

effectively for the 21st century and continue to serve students at a high level of

personalization in such a large one high school format?

In response to this rapid growth, school leaders devised a plan to move the

secondary portion of the district to a two high school system. This plan involved the

construction of three large secondary buildings and the successful implementation of a

major community bond issue. The strategy was executed in stages and required extensive

community input and discussion.

What implications would come along with having two high schools in the

community? Would the quality of high school programs suffer? Could the district afford

to support two high school programs? What new challenges does the two high school

system produce? The ability to bring the community together to collectively discover the answers to these questions and to lead the district through this enormous change process requires considerable administrative skill. How did the district administration work through this complex situation and bring the community to a collaborative decision?

<div align="center">Conceptual Framework</div>

Leading a public school district through major change is a tall task. One that Fullan (2001) described as complex, full of dilemmas and lacking once and for all answers. When that change involves adding a second high school to a community that has only had one high school for over 100 years, the task becomes even more complicated. District administrators must overcome many challenges in order for the result to be successful. Hardy (2004) described the basics of these challenges when he stated that "rapidly growing enrollment presents districts…with a number of challenges: planning for and financing construction, finding qualified teachers and other staff, educating the public and elected officials about the pressures of growth, and dealing with the trade-offs districts face when confronted with the need to constantly expand" (p. 16).

Reeves (2009) explained the process of school change as being divided into four segments: creating conditions for change, planning change, implementing change and sustaining change. Clearly the work required to move a district from one high school to two would move through these four stages. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) would call this second order change. Second order change is a deep change that alters the system in fundamental ways that requires a new way of thinking and acting. Heifetz and Linsky (2004) would describe this issue as an adaptive problem. One that requires deep

participation of the people involved with the problem. Fullan (2005) expands on this

idea:

> Working with communities to bring about sustainable reform represents a set of
> complex adaptive challenges having all of the attributes that Heifetz identifies.
> The solutions have to be worked out with the stakeholders, and to do this requires
> skilled, confident school leaders, who have one foot in the present and the other
> on the sustainability accelerator. (p. 62)

The combination of increasing student enrollment and decreasing building and

classroom space at the secondary level can put a district in the position of having to make

the difficult decision of changing grade span configurations or opening another high

school building. Districts confronting rapid growth must find enough money to build

needed facilities, juggle multiple construction projects simultaneously, and not let the

focus on new facilities overshadow everything else (Kennedy, 2002).

The idea of moving from one high school to two can cause a great deal of anxiety

within a community. Often times the high school is at the center of the community's

very identity and any change in this structure can be viewed as threatening to that

identity. This editorial excerpt from a Minneapolis suburban newspaper ("Two high

schools," 2011) demonstrates the point:

> Last week's recommendation of a task force appointed by the Shakopee School
> Board that Shakopee build a second high school was, we admit, surprising and
> disappointing.
> Surprising because even though we knew the district, like a couple of
> others in our area, was eventually going to have to decide whether to expand the
> high school or build a second one, we thought that adding on to the current school
> would suffice, given the virtual shutdown of new-home construction in the region.
> Disappointing because we hoped that the district would be able to get by
> with one larger high school rather than two smaller ones. (p. 1)

The topics of grade span configuration and school to school transition are two that have received little attention in the literature or within school districts (Wren, 2003). Factors such as geographic location, student populations, limited financial resources, and community preference may dictate the grade and building configuration within a school system (Renchler, 2002). At some schools grade span comes about by choice, at others as a result of practical and administrative consideration such as building costs, enrollment trends, or distance from other schools (Paglin & Fager, 1997). Rapid community growth resulting in rapid growth in student numbers puts the school in this study in the latter category.

Regardless of the factors driving the increase in student population, rapid growth resulting in the need for an additional high school in a school district is second order change. Second order change is deep change that "involves dramatic departures from the expected, both in defining a given problem and in finding a solution" (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2007, p. 66). This is much like the concept of adaptive change or problems that cannot be solved by an expert or standard operating procedures (Heifetz, 1994). Adaptive change work is difficult and demanding. An important point in this discussion is that the change is not categorized as first or second order; however, the implications for stakeholders may be, because stakeholders may perceive the change differently. What may be first order to one person may be second order to another.

<div align="center">Statement of the Problem</div>

This study will examine the leadership actions of the district level leaders as they moved the district through the process of fundamental change.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to more fully understand the actions of district level leaders in a major change effort and their effects on the change process. Furthermore, this study aims to provide additional information about the factors that school district central office administrators confront when making the decision to add another high school and the actions taken by these administrators to lead the district through this process so that other school districts and school leaders may learn from this. Specifically, this study will focus on district central office leadership actions throughout the decision making process of a major change effort

The district level administration in the rapidly growing Midwestern suburban public school district in this study successfully created and implemented a plan to move to a two high school secondary format. There are many school districts that are facing these same circumstances or will be in the near future. District administrators in school districts in similar situations will be able to analyze the data from this unique study and compare the individual contextual information to their own unique situations. They will be able to analyze the data regarding the actions taken by leaders to facilitate this major change process and apply it in order to aid their own leadership actions in the planning and implementation of their own plans of action as they lead school systems through second order change.

Research Questions

Leading a school district from a one high school format to a two high school format is leading a fundamental change. Cuban (1996) describes fundamental change as

transforming and altering permanently the basic structure of the system. This study will examine the leadership actions of the district level leaders as they moved the district through the process of fundamental change.

Five research questions will frame this study.

1. What were the antecedents and major factors used to determine the need for a second high school?

2. How did district leaders plan for change?

3. How did district leaders lead the community through change?

4. What impact has this process had on the district leaders?

5. What new challenges has this process brought about?

Methodology

The methodology for this study will be a qualitative case study approach in which central office leaders in a district that has recently gone through the process of changing from a one high school district to two high schools will be interviewed. Those interviewed would include the Superintendent, Former Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Executive Director of Secondary Education, and Chief Financial Officer and Board Secretary. Interviews will last from one to two hours and it is likely that there will be follow-up interviews for each of the interviewees.

A semi structured interview process will be used in each of the interviews. A series of open ended interview questions will be used in the process. Constant comparative analysis will guide the formation of interviews. Each interview will be

digitally recorded and transcribed into field notes. The transcribed notes will be provided

to interviewees to conduct a member check. These notes will then be analyzed to find

common themes among the participants' experiences. Finally, the data will be used to

draw conclusions about the findings and determine implications for the field.

<div align="center">Definition of Terms</div>

District Level Leaders: District Central Office Administrators including the

Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Organizational Development and Learning,

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Executive Director of Secondary

Education, Executive Director of Elementary Education, and Chief Financial Officer and

Board Secretary.

High School: An institution providing secondary education for students in grades 9-12 or

generally in the age range of 14-18.

Qualitative Research: Research that involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach.

"This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting

to make sense of or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to

them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.3).

Case Study: Case study is "an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a

phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p.

544). A case study approach should be considered when contextual conditions are

relevant to the phenomenon being studied.

Semi-structured Interview: A data collection strategy for qualitative research that is

"generally organized around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other

questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee" (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315).

Systemic Change: The process of understanding one's current system, identifying and understanding problems, identifying and managing change-relevant resources and embarking towards a newly reformed system (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

Second Order Change: Deep change that "alters the system in fundamental ways, offering a dramatic shift in direction and requiring new ways of thinking and acting" (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 66).

Fundamental Change: Change with a goal to "transform and alter, permanently, the basic structural framework of the system" (Cuban, 1996, p. 76).

Adaptive Challenge: Challenge that force an organization to "clarify their values, develop new strategies, and learn new ways of operating" (Heifetz, 1997, p. 124).

<u>Assumptions</u>

This qualitative study will employ the use of semi-structured interviews with participants. It is an assumption that the participants will provide truthful and candid responses during the interview process.   It is also assumed that the perceptions of these central office administrators are in congruence with those of their peers.

<u>Limitations</u>

This study is a case study of one suburban school district in the Midwest. The context of the events that occurred throughout this major change process and the actions taken by the district leadership team are unique to this situation. It is not possible to

make sweeping generalizations regarding second order change and leadership actions

based off this unique individual case.

<div align="center">Organization of the Study</div>

This study of the leadership actions of district level administrators as they moved

their district through the major change of adding a second high school consists of five

chapters. The first chapter provides rationale for the importance of the study. The

second chapter reviews the literature surrounding educational leadership and major

change. The third chapter presents the details of the methodology used to conduct

research in this study. The fourth chapter will present the findings of the study. The fifth

and final chapter will discuss the findings and conclusions based on analysis of the data.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature begins with an historical appraisal of change theory research as it relates to education. Fullan (1991) noted that the history of careful study of the educational change process is relatively young. Even so, much has been written on this topic over the past 50 years. This study will focus on three philosophical traditions associated with change as related to education: diffusion of innovations, conditions of change theory, and systemic change. The role of district level administrators in the change process will be addressed. This will include a look at the relationship between administrative responsibilities and change efforts. The final section of the literature review will focus on leadership behaviors and principles regarding school leadership and their relationship to change.

<u>A History of Educational Change Theory</u>

It is important to look at the history of change theory as it relates to education in order to better understand where we are today. Sashkin and Egermeier (1993) pointed out that:

> Unless education reformers and practitioners at all levels are aware and make use of some of the important lessons from the history of previous efforts [for change] all bets are off. We can't dither at this time over fine points, but if our designs for New American Schools are based on quick impressions and seat of pants judgments uninformed by the lessons of history, a great opportunity will probably be lost as history repeats itself. (p. 14)

Ellsworth (2000) described the knowledge base of change theory as tools in a "change toolbox" and goes on to say that ". . . past research has provided us with effective methods of 'greasing the wheels' of particular portions of a change effort" (p. 33).

Educational change research is relatively young, as compared to other areas of educational research. It is only since the 1960s that we have begun to understand how educational change works in practice (Fullan, 1991). The timing of this focus on change coincides with the reaction to the launching of the Russian satellite Sputnik. Ravitch (2000) identified the launch of Sputnik as "a major humiliation for the United States, as well as a dangerous threat to the nation's security. Sputnik became an instant metaphor for the poor quality of U.S. schools" (p. 361).

Diffusion of Innovations

Rogers (1995) is credited with describing diffusion as the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. One of the earliest studies of diffusion was conducted by Gabriel Tarde in France over 100 years ago. Tarde was a lawyer, judge, criminologist, statistician, social theorist and fiction writer (Brighenti, 2010). Tarde (1903) introduced the concept of the S-curve to the rate of innovation adoption. At the early stages of an innovation, growth is slow. At some point demand increases and growth becomes rapid eventually leveling off as the innovation reaches a saturation point. The slope of the S-curve could identify those adoptions with a fast rate of adoption and those that proceeded more slowly. Brighenti (2010) expanded on this using the words of Tarde:

> An assembly or an association, a crowd or a sect, has no other idea than the one that is blown into it, and this idea, this more or less intelligible trace of an aim to pursue, a means to employ, may well diffuse from one's brain to the brains of all, remains the same; he who blows the idea is therefore accountable of its direct effects. But the emotion that comes with this idea and diffuses with it, does not remain the same, rather it intensifies through a sort of mathematical progression, so that what was moderate desire or hesitant opinion in the mind of the author of such propagation, for instance the first inspirer of a suspicion about a certain

category of citizens, swiftly turns into passion and belief, hate and fanaticism, in the very fermentable mass where such germ is brought. (p. 302)

Bryce Ryan and Neil Gross applied the theory of diffusion to their study of hybrid corn adoption by Iowa farmers 40 years later. This classic study is "probably the most widely cited diffusion of innovations study of all time" (Greenhalgh, Robert, Bate, Macfarlane, & Kyriakidou, 2005). Ryan and Gross (1943) studied the process by which innovations were adopted in agriculture by interviewing hundreds of Iowa corn farmers to find out when they had adopted the use of hybrid corn seed that offered higher yields and greater resistance to drought, but had to be purchased every year rather than just reseeding by pollination. The interview technique demonstrated that it had taken almost 20 years for 99% of farmers to adopt the new seed for 100% of their crops (Greenhalgh et al., 2005). Ryan and Gross found that the farmers could be categorized into five categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Greenhalgh et al. explained:

> The "innovators" and "early adopters" had adopted it after only a year or two after first encountering it via the seed reps. Most (the early and late majority) had taken between four and nine years, usually trying it out on a small field before switching to it for the entire crop. A few had delayed the switch for over a decade, and 2 (out of 259) never switched at all. (p. 52)

This study laid the groundwork for future diffusion work by demonstrating that social factors rather than economic ones were important influences on adoption (Carrington, Scott, & Wasserman, 2005). The social information collected in the interview process was used to describe characteristics of the five categories of adopters. Early adopters tended to be wealthier, more educated, more cosmopolitan, and had wider

social networks; late adopters tended to be less educated and socially isolated (Greenhalgh et al., 2005).

Ryan and Gross (1943) also identified the fact that the rate of the adoption of the hybrid seed followed an S-curve pattern when plotted over time. This falls in line with the earlier findings of Tarde. The work of Ryan and Gross supported the premise that new ideas and practices spread through interpersonal contacts largely consisting of interpersonal communication (Carrington et al., 2005). This premise would be supported by the next wave of diffusion research led by the work of Rogers in the 1960s.

Everett Rogers was one of the early change researchers and is often referred to as the father of diffusion innovation research. His 1995 book, *Diffusion of Innovations*, is a synthesis of over 3,800 diffusion theory publications. The framework of this theory has been used in a wide variety of fields such as business, marketing, public health and education. Rogers (1995) defined diffusion as "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" (p. 5).

When people make a decision to adopt an innovation, they engage in a process of making a decision. Rogers (1995) outlined this as a five step process that includes:

1. Knowledge: a person is exposed to an innovation and understands more about it.

2. Persuasion: a person forms a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the innovation.

3. Decision: a person engages in activities and decides to reject or adopt.

4. Implementation: a person implements the innovation.

5. Confirmation: the decision to adopt is confirmed by a positive outcome with the innovation.

In the knowledge stage, people need to be aware that the innovation exists, have information about how to use it properly, and understand the underlying principles of the innovation. Rogers (1995) distinguished earlier knowers at this stage as having more education, higher social status, more exposure to mass media, more exposure to interpersonal communication channels, more contact with change agents, more social participation, and a more worldly outlook.

A person forms a positive or negative attitude about the innovation during the persuasion stage. People are seeking the advantages and disadvantages of the innovation so that they can move to the decision stage where they will engage in activities that lead to adoption or rejection. Most people will try out the innovation at this stage or experience the innovation through a trial by others (Rogers, 1995).

Implementation involves a process of rationalizing and changing or modifying the innovation in a process that Rogers (1995) called re-invention. This is followed by the confirmation stage where people seek confirmation about the decision to adopt. It is not uncommon for people to reverse their decision and reject the innovation in what Rogers (1995) described as discontinuance.

The rate at which this process occurs depends on a variety of different factors and variables, but Rogers (1995) identified five factors perceived by adopters that account for

49% to 87% of the variance in rate of adoption of innovations. These factors include the following:

1. Relative advantage: the extent to which people see the innovation as being better than what it supersedes.
2. Compatibility: the degree to which the innovation is consistent with people's values, beliefs, needs, or past experiences.
3. Complexity: when an innovation is perceived as too complex or difficult to understand. Complexity negatively influences the adoption of an innovation.
4. Trialability: the degree to which people can experiment with the innovation.
5. Observability: the visible results that the innovation works. Observability is positively related to the adoption of the innovation. (pp. 15-16)

Relative advantage represents "the extent to which the innovation in question is perceived as being better than the tool or practice it replaces" (Rogers, 1995, p. 212). The innovation may save people time or money, it may make their job easier, or it may allow people to focus in other areas.

Compatibility describes "the congruence of the innovation with the values, experience, and perceived needs of the intended adopters" (Rogers, 1995, p. 224). This factor underscores the importance of language and the approach taken to introducing a change.

Complexity is defined just as one would expect. Rogers (1995) said that "innovations that are seen as difficult to understand or adopt will diffuse more slowly, as few will embrace change that will make their lives more difficult" (p. 242).

Ellsworth (2000) described trialability:

Trialability refers to the extent to which a prospective adopter can "try out" an innovation before committing to full adoption. To some extent this involves the ability to adopt the innovation a little at a time. . . (p. 57)

Observability is closely related to the other four factors perceived by adopters that effect change. This relates to the adopters' ability to actually see the innovation being used by others. Ellsworth (2000) recognized this factor as being less critical to later adopters, but significantly important to early adopters and innovators. He further shed light on observability:

> One aspect of this reduces complexity: later adopters may find it easier to learn innovation use by watching it, rather than merely reading about it or having it described to them. Another aspect pertains to the consequences of adoption: innovations exhibiting relative advantage that are highly (and immediately) observable may diffuse more quickly than those whose positive consequences are invisible or delayed. . . (p. 58)

Each of these variables has an effect on the overall rate of the innovation adoption. Like Tarde and Ryan and Gross before him, Rogers (1995) expressed this as an S-curve phenomenon. This concept is further explained by The Center for Mental Health in Schools (n.d.a):

> Innovations are an S-curve phenomenon- starting slowly, then (if they catch on) quite rapidly, and then leveling off as they become routine…however…the slope varies in steepness depending on the rapidity of the diffusion. Change agents also have different functions at different stages of the innovation process. First they try to build positive relationships, help assess needs and problems, and create awareness of potential innovations that can solve these problems. Later, they provide the technical assistance necessary to implement innovations effectively, the most effective change agents are seen as those who help build up enough resources to sustain the innovation without their ongoing assistance. (p. 3)

In order to understand the rate of adoption, one also has to know about the categories of people who adopt innovations. Rogers (1995) used the term innovativeness to describe the degree to which people are early in adopting innovations. He defined this as the "bottom line behavior in the diffusion process" (Rogers, 1995, pp. 267-268), and distributes this characteristic on a normal curve. Building on the work of Ryan and

Gross, he expanded the description of the five adopter categories that fall on a normal distribution of time for adoption of innovations. These five categories are (a) innovators, (b) early adopters, (c) early majority, (d) later majority, and (e) laggards (Rogers, 1995).

Innovators make up 2.5% of adopters and are risk-takers who have technical knowledge to deal with the uncertainty of a new innovation. Early adopters account for 13.5% of the adopters and are role models who are successful and respected by their peers. Because of this fact, the group holds the greatest degree of opinion leadership. The early majority comprise 34% of the adopters. This group deliberates for a long time, interacts frequently with their peers and are seldom opinion leaders. The late majority make up 34% of adopters and are skeptical, cautious, and need to be pressured by peers to adopt innovations. The laggards are the last 16% of the adopters and are socially isolated with a point of reference in the past. It is important to remember that the adopter categories are situational. A person could be in different categories with different innovations, the categories can be fluid (Rogers, 1995).

The work of Rogers has been instrumental in change research. The Center for Mental Health in Schools (n.d.a) succinctly summarized the idea of diffusion of innovations:

> The process consists of a series of choices and actions over time through which an individual or system evaluates a new idea and decides whether or not to incorporate the innovation into ongoing practice. This behavior consists essentially of dealing with the uncertainty that is inherently involved in deciding about a new alternative to an idea previously in existence. The perceived newness is a distinct aspect of innovation decision making. (p. 1)

The tipping point. While it has been nearly 50 years since the original work of Rogers, Diffusion of Innovations Theory remains popular today. One of the reasons for

this popularity is the work of Malcolm Gladwell. Gladwell popularized the phrase

"tipping point" in a *New Yorker* article and in his book titled *The Tipping Point: How*

Little Things Can Make a Big Difference (2002). Gladwell summarized his ideas:

> The Tipping Point is the biography of an idea, and the idea is very simple. It is
> that the best way to understand the emergence of fashion trends, the ebb and flow
> of crime waves, or, for that matter, the transformation of unknown books into best
> sellers, or the rise of teenage smoking, or the phenomena of word of mouth, or
> any number of the mysterious changes that mark everyday life is to think of them
> as epidemics. Ideas and products and messages and behaviors spread just like
> viruses do. (p. 7)

Gladwell described the Tipping Point as "a threshold, critical mass, boiling point

moment that leads to sudden, dramatic, radial change" (The Center for Mental Health,

n.d.b, p. 1). Gladwell (2002) used the analogy of an epidemic to describe how "ideas and

products and messages and behaviors" (p. 7) spread just like viruses do and "that one

dramatic moment in an epidemic when everything can change all at once is the Tipping

Point" (p. 9).

Building on the epidemic analogy, Gladwell (2002) identified the three

characteristics of the spread of ideas as contagiousness, the fact that little causes can have

big effects, and that change happens not gradually but at one dramatic moment. He

identified the dramatic moment of change as the Tipping Point.

Gladwell (2002) developed three general themes that can have direct effect on the

Tipping Point. These themes are The Law of the Few, the Stickiness Factor, and the

Power of Context.

The Law of the Few stated that a critical factor in epidemics is the nature of the

messenger. Something new can become highly contagious and tip just by being

associated with a particular kind of person. Gladwell (2002) stated that "the success of any kind of social epidemic is heavily dependent on the involvement of people with a particular and rare set of social gifts" (p. 33). He identified those people among three classes: connectors, mavens, and salesmen. Connectors are people who know lots of people and manage to "occupy many different worlds and subcultures and niches" (Gladwell, 2002, p. 48). Gladwell (2002) further elaborated, "The point about connectors is that by having a foot in so many different worlds, they have the effect of bringing them all together" (p. 51). They have access to diverse social networks and possess significant ability to spread information. Connectors are seen as providing the glue necessary for a social epidemic (The Center for Mental Health, n.d.b).

Mavens link people with new information and teach them about it. The word maven comes from the Yiddish and means one who accumulates knowledge (Gladwell, 2002). Mavens collect data and broker information. They provide the message that becomes the social epidemic (The Center for Mental Health, n.d.b).

Salesmen are able to win over people who initially are unconvinced. They transact with others verbally and nonverbally and are able to draw others in and control the transactions (The Center for Mental Health, n.d.b).

The Stickiness Factor is defined by Gladwell (2002) as a simple way to package information that under the right circumstances can make it irresistible. The Center for Mental Health in Schools (n.d.b) expanded on this by noting, "Gladwell states that to spark an epidemic, the ideas carried by messengers have to be memorable and capable of moving people to action. Messengers are what make something spread" (p. 1).

The content of the message matters also. The specific qualities that the message needs to be successful is the definition of stickiness. "Stickiness describes ways that messages are systematically engineered (e.g., structured, formatted, packaged) to make them memorable and irresistible and that compel people to take action" (Gladwell, 2002, p. 1). Gladwell (2002) argued that there are simple ways to package information that contribute to stickiness that often seem small and seemingly trivial. The problem is finding and using these methods effectively while avoiding things that clutter the message. Thus if you can find the quality that makes people pay attention to the message, you have found the stickiness factor. Often times in change, the elements that make the message sticky are seemingly small and trivial, they just need to be memorable and move people to action (Gladwell, 2002).

The third essential change consideration identified was the Power of Context. Gladwell (2002) defined this with the explanation that "epidemics are sensitive to conditions and circumstances of the times and places in which they occur" (p. 139). The context of the situation matters in whether or not the change moves forward. Gladwell (2002) explained:

> The lesson of the Power of Context is that we are more than just sensitive to changes in context. We are exquisitively sensitive to them. And the kinds of contextual changes that are capable of tipping an epidemic are very different than we might ordinarily expect. (p. 140)

Again, what may seem to be a small and trivial thing may be the deciding factor contributing to the change.

The Power of Context also recognized the power that groups have in social epidemics. Gladwell (2002) said, "Once we are part of a group, we're all susceptible to

peer pressure and social norms and any number of other kinds of influence that can play a critical role in sweeping us up in the beginnings of an epidemic" (p. 171).

Using the epidemic analogy and the three rules of the Law of the Few, the Stickiness Factor, and the Power of Context, Gladwell (2002) presented a framework for understanding change. Gladwell concluded that underlying successful innovations is a belief that change is possible and that people can transform their behaviors and beliefs with the right kind of impetus (The Center for Mental Health, n.d.b).

Diffusion of innovation research provides guidance to those implementing changes in a system through strategies that focus on effectively connecting with specific target audiences. The seminal work of both Rogers and Gladwell provide a representation of this field of research that has many implications in relation to the field of education and specifically to the practice of educational leadership.

Conditions for Change

Ely (1990) was one of the first education researchers to emphasize the environmental conditions that promote change in a set of factors that he identified as conditions for change. Ely's work recognized that the characteristics of the innovation are not the only factors influencing its adoption. His research suggested that the environment in which the innovation is to be introduced "can play an equally important role in determining a change effort's success" (Ellsworth, 2000, p. 66).

Ely's eight conditions. Ely's studies have outlined eight conditions of the environment that may play a role in a change effort's success. Ellsworth (2000) described these characteristics:

(1) there must be dissatisfaction with the status quo; (2) the people who will ultimately implement any innovation must possess sufficient knowledge and skills to do the job; (3) the things that are needed to make the innovation work should be easily accessible; (4) implementers must have time to learn, adapt, integrate, and reflect on what they are doing; (5) rewards or incentives [must] exist for participants; (6) participation [in the change process must be] expected and encouraged; (7) an unqualified go-ahead and vocal support for the innovation by key players and other stakeholders is necessary; and (8) leadership must be evident. (pp. 66-67)

Ely (1990) advocated these guidelines as suggestions for successful implementation. He did caution that it is not always possible for all of these to be achieved for all innovations in every situation and notes that these are not formula or rules.

Dissatisfaction with the status quo can be summed up with the statement "There has to be a better way." In order for a change to be successful, "participants must perceive the status quo to be even less comfortable" (Ellsworth, 2000, p. 68). The source of the dissatisfaction can also provide valuable information to those involved with a change effort. This information can help them understand who is supporting the change and why, what changes might cause the support to shift, and how to best position the change effort (Ellsworth, 2000).

Knowledge is necessary for the implementation of change. Ely (1990) described his second condition:

The people who will ultimately implement any innovation must possess sufficient knowledge and skills to do the job…people may believe that changes are in order, but without the specific knowledge and skills to bring about the change the individual is helpless. (p. 300)

The third condition, that required resources are available, can be viewed as common sense. Ely (1990) defined resources as "those tools and other relevant materials that are accessible to assist learners to acquire learning objectives" (p. 300).

Time is the fourth required condition. Individuals implementing the change need time to learn the new process, integrate it into practice, and reflect on its effectiveness (Ely, 1990). Ellsworth (2000) addressed this factor by stating, "change by definition requires development of new competencies to support the new product, procedure, or principle being introduced. Those expected to adopt the innovation will need time for this" (p. 69).

Ely's fifth condition requires that rewards or incentives exist for participants (Ellsworth, 2000). People involved in the change process need to perceive that they are getting something out of the change. Ely (1990) stated, "Regardless of whether the reward is intrinsic or extrinsic, or whether it is seen as the result or the cause of innovation use, it should be there in some form" (p. 301).

Participation is the sixth condition. Leaders must communicate that participation in the innovation is expected (Ellsworth, 2000). This participation creates a sense of ownership. This ownership makes it more difficult for participants to reject the change or it "would essentially render their own investment wasted" (Ellsworth, 2000, p. 71).

Ely (1990) identified commitment as the seventh condition for change. Support for the innovation by key players and participants is necessary for successful implementation. Educators need to know that the change is not another passing fad and will be supported. Ellsworth (2000) stated that "change requires effort . . . . Potential

adapters who are being asked to commit time and effort to the innovation's success will

be looking to their leaders for evidence of long term backing" (p. 71).

The final condition according to Ely (1990) is that leadership is evident.

Leadership includes expectations and commitment as previously discussed, but also

influence. Ellsworth (2000) described this phenomenon:

> Whether they are official supervisors or informal role models, mentors, or
> advisors, these individuals provide those around them with inspiration and
> encouragement throughout all phases of implementation. They are available for
> consultation when discouragement or failure occur; and they continually
> communicate their enthusiasm for the work at hand. This reinforcement is
> particularly crucial in educational settings, where individual practitioners
> generally act with great autonomy. (p. 72)

The ideas presented by Ely acknowledge the fact that there are factors that can

influence change. More importantly, these factors can be manipulated for greater effect.

Ely (1976) summarized:

> One simple answer is to understand the process of change, to help prepare the
> conditions for change to occur, and then to embrace those innovations which will
> help to provide information to those who need and seek it. To do less is to accept
> the dictation of uncontrolled events. (p. 162)

Ely pioneered the investigation of environmental conditions and their influence on

the change process (Ellsworth, 2000). His framework model identifying eight conditions

that facilitate an innovation's diffusion and adoption has been supported by further

research and is a useful tool for those that are involved in a change process or will be

beginning this work. Ely's work continues to offer "the greatest insight into the

environment immediately surrounding a single change effort" (Ellsworth, 2000, p. 76).

<u>Systemic Change</u>

Systemic change is defined as the process of understanding one's current system, identifying and understanding problems, identifying and managing change-relevant resources and embarking towards a newly reformed system (Fullan & Miles, 1992). Wagner (1993) outlined the importance of systemic change when he stated that "systemic reflection, not reflexive reaction, is fundamental to long term improvement" (p. 24). This school of thought regarding change combines the previous ideas of diffusion of innovation and environmental factors influencing change and adds to it the concept of culture.

Anderson (1993) described systemic change accurately:

For systemic change to occur, all aspects of the system must move forward. A physician doesn't say, "Well, I guess I won't worry too much about that heart problem. The rest of the body seems fine." …educators can help stakeholders rise above their singular viewpoints to a more comprehensive perspective of the changes occurring. By nurturing all aspects of the education system, we can bring about the systemic change that will transform education. (p. 17)

Banathy (1992) noted the importance of examining the components of a system and their relationships in order to appreciate it. Watson and Reigeluth (2008) echoed this when they described the central notion of systemic change as "the importance of relationships among elements comprising a whole" (p. 43).

Patterson (1997) proposed ideas on systemic change noting that this change affects the norms, values and relationships throughout an organization. He also stated that systemic change "only happens when people inside a school examine fundamental beliefs and change their practices to fit their revised beliefs" (p. 4).

These fundamental beliefs and practices introduced the idea of culture in the change process. Sustainable school improvement is contingent upon the reculturing of schools and the shared responsibility for promoting and sustaining change (Fullan, 2001). Fullan (2001) further explained and defined this concept:

> Leading in a culture of change means creating a culture (not just a structure) of change. It does not mean adapting innovations one after another; it does mean producing the capacity to seek, critically assess, and selectively incorporate new ideas and practices- all the time, inside the organization as well as outside it. (p. 44)

Elmore (2004) agreed that improvement requires a change in the prevailing culture and noted that:

> Cultures do not change by mandate; they change by the specific displacement of norms, structures, and processes by others: the process of cultural change depends fundamentally on modeling the new values and behavior that you expect to displace the existing ones. (p. 11)

In order for a school to move successfully through the change process, there must be a common vision among all those connected to the school community. A community is a place where people are "bound to values and bound together in pursuit of those values" (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 7). The best way to see those values take shape is to have frequent conversations about them (Goldman, 1998). Through this dialogue, a learning community can be created.

Creating and maintaining a learning community can help facilitate change. "Principals, teachers, students, and often parents and community members, shape and maintain positive values and shared purpose" (Peterson & Deal, 1998, p. 30). By creating this shared vision, the foundation for change is developed. The learning community can work through active communication and listening, forming action

research groups to explore ideas, using focus groups to further clarify ideas, and surveying the literature to learn from the experiences of others. When a learning community is in place, change can occur when the need appears.

An effective change leader moves the school community toward a shared vision of what learning should be like at their school. This vision should be described to all involved and should be the focus of all decisions made regarding the educational program of that school. "The vision shapes the educational programs, plans, and actions" (Sharp, Walter, & Sharp, 1998, p. 3). When a school has created a learning community with a shared vision, the result is most likely to be positive change. "A common vision with a common philosophy and common conversation is causing a transformation in the quality of instructional services provided for students" (Boyer, 1994, p. 31).

Schwann and Spady (1998) discussed the concept of productive change occurring only with the alignment of organizational vision with the structures, policies, procedures, and practices of that organization. This seems to dovetail nicely with the idea of culture and climate. Culture, a school community's shared beliefs, values, and norms, will determine the organizational vision. Climate, the interpretations of culture, touches all of the functions of the school. These two must be compatible in order for the school to function effectively.

Thus, in order for a school to undergo meaningful change, the vision and all of those functions of the organization that are driven by that vision must change. This means that culture and climate must change. This type of change involves all of the members of the school community. This is a major challenge.

The task of reculturing schools is not an individual one. Reculturing schools requires many to collaborate in an act of shared responsibility (Waters, McNulty, & Grubb, 2005). Administrators must work together with teachers towards improvement and teachers "must engage in interactive professionalism- collaborative work cultures with norms that support and promote reflective practice, continuous improvement, collaboration, professional discretion, and sense of efficacy" (Waters et al., 2005, p. 20).

Relationships then are a key to successful change. Fullan (2001) noted that the single factor common to every successful change initiative is that relationships improve. Lewin and Regina (2000) underscored this idea:

> This new science we found in our work leads to a new theory of business that places people and relationships- how people interact with each other, the kinds of relationships they form- into dramatic relief. In a linear world, things may exist independently of each other, and when they interact, they do so in simple predictable ways. In a non-linear, dynamic world, everything exists only in relationship to everything else and the interactions among agents in the system lead to complex, unpredictable outcomes. In this world, interactions or relationships, among its agents are the organizing principle. (pp. 18-19)

Wagner et al. (2006) identified relationships as one of three levers that play important roles in moving through systemic change.

Fullan (2002) asserted that complex systems are naturally fragmented and overloaded by demands from both internal and external sources and that "complete coherence is unattainable in complex systems fraught with fragmentation" (p. 19). Sahlberg (2012) concurred, stating that, "it is generally acknowledged that significant educational change cannot be achieved by a linear recipe-like process" (p. 1). Traditional models of thinking about educational change no longer provide sufficient conceptual tools for responding to multidimensional needs and politically contested environments.

Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) noted that "leadership will require new skills tailored to an environment of urgency, high stakes, and uncertainty" (p. 1).

In the systems change philosophy of change it is recognized that there are multiple variables at play and context plays a large role. A major challenge to educational change then is how to deal with rapid change in an environment that is constantly changing as well. There is no clear cut step by step process. Fullan (1998) noted that the educational leader of the 21st century will "find greater peace of mind by looking for answers close at hand and reaching out, knowing that there is no clear solution" (p. 10).

Reculturing is difficult work. Fullan (2001) indentified this as "a contact sport that involves hard labor and intensive work" (p. 44). Change initiatives involve values and may clash with existing cultural values and norms. When this occurs it is not uncommon to see defensiveness, withdrawal and the distortion of important information (Argyris, 1992). This kind of work is ongoing and never really has an end point. This is why Fullan (2001) pointed out that successful change leaders need energy, enthusiasm, hope, and a sense of moral purpose. He noted that "leaders who combine a commitment to moral purpose with a healthy respect for the complexities of the change process not only will be more successful, but also will unearth a deeper moral purpose" (Fullan, 2001, p. 5).

Sergiovanni (1999) identified moral purpose as a key trait of successful change leaders. He specified "moral excellence, a sense of purpose" and "moral underpinnings" (p. 17) as qualities that set authentic leaders apart from others. Bolman and Deal (2000) singled out moral purpose as a key to change and predicted that people will increasingly

want to know the higher calling or enabling purpose of their work. Fullan (2001) asserted that in a non-linear world, moral purpose is a vital quality of the change process.

In order to foster relationships a change leader must possess what Fullan (2001) identified as emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence can be simply defined as street smarts or common sense. He notes that people need emotional intelligence more than ever during complex times.

Goleman (1998) acknowledged five emotional intelligence competencies important to people in leadership roles. These competencies are (1) self awareness – knowing one's internal state, (2) self-regulation – managing one's internal states, (3) motivation – emotional tendencies that guide reaching goals, (4) empathy – awareness of others' feelings, needs and concerns, and (5) social skills – adeptness at inducing desirable responses from others.

Stein and Book (2000) built on Goleman's ideas and developed the Emotional Quotient (EQ) Inventory. This inventory consists of five realms; intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management, and general mood. They asserted that emotional intelligence has to do with the ability to read the political and social environment to intuitively grasp what others want and need.

The political and social environment identified by Stein and Book likely includes members with a variety of views and opinions. Fullan (2002) summarized this idea when he stated that "effectively improving relationships requires emotional intelligence and emotionally intelligent leaders are those who can develop relationships with others, including those with divergent points of view" (p. 18).

With this in mind, it is interesting to look at the ideas on change, leadership, and leadership capacity proposed by Lambert (1998). Lambert states:

> Leadership is about learning together, and constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively. It involves opportunities to surface and mediate perceptions, values, beliefs, information, and assumptions through continuing conversations; to inquire about and generate ideas together; to seek to reflect upon and make sense of work in the light of shared beliefs and new information; and to create actions that grow out of these new understandings. Such is the core of leadership. (pp. 5-6)

This breaks away from the traditional concept of leadership as a set of behaviors exhibited by one person. This concept moves towards a place where leading is work shared by all members of the school community.

Systemic change theory involves an understanding of the system and the factors that influence it. It involves creating or recreating a culture conducive to change. It also involves building and sustaining relationships. Fullan (1991) added to this and asserted that meaning is central to making sense of change. Understanding the meaning of change in both the large and individual context is necessary for success, but not an easy task to achieve. Fullan (1991) cautioned that "we need to comprehend the dynamics of educational change as a sociopolitical process involving all kinds of…factors at work in interactive ways" (p. 5).

Solutions in the change process then are achieved through the development of shared meaning. This process is in constant flux. Fullan (1991) noted "the interface between individual and collective meaning and action in everyday situations is where change stands or falls" (p. 5). Portis and Garcia (2007) agreed when they stated " if

stakeholders don't understand the purpose of the reform, the impact of the change and the time required to implement the change, reform efforts may waver or fail" (p. 20).

In order for shared meaning to be facilitated, relationships need to be improved to create the conditions for change to occur. These relationships establish a collaborative culture. Collaborative cultures focus on building the capacity for continuous improvement that is enduring and not just a onetime event (Fullan, 2005).

Research identifies the concepts of culture and climate, a common vision, community, relationships, non-linearity, moral purpose, and shared meaning as vital components of the systemic change process. These concepts of systemic change move away from simplistic models of concrete sequential linear change to the idea of cultural change with a focus on relationships, values, and shared meaning. Sahlberg (2012) described the main characteristics of this systemic concept of change as "nonlinearity of processes, thinking about education as an open system, the interdependency of the various components of the system, and the influence of context on the change process itself" (p. 1).

A continuum of systemic change. Anderson (1993) recognized the complexity of society and the fact that individuals tend to see change generally from their own perspective. In order to give stakeholders "a common vantage point for communicating and making decisions about change" (p. 14), Anderson (1993) developed a model called A Continuum of Systemic Change. This model was designed to help participants analyze where they are on the continuum of change and develop a plan for where they need to go.

This model consists of six stages of change characteristics that are all interconnected. Anderson (1993) described the six stages as:

1. Maintenance of the Old System: Educators focus on maintaining the system as originally designed. They do not recognize that the system is fundamentally out of sync with the conditions of today's world. New knowledge about teaching, learning, and organizational structures has not been incorporated into the present structure.

2. Awareness: Multiple stakeholders become aware that the current system is not working as well as it should, but they are unclear about what is needed instead.

3. Exploration: Educators and policy-makers study and visit places that are trying new approaches. They try new ways of teaching and managing, generally in low-risk situations.

4. Transition: The scales tip toward the new system; a critical number of opinion leaders and groups commit themselves to the new system and take more risks to make changes in crucial places.

5. Emergence of New Infrastructure: Some elements of the system are operated in keeping with the desired new system. These new ways are generally accepted.

6. Predominance of the New System: The more powerful elements of the system operate as defined by the new system. Key leaders begin to envision even better systems.

Anderson (1993) presented these stages in a linear sequential model format, but did acknowledge that "change is unlikely to follow a linear path" (p. 15) and a system will "usually experience Brownian motion going back and forth from one stage to another on the path toward an ideal situation" (p. 15).

Anderson (1993) also identified six key elements to change as part of the Continuum of Systemic Change model. These six key elements are:

1. Vision: The vision people have of an education system and what it should accomplish must change in order for the system to change.

2. Public and Political Support: As the vision develops and is translated into practice, the support of the public and of the political leadership at all levels of the system must grow. Such support involves a deepening understanding of the what and why of the changes needed. The inclusion of diverse populations appears to be critical.

3. Networking: Building networks that study, pilot, and support the new vision of the education system is essential in establishing lasting systemic change.

4. Teaching and Learning Changes: Teaching and learning based on the best available research on how people learn is at the core of the new system. If changes do not occur in teaching and learning, all the other changes have little value.

5. Administrative Roles and Responsibilities: To achieve change in the classroom, administrative roles and responsibilities need to shift at all levels

from a hierarchical structure of control to one of support and shared decision

making.

6. Policy Alignment: State and local policy need to be aligned around the beliefs

and practices of the new system.

Maintaining an awareness of these six elements and monitoring them can be a

monumental task. Anderson (1993) noted the complexity of systemic change and these

six key elements:

> Making simultaneous changes in all six elements requires conscious planning.
> The process is akin to remodeling a building while people are still using it,
> redesign and reconfiguration need to be carefully staged to keep the building
> functional. (p. 17)

The Continuum of Systemic Change model serves as an adequate tool for

awareness of factors that have an effect on systemic change, but that is where its'

usefulness ends. However, the model's stages of systemic change do not sit congruent

with the concept of systemic change itself and this confuses the issue. A better model of

systemic change was developed by Fullan and Miles.

Seven themes of successful change. Fullan and Miles (1992) developed seven

basic themes or lessons derived from current knowledge of successful systemic change

that hold true today. These seven themes are: (1) change is learning; (2) change is a

journey; (3) problems are our friends; (4) change is resource hungry; (5) change requires

power to manage it; (6) change is systemic; and (7) all large scale change is implemented

locally.

The first theme of successful change is that change is learning. Change requires a

person to create meaning so it is therefore a learning process. Fullan and Miles (1992)

stated that "all change involves learning and that all learning involves coming to understand and be good at something new…even well developed innovations represent new meaning and new learning for those who encounter them initially and require time to assimilate them" (p. 1). Another way of describing this is to say that ownership of a change cannot be achieved without learning. In order for a change effort to be successful, conditions that support learning must be in place.

The second theme of change, being a journey, is fitting for the school environment. Conditions surrounding change in the school setting are so complex and particular to the individual setting that Fullan and Miles' (1992) statement that "change is a journey not a blueprint" (p. 1) is especially true.

Change threatens the existing conditions, routines, and interests of an organization. It also heightens uncertainty, and increases complexity (Fullan & Miles, 1992). Problems arise from conditions like this. Fullan and Miles proposed that problems "are our friends because only through immersing ourselves in problems can we come up with creative solutions. Problems are the route to deeper change and deeper satisfaction. . . effective organizations embrace problems rather than avoid them" (p. 2). The third theme of problems are our friends is supported by the idea that success is more likely when problems are treated as natural and part of the process of continual improvement.

The fourth theme describes change as being resource hungry. Fullan and Miles (1992) described this concept:

> Change demands additional resources for training, for substitutes, for new
> materials, for new space, and, above all, for time. Change is resource-hungry for
> what it represents- developing solutions to complex problems, learning new skills,
> arriving at new insights, all carried out in a social setting already overloaded with

demands. Such serious and personal and collective development necessarily demands resources. (p. 2)

Change does not manage itself. The fifth theme for successful change is that change requires the power to manage it. A great deal of effort is required for such tasks as monitoring implementation, communicating with stakeholders about what is happening, linking multiple projects, locating unsolved problems, and directing action (Fullan & Miles, 1992). The management of this kind of work is best done by what Fullan and Miles called a cross-role group. This is a group of teachers, administrators, parents, students, or other group involved in the school community. More learning occurs in a group like this due to the differing background knowledge and perspectives brought forward by members. There is much evidence that steering a change effort in this way results in substantially increased commitment (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

The sixth theme of change is that change is systemic. This means that change efforts must focus on the development and interrelationships of all the main components involved simultaneously and these efforts must focus not just structure and policy, but culture as well (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

Fullan and Miles' (1992) final theme of change is that all large scale change needs to be implemented locally. Successful change cannot be accomplished from far away. This theme is actually a combination of the previous six. The authors expanded on this:

> This cardinal rule crystallizes the previous six propositions. The ideas that change is learning, change is a journey, problems are our friends, change is resource-hungry, change requires power to manage, and change is systemic all embody the fact that local implementation by everyday teachers, principals, parents, and students is the only way that change happens. (p. 4)

These seven themes regarding successful change are interrelated and demonstrate the philosophy of systemic change. Utilizing these themes means making the change process more explicit to all of those involved and increasing the knowledge about change to all as well. This knowledge may be the best tool educators can possess for dealing with change. Fullan and Miles (1992) stated that "being knowledgeable about the change process may be both the best defense and the best offense we have in achieving substantial education reform" (p. 4).

<div align="center">Leadership and Change</div>

An essential skill for effective school leadership is the ability to orchestrate change. In this era of school reform, the ability to adapt to changes mandated from society, state regulators, and the school community while still staying true to the school vision can be a difficult task. This rate of change seems to be increasing. Therefore, focus on this role is important. In a world that is changing faster than ever, schools must be able to change to meet society's needs. The New American Schools Development Corporation (1991) stated:

> Think about every problem, every challenge we face. The solution to each starts with education. For the sake of the future –of our children and the nation- we must transform America's schools. The days of the status quo are over. (p. 7)

Change is inevitable. Change is the norm. An effective school leader must be able to manage change within the school community. By utilizing the research and knowledge base that has been developed around change in schools, meaningful and lasting change can be achieved. This action will benefit students, the school community, and society.

With the knowledge base of the history of change theory providing the foundation for the work, much has been written by many authors on the subject of leadership and change. So much, in fact, that it would be easy to get lost in the myriad of skills and strategies and step by step instructions offered to leaders so that they may successfully implement change. Common sense, experience, and the research surrounding systemic change theory tells us that it is not that simple. Multiple variables and the context of the individual setting play a huge role in the change process. The system is too complex for a simple recipe that works for all occasions. There is no singular step by step guide to successful change leadership.

In this section, I will discuss 12 authors that have been influential in providing guidance for change leadership in education and their theories and ideas on change leadership. These 12 authors and theories are; (1) Deming and Total Quality Management, (2) Hersey and Blanchard and Situational Leadership, (3) Bennis, (4) Covey and the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, (5) Collins and Good to Great, (6) Fullan, (7) Wagner, (8) Heifetz and Linsky and Adaptive Problems, (9) Reeves, (10) Marzano, Waters, and McNulty and Balanced Leadership, (11) Marzano and Waters and District Leadership, and (12) Marzano and DuFour.

Deming and TQM

W. Edwards Deming was a master statistician with a profound understanding of systems theory. He helped create and teach the quality standards that were critical in manufacturing American war equipment in World War II (Cross, 2012). Deming is best

known however for his philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM) and his work with Japan after the war (Hackman & Wageman, 1995).

Total Quality Management is based upon the underlying assumptions that the costs of poor quality are greater than the costs of developing new processes to improve quality, employees naturally care about the quality of their work and will improve if given the proper tools and training, organization are systems of interdependent parts that face the same problems, and quality is ultimately the responsibility of top management (Hackman & Wageman, 1995). These four assumptions about quality, people, organizations, and leadership are interlocked.

Building on the concept of the interlocked assumptions are specific change principles. The TQM system consists of four "interrelated and inseparable parts that act as a critical foundation" (Cross, 2012, p. 2) known as profound knowledge. These four parts of profound knowledge are:

1. Appreciation for a system: Focus on the whole rather than the isolated parts.
2. Knowledge of variation: Regularly collect and interpret data.
3. Theory of knowledge: Knowledge that provides highly reliable and predictive power.
4. Psychology of change: The introduction of constructive change must involve all members of the system for best results. (Cross, 2012, pp. 2-3)

Profound knowledge provides the lens through which business can optimize all of their efforts and achieve greatest success (Cross, 2012). This puts the emphasis on teamwork, interdependence, and the view that it is the system not individuals that ultimately determine quality (Hackman & Wageman, 1995). This focus on the system as a whole over the individual parts is a hallmark characteristic of TQM and supports the fundamental basis of systemic change theory.

To go along with profound knowledge, Deming also created 14 Points for the Transformation of Business and Management to help provide clear guidance for TQM. These 14 points are (1) creating a constancy of purpose, (2) adopting a new philosophy, (3) ceasing mass inspection, (4) minimizing total cost, (5) constantly improving systems, (6) instituting training on the job, (7) instituting leadership, (8) driving out fear, (9) breaking down department barriers, (10) eliminating slogans, (11) eliminating management by numbers, (12) removing barriers that rob pride, (13) instituting education, and (14) involving everybody (Cross, 2012). The 14 points are meant to be implemented together and provide support and are not meant to be an instant cookie cutter approach. The elements of time, commitment, and focus are required (Cross, 2012).

Total quality management leadership promotes leadership actions from all individuals throughout an organization. It develops the leadership capacity of the entire system. Such leadership serves to develop and implement the primary systems and processes within the organization; however, such action is not necessarily initiated from the top down. Rather, as previously stated, "leadership action is encouraged on the part of all workers throughout the organization" (Norton, 2005, p. 45).

<u>Hersey and Blanchard and Situational Leadership</u>

Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard developed the Situational Leadership model in the late 1960s. This model is meant to aid a leader in determining the style of leadership that would be most effective for the situation at hand. The leader must first understand

the situation and the possible outcomes and then choose from one of four leadership styles.

Leadership style in the situational leadership model is classified according to the amount of task and relationship behavior the leader engages in. Task behavior is the extent to which the leader spells out duties and responsibilities for individuals or groups by giving directions and setting goals. Relationship behavior is the extent to which the leader engages in communication including the actions of listening and coaching (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977).

The situational model consists of quadrants with different combinations of task and relationship behaviors. The four quadrants according to Hersey and Blanchard (1977) are:

Style 1: High task and low relationship- This is known as the "Telling" style and is characterized by one-way communication and directing with a minimum amount of relationship behavior.

Style 2: High task and high relationship- This is known as the "Selling" style and is characterized by two-way communication, persuasion, and guidance. Most of the direction is still supplied by the leader, but they are also using human relations to get followers to buy in to the change.

Style 3: High relationship and low task- This is known as the "Participating" style and is characterized by less direction and more collaboration between the leader and group members. There is a high level of trust between the leader and the follower.

Style 4: Low relationship and low task- This is known as the "Delegating" style and is characterized by the leader letting followers act on their own and is simply kept updated of progress.

Another factor that comes into play with this model is participant readiness or the ability, willingness, or confidence to accomplish a specific task. The most effective leadership style depends on the readiness level of group members (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). As group member's readiness increases, the leader should rely more on relationship behavior and less on task behavior

This model is useful because it builds on other explanations of leadership behavior and is relatively common sense. It is easy to understand, requires little time, and provides solid general guidance. Competent people require less direction than those who are less competent. Critics of this model have argued that this is more of a management model than leadership and that there are few leadership situations where the S2 or "Selling" style does not produce the best results (Bass, 1990). Ultimately, Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model has stood the test of time and is still of value in the discussion regarding change leadership.

Lambert (1998) developed a Leadership Capacity Matrix to describe conditions in schools with different levels of leadership capacity that is very closely related to the model developed by Hersey and Blanchard. The model advocates for the inclusion of the school community in the change and improvement process. This model consists of four quadrants, which focus on the participation in and comprehension of the work of leadership. The matrix consists of (a) Quadrant 1 in which participation and skillfulness

are both low, (b) Quadrant 2 in which participation is high and skillfulness is low, (c)

Quadrant 3 in which skillfulness is high and participation is low, and (d) Quadrant 4 in

which skillfulness and participation are both high. This fits very well with the model for

Situational Leadership developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1977).

<u>Warren Bennis</u>

The work of Warren Bennis over the last several decades has focused on

leadership and change. Bennis, chairman of the Leadership Institute at the University of

Southern California, writes with a focus on the business community, but his ideas on

leadership apply to most systems.

Bennis (2009) proposed that change is the norm and that leadership in the twenty-

first century means that staying with the status quo is unacceptable. He identified the

keys to advantage for an organization as the capacity of leadership to create social

architecture capable of generating intellectual capital. Intellectual capital means "ideas,

know-how, brains, knowledge, and expertise" (Bennis, 2009, p. 12). Bennis (2009)

further explained his ideas on successful leadership:

> Ideas are the basis for change, for invention, for intellectual capital. Relationships
> have to do with outstanding people working in harmony and openness, where
> everyone feels empowered, where all members fell included and at the center of
> things, where they feel significant. And adventure has to do with risk, with a bias
> towards action, with curiosity and courage. The challenge of leadership is to
> create the social architecture where ideas, relationships, and adventure can
> flourish. (p. 14)

Bennis' book, *On Becoming a Leader*, has been singled out as one of the top

leadership books written (University of Southern California, 2012). In this book Bennis

(2009) outlined what he calls the basics for leadership:

1. The first basic ingredient is a guiding vision. The leader has a clear idea of what to do professionally and personally, the ability to share this vision with others, and the strength to persist through setbacks and failure.
2. The second basic ingredient is passion. The time and energy required by the work require a commitment bordering on love.
3. The third basic ingredient is integrity. Effective leaders are authentic. Candor is a major factor in integrity and a huge component of trust.
4. Curiosity and daring are two more basic ingredients of leadership along with learning from diversity. (pp. 39-41)

In addition to the basics for leadership, Bennis (1999) also identified four critical characteristics of effective leadership. These characteristics are the ability of a leader to create a shared vision, the ability of the leader to have a clear voice driven by a sense of purpose, a strong moral code and belief in a higher good, and the ability to adapt to relentless pressure to change. Bennis further discussed this concept of adapting to the pressure of change. Perspective and context is noted by Bennis (1999) as necessary for change leadership:

> Perspective is hard to come by but is essential in a world of rapid change. For most people in organizations, the question is not only what happens next, but what happens after what happens next. As hockey great Wayne Gretzky explains, "it ain't where the puck is, it's where the puck will be." . . . Because the fog of reality is so pervasive, constituents want not just a vision of where we're heading, but also where they've been and where they are now. People want leaders to provide context. (p. 21)

Bennis (1999) also singled out candor as being of great importance for change leadership noting that "without candor there can be not trust" (p. 22). He explained that especially during times of change, exemplary leaders share information about what is going on in the organization.

Bennis (1999) also identified the importance of learning in an organization and its importance in the change process:

> Exemplary leaders believe they have a responsibility to extend people's growth and to create an environment where people learn. Those are the surest ways to generate intellectual capital and to use that capital to create new value. (p. 23)

The work of Warren Bennis has been influential on leadership in organizations both in the business world and in education. His four critical characteristics of effective leadership and considerations on leading through change continue to provide guidance to leaders.

Stephen Covey and the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (1989) has been widely used as a leadership tool in the field of education. The book builds off of the concept of aligning values with principles and character in an inside-out approach meaning that change starts within the leader.

Character consists of habits which are made up of knowledge, skill, and desire. Knowledge allows us to know what to do, skill gives us the ability to know how to do it, and desire is the motivation to do it (Covey, 1989).

The seven habits move us through the stages of dependence, independence, and interdependence. Much of the other research focusing on success stresses independence, but in reality we live in an increasingly interdependent world (Covey, 1989). It is this focus on interdependence that makes the work of Covey so useful in education.

The seven habits proposed by Covey (1989) are:

1. Be proactive: Focus on things that you can do something about and make a decision to improve rather than just reacting to external forces.

2. <u>Begin with the end in mind:</u> Begin all things with a clear view of the ultimate goal. Develop a mission statement that includes long term goals.

3. <u>Put first things first:</u> Manage according to needs and priorities and keep a proper balance.

4. <u>Think win-win:</u> Seek agreements and relationships that are mutually beneficial. Develop a culture that rewards win-win behavior.

5. <u>Seek first to understand, then be understood:</u> Learn how to communicate clearly and listen to others. Put yourself in the position of others and listen empathetically for feeling and meaning.

6. <u>Synergize:</u> Find ways to leverage individual differences to create a whole that is greater than the sum of the parts.

7. <u>Sharpen the saw:</u> Allow yourself to grow by maintaining balance in the physical, social/emotional, mental, and spiritual areas of your life.

The first three habits focus on moving from dependence to independence, the next three address interdependence, and the seventh habit focuses on continual improvement. These habits represent timeless principles of character and effectiveness that are more applicable today than when they were developed. The greater the change and more difficult the challenge, the more relevant they become (Covey, 2004).

Covey (2004) built on his habits to add his follow up work, *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*. This sequel offered ideas on how to find your voice and inspire others to find theirs as we face our greatest challenges. Covey (2004) addressed this idea of voice:

…voice lies at the nexus of *talent* (your natural gifts and strengths), *passion* (those things that naturally energize, excite, motivate, and inspire you), *need* (including what the world needs enough to pay you for), and *conscience* (that still, small voice within that assures you of what is right and that prompts you to actually do it). (p. 5)

By utilizing their voice and inspiring other to find theirs, a leader is able to move an organization through the change process even in the most difficult of times.

Jim Collins and Good to Great

Jim Collins' (2001a) *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap…and Others Don't* analyzed companies that after years of average performance had a transition and then outperformed the stock market and other industries. The lessons learned pertaining to leadership have been useful to many fields including education.

Collins (2001b) noted that all of the companies that had moved from good to great had strong leadership. He identified these leaders as level 5 leaders. A level 5 leader is "an individual who blends extreme personal humility with intense professional will" (p. 2). These leaders exhibit the seemingly contradictive qualities of modesty and willfulness, shyness and fearlessness (Collins, 2001b). Collins further documented that "level five leaders look out the window to assign credit, even undue credit. They look in the mirror to assign blame, never citing external factors" (p. 10).

Level 5 leaders concern themselves with the who before the what. They recognize that a strong team with the right people on the bus is the key to success (Collins, 2001b). Collins identified three truths regarding adapting to change. First, with the right people on the bus, you can more easily adapt to a fast-changing world. "If people board the bus principally because of the other great people on the bus, you will be

much faster and smarter when responding to changing conditions" (p. 4). Second, the

right people on the bus means that there is no need for motivation because the right

people are self-motivated. Third, if you have the wrong people on the bus, nothing else

matters. Great change plans with the wrong people produces the wrong results (Collins,

2001b).

Like Covey, Collins (2001a) emphasized the importance of balance in the life of

team members in determining the right people to be part of the organization. People with

balance maintain a deep commitment to work and the change process while still

recognizing the importance of the other things in life. He also noted the importance of a

climate that values and honors honesty and openness and calls this process confronting

the brutal facts. This fits well with Bennis' thoughts on candor.

<u>Michael Fullan</u>

As previously discussed, Michael Fullan has written much on the subject of

change in education. He has provided guidance on systemic change to educational

leaders for many years. What separates Fullan from many others is the fact that he has

not only proposed theory but also suggested best practice to apply this knowledge in a

change situation.

In his book, *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (1991), Fullan discussed

the complexities of change:

> Change is difficult because it is riddled with dilemmas, ambivalences, and
> paradoxes. It combines steps that seemingly do not go together: to have a clear
> vision and be open-minded; to take initiative and empower others; to provide
> support and pressure; to start small and think big; to expect results and be patient
> and persistent; to have a plan and be flexible; to use top-down and bottom-up
> strategies; to experience uncertainty and satisfaction. Educational change is

above all a very personal experience in a social, but often impersonal, setting. (p. 350)

Fullan outlined the framework for most of his ideas on change in education over the past 20 years in this book. Fullan (1991) identified culture as vital stating "Everyone inside and outside the school is going to have to put great energy over a period of time into changing the culture of the school. This means new values, norms, skills, practices, and structures" (p. 352). The whole school must participate in change with collegiality and commitment to continuous improvement. Innovation and improvement is then built into the daily activities of all teachers and leaders.

Fullan (1991) emphasized the need for action. He stated that we cannot wait for others to take action. Individual must take responsibility for empowering themselves and eventually others through becoming experts in the change process. Fullan further clarified stating, "The solution lies in critical masses of highly engaged individuals working on the creation of conditions for continuous renewal, while being shaped by these very conditions as the latter evolves" (p. 354). So the process is both individual and collective happening simultaneously. "New meaning and reform are created in a thousand small ways that eventually add up to a new order of things. Systems do not change by themselves. People change systems through their actions. It is time to change the way we change" (p. 352).

Relationships have always been a key component of Fullan's views on change leadership. This idea can be summed up with the following:

School districts can get tough about student learning, can use their minds to identify new and better ideas, and can establish strategies and mechanisms of

development. But successful strategies always involve relationships, relationships, relationships. (Fullan, 2001, p. 70)

Fullan further explained his views on change in his 2001 book, *Leading in a Culture of Change*, where he outlined five core capacities leaders need in order to successfully manage change. These capacities are:

1. <u>Moral purpose:</u> the higher calling or enabling purpose of work.

2. <u>Understanding of the change process:</u>

    a. the goal is not to innovate the most – organically build innovation into the culture.

    b. it is not enough to have the best ideas- recognize weaknesses as well as strengths.

    c. appreciate the implementation dip- effective leaders know that the change process is a process not an event, they don't panic if things don't go smoothly, they are empathetic and appreciative of resistance.

    d. redefine resistance- build on differences and do not just go with like-mindedness.

    e. reculturing is the name of the game- do not adopt innovations one after another, develop a culture that has the capacity to seek, critically assess, and selectively incorporate new ideas and practices all of the time.

    f. never a check list, always complexity- no recipes or step-by-step processes.

3. <u>Building relationships:</u> successful strategies always involve relationships

4. <u>Knowledge building:</u> share knowledge explicitly and strengthen capacity.

5. <u>Coherence making:</u> distinguish complexity from chaos.

Fullan (2002) concluded that leading in a culture of change is all about complexities. "Complexities can be unlocked and even understood, but rarely controlled" (p. 46). In terms of these complexities, the chief role of leadership is to mobilize the collective capacity to challenge difficult circumstances.

This idea of collective capacity is one that Fullan has come back to several times throughout his research. "Time and again we see the power of collective capacity. When the group is mobilized with focus and specificity, it can accomplish amazing results" (Fullan, 2010b, p. 9). Fullan and Miles (2006) defined this collective capacity as any strategy that increases the collective effectiveness of a group to raise the bar and close the gap of student learning. He further clarified these ideas explaining that collective capacity enables ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things (Fullan, 2010a). Fullan also warned that strategies focusing on individuals will not work to improve schools. In order to meet that challenge, collective capacity will need to be built.

More recently, Fullan (2008) has proposed the 6 Secrets to Change to aid leaders in managing the change process. These 6 Secrets are:

1. <u>Love your employees:</u> focus on relationships.
2. <u>Connect peers with purpose:</u> student learning improves substantially when teachers work in learning communities supported by leaders who focus on improvement.
3. <u>Capacity building prevails:</u> capacity building concerns competencies, resources, and motivation. Individuals and groups are high on capacity if they possess and continue to develop these three components of concern.
4. <u>Learning is the work:</u> successful growth is accomplished when the culture of the school supports day-to-day learning of teachers engaged in improving what they do in the classroom and school.

5. Transparency rules: transparency with non-judgmentalism and good help equals classroom improvement.
6. Systems learn: continuous learning and openness to new ideas and complexity. (pp. 5-14)

Although there are some differences in language and terminology, Fullan's consistent general message on change exists here.

Most recently, Fullan has identified what he called the wrong drivers of systemic change. These wrong drivers are (a) the focus on accountability over capacity building, (b) individual teacher and leader quality versus group solutions, (c) technology over instruction, and (d) fragmented strategies over integrated strategies (Fullan, 2011). These four wrong drivers have a place in the change process, they are most likely required in some form. They are just labeled as poor strategies by which to lead a change effort.

Fullan (2011) did go on to offer his ideas on the right drivers of systemic change. These are (a) capacity building which was discussed previously, (b) group work to solve problems, (c) instruction, and (d) systemic solution. Fullan proposed that in order to catalyze systemic change, leaders need to focus on (a) the learning instruction assessment nexus, (b) using social capital to build the profession, (c) making sure that pedagogy matches available technology, and (d) capitalizing on systemic synergy by thinking of the drivers as a whole rather than individual parts. He summarized these ideas:

> Capacity building, group work and deep pedagogy, accelerated by technology, are in effect processes that support, indeed require, all schools to engage in the improvement practice." (p. 16)

This type of work requires a systemic mindset to accomplish; a mindset that focuses on the change process through the lens of systemic change. These elements of the system

are connected and influence each other in many different ways that may not always be simple to identify, so they must be dealt with as a whole.

<u>Tony Wagner</u>

Like Fullan, Tony Wagner has offered much to the profession regarding systemic change. Wagner (2004) noted that "professionalizing education means creating ongoing opportunities for discussion of problems of practice at every level in the organization. It is only through such discussion that we can collaboratively create new knowledge about how to continuously improve learning, teaching, and leadership" (p. 3).

The structure put forth to accomplish this task is what Wagner et al. (2006) called a community of practice; or networks of professionals that develop capacities, share best practices, and solve problems of practice. These activities serve to disrupt the natural barriers like reaction, compliance, isolation, and autonomy that educators and the system put up to block change. Communities of practice can counteract these factors and develop "a clear focus, engagement, and collaboration- the conditions needed for true change" (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 4).

Wagner (2001) proposed the S-U-R-E method of educational change to help educational leaders create the conditions and capacities for sustained change. This method consists of four essential conditions for educational change:

1. Shared vision of the goals of learning, good teaching, and assessment.

    a. Clarity regarding the few most important things students should know and be able to do, deep understanding of teaching best practices, and assessments that best measure student progress.

2. Understanding of the urgent need for change.

   a. The sorting system of the 20th century has been replaced by a need to educate all students to higher standards.

3. Relationships based on mutual respect and trust.

   a. The creation of a respectful environment for both the students and adults.

4. Engagement strategies that create commitment rather than mere compliance.

   a. A good learning community is one of shared responsibility and collaborative inquiry for adults and students.

Wagner (2001) concluded his ideas on the S-U-R-E method with the following quote that effectively summarized his thoughts on educational leadership and change:

> Today's successful educational leaders understand that they cannot make change alone or by edict. They motivate groups to learn and to solve problems together by asking tough questions and naming the big problems while refusing to offer easy answers. They are self-aware and reflective, they seek constructive criticism, and they freely admit their mistakes. They are leaders who, above all, model good teaching every single day. (p. 383)

Wagner et al. (2006) further clarified this process when they described the three phases of whole-system change and the three levers of each phase. The first phase is the preparing phase and includes steps one and two of the S-U-R-E method. The second phase is the envisioning phase which takes the actions of the preparing phase and spreads them from internal to external audiences. The third phase is the enacting phase and this includes step three and four of the S-U-R-E method. The common levers of data, accountability, and relationships run through each of the three phases of whole-system

change. In order for this to be successful, the leader must think systematically and act

strategically.

Heifetz and Linsky and Adaptive Problems

Heifetz and Linsky (2002) distinguished between challenges that are common and

have routine procedural solutions, which they called technical problems, and problems

that cannot be solved by an expert or standard operating procedures, which they called

adaptive problems. Adaptive change work is difficult and demanding. Adaptive change

also can be dangerous. People can have very negative reactions to this type of a situation

and become desperate.

Heifetz and Linsky (2002) stated that the deeper the change, the greater the

amount of new learning is required and the more resistance there will be from

stakeholders. The challenge is then to nurture courage and resourcefulness while

learning how to deal with the deep change. They suggest the leader must shift the focus

of problem solving to the group and guide and support the process. Rather than offering

answers, the leader needs to ask questions. This takes patience and resilience as

stakeholders may not always be happy without instant results and may react negatively.

Heifetz (1994) offered advice in sequencing technical and adaptive issues.

Leaders must first gain the trust of people by demonstrating competence in technical

areas. Once this trust is earned then leaders try to sequence adaptive issues that will

challenge people strategically to leverage that trust.

Heifetz and Linsky (2002) identified the fact that there will likely be conflict in

adaptive change situations. In recognizing this they offered the idea that "the challenge

of leadership when trying to generate adaptive change is to work with differences, passions, and conflicts in a way that diminishes their destructive potential and constructively harnesses their energy" (p. 10).

This may be easier said than done, but Heifetz and Linsky (2002) did offer four techniques to help in this action. The first technique is to create a holding environment to contain the energy created in the adaptive change process. In a holding environment which may be a physical place or a set of norms, people feel safe enough to address problems that are difficult. The second technique is to control the temperature. This means providing enough pressure to get people to act, but not so much that it shuts down the system. Closely related to this is the act of pacing the work. People can only take so much change at a time, so it may be beneficial to move slowly at times and more rapidly at others. The final technique to help control change is to show stakeholders the future. If people can see where they are headed and the positive result of their difficult work, they are more likely to endure and keep moving forward (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002).

Doug Reeves

Doug Reeves (2006) said, "Leadership is about change – how to justify it, implement it, and maintain it" (p. 158). He has done much work in the area of change and leadership including outlining some specific actions that leaders can take to better facilitate the change process.

With the premise that the definition of educational change would be increased student achievement, Reeves (2006) offered the Leadership for Learning Framework to encourage systematic thinking about change. The framework is comprised of quadrants

representing the interaction of the achievement of results and the antecedents of excellence. High results with little understanding of the antecedents are categorized as lucky. Low results and little understanding of antecedents are losing. High understanding of antecedents but low results are learning. High results and high understanding of antecedents are classified as leading. Reeves (2006) then proposed some actions to move towards the leading quadrant which he identified as most desirable. These actions included (a) moving from "islands of excellence" (p. 159) to systemic practice, (b) making connections between effective practices, (c) focusing effort on challenges that matter the most, and (d) committing to long term sustainable change.

Reeves (2006) presented what he identified as leverage points that have the greatest influence on student achievement and thus change. These leverage points are (a) time, (b) teaching, (c) professional learning, and (d) collaboration. These points mesh well with the ideas of Wagner et al. (2006) and Fullan (2008).

In his 2009 book, *Leading Change in Your School: How to Conquer Myths, Build Commitment, and Get Results*, Reeves defined change leadership as the "single greatest challenge for organizations around the world" (p. 1), noting that the work is complicated technical, personal, and political. He argued that failure of change is avoidable if leaders "balance their sense of urgency with a more thoughtful approach to implementing change" (p. 7). This type of approach would move change from threatening to affirming. Reeves (2009) noted that "when change is reframed from a personal attack to a new, meaningful and exciting opportunity, then the odds in favor of successful change are altered" (p. 11). The work of change leadership was organized into the four categories of

(1) creating conditions for change, (2) planning change, (3) implementing change and (4) sustaining change. In the framework of systemic change theory, he argued that leaders need to focus on all four of these areas.

Reeves (2009) again proposed actions for leaders aimed at improving the chances for successful change. He proposed the idea of a "garden party" (p. 15) as an analogy. Pulling the weeds before planting the flowers in a garden is an answer to initiative fatigue. Because change has been so rapid in education, initiatives have come and gone, but are not always fully abandoned. Each initiative added creates a "dramatic decline in organizational effectiveness" (p. 14). By choosing to identify what can be abandoned, the organization is able to focus on priorities.

In the tradition of Fullan, Reeves (2006) acknowledged the importance of culture in the change process noting that "evidence from schools that have experienced successful change provides encouragement for leaders who know that meaningful change begins with cultural change" (p. 36), and "change leaders in schools know that we are engaged not only in the work of education, but also in a complex enterprise of people" (p. 87). Reeves outlined four imperatives for cultural change: (1) defining what will not change, (2) organizational culture will change with leadership actions, (3) using the right tools for your system, and (4) giving relentless personal attention.

Reeves (2006) tied his ideas together by stating that "implementing change requires focus, clarity, and monitoring- qualities that will place you among the very best change leaders in the world" (p. 123). He went on to note that leaders need to focus beyond the short term and look toward sustainable change. Reeves stands apart from

some educational change theorists in that he offered specific actions aimed at increasing the chances for success of a change effort.

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty and Balanced Leadership

Marzano et al. (2007) asserted that an expectation of a school leader now and in the future is to know how to lead change effectively. Through a meta-analysis of 30 years of research, the authors were able to develop a Balanced Leadership framework with components of leadership, focus, magnitude, and purposeful community. The framework is designed to "help define, understand, and emphasize a set of leadership responsibilities that are associated with higher levels of student achievement" (p. 2).

The meta-analysis of Marzano et al. (2005) revealed several significant findings related to student achievement. One finding was that leadership does matter, what principals do has an effect on student achievement. Another finding identified 21 leadership responsibilities having a positive association with student achievement. If we accept Reeves' (2006) definition of educational change as increased student achievement, then it is easy to see the importance of this work to the concept of educational change.

The 21 leadership responsibilities identified by Marzano et al. (2005) as having a positive association with student achievement are:

> (1) Affirmation, (2) Change agent, (3) Communication, (4) Contingent Rewards, (5) Culture, (6) Discipline, (7) Flexibility, (8) Focus, (9) Ideals/Beliefs, (10) Input, (11) Intellectual Stimulation, (12) Involvement with Curriculum and Instruction, (13) Knowledge of Curriculum and Instruction, (14) Monitor/Evaluate, (15) Optimize, (16) Order, (17) Outreach, (18) Relationships, (19) Resources, (20) Situational Awareness, (21) Visibility. (pp. 42-43)

Additional associated practices were identified for each of the 21 responsibilities to help explain and clarify each.

Marzano et al. (2005) also identified two factors that underlie the 21 factors; first order change and second order change. First order change is incremental and a logical extension of the past like the technical change described by Heifetz (1994). Second order change is deep change that "involves dramatic departures from the expected, both in defining a given problem and in finding a solution" (Marzano et al., 2007, p. 66). This is much like the concept of adaptive change (Heifetz, 1994). An important point in this discussion is that the change is not categorized as first or second order, the implications for stakeholders is categorized. Stakeholders may perceive the change differently. What may be first order to one person may be second order to another.

In first order change, all 21 leadership responsibilities are essential (Marzano et al., 2007). The authors put these responsibilities in rank order with (1) monitor/evaluate, (2) culture, (3) ideals/beliefs, (4) knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (5) involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (6) focus, and (7) order as the top several responsibilities.

There are seven responsibilities that positively correlate with second order change according to Marzano et al. (2005). These are (1) knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment, (2) optimizer, (3) intellectual stimulation, (4) change agent, (5) monitoring/evaluating, (6) flexibility, and (7) ideals/beliefs in rank order. These findings provide insight into leadership recommendations for second order change. Three of the responsibilities- monitoring/evaluating, ideal/beliefs, and knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment- are on both the first and second order change lists. Marzano

et al. (2005) stated, "We might infer that behaviors within these responsibilities are vital

to any type of change" (p. 72).

Four responsibilities were negatively correlated with second order change. These

were culture, communication, order, and input. This means that no matter what a leader

does, people will perceive these four areas as not being fulfilled. This does not mean that

these areas should be ignored, in fact, the authors proposed several actions that address

each of the four areas. Sharing these four responsibilities with others when leading

second order change is suggested (Marzano et al., 2007).

Marzano et al. (2007) contributed much to the knowledge base around leadership

and change. They were able to take decades of leadership research and put it into an

understandable framework that could be used to improve practice. They stated leaders

"accept responsibility for achieving results and create the necessary environments that

contribute to individual and organizational success" (Marzano et al., 2007, p. 5). The

authors went on to say that "most if not all standards for administrative performance will

be explicit regarding the need for leaders to deeply understand the change process" (p. 5).

Marzano et al. (2005) concluded their thoughts on leadership and change with the

following:

> The need for truly effective leaders is great. The time for improving our schools
> is short. The opportunity to lead is ours…we believe that the knowledge needed
> to make substantial, positive changes in the effectiveness of schools is available.
> The only thing left is to act. (p. 123)

Waters and Marzano and District Leadership

Waters and Marzano (2006) built on their meta-analysis of principal leadership

with an examination of the literature regarding district level leadership and specifically

superintendent leadership. Their meta-analysis involved studies that included nearly 3,000 school districts and over 3 million students. The study revealed three major findings:

1. District level leadership matters.

2. Effective superintendents focus their efforts on creating goal-oriented districts.

3. Superintendent tenure is positively correlated with student achievement.

District level leadership had a positive correlation of .24 with student achievement (Waters & Marzano, 2006). If increasing student achievement is ultimately the goal of any change in schools, then the implication is clear that what district level leaders do has an effect on change.

Waters and Marzano (2006) found five district level leadership responsibilities that had a statistically significant correlation with student achievement in their research stating that "all five of these responsibilities relate to setting and keeping districts focused on teaching and learning goals" (p. 3). The five responsibilities are:

1. Collaborative goal-setting: Including all relevant stakeholders, administrators, and board members in establishing goals for the district.
2. Non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction: Ensuring that the collaborative goal-setting process results in non-negotiable goals including achievement targets and research based instructional strategies.
3. Board alignment and support of district goals: Ensuring that the goals are the primary focus of the district's effort and no other initiative detract attention or resources from accomplishing the goals.
4. Monitoring goals for achievement and instruction: Continual monitoring of progress.
5. Use of resources to support achievement and instructional goals: Necessary resources are allocated to accomplish goals. (Waters & Marzano, 2006, pp. 3-4)

Along with the five responsibilities, Waters and Marzano (2006) also discussed the idea of defined autonomy. This is achieved when district leaders "set clear, non-negotiable goals for learning and instruction, yet provide school leadership teams with the responsibility and authority for determining how to meet those goals" (Waters & Marzano, 2006, p. 4).

Marzano and Waters (2009) identified these five responsibilities as concrete steps to take towards change and improvement and outline steps and actions leaders may take to achieve them. They cautioned, however, that they "believe that the initiatives discussed…represent second order change for the vast majority of districts in the United States" (p. 105). They went on to suggest several actions to address this second order change challenge. To illustrate the need for this, Marzano and Waters (2009) used the example of fighter pilots turning into the threat when faced with an enemy plane in combat. By being proactive in the change process, the leader has the ability to see the situation and make corrections and adjustments as needed much like the fighter pilot in the example.

The first recommendation from Marzano and Waters (2009) was that leaders must know the implication of the initiatives. District leaders must have a deep understanding of how second order change initiatives will affect stakeholders and "use this understanding to forecast and address potential problems" (p. 109).

Marzano and Waters (2009) offered the second recommendation of maintaining a united front. District leaders must show a positive unified front when others express doubts. District leaders will need to "be ready and willing to articulate the benefits" (p.

109) of the initiatives and "embrace the responsibility of continually inspiring administrators and teachers throughout the district regarding the importance of the changes being made and the potential benefits for students" (pp. 109-110).

Recommendation number three was to keep the big ideas in the forefront (Marzano & Waters, 2009). The authors delve into diffusion of innovations change theory when they recommend that leaders use what is known about acceptance of new ideas and communicate with sticky messages as recommendations four and five. Marzano and Waters (2009) use examples from Rogers and Gladwell to illustrate these two recommendations.

The final recommendation proposed by Marzano and Waters (2009) in dealing with second order change is to manage personal transitions or the internal changes in people. Managing transitions may be as important as managing the change itself. The authors suggested that leaders manage personal transitions the same way they would the process of grieving because for some individuals "second order change represents significant personal loss" (p. 112). Marzano and Waters (2009) suggested scheduling events to honor the past (both people and initiatives) and put a "ceremonial ending" (p. 112) to the things that are going to be left behind. This action helps people through their personal transition and sets the stage for "assimilating new knowledge and skills and building confidence in themselves and in the future" (p. 112).

DuFour and Marzano

DuFour and Marzano (2011) made a bold statement when they suggested that "every person who enters the field of education has both an opportunity and an obligation

to be a leader" (p. 1). DuFour and Marzano (2011) expanded on this idea when they noted that "leadership is ultimately about the ability to influence others" (p. 3) and stated that "effective leaders cannot accomplish great things alone" (p. 2), but rather "it will take a collaborative effort and widely dispersed leadership to meet the challenges confronting our schools" (p. 2).

DuFour and Marzano (2011) proposed that improvement requires a systematic collective effort rather than a series of isolated individual efforts. Building this collective capacity means providing the training, support, and resources necessary for successful change and giving people the freedom to act within a specific set of ground rules. This concept of simultaneous loose and tight leadership has been a backbone of the professional learning community work of DuFour. People feel empowered when they feel that their leader is committed to helping them.

Many recommendations on change leadership have been offered by DuFour and Marzano (2011), such as the idea that "the ability to articulate a realistic, credible, and attractive vision of the future that connects to the hopes and dreams of others is a defining skill of an effective leader" (p. 202). DuFour and Marzano expanded on the idea by stating that "effective leaders constantly remind people of the significance of their work" (p. 202). The best leaders link these two concepts, the vision and the importance of the work, helping to build a sense of empowerment and commitment. DuFour and Marzano did caution not to let vision, planning, and talk be a substitute for "purposeful action," but to "engage others in clarifying the very specific steps that must be taken" (p. 198).

DuFour and Marzano (2011) also stated that effective leaders "focus their attention...and hold themselves accountable for shaping the outcome with their actions" (p. 198) and "identify a few key priorities and pursue them relentlessly" (p. 40). Once these priorities are in place, effective leaders "monitor the degree to which priorities are understood and acted upon throughout the district" (p. 34). Effective change leaders also "recognize the importance of ongoing communication" (p. 42) throughout the change process. According to DuFour and Marzano (2011), leaders "create a common and widely understood language" (p. 34) and "demand solidarity of leadership" (p. 43) with this message. When the situation gets demanding and there is the inevitable push back that comes with second order change efforts, effective leaders demonstrate "confidence, resilience, and tenacity to persist" (p. 199).

The authors went further than others in the literature in the specificity of actions for change leadership. DuFour and Marzano (2011) explained their overall philosophy on change leadership when they stated that to become the best leader you can be you must be able to "demonstrate your confidence in the possibility of improvement through the collective efforts of those you lead by putting a process in motion to foster the necessary changes. Then begin to present concrete evidence that improvement is taking place. Celebrate the progress" (p. 200); and "you must fall in love with leading, with the purpose you serve, and the people with whom you work in fulfilling that purpose" (p. 197).

The authors recognized that change is learning and vice versa. This aligns well with the change concepts of Reeves (2006) and Bennis (1999) on leading and learning.

DuFour and Marzano (2011) instructed the change leader to "think of learning as the master skill of leadership, never stop learning about how to become more effective, and translate your learning to action" (p. 198).

DuFour and Marzano (2011) acknowledged the importance of a guiding vision and strong relationships consistent with the work of Bennis (2009), Fullan (1991), and Wagner (2001). The authors directed change leaders to:

> Link the vision of your district. . . to the hopes and dreams of those you serve. Work with a guiding coalition to develop the specific actionable steps you will take to move toward the vision. Then constantly remind your staff of the importance of their work by linking it to a higher purpose. (DuFour & Marzano, 2011, p. 203)

DuFour and Marzano (2011) gave a final recommendation by stating "don't hoard power; give it away. Don't view yourself as the heroic individual who will single-handedly improve your district. . . ; view yourself as a hero-maker who develops the leadership potential of those you serve." (p. 207). This is consistent with Collins' (2001a) ideas on focusing on the who not the what. It is also aligned with Covey's (1989) concept of synergy and the Wagner et al. (2006) S-U-R-E method.

It is this explicit advice that provides the most insight into the views of DuFour and Marzano on leadership and change. It is easy to recognize the findings of the research on second order change from Marzano's earlier work at both the building and district level and it is also easy to see the natural fit and usefulness that DuFour's professional learning community research has with it.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

<u>Introduction</u>

The transition from a system of one high school in a school district to two high schools would be classified as fundamental change (Cuban, 1996), second-order change (Marzano et al., 2005), or an adaptive challenge (Heifetz, 1997).   The challenges that go along with this process are complex. A review of the literature revealed a growing knowledge base on the educational change process, but a lack of research on the specific situation of adding a second high school to a district system. Leading a district through this type of change requires specific skills. Identifying these skills is an involved task. It requires observation and investigation to uncover and determine what those skills look like, what they are comprised of, and how they were utilized.

<u>Research Questions</u>

The following five research questions were used to frame this study:

1. What were the antecedents and major factors used to determine the need for a second high school?

2. How did district leaders plan for change?

3. How did district leaders lead the community through change?

4. What impact has this process had on the district leaders?

5.   What new challenges has this process brought about?

Research Design

The appropriate research design for this study was one of qualitative methods. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) described qualitative research as "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world" and "consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible" (p. 3). This world, in the case of a large suburban school system, is not a simple and orderly place. Berliner (2002) noted that "humans in schools are embedded in complex and changing networks of social interaction" (p. 19). He went on to say that "context is of such importance in educational research because of the interactions that abound" (p. 19). It is the task of the qualitative researcher then to "study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3).

Nelson, Treichler, and Grossberg (1992) attempted to describe qualitative study:

Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counterdisciplinary field. It crosscuts the humanities and the social and physical sciences. Qualitative research is many things at the same time. It is multiparadigmatic in focus. Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multimethod approach. They are committed to the naturalistic perspective and to the interpretive understanding of human experience. At the same time, the field is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions. (p. 4)

In order to more fully understand the political and social forces involved in the process of making a second order change in a school district, it was determined that qualitative methods would work best for this study.

Eisner (1998) identified six features of qualitative study. He first noted the idea that qualitative studies tend to be "field focused" (Eisner, 1998, p. 32). Qualitative educational researchers go to school buildings and offices and visit. The study is

"naturalistic" in the words of Lincoln and Guba (1985). The researcher observes, interviews, describes, and interprets the setting as it is. Eisner also described the idea that qualitative study relates to "the self as an instrument" (p. 33). The self can see what counts and what to neglect to make sense of the situation. In this study, the researcher planned meetings with the interviewees in their school or work setting. Through the filter of the self, the researcher would be able to provide individual perspective into the situation.

Eisner (1998) identified "interpretive character" (p. 35), the "use of expressive language" (p. 36), and "attention to particulars" (p. 38) as features of qualitative study. The researcher uses experience and meaning to explain why something happens in what Geertz (1973) called "thick description." This description is done in the voice of "a person, not a machine" (Eisner, 1998, p. 36) with attention to particular detail that helps people understand what others have experienced.

Eisner's (1998) final feature of qualitative study is "coherence, insight, and instrumental utility" (p. 39). The researcher relies on multiple forms of evidence and persuasion of usefulness by reason. There is no law or test to validate the study, rather "what counts is a matter of judgment" (p. 39). These six features of qualitative study were a part of this research.

The trustworthiness of qualitative research can be questioned by some due to a difference in paradigms. Those with a positivist view may have a difficult time with naturalistic work because their ideas on validity and reliability cannot be addressed in the same way as a constructivist (Shenton, 2004). Guba (1981) proposed four criteria to

address trustworthiness in a qualitative study. These four constructs are (a) credibility,

(b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability.

Credibility addresses the internal validity of the study (Guba, 1981). It involves

the criteria of ensuring that the study measures what it actually intended. Shenton (2004)

noted that multiple researchers argue that ensuring credibility is one of the most

important factors in establishing trustworthiness.

Transferability addresses the external validity of the study (Guba, 1981). External

validity is "concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to

other situations" (Shenton, 2004, p. 69). In qualitative study, the context of each

situation is unique so generalization can be complicated. Ultimately this means that it is

the responsibility of the researcher to provide enough contextual information to the

readers so that they may make their own decisions about transferring to other situations.

Shenton (2004) described this process:

> It is also important that sufficient thick description of the phenomenon under
> investigation is provided to allow readers to have a proper understanding of it,
> thereby enabling them to compare the instances of the phenomenon described in
> the research report with those that they have seen emerge in their situations. (p.
> 70)

Dependability addresses the issue of reliability and is closely related to credibility

(Guba, 1981). By addressing one the researcher also affects the other. Shenton (2004)

noted that "in order to address dependability the processes within the study should be

reported in detail" (p. 71). This would allow for replication of the study and also for the

reader to assess the quality of the research strategies.

Confirmability addresses the issue of objectivity (Guba, 1981). Confirmability means ensuring that the research findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants and not the preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). A key piece to this idea is that the researcher "admits his or her own predispositions…and beliefs underpinning decisions made and methods adopted should be acknowledged within the research report (Shenton, 2004, p. 72). This will serve to reduce the effect of bias and allow the reader to determine how reliable the study is (Shenton, 2004).

In order to ensure that this study meets accepted criteria for trustworthiness, the four constructs of Guba (1981) were employed. By remaining mindful of the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, it was the intent of the researcher to produce a trustworthy study.

<div align="center">Qualitative Case Study</div>

Baxter and Jack (2008) defined case study as "an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources" (p. 544). Yin (2003) stated that a descriptive case study approach should be considered when contextual conditions are relevant to the phenomenon being studied.

The purpose of this case study was to more fully understand the actions of district level leaders in a major change effort and their effects on the change process. The change in this case was the addition of a second high school to the district secondary school system. Data used for this study was collected from a variety of sources. An integral part of the case study was to gather data about what actions leaders took throughout the process and their perceptions of how these actions affected the change

process. In order to gain the insights and perceptions of those involved in the process, it

was necessary to use a technique that would provide significant depth of knowledge on

these insights and perceptions.   The specific ethnographic technique chosen in this case

was the semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interview methodology allowed

the researcher to more fully and accurately represent the district leaders' knowledge and

perception of the actions that they took throughout the major change process and how

these actions affected the change process.

<div align="center">Participant Selection and Description</div>

Purposive sampling was used when selecting participants for this case study.

Two criteria were utilized in selecting participants. The first criteria was being a member

of a district that had recently undergone the change of adding a second high school or

was currently in the process and the second was that participants needed to be district

level administrators. District level administrators in the Jackson Community School

district were chosen for this study as they fit the two identified criteria and the district

was of reasonable proximity to the researcher's home. Data emerged through the semi-

structured interview process that indicated the Jackson School Board President would

provide useful data for this study so he was added to this group. All participants were

volunteers. Participants were contacted individually through a letter of introduction,

spoken to with a follow up phone call, and were also asked to sign an informed consent

form in agreement with the Institutional Review Board requirements. The letter of

introduction can be found in Appendix A on page 163 and the informed consent form in

Appendix B on page 164. Each participant was informed of the efforts taken to protect

their anonymity.   Pseudonyms were used for all participants, the school district and buildings, and the community.

Superintendent

Lane has served as the district superintendent for one year. Prior to this position, he was an associate superintendent in the district for three years. In this role, he was charged with leading the transition process to a two high school system. He has previously served as an assistant superintendent in another rapidly growing suburban district where he was charged with opening and staffing new buildings. Lane also served as a teacher and a counselor in another large suburban district that went through the discussion of whether or not to split into a second high school.

Lane holds Master's Degrees in Counseling and Educational Administration. He received his doctoral degree from a local university. Lane has extensive experience in human resources as well as communications. He is a father of two and his wife is a teacher.

Former Superintendent

Brian served as the district superintendent for five years. He was directly involved in orchestrating the change effort to move to the two high school system. He has since taken a superintendency in another district in another state. Brian has over 20 years of educational experience in three different states. He has served as an English teacher and athletic coach, a building administrator, an assistant superintendent for teaching and learning, and a superintendent. Brian has also taught courses at the college and university level. In addition to this, he has served as a consultant to districts

experiencing increased student enrollment, boundary line adjustments, and the opening of new facilities.

Brian received his doctoral degree from a large university in a southern state. His dissertation was named dissertation of the year at that university seven years ago. Brian is married to a teacher and has two teenage children. He has been an active member of several professional organizations and served as a presenter at state and national conferences. He is also active in his community serving with the Chamber of Commerce, the local YMCA, and the United Way.

 Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

Katherine served as the district assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction during the change effort. She was in this role for four years before leaving to accept a superintendency in another district within the same state. Prior to serving in this district, Katherine worked in more than one state as a teacher at all levels including college and as a building principal. She served as the director of special education in the same large, rapidly growing suburban district that went through the discussion of whether or not to split into a second high school that Lane worked in.

She received her Ph.D in Educational Administration from a local university. Katherine is married and has a daughter in college.

Executive Director of Secondary Education

Rene served as the district executive director of secondary education for five years during the change effort. She will serve as the high school principal of the newest high school in Jackson when it opens during the 2013-2014 school year. Prior to these

positions, Rene served as an associate principal at the high school for six years. She has

previously taught math and computer science in another district within the state.

Rene is married and has two children who both graduated from Jackson High

School. She is the daughter of a public school teacher and athletic coach. Rene received

her doctoral degree in educational leadership from a local university 10 years ago.

Chief Financial Officer and Board Secretary

Ben served as the district chief financial officer and board secretary for five years

during the change effort. He has since taken a similar position in a different district that

is also having community conversations about adding a high school. Prior to his service

in the district, Ben worked in similar roles in two other districts in the state for 20 years.

Ben is considered one of the finest school finance experts in the state with a

detailed knowledge and understanding of the process of school funding. He has a Ph.D

in public administration, an MBA, a BA in business finance and a minor in computer

science, along with several accreditation certificates. Ben is married and has adult

children including a son who is a school business official.

Board President

David served on the Jackson School Board for seven years and held the position

of Board President during the last half of his tenure. It was during these seven years that

the plans for moving the district to a two high school pathway were created and

implemented. He was not re-elected in the fall of 2011.

David became interested in the School Board in 2004 when he had to move his

family across town and his children could not attend the same neighborhood elementary

school. Due to growth and space issues, along with district policies, it took almost 18 months before his children could all attend the same neighborhood school. This was a signal to him of the growth issues in front of the district and he had a desire to be a part of the solution.

David is married and has four children who are all in the Jackson school system. He moved to the community a little over 15 years ago. David is an executive leader for a major global company with management responsibility in Asia, Europe, and North America. He had prior experiences on multiple community boards before running for the Jackson School Board.

Community and School District Description

Jackson is a suburban Midwestern town of roughly 45,000 people that is part of a larger metropolitan area of around 700,000 inhabitants. Jackson offers excellent transportation access, quality land and buildings, a strong and vibrant economy, and a city government that supports business success. The city's website notes it is home to businesses in the area of bioscience, advance manufacturing, logistics, and also several corporate headquarters. Residential areas are clean, safe, and progressive. Numerous recreational and cultural opportunities help to create a high quality of life. The city has recently been listed in the *Money* magazine Top 100 Places to Live, was rated as the #1 Best for Young Professionals city by *Forbes* magazine, and was listed as the #1 Best City for Families by *Kiplinger's* magazine. This attractive list of amenities has contributed to the city's growth rate.

Jackson is home to a relatively young population base. The median age is 31.9 years. It is also a relatively affluent community with a median home value of $172,000 and median income of $71,000. This socioeconomic status is also reflected with the number of students eligible for the school district's free and reduced lunch program being at 11% when the state average is around 40%.

Jackson places a high degree of value on education. In fact, the city devotes a major link on its website to education and boasts that 81% of Jackson residents have completed at least some college coursework. A local community college and several other small colleges have campuses located in town.

The school district consists of nine neighborhood elementary buildings, four middle schools, and one high school with another that will open next year. District enrollment is near 9,400 students with an average yearly growth of more than 300 students over the last 10 years. Growth has necessitated planning and discussion for a tenth elementary building. A $16 million bond referendum was recently passed to provide funds for this building. Jackson is the eighth largest district in the state and is the third fastest in growth rate.

Jackson has a student population that is 93% White, 3% Hispanic, 2% African American, and 2% Asian or Pacific Islander. The district employs 1,172 people, including 595 teachers. Of these teachers, 54.7% hold a master's degree.

The district has a proud history of high student achievement and student engagement in activities. Jackson students routinely rank among the top in the state in achievement on standardized tests. In 2011-2012, 94.6% of 11th grade students were

proficient in reading and 92.2% were proficient in math. Of the students who took the ACT, 78.6% had a score of 20 or higher with the average composite score being 23.8. The most recent graduation rate of 97.4% ranked best among large schools in the state. The class of 2013 represents the 100th graduating class of the district.

District fine arts performance groups and athletic teams are a source of pride within the community of Jackson. Many of these groups and teams regularly compete for conference and state titles and draw large crowds of community members to their performances and contests. Last year, school athletic teams had 14 state tournament appearances, 12 top 10 finishes, and two state championships. Fine arts groups produced several division one ratings at state contests, multiple All-State selections, and three groups were ranked nationally.

<u>Data Collection and Analysis</u>

Yin (1994) identified the use of multiple sources of evidence in a converging manner as a technique of good case study. Data was collected in this case study through the use of school district documents, online website resources, online articles, and semi-structured interviews.

The school district made available documents produced and used throughout the change process such as a construction transition timeline document and the frequently asked questions document used to provide information to the public. These documents provided a wealth of data. The district also created a special website dedicated to providing information to the public about the change process that proved to be a rich

source of data. None of these sources, however, offered the deep insight or perception into the phenomenon that the interviews provided.

DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) described the interview as an effective qualitative data collecting method to learn about individual perspectives and experiences on a given set of issues. The technique "encourages the interviewee to share rich descriptions of phenomena while leaving the interpretation or analysis to the investigators" (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 314). Next to direct observation, it is identified as one of the best qualitative techniques that can provide the most information (Eisner, 1998).

The semi-structured interview is a data collection strategy for qualitative research that is "generally organized around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee" (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). Smith and Osborn (2008) noted that "this form of interviewing allows the researcher and participant to engage in a dialogue whereby initial questions are modified in the light of the participant's responses and the investigator is able to probe interesting and important areas which arise" (p. 57).

In a semi-structured interview there is an attempt to establish rapport with the respondent. The researcher has the freedom to ask follow-up questions and go deeper into a particular subject area. The researcher can also follow the interviewee's interests or concerns (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The semi-structured interview benefits noted by Smith and Osborn of greater flexibility of coverage, facilitating rapport and empathy,

allowing the interviewer to go into novel areas, and ultimately producing richer data helped the researcher to identify this method as the method of choice in this study.

Interviews were scheduled during the school day at the participants' place of work in order to accommodate the participants' schedule. Not all interviews occurred within the school district as some members had advanced their careers and moved to new positions. Interview questions were developed with the intent of exposing the perceptions of the participants regarding their actions in the change effort and the effects throughout the process. Constant comparative analysis guided the formation of the interviews. These interview questions can be found in Appendices C, D, and E beginning on page 167.

Digital audio recording was utilized for acquiring the data from the interviews along with field notes to identify any non-verbal elements of the interview. At the conclusion of the interview process, the researcher transcribed the interview data using the Dragon Dictation software application. The transcribed notes were provided to interviewees to conduct a member check.

The data was then organized and interpreted to tell the story of district level leaders moving a school district through fundamental change. Eisner (1998) described how to organize and interpret data through the use of themes or "those recurring messages construed from the events observed" (p. 189). Themes were allowed to emerge through the data collection process in the grounded theory tradition and the researcher interpreted the data through these themes. The software program Simple Concordance aided the researcher in identifying themes and coding the data. Constant comparison was

used to compare coded data with other data coded the same way to insure consistent coding.

<center>Researcher and Bias</center>

An important factor in ensuring that this study meets the accepted criteria for trustworthiness and specifically confirmability as defined by Guba (1981) is that the researcher must remain aware of potential bias when collecting and interpreting the data. The researcher grew up as the child of two professional educators. His father was a secondary math teacher and athletic coach before becoming an elementary principal, district superintendent, and college administrator during his career. His mother was a 5th grade teacher. The researcher attended the University of Northern Iowa as an undergraduate student on a Teacher Education full tuition scholarship. Later, he received his Master of Arts in Education degree and Advanced Studies Certificate from the same university. The researcher has 22 years of experience working in public schools. For 11 years he was a secondary science teacher. Three of those years were spent in a small district where he was the only member of the life science department. The rest of his teaching occurred in a large suburban high school. During that time, the researcher taught Biology, Honors Biology, Microbiology, Anatomy and Physiology, and Advanced Placement Biology. The researcher has a constructivist science teaching philosophy and a strong background in hands-on, inquiry-based teaching. Because the suburban district was in a university town, the researcher had the opportunity to work with numerous students who were preparing to become teachers and also mentor several student teachers.

During his 11 years of teaching, the researcher also served as an athletic coach in varsity football, track and field, and baseball. He had the opportunity to work with several team and individual conference champions, state champions, and all-state level performers. Through these experiences, he also worked with community supporters, athletic boosters, parent groups, and the state and local media.

The researcher then served as a high school associate principal in a large suburban district in a different community for five years. This role included many duties, some of which included: oversight of the 9th and 10th grade educational programs, evaluating teachers, creating the master schedule, supervising events, and representing the school in the community.

Over the last six years, the researcher has served as a central office administrator in that same large suburban district. In this role, he has many responsibilities including the PK-12 educational program (curriculum, instruction, assessment, testing), school improvement, staff and professional development, entitlement programs, career programming, the district calendar, enrollment, open enrollment, attendance exception requests, completing state and federal reports, and administrative staff evaluation.

During all but three of these years, the researcher has been in a Midwestern suburban school district that has been faced with growth issues. The researcher worked to ensure that the themes and findings that emerged from the interpretation of the data were based in the knowledge and perception of the participants and not from the biases of the researcher or other external influences.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

<u>Introduction</u>

This study aimed to recognize and comprehend the actions of district level leaders in a major change effort and their effects on the change process. In addition, this study was designed to provide added information about the factors that school district central office administrators face when making the decision to add another high school. Specifically, this study solicited the actions and reactions of the central office leaders to learn more about the actions taken by these administrators to lead the district through this change process. Five research questions were used to frame this study:

1. What were the antecedents and major factors used to determine the need for a second high school?

2. How did district leaders plan for change?

3. How did district leaders lead the community through change?

4. What impact has this process had on the district leaders?

5. What new challenges has this process brought about?

Several analysis procedures were utilized to reveal the findings presented in this chapter. The questions that were chosen for the semi-structured interviews were coded and aligned with the five guiding research questions. These questions and their alignment to the research questions can be found in Appendices C, D, and E beginning on page 167. The interviews were then conducted and transcribed. The iPad application Dragon Dictation was used to assist in the transcription process. The researcher was able

to listen to the recording of the interview on a digital audio recorder and repeat the

contents into the iPad microphone which recorded the data in one minute segments.

Dragon Dictation used voice recognition software to turn the researcher's speech into

text. The researcher could then email the text file to a Google mail account and then cut

and paste it into a Microsoft Word document. After the entire interview was transcribed

in this manner, the researcher then went back through the interview on the digital audio

recorder and edited the text as needed. Dragon Dictation is designed to learn a voice over

time and the speech to text process then improves. This is exactly what occurred. Later

interviews transcribed more smoothly with fewer mistakes. The process was never

perfect and required much editing, but it surely saved time.

At this point each transcription was read and reread keeping track of key words

and themes that emerged. The researcher used colored sticky notes to denote segments of

text that matched the emerging themes. Colored highlighting was also used to

accomplish the same goal. In addition to this, the technique of memoing and writing

notes in the margins of the transcriptions in order to document the researcher's thinking

was used. Simple Concordance, a concordance software program was utilized to further

examine the data. This program generated a frequency analysis of the words in the

transcribed interviews and also a series of KWIC (key word in context) reports. This

process allowed the researcher to verify the work that had been completed manually. The

program also allowed a concordance analysis among all of the transcribed interviews of

the key words that had been indentified to be completed. This analysis report allowed the

researcher to further explore and identify the emerging themes. Tables were also used to

sort and group the data and the emerging themes. The compilation of all of these coding methods allowed the researcher to fully analyze the data and confirm the themes that had emerged.

The findings of this study were organized and presented around the five research questions and the three themes that emerged through the well-grounded process. The findings presented in this study were derived from the knowledge and perceptions of the participants. These findings based on the data collected from this research were presented in this chapter.

<div align="center">Research Site</div>

Jackson is a busy, energetic small city located very near the largest city in a Midwestern state. It is well kept and clean. Due to the rapid rate of growth and the construction that goes hand in hand with that, it has the general feel of something that is new. As you drive into town, many of the buildings are noticeably new construction. In fact many whole sections of town are relatively new. It is impossible not to notice that people in Jackson take great pride in their city. The streets are clean, yards are manicured, and there is a real sense of order. The community has been well planned. There are parks and recreation trails, a large newer library, facilities dedicated to youth sports, and of course schools.

Jackson clearly values its schools. Street signs guide you to the schools and the buildings themselves are mostly new. Those that are not new have been recently remodeled. There is one symbol that speaks louder than any words could about the pride the community feels in relation to the school system. As you drive down the main street

in Jackson, there is a towering three story lighted electronic sign made of brick with the school name and the word "Champions" along with a list of all of the state championships the school has won over the years. The fact that the sign dominates the landscape of the main thoroughfare in town tells you exactly where the community places the school system in its hierarchy of values.

The Jackson school district contains a population of over 9,000 students. The enrollment numbers are much larger in the elementary grades than in secondary. This year's senior class is around 550 students and the incoming kindergarten class is just over 900 students. Nine elementary schools serve the district's prekindergarten through fifth grade students, with a 10th scheduled to be built in the next year. There are two buildings that serve sixth grade and seventh grade students, two buildings that serve eighth grade and ninth grade students and one high school that serves 10th grade through 12th grade students. A second high school will open in the fall of 2013. The student population is made up of 7% minority students, 11% of the district's students qualify for free or reduced lunch, 8% receive special education services, and 1% are classified as English language learners. The district is projected to grow to over 13,000 students over the next 10 years.

Students in Jackson perform at a high level. The district graduation rate is 92.87% which is the highest among the 10 largest districts in the state. Nearly 82% of the students who took the ACT exam had a composite score of 20 or higher. The district was identified as an Advanced Placement (AP) Honor Roll school, one of only 11 in the state. Of last year's senior class, 90% intended to pursue postsecondary education. Last

year, school athletic teams had 14 state tournament appearances, 12 top 10 finishes, and two state championships. Fine arts groups produced several division one ratings at state contests, had multiple All-State selections, and three groups were ranked nationally.

<div align="center">Participants</div>

Central office administrators who were involved in the change process of moving to a two high school pathway system in Jackson at the time it was designed and implemented were involved in this study. The superintendent, all cabinet members, and a central office administrator who will become the new high school principal were all part of semi-structured interviews designed to reveal information about the change process of moving to a two high school pathway. The Board President at the time of the transition work was added to this group as data emerged through the other interviews that indicated he had information that was important to the study. The leadership team at the Jackson school district has not remained static. Six months before the opening of the school district's second high school, not one of the district leaders in place during the decision making process of moving to the two high school pathway was still in the same position. In fact, only two were still associated with the school district at all.

Lane

The current Superintendent of the Jackson school district was very open to the idea of being involved in the study. There was never any hesitation when he was asked to participate. This was a concern of the researcher due to the fact that this was his first year as superintendent and the issue of a two high school pathway had previously been a divisive community issue. To add to this concern, Lane was in the home stretch of

leading a campaign for a $16 million bond referendum to build a new elementary school. He had a lot on his plate during the first months of his job as superintendent.

Lane had an employment history that seems tailor-made for the role he has now assumed. His teaching, counseling, and administrative experience has all been in large suburban school districts that were rapidly growing and adding school buildings. As the assistant superintendent in Jackson for the last three years, he was charged with leading the transition process to a two high school system.

Lane was very proud of the story that he had to tell and eager to tell it. Although he was exceptionally busy in his role as superintendent of the eighth largest district in the state, he went out of his way to accommodate the researcher in our interview process. Lane's administrative assistant, whom he credited with keeping him organized throughout the whole transition process, was also very helpful in coordinating schedules and communication.

Brian

The district Superintendent at the time of most of the transition work was a little more difficult to get in touch with. He has since moved on to another job as superintendent in a large suburban district in another state. He was, however, extremely interested in participating and very candid and helpful.

Brian's five years in the Jackson district were defined by change. The district leadership team was reorganized including the addition of several new positions. The curriculum at all levels was reviewed, renewed, and implemented. He worked behind the scenes to help pass the largest bond referendum in state history before he even officially

started his job with the district. And of course the two pathway system was finalized and implemented. Through this relatively short period of time he worked for 14 different Board members.

Brian placed a high value on communication and building relationships. Much of our discussion centered on these two areas. He was also a staunch supporter of public education, noting the responsibility school leaders have in educating the public on important education topics.

Katherine

The Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction during the time period of transition work has also since moved on to another job. She has taken a position as superintendent in a different district about 50 miles away from Jackson. This new job allowed her to work in the same community as her husband.

Katherine was the only female member of the superintendent's cabinet at Jackson. She was charged by the Board with completely overhauling and updating the district curriculum within a four year time span. She was able to build a curriculum department team to assist with this work and credits those teammates with the success of the effort.

Katherine met with the researcher at her office in her new district. Like the other members of the Jackson leadership team, she was very forthright and openly answered all of the questions that were asked in the interview, even when they were difficult to discuss. This honesty and openness helped to paint a better picture of the process of change in Jackson.

<u>Rene</u>

Rene was the Executive Director of Secondary Education during the time of transition work. She has since been named as the principal for the new high school opening next fall. She proved to be extremely helpful for many reasons. The largest of these was the fact that she has been in the district and associated with the high school since 1997. This sense of history offered a perspective unique to the group. It also extended the timeline of knowledge of the change process and filled in several gaps because the other major players in leadership were relatively new to the district.

Rene was very passionate about the community of Jackson. Her two boys both graduated from Jackson High School. Her excitement about the opening of the second high school was palpable. Her pride regarding the work that had been done could be heard in her answers during our discussions. Her frustration with some of the stumbling blocks along the way that she felt were avoidable was also evident.

Rene was straightforward, transparent, and honest in our discussions. At times she hesitated when pushing into delicate territory, but ultimately she chose to say exactly what she thought. This uninhibited style of discussion provided rich data about the change process in Jackson.

<u>Ben</u>

Ben was the Chief Financial Officer for the district during the time of transition. He described walking into a business operations department that had no systemization and a "mom and pop" mentality. His first six months on the job were spent developing

plans for the district to finance the evolving facilities plan and putting systems in place for the department.

Ben was very frank in our discussions and did not hesitate to disclose his opinions. He shared information that was difficult for him to discuss at times. Throughout all of our discussions, he chose to focus on the positive rather than dwell on negatives.

He has since taken a job as the Chief Financial Officer in another larger district in the state. This growing district is involved in community discussions about adding another high school.

David

The Jackson School Board President during the period of transition planning was also very helpful in this research. He is a very busy professional who is in charge of global operations at his international company, yet he made the time to speak with the researcher about the transition process.

We met at a restaurant that David owned before it was open for business. His eyes lit up as he described the plans and progression of the change process to the two high school pathway system. He could recite precise details off the top of his head. His passion for Jackson and the school system could be heard in his interview answers.

Parts of this discussion surely were uncomfortable for him because it involved the end of his Board term and the campaign that he lost. Like the other participants, David was unguarded, sincere, and spoke from the heart. The Board leadership perspective that he provided proved to be extremely valuable.

Research Question 1

What were the antecedents and major factors used to determine the need for a second high school?

Each of the participants was able to identify several factors that they felt led to the transition to a two high school pathway. Rene, who will be the principal of the new high school building, was able to incorporate some community history and provide context for how the process started, "What I see is that Jackson is built on a very solid, firm foundation of doing what is right for kids. That is the basis of everything that happens in this district." She went on to explain that it was this solid foundation that allowed for the discussion of a two high school pathway to begin. Ben, the Chief Financial Officer, echoed this sentiment, "Expectations are very, very high in Jackson. And so that is a huge strength in my opinion because they're involved and they are passionate about their kids' learning."

The most obvious factor influencing the need for a second high school was the growth of the student population. Jackson as a community had grown from a population of around 27,000 in 2000 to more than 45,000 in 2010. Former Board President, David, described this growth, "And in some ways during this time period from 2000 on I have almost kind of characterized Jackson as growing from a town into a city." With this growth came students. The district hired a demographer to help them sort out what was happening. Ben shared his perspective on this:

> One of the things Brian realized early on was our need for a demographer. And Jackson had never used a demographer to project enrollment before. And so he got Bob Smith out of Olathe, Kansas. And Bob came up and he did a study for us. And he became our annual demographer and that was a stroke of genius in

my opinion. He actually was able to quantify… here's what we're going to grow… and that really helped us establish within the community a sense of urgency. When we got there our kindergarten class celebrated 600, a couple years later we celebrated 700, and then a couple years later we celebrated 800 in the kindergarten class. And we were growing phenomenally in the elementary level, but that hasn't really been seen in the secondary yet. So people didn't feel a sense of urgency so much. And so they knew they needed another elementary and that was part of this $83 million bond referendum, but the city and the community hadn't really been educated that you're exploding. Here it was that mom-and-pop shop mentality… we're just a little community and we just all love and hug and everything is fine, but it wasn't. There was this huge tsunami coming at them and they were blissfully not wanting to deal with it, honestly. And so by bringing in Bob he really elevated the conversation.

Lane, the district Superintendent, felt that the numbers spoke for themselves and that there was never really any doubt about the decision to be made:

We know from our work with the demographer that Jackson cannot remain one school. At some point it was going to have to become a two high school two feeder school system. The only question is when and whether it occurs in 2013, which we will open on August 15, or some people wanted it three or four years later. The decision had to be made…

Katherine, the Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, shared Lane's perspective, "Well, you know I think it was inevitable. I don't think it was really a question of if it was going to happen. I think the question was really when it was going to happen. Because you know we had… we were adding 400 new kids basically, 300 to 400 a year."

David agreed:

And I think everyone also understood from a K-12 perspective we were way over capacity through the whole system. So there wasn't that much to convince them that we are out of space. Everyone kind of knew that, but I would say over like a three month window telling people like how… not how bad, but how critical we were and what was coming. I mean, we were graduating classes in the 400s and we are having kindergarten classes in the 700s. And that in a matter of just several years this whole tsunami was coming through the system and you had to prepare now for that throughout the whole place.

Former Superintendent, Brian, described how this raised the stakes on the discussion to add a second high school:

> We worked really well together with the Board at that time. We used the demographer with student enrollment. And you know I think I would say to you that there was… there were some initial plans in place and I took those initial plans with our staff and the current Board and we just… we just took it to another level.

Rene divulged that some early discussions indicated a community desire for a mega high school. "As we looked to those enrollment numbers, we thought, wow, mega really is mega and you still have a ton of room for development in Jackson," she shared. "So that growth factor played a huge role in saying let's not be shortsighted here."

A second major factor in the two high school decision was the increase in opportunities for students. Lane stated:

> The consistent message that I heard was that the Board and the former superintendent believed that kids had greater opportunity and that would not only include, you know, activities and athletics, but also academics. We believe that kids would receive a more personalized education in a smaller high school. Right now we have a high school of 1,700 to 1,800. In the next year we will open two high schools that will be between 900 and 1,000.

Rene added something similar when she stated, "People want their kids to be known and there was a sense that that couldn't happen in a large school. People said, 'Gosh if we can double those experiences for kids?'" David described the importance of this concept calling it, "an equal capability to perform and compete and offer both activities as well as academic programs." Current Superintendent, Lane, agreed, "I think the impetus of going to a second high school was opportunity academically and in extracurriculars."

Former superintendent, Brian, shared a story to demonstrate this:

People came up to me, Dirk, and would say, you know, 'Our basketball team has been four years state champions in girls and they've had so many great opportunities.' My standard answer was, 'That's exactly why we're going to the second high school.' We wanted to double that. Why wouldn't we view it as Jackson versus Jackson in the state championship?

Lane summarized the factor of increased opportunities for all Jackson students with the following:

Our attitude and really the purpose behind not only the size aspect, but a second high school, a second eight/nine, is to provide those kids more opportunities to participate. We realize that we are limited in the number of kids that can compete. By doubling, it's just that many more kids. We believe strongly that kids that are involved in extracurricular activities, whether it be, you know, the arts or athletics, they do better.

Jackson is a young community. The median age of its population is under 32 years. It was rated as the #1 Best for Young Professionals city in America by *Forbes* magazine. The values these young community members possess was a third factor in the decision to move to a two high school system. David shared:

And now a lot of new people are coming in not only from around the state, but from out of state that were bringing families here. I think there is just as much if not more people who have lived here five years or less than have lived here 10 years or more.

Ben, former CFO, described the differences among the growing population when it came to the school system:

Brian and I nicknamed it Old Jackson, New Jackson, because you had these new parents over here that are clamoring for more participation, more inclusion, opportunities for their kids etc… Then you had Old Jackson that was tied up with tradition and there's no way that we can split into two high schools. We will devastate our sports program and there will be fighting in the community and all that kind of stuff. And we quickly learned that there was a strong division and that division manifested itself on the Board.

Former superintendent, Brian saw this same difference among those who had

resided in Jackson for a long period of time and the newer residents:

> You take what I just said, all of its people, all of its traditions and then you mix it
> with all of these new 20 and 30 year olds moving in who not only didn't know
> about the traditions, but they really didn't care. They wanted to start their own
> and they were more interested… you know, the older 'Jacksonites' and the alumni
> wanted to win state championships. The new folks moving to town, they wanted
> a quality education with opportunities for their kids and if that meant two of
> everything…

Ultimately, there were many factors that led to the decision to add a second high

school in Jackson. Student population growth and lack of classroom space, increased

opportunities for students in academics and activities, and the values of the younger

community population were identified by the district leaders as being the most powerful

factors.

<u>Research Question 2</u>

How did district leaders plan for change?

Successfully implementing a major change such as adding a second high school

required a great deal of planning. Rene and David were the only two members of the

central office leadership team who were in the community when the planning really

started. Rene said, "When I came to Jackson 15 years ago, I'll never forget the assistant

principal at the time said to me, 'We have got to get two high schools in this town.' We

needed two high schools, but no one was doing anything about it." The district had a

facilities committee made up of community members, parents, and school district staff. It

was through this committee that the first real conversations about a second high school

started. Rene remembered the issues of those days, "At that time the question was, 'Do

we go with one mega high school, or do we go to two smaller high schools?' People

thought it might turn out that we would have two 3A high schools."

The district superintendent retired at that time and Jackson turned to a local leader

from a nearby fast growing district to serve as an interim superintendent for one year.

The facilities committee had morphed into a task force by 2006. Former superintendent

Brian described this group, "There was a task force. While they were looking for a new

superintendent, the interim superintendent assisted in a task force kind of defining the

future of Jackson and what we're going to do. I think there were 40 or 50 people on this

task force." David, the former Board President, elaborated on this:

> And so in 2006 we put together about a 50 to 60 person community group to look
> at our facility needs. I would probably say that just under half of those were
> school district employees and then a little over half of them were various people,
> senior citizens, parents, we tried to get a good cross-section. Their goal was to lay
> out a 10 year plan, which we didn't have in the school district. We didn't have a
> 10 year plan. We had a little bit of land that we owned, but there wasn't a plan on
> what we would need to become and how stressed we were growth-wise and what
> that next decade looked like.

It was at this time that the district began working with the demographer to provide

what the 10 year growth was going to look like. David described this, "They studied and

worked with the city and the large companies to kind of lay out what the growth is going

to look like. Where it is going to occur. What that meant for our student population K-

12. Excellent job. We had a map."

It was apparent to the committee that there would need to be several new school

buildings built and others renovated and all of this would require a major bond

referendum. "We kind of got in a little trap where we used PPEL money to help with

new construction rather than using those monies to keep our current facilities up to date,"

David explained, "and so all of that money was gone and spoken for." Ben remembered the committee and its role, "And this steering committee for the community was made up of about 25 community members and it had Board representation on it. The charge of this committee was to basically come up with the framework of how to manage growth and then be the champions behind this $83 million bond referendum."

That bond referendum was the largest in state history at the time. Bond referendums in this state require a super majority of 60% to pass. It passed in the spring of 2006 by 16 votes. Rene remembered, "And it was really during her year interim where we passed a bond issue that created this two high school concept. It was the bond issue that started this building." There was, however, some confusion surrounding the bond issue. Rene shared, "As I recall, our plan was, we will build this one and two years later we will build the other. But there are some people in our community who remember that differently. And they believed that when they voted for the bond issue it was not necessarily for the two high schools." Ben described the intricacy of this issue:

> Some on the committee envisioned that there would be a… I think it was an 8-12 facility built somewhere in the community, probably in the subdivision where we ended up putting it. And there would be one building. And then I think there was a general understanding that we would then make that the comprehensive high school and it would still be a one high school system. I never really quite grasped how all this happened, but there was… the interim superintendent in her way of getting this thing done… was able to balance both sides of this equation and get this moved out to the community. Like I said it barely passed, but it passed. And yet when we went to implement this plan it was clear that this committee was split 13-12 right down the middle. And that half of the people thought we're going to have a one high school system and the other half of the people thought we're going to have a two high school system.

Brian elaborated further:

And what I learned over time was that at that last meeting, half the people got up and went home and believed that we were going to have one high school and when it was time to have a second high school, the community would be told and there would be a vote on it. The other half got up from the task force and said, 'Well we're going to have one high school built and we are on a pathway to the second high school. It's basically already approved and we just need to find a way to finance it.'

This misunderstanding of events created a difficult situation for the district leadership team. Rene said, "That has created some tension there." David added," That was a critical issue, in my opinion, that caused a lot of… a lot of concern and discord around the community." Ben shared, "And so all of a sudden there became this huge split within the community, one high school, two high schools. And we were thrust right in the middle."

The misunderstanding was not due to a lack of effort in communication. There were community forums, discussions, newspaper articles, and according to David, "Actually it was everywhere you could look…it was a lot of information being put out there so the discussion of our situation, the pros and cons of the various plans were being put out in the community and allowed pretty good feedback from a lot of people."

David offered a little more clarity into the situation, "Well, I never truly felt that there was a majority of town that supported any one particular plan. I believe there was a majority that agreed that we eventually would need a two high school system." He described the sentiments of the committee:

And then the timing of when it [second high school] was going to open was the other one. And so at the time we would seem to be able to get the 60 member committee or so, I think it was 84% taking a straw pool agreed that if our growth continued that within 10 years we would need it. And so we reached a consensus

on that but if you pick any particular time period, there was a lot of discussion around that.

At this time, Brian was hired as superintendent in Jackson. The bond issue had been passed, but the issue of one high school or two was still up in the air. Brian described this situation:

> Probably still today there'll be people tell you that, 'You know, we were told we're going to build one new high school and when it is time to build a second high school we were told we get to vote on it.' And then you've got people that sat in a lot of committee meetings or task force meetings and said, 'You know, there's no question that we are going to go to a second high school. We're on the pathway. The only thing we need to do…we agree philosophically…we just need to decide when and how we are going to pay for it.' Those things were not decided when I got there. In fact, you know, we didn't know how we were going to build that second high school when I arrived.

So the first thing that needed to happen was for the district to develop a financial plan for funding the necessary buildings. Ben shared his thoughts on his first days on the job, "I saw a plan, a facility plan that they had projected out that was not fundable.   We were about $13 million short of it all fitting together.   We didn't have a long-range plan of projections for our growth. We didn't have enough cash in bank, we were borrowing money."   When asked how he dealt with this, he replied, "I literally took long walks. You'll find that amusing, but honest-to-goodness, Dirk, I would leave the office in the middle of the day because I was so overwhelmed by the enormity of the puzzle." Ben continued, "And I would walk, and I would walk, and I would walk, and I would think about scenario, after scenario, after scenario. And then I would go back to the office and I would put them into the computer." By January, Ben had 30 or more scenarios to fund the facilities plan for the Board to decide on. This plan included finances, buildings,

locations, time frames, and grade configurations. Ben's pride regarding this plan that had

required such hard work could be heard as he described the result:

> It took six months basically for me to come up with that plan, present it to cabinet, get our leadership team up to speed on all the scenarios behind it, present it to the Board, get the Board on board and then we had that framework on which to start. So that was kind of how it all came about. It was… it was incredible.

This financial plan allowed for the construction of the current Jackson High

School along with a new elementary school and renovations to several buildings, but

could not solve the issue of funding another high school building. It was not until the

state changed the one cent sales tax law that things began to accelerate with the second

high school. It was the Board that started the process in motion.

> Ben described the Jackson Board of Education at that time:

> Four progressive young New Jackson people actually got on the Board. And after that every four to three vote that took place for the next four years that they were on the Board was in favor of a two high school system. Had that not occurred Jackson wouldn't have, I'm convinced, two high schools because Old Jackson wouldn't have permitted it.

Brian communicated a great deal of gratitude to the Board in place at the time of

these decisions:

> Those Board members and the four that were there when we made this decision, were heavily involved, they were engaged in the process, they knew why we were doing it, they understood and had an appreciation for not only the past and the present, but the future. They were big picture thinkers and I never once doubted their loyalty and their commitment not just to me but to our vision. And that made my job much easier.

The law change allowed districts to bond against future sales tax revenue. The

Board decided to propose a revenue purpose statement to the community that would

allow them to bond for new buildings. A revenue purpose statement only requires a

simple majority to pass as opposed to the super majority needed for a bond referendum.

Needless to say, the revenue purpose statement passed. David described this as the

biggest wildcard in this process, "That was a huge gift. I could not imagine after passing

the $83 million bond if we would have had to bond for another middle school, two

elementaries and another high school and another major renovation. I don't know that the

community… it would've been too much overload."

The Board, led by the majority four New Jackson members, made the decision to

fund the second high school along with a second middle school and an elementary school

by bonding against one cent sales tax revenues. This move allowed them to fund these

projects of up to $65 million without going to a community vote. This was the turning

point in the two high school pathway process. From this point on, there was really no

longer a question of if there would be two high schools. The conversation now changed

to the details of when, where, and how.

In tandem with this work, Brian was creating his leadership team, "The planning

certainly started when I hired my administrative staff.   I had to make some tough

decisions about folks at the district office. We had to make some changes in several key

areas." Ben talked about this team, "We had a good strong administrative team and some

internal restructuring helped with the load and responsibilities." It was not necessarily an

easy task. "And so from the very get go, the very first thing that we did was take a look

at the organizational chart and there were huge holes in the organizational chart." It was

necessary to bring people on board and create a system to support the needs of the

district.

Ben had developed and implemented the financial plan that had included land sales and purchases. He worked with the wealthiest man in the state to procure land for the secondary buildings at a price of $117,000 per acre. So the question of where was taken care of.

The task force committee in 2006 had proposed that any student in elementary school would be part of the two high school system and those in secondary would finish with the one high school system. This set the timeline for the class of 2014 to be the first class to graduate in a two high school system. So the question of when was taken care of.

How this change was going to happen was a monumental task. Lane was assigned to facilitate this transition, "We defined our goals of what we wanted and our objectives and if you start with the end in mind, I won't say it's easy, but it's easier to know what direction you're going." He described the basics of his strategy:

> I intentionally went to a very large committee structure. And I had 60 people engaged in that committee. At that point I involved every secondary administrator. I involved 20 parents and community members and I involved 20 teachers. And we had different groups do different work and then they met as subcommittees.

Communication was a key. Lane said, "We communicate a lot." He described his methods for communicating to stakeholders:

> Each person has a different lens or paradigm in which they view things. And so we spent a lot of time asking ourselves, 'What do kids want to know about this?' And we met with kids and we said, 'What are some answers you need?' We met with parents, we met with teachers, and those meetings helped us form the questions and then begin to answer a lot of the details. And a lot of times we didn't have the answer and we would tell people we don't know but through this process we will come to an answer and let you know.

Rene described the communications plans. "We went out and talked to every civic group in town. I think that we had a calendar of 48 different events that we went to. Lunches, dinners, talking to people about that transition." Brian expressed his thoughts on communication in a very animated way:

> There was some very good communication. Newsletters, special brochures created PowerPoint presentations. I was on the road. I felt like at times I was a traveling evangelist trying to get people baptized into the two high school merge. So you do a lot of that. Mornings, late evenings, every lunch hour you can. You just try to keep people abreast and involved and engaged because not everybody is going to make the decisions. Not everybody has a vote. Not every person is going to even be able to provide at the table their input.

Katherine added, "I think trying to be just as transparent about any of the decisions that had to be made was very important." Rene agreed, "Attend to the needs of the people in the process and that means taking time to listen and hear where they are coming from and think about how that looks from your perspective."

There were many details to be planned regarding the construction of buildings and the eventual move to the new facilities. The D3 committee was formed out of this need for precise planning. Lane ironically described D3 as "the committee that was not planned." D3 stands for details, details, details. This committee covers things from fixtures, furniture, and equipment to packing boxes.

Brian felt strongly that the most important group in the change process was the students, "There's all these folks to take care of the building. At that point I thought it was important to turn our attention to what was in the best interest of students. And to truly make this the smoothest transition for kids as possible." He met in small groups with every student who will be a senior in 2013 to discuss their needs and questions.

Katherine shared, "I think that was really, really important because the kids felt like they had ownership in it."

Staffing the buildings was another very important step in the planning process. Lane's background in human resources was a strength area. "The key for me is hiring great people," he shared. "My background in HR has allowed me to see the difference of hiring a good person versus a great person. And I am able to have a big impact on a greater number of people by the people I hire."

Lane summed up the planning process, "Things need to be strategic…and if you can answer those questions about why and who and for whom, then it's just a lot of work." He talked about the amount of details involved in planning a process like this:

> To operate a second high school from a curriculum standpoint is very extensive versus any other grade level. So I think that probably is when I say details, all of the different areas from finance to curriculum to staffing. I don't think even though that I had been in public and private education for 22 or 23 years that I could anticipate all of the details.

Lane identified this as an ongoing process, "As of today, I still learn something new and something that I haven't thought of. I am sure that we will get to the end and say, 'Oh, we didn't think of that.' High schools in and of themselves are unique."

<div align="center">Research Question 3</div>

How did district leaders lead the community through change?

Change of this magnitude required considerable leadership skills and actions from each of the participants. Brian described the expectations, "There isn't a community school district in the country today where people don't expect transparency. They expect engagement and involvement." David emphasized the importance of leadership in the

process when he said, "None of this would have ever happened if you didn't have strong leadership on both your school board and administrative team." Katherine cautioned that you need to be okay with making difficult decisions, "because you've got to make some decisions that are not going to make everybody happy." She added, "It's not for the weak of heart." Rene highlighted the importance of knowing the culture of the community, "Developing your plan and communication within that culture. Not that you don't try and change it, but I think you have to start with where your people are at." Each of the participants offered several personal examples of leading the community through this process.

Former superintendent Brian described the importance of building relationships with community leaders:

> I think that's extremely important…that when you're at the top of the agency or the organization that the top people in other governmental agencies and other organizations that are important to the vision of the school district… but you know superintendents have to drink a lot of coffee and sit down and eat lunch with a lot of folks.

Brian even started a monthly joint leadership team meeting with city officials. He stressed how valuable this strong relationship was to the change process:

> And I can't underscore the importance of having a strong relationship enough. It doesn't mean we agreed on everything. In fact there were times when we adamantly disagreed. And it was hard, you know, we just agreed that we weren't going to support each other on this issue publicly. We would just be silent. But sometimes silence is… silence is always going to be better than negative comments.

Early on in the change process, Brian identified the need for strong communications among all stakeholders. It was this need that guided him to the decision to hire a district communications director. This director proved to be a valuable asset.

"His skill set is in the creation of communication venues and items and he is fabulous at that," stated Rene.   His ability to focus on communication ensured that important information was available and delivered to the community. Brian was heavily involved in this communication process, "It wouldn't be a stretch to say that I had, over five years, over 100 community forums, and staff meetings. I spoke to everyone." This communication effort went both ways, "I mean I was being invited, obviously, to many of these events. We also took the initiative."

The Board had made the ultimate decision to move to the two high school pathway, but Brian was the symbol of implementation. "It was like a tattoo and people knew it," he illustrated. In some cases this was a good thing and in others it was not. When describing discussions with elementary parents, Brian said, "Most of them were excited." Secondary discussions were not always as positive. Ben shared, "As the superintendent he had to keep going out and meeting with coaches and I mean they would just… if they could, they would have thrown knives at him because they simply didn't want this to happen."

Despite this resistance, Brian kept things moving forward, "I had a job to do and once I make my mind up it is the right thing for young people, I will communicate the reasons why that is. I will communicate and continue to ask the district and all staff to support it." Brian discussed issues and kept people updated and included as many people as possible in the effort. "We wanted to include everyone that wanted and desired to be a part of the process." Ultimately, Brian was "full throttle ahead" in implementing the two

high school pathway. Channeling Jim Collins, he said, "So, you either get on the bus and find your right seat, or at the next bus stop you need to get off."

Rene had the closest association within the community, having lived there for 15 years. To capitalize on this, she was assigned to be the leadership side of the communications effort. She described working with the communications director and how this came about:

> His comfort is in being given tasks and making those happen. But leading people and all of that was really not something he was interested in. He would prefer… that would be fearful for him, uncomfortable. I have no idea how to create a flyer that is going to hook an audience. He can do that. In that sense we were a great team.

Together they created Transition Central, a website loaded with information about the change to the two high school system. Rene described the functionality of the site:

> If you look at Transition Central there are four quadrants to pick depending on who you are. So students, if you go here you are going to see a very student friendly bit of information. Community same, staff information, you have to log in. That's going to show you how to label your box, pack your box to get it moved. Students and parents don't need that level of detail but they want to know. At that time we had an address tool where they can enter the address and it would tell them what their feeder would look like because they wanted to know that.

Rene was the champion of Transition Central. She described her actions with a great deal of passion:

> I would say, 'Okay Transition Central is going to be born… and we cannot say Transition Central enough. Every conversation you have with people I want to hear the words Transition Central. I want every staff member in this district to have it linked to their e-mail.' It's at the bottom of every e-mail. I was the one that was probably tenacious about it. If we are going to have it we've got to take people to it. Check out Transition Central. Let's not just create it and have it sit there. We have to help people get to it.

At the same time as the transition work was occurring, the district was on an aggressive four year curriculum cycle. This was important work to get academics updated and standardized across the district as the two pathway system came on board. Rene helped lead the secondary side of this, "So it was so important to me that we have a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all students.   It didn't matter what your address was what curriculum you were going to get."

Rene was named the principal of the new high school a year ahead of the opening and has spent the last nine months preparing for the transition. This has included hiring staff, furnishing the building, and planning for the move, among a myriad of other tasks. Dividing up the staff, hiring 23 new staff members and making sure that both buildings had teachers with the necessary certifications to teach all of the courses that the community expects was a big job. They were able to honor the requests of 112 of 115 teachers. All staff members were individually notified before winter break so that they would have time to process things personally and with their families. Rene shared a great story about how staff members were notified of their assignments which demonstrated her value for the culture of Jackson:

> What we did was a mock NFL draft. They all came into the auditorium at the end of the day. We have three sections in the auditorium. Everyone sat in the middle. On the stage, the high school principal and his two admins and me and my two admins sat on one side and then we had our assistant superintendent as the commissioner. We had a local TV guy who was also a coach for us; he and our curriculum superintendent did color commentary that was hilarious. We wrote a script that had made fun of things. People knew where they were going when we came in, but our purpose was... the way it worked… as the associate superintendent would read, 'Okay, now drafting for the North Stars in the math department.' So then he would read, 'The North Stars choose these eight people for the math department,' and they would come up on stage and we would give them this shirt. And they would go sit on one side of the auditorium. So at the

end of the hour, the middle of the auditorium was empty. So we had each staff on each side. So it was pretty emotional. People are like, 'This is real; I'm not going to be teaching with my buddy I've taught with for 30 years.' So we took that moment and then we had a little social thing afterwards. But tied to this these shirts that we gave them... mine were black with silver writing and the others were maroon with gold writing …but the fronts of all of them said Team Jackson, Team Jackson, Team Jackson, we were intentional about that. Because it's like yes we are going to live in two schools, but we are team Jackson first and foremost. On the back mine said Stars Squad and his said Panthers Squad. And we had them wear them the next day sort of as a soft roll out for kids of who's going where.

Rene was proud of the benefits that this process provided. They did not need to have a big public announcement that could be disruptive and they received positive feedback from the staff. She shared, "That attending to the personal needs of people... then really we had no pushback from staff...everybody is like okay."

David also moved to Jackson in 1997. He was elected to the Board in 2004. During his seven years on the Board, he was heavily involved in leadership with the transition process. As a Board member and Board President, he was instrumental in developing the long range facilities plan, passing the largest bond referendum in state history, and providing the means to fund the transition to a two high school system. David noted the importance of involving the community in the design of the plan. He summed up his leadership philosophy:

I think the board and administrative team really looked not at what is best in 2013 when the two systems come on board, but what was best in 2020, 2030, 2040 and looking further out at how you get multiple decades of service for the least cost and to the most benefit of the student population with really forward thinking.

Katherine was tasked with leading the aggressive four year curriculum cycle that Rene helped with. This was a K-12 effort that touched all teachers. Katherine described this ambitious plan:

So we put together a curriculum review cycle. And with that we had some negotiables and some non-negotiables. That included a complete assessment plan, pacing guides, new materials. I mean it was just everything. So pretty much everything that people were used to was not the way it was anymore. In addition to that though we also had to put up structures to help support that. So we completely redid the schedules, completely redid how people work together, we did a PLC environment that sort of thing. So just pretty much everything.

This work included a lot of communication to stakeholders to build the case for change and to help answer questions. This work spurred the creation of a program of studies committee. This committee worked to standardize the education system in Jackson and mesh with the two pathway system work. Katherine shared, "It was a big deal in Jackson that no matter where you went the kids had the same kind of education." Katherine described an example that she used with stakeholders to help explain the process that they were going through:

There are some people on our team who are architects, there are some people on our team who are the project managers, and there are some people on the team who are actually building the building. Trying to get people to understand their role. I know that sometimes people would make fun of that analogy because they wanted, well sometimes the construction workers wanted to be the architects. Sometimes the architects got really tired. So, you know, trying to help people understand the role they played in the organization and if they didn't play that role how that wasn't going to help us get to where we needed to be was really important.

Katherine was involved in several subcommittees of the transition committee along with the main committee. She went out with the other members of the cabinet to speak about the transition with community groups. She answered questions that people had about the curriculum changes that were coming along with the transition to two high schools. Katherine also surveyed parents about their students:

We did ask them, 'So what would you like from your students by the time they finish Jackson schools? What are your hopes and aspirations for them? What

kinds of things are you looking for?' And we kind of asked general questions that way so we wanted to make sure that we were aligning things.

Katherine made a statement to the researcher that really wrapped up her ideas on leading the community through change:

I guess I would say the key thing is really focusing on listening and communicating as much as you can, but then also figuring out that balance between, you know, after you listen and communicate, you've got to do some things too. So figuring out what that good balance is for that.

Ben was placed in a situation that he was not used to when he came to Jackson. He had been the CFO for the same stable district for 17 years when he walked into what he described as a district with "no systems, no systemization, and no processes in place." His first leadership task was to create those systems. At the same time he had to come up with a way to finance the district facilities plan. He described his feelings about this, "I felt a tremendous amount of pressure, responsibility, and burden to come up with a financing plan that would work as quickly as possible." Ben said, "So we had to raise massive amounts of cash reserves, which meant that I had to raise the tax rate. In one year I raised it $2.51." This did not go over well in the community as one would expect, but Ben worked hard to build the case for the need and the taxpayer's association did not come out against it. "They didn't endorse it, but they didn't come out actively against it. They came out with a plan that it was neutral to them, which was really amazing when you stop and think about it."

The finances in place were built on assumptions that no longer held true. Projections were developed on 4% allowable growth which was not a reality. Ben had to go in front of the School Budget Review Committee to make a case for the largest award

ever granted in allowable growth, nine million dollars, to fund the opening of the high

school. He pulled this off, but still had to raise taxes as Moody's had downgraded the

district's bond rating and was threatening to do it again if they did not fix things. All of

these issues weighed heavily on Ben who said, "I felt a tremendous amount of

responsibility on my shoulders."

Ben's plan did make a difference for the district. He explained the financial state

that he left the Jackson district in when he assumed a new role in a different district:

> I left them in terrific financial shape. The solvency ratio when I left was over 8%
> positive. I left them with a cash plan of decreasing taxes over a five-year period
> of time. I had already implemented two years of tax decreases before I left. And
> everything was positive and looking good. $23 million unspent balance it was
> that I left.

Lane had the most direct responsibility for leading the transition process as it was

a part of his job description. One of the key things that Lane led was the discussion about

what to call the new high school and the details surrounding that issue. "And so name,

colors, and mascot we addressed those issues that we know a lot of people wanted to

know," Lane said. "There has to be community investment and buy in as it relates to the

little things of colors and names and all that. Rene has worked with the students about the

academic crest and the school song." These may seem like trivial matters, but they were

huge in the eyes of the community. Leaders went out and sought suggestions from the

community on these things and received thousands of suggestions. Lane said, "We

thought well what's really important about this because this is something that will not

ever change. We let the senior class be involved and they were the ones that chose."

Lane convened several committees with responsibilities for all aspects of the transition process. He described the style of their work, "Each committee developed or backdated what needed to occur in year one and same thing from a policy standpoint. And all of these committees had huge jobs. And they became specialists in that area." Lane was a big believer in groups:

> I read a lot about the facilitation of groups, group dynamics and what to do if a group stalls or what to do to rein a group in if they are going too fast. A group of people has a lot of power to do good and also conversely.

Policy became a very important piece of the transition puzzle. "That policy is the foundation and it gives us the authority to do things. From policy it goes to handbooks and goes to practices," Lane shared. "Policy drives everything."

Another intentional move led by Brian but executed by Lane was to start dividing the underclassmen into two groups in all activities and athletics according to where they would go to high school after the opening of the new building. This has provided more opportunities for students within an earlier timeframe and also has begun to build the culture for the two buildings. This has also served to help ease the community into the two pathway system. Brian described his thoughts on this move:

> And I think that the decision that we made that we were not going to wait until August of 2013 to divide the entire district. I think that was a critical decision. It was the right decision. It was a difficult decision. It was an emotional decision.

Another key decision made by Lane was naming Rene the principal of the new building and allowing her a year to work on the transition along with housing her in the current high school so that she can work closely with the principal of the high school. Lane did the same thing with the two middle school principals. They are acting as co-

principals this year. This close working relationship will pay dividends in the future. All secondary principals also have easy access to the teachers that they will be working with next year as they plan the transition.

Lane shared his ideas on the transition process in general, "You have to be strategic in everything that you do. You also have to understand that it won't be perfect. Trying to think ahead, trying to be proactive, and knowing that not knowing everything is okay."

<u>Research Question 4</u>

What impact has this process had on the district leaders?

None of the participants in this study are in the professional position that they were in at the time of the transition work in Jackson. The relationship of the transition work to the professional career moves is unique to each participant. It is not possible to quantify this relationship, but clearly the transition work had at least some effect on the changes.

Brian, the former superintendent, dealt with 14 different Board members during his five years with Jackson. In his final year, he ended up with seven members of the Board that felt differently about the direction of the district than he did. Brian openly discussed these events:

> I literally had Board members who ran in the election in 2011 who were adamantly opposed to things. There was a Board candidate who actually had a website that was not favorable to the superintendent, the direction of the district, including the second high school. And so it was emotional. I never blamed those folks. I never tried to. Of course I would work with them and try to convince them otherwise. I always thought that up through even the end of my career there that people maintained professionalism. We agreed to disagree. I never felt like

we were publicly disagreeable with one another. I think they knew how I felt. I certainly knew how they felt.

Brian addressed the issues that led to the difference of opinions, "I'm not confident that that task force completed what really needed to be completed." He reflected more deeply on this:

> The community has to understand why it is that you're proposing what it is you're proposing. And I'm not confident today that back in '06 that occurred. And I think that would be something that I would like to go back and be a part of. You know you're not trying to convince everybody, but you certainly don't want key players in the district and in the community, including faculty and staff, questioning the integrity of a process that made them feel like it was going to go a different direction.

Brian's sense of humor came through when he discussed the irony of the opening of the new high school and the current Board makeup. When the Board voted to build the second high school with sales tax revenue, it was passed four to three. Brian mused:

> The three Board members that voted no are still on the Board and four that voted yes were voted out of office.   Which means, in August when they have the ribbon-cutting ceremony, no Board member will have voted for that high school. I think that may be historical. I mean, I plan to attend that ribbon-cutting ceremony obviously because my daughter is still there, she will be as a senior. But several of the Board members from past years will be there. I'll be there. And I'm going to sit there and I know I won't be able to sit there and not think, here are seven Board members in a photo and not one of them cast a vote… in fact three of them said no.

Former Board President David did not change jobs because he was a volunteer. He was unsuccessful in his re-election campaign in the fall of 2011. In fact all four of the Board members who voted for the two high school pathway were voted out of office. They ran together on a platform of togetherness. Katherine shared, "They had actually some outside public relations that suggested that they do that. Well I think that was

probably their downfall because people were like, 'How dare you tell me who I should vote for.'" The backlash to the decisions that were made probably had an effect as well.

David described the experience on the Board during this time of transition work as a series of highs and lows:

> I mean you go from passing a bond and the plan and the high note of, I helped create this and lead this and provide the solution. The community is allowing us, trusting us to do all that. And then you have the low side of it.

The low side visibly bothered David, but he did not hesitate to talk about it. People attacking his character and making things personal disturbed him, but he noted having thick skin. He then shared what really upset him, "The toll it takes more on some of my family members you know, especially when kids are involved, that part of it has been the negative side."

David identified the one thing that he would do differently if he had a chance. When the sales tax law changed and the community was voting on the revenue purpose statement he said, "I would've amplified the message of, 'Hey this is the vote for two high schools', and tried to make that very clear. I think a lot of people understood that… but not everyone."

Like Brian, he has a child that will be a senior in the new high school. David is also looking forward to the opening of the school in the fall. "So I'll have a big smile on my face that day seeing that happen."

Katherine spent four years as Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction in Jackson, but did not ever live in the community. She identified this as a positive thing when working through the transition process. She did not have to deal with

the town politics outside of the job. She accepted the position of superintendent in the

community that her husband worked the same summer that Brian and Ben left. Katherine

shared, "I had an opportunity and I took it. You know I would never take back those four

years, like I said. I'd be in Jackson still… I didn't leave there thinking, oh my gosh, I

can't be here one more year at all."

But things were not always rosy according to Katherine, "I'm not so sure I would

do it again. I don't know if I have the energy to do that." She used the phrase "pretty

dysfunctional" to describe the cabinet group. Katherine expanded on the thought, "I don't

really know how to better explain it. I think if we were more functional as a cabinet, I

think our system would've been more functional. And people knew that we weren't very

functional."

The move to her new job has been good for Katherine:

My family and my friends all say, 'You're just totally different. You're just so
much more laid-back.' I woke up thinking about it and went to bed thinking
about it. I worked, you know, probably 18 hours a day on it because it just was
enormous, just an enormous task.

Former Chief Financial Officer Ben came to Jackson after 17 years in the same

district. He helped to create an assertive financial plan to meet the needs of the rapidly

growing district. Ben looked back on this, "I was very aggressive with the Board. And

we raised taxes and as I look back on that I feel that was probably one of the things that

really made it difficult to stay in Jackson."   The other thing that made things difficult for

Ben to stay was the change in the Board. "There was a whole new mindset of maybe

more of a tea party… let's control spending, let's control taxes, let's do this, let's not

follow Ben's plan," he shared. "And so I saw basically the handwriting on the wall then

that my services would no longer be required in the school district because they wanted to go in a totally different direction."

Ben shared some of his frustrations with the situation. He noted that there was "a lot of dysfunction in a lot of different areas" in the system. He felt like he was on his own when it came to finances, "There needed to be more collaborative effort on the part of the whole financing of the school district, but for whatever reason in our administrative team that didn't exist." He expanded on this, "At the same time I think there was an awful lot of blame affixed to my position because of the money thing that I had to do." Ben noted that he was not alone in this situation, "We were all villainized by the things that we had attempted to do."

Ben landed on his feet in a larger district in the eastern part of the state. He is the Chief Financial Officer and is in the process of discussions about facilities plans and the possible addition of a new high school. The district recently passed a new revenue purpose statement under his leadership.

Former Executive Director of Secondary Education Rene is one of the two participants that remains associated with the Jackson district. She did not see herself assuming the role of high school principal before it happened. She revealed, "There would've been a time when I thought I was going to be in a district office role forever." Things changed and she rolled with the changes. "I would not have told you a year and a half ago I was going to make a change. I mean things played out that way. I'm a believer that things happen for a reason." The reason is clear when you talk with Rene. She could

not be more direct when she said, "I cannot tell you how good and right it feels to be in this role for me. It's what I love."

The transition process has not been without frustration for Rene, however. She shared her feelings:

> As district leaders we should be about unifying our community. That should be our role. We should help people come together and we should be the champion of believing in people. Take time to help people understand initiatives, change, whatever… concepts I guess. That just all seems somewhat obvious to me that I'm surprised that that wasn't always what was leading.

She felt like there were times that people were characterized as bad if they questioned or did not immediately agree with decisions that were being made.

Rene has learned a lot about herself as she has participated in the transition process. She explained her views on community politics:

> I learned some lessons myself about leadership and I learned I just am not political. I know I have to recognize there's politics out there... it's not that I don't know that... I just don't, I don't live in that very well... it's uncomfortable.

She also recognized her priorities and how this experience has clarified things for her:

> I have learned and it's probably in this process and other things, I can't say it's all this process, but maybe it's just old age or wisdom that comes as you get older, but I've sort of learned not to take myself so seriously or my work so seriously. Like this is a lifestyle and I live the lifestyle of a principal or educator. I'm okay with that… I also think there was a time in my career where it probably was a bigger priority than I would have designed it to be now. I don't have regrets necessarily I have great kids and a great spouse. I feel very blessed in that, but I think I was a little bit misguided being too focused on my career and what's next. Driven is probably the word. Not content enough, so I feel like this process has helped me be a little more content with where I'm at.

Former Assistant Superintendent Lane assumed the role of Superintendent when Brian left the district. His work with the transition process prepared him to step into this role and oversee the final stages of the two pathway system implementation. He

explained, "I've had the luck of working in the fastest-growing school districts in the state. And that has caused me to think differently. That has caused me to focus on certain things and not perseverate on others." Lane again identified hiring the right people as the key focus. Lane shared some of his philosophy on this:

> People in our positions have to be learners and that has to become your lifestyle. You have to be a learner to work in Jackson. And we can't promise you the same job every day. And we will expect more each day, but will also hopefully give you more each day.

He also described the changes and similarities that come with assuming the superintendent's role:

> I've been afforded an opportunity to do lots of different things. I have been blessed with great people with whom to work. And now as superintendent things have changed. I'm still a very hands-on person in year one here as the superintendent versus year four. Having situational awareness was the key for me. That I knew what was happening and I heard what people were talking about. And if you don't have that, that is a characteristic or a trait that will be your downfall… So situational awareness for me is the key leadership characteristic that you have to have to be effective, to be efficient, and to be able to deal with change.

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Research Question 5

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What new challenges has this process brought about?

The move to a two high school system by the Jackson school district has been a monumental task. One that has required a great deal of leadership from many players. Even as this plan is fully implemented over the next 6 to 12 months, there will be new challenges that present themselves.

Continued growth will certainly be a challenge. It already has proven to be. Lane said, "In Jackson we will be opening an elementary about every three years if successful bond issues occur. We need elementaries in '14, '17, and '20." The first of those bond

issues was passed with a price tag of $16 million this winter. It does not stop with elementary needs. Lane explains the numbers:

> Next year we will open two high schools that will be between 900 and 1,000. I think one of the high schools jumps past 1,000 in the first year. And so we know that in approximately 10 years, Jackson will need to look to see whether they add onto two high schools or whether they were to create a third high school.

Opening new buildings puts a tax on the system. Not only do you have the cost of the building, but also the furnishings and equipment and then you need to staff the buildings. In the case of the high schools, there will only be 23 new teachers added as they will utilize current teachers also, but there will be a requirement for additional custodians, support staff, and so on. Lane stated, "High schools in and of themselves are unique. To build a second high school from a financial standpoint is very expensive. To operate a second high school from a curriculum standpoint is very extensive versus any other grade level."

Equity among all Jackson students is another challenge. The district has been dealing with this issue already. It found that there were more elementary sections for the population base in the north part of town than in the south, so another elementary was built in the south. It also found that all of its secondary facilities were on the northwest side of town. In response to this, a high school and middle school were built in the south. Even though these actions have been taken, there may still be the perception of inequity in the community. Katherine spoke to this:

> Last summer things were starting to get kind of… they were starting to boil. You know the north… people in the north had more money; the kids there are more athletically inclined. So the north is going to be the haves and the south was going to be the have-nots. As we were setting up the system we were trying really hard to ensure that that wasn't the case.

The two high schools were designed to be exactly the same to avoid this type of

conflict. Brian described this:

> One of the issues that we don't want to face with this decision that's never
> occurred in the state in the last 40 some years, we are going to have enough issues
> the way it is, we don't want equity issues.   So we literally designed, the same
> architect designed both high schools. They're literally designed the same.   I think
> there are only two or three differences, besides the interior colors, between
> Jackson High School operating today and Jackson North High School that will
> open in August.

> Lane explained the link between policy and equity:

> I think it's important that policy promotes equality. And the equality of both
> systems. I tell people there's a difference between equal and equitable. We want
> equal as much as we can have. There may be a circumstance to go get a staff
> member that is equal that has the number of certifications in industrial tech as an
> example. That person may not exist. But I can hire someone and say that within
> so many years you will be asked to have these certifications. But policy promotes
> equality for all kids.

With the opening of the second high school in Jackson will come new traditions.

The decision was made to keep all of the traditions, trophies, awards, and records of

Jackson High School there. Jackson North High School would start from scratch.

"Tabula rasa" as Rene described it. The district has planned ahead and worked to divide

the activities and athletics programs for several years so that they will open next year

with two completely different groups of kids who already have been working together.

They also have allowed the students of the new high school to meet and establish things

like the school colors, mascot, school song, school crest and other high school traditions.

This will go a long way in helping to insure a smooth start.

But surely there will be things that will be challenging along the way. Rene

shared a great example:

I was working with the kids and we're talking about homecoming and dates. It's September. We play East I think. The kids are juniors. The kids sat there for a minute or so. They are getting to know me I think. Finally one kid looks at me and says, 'We're having homecoming?' I said 'Yeah, yeah,' and he said, 'Who's coming home?' And I'm like, 'Good question. We really don't have any alumni do we?' The kids are like, 'We can still have a dance, still have a game.' So pretty soon they come up with, 'We'll call it up-and-coming, we'll call it the inaugural homecoming.' So I would've never thought of that. We would've had homecoming because that's what you do in a high school.

Another issue that will need to be dealt with immediately is the fact that the athletic teams and activity groups will be competing against each other beginning in August. The district has viewed these expanded opportunities for Jackson students as a positive thing and it was a big selling point in the discussions leading to the two high school system. But there is the potential for division among the community when you add in competition. In fact this division has played out through activities in the transition to the two high school system. Brian stated, "It never was about mathematics or language arts it was always about athletics and activities dividing the town." Katherine agreed:

But really athletics and activities really are a big thing in Jackson. They are huge. In fact when we went through a strategic planning process we all had to kind of put together some major key points from our area. And one of the key points I said was that academics isn't the number one priority in Jackson. It's athletics and activities and I wasn't exaggerating and people were all like, yep, that's kind of the way it is. So I guess that was kind of maybe a disappointing learning point to really say that was a reality.

Rene said, "I would say that probably the biggest source of the internal resistance was our coaching staff. And not all of them, but as a whole a lot of resistance to the transition came from them." Brian added:

I just was surprised at the behaviors and conduct of some adults. And I appreciate their tradition, their valuing of the system, their loyalty. I think statewide people

would recognize Jackson as probably one of the five, six, or seven school districts to carry a lot of pride. Sometimes maybe it's even arrogance, but they had success. And that's going to be a difficult challenge for some folks.

Rene had a plan for handling the first football game between the two high schools

in August:

There was an idea that we need one shirt that every Jackson person wears to that game. We'll figure out a way to do that because we've done a lot like that before. We're going to create that. Hopefully were going to pull off a commemorative coin people can buy, have Panthers on one side Stars on the other. Our bands will perform together at halftime. People will say, 'Oh you're shortsighted, that might work for a year or two,' and maybe that's the case, I don't know, oh well. But I feel the sense of a challenge to continually think about it.

It is thinking like this that will make this transition successful, but it will be challenging

and it will require strong leadership and attentiveness to community needs.

Themes

The findings presented in this study were developed and presented by reviewing the

data collected in the context of the conceptual framework of educational change theory.

Themes were allowed to emerge through the data collection process in the grounded

theory tradition and the researcher interpreted the data through these themes. The

software program Simple Concordance aided the researcher in identifying themes and

coding the data. Constant comparison was used to compare coded data with other data

coded the same way to insure consistent coding. Three themes emerged from the

findings that provide another lens in addition to the research questions to help in

understanding the change process in Jackson: (a) community, (b) planning and work, and

(c) communication.

Table 1 displays the key words and grouping data derived from the Simple Concordance analysis.

Table 1

Key Word/Word Groups Frequency Table

Word	Grouping	Frequency in Interviews
Planning and Work	Plan, Plans, Planning, Detail, Details, Build, Building, Buildings, Built, School, Schools, Facilities, Need, Needs, Needed, Process, Committee, Committees, Subcommittee, Design, Prepared, Transition, Referendum, Bond, Tax, Demographer, Direction Work, Worked, Working, Works, Do, Doing, Did Look, Looked, Looking, Lead, Leading, Leadership, Job	1919
Communication	Communicate, Communicated, Communication, Communications, Talk, Talked, Talking, Tell, Told, Discuss, Discussed, Discussion, Say, Says, Saying, Said, State, Stated, Question, Questions, Questioned, Answer, Conversation, Forums, Engaged, Involved, Information, System, Message, Meet, Meeting, Meetings Think, Thinking, Thought, Decide, Decisions	1389
Community	Community, Communities, Town, City, Folks, People, Person, Kid, Kids, Students, Group, Groups, Member, Members, Teachers, Staff, Parents, Family, Families, Team, Tradition, Pride, Culture, Activities, Athletics, Business, Public, Home	1322

Community

All participants involved in the study identified the strong sense of community in Jackson as being a major factor in all steps of the transition process. Rene addressed this, "There is great pride in excellence and tradition. These people love their town; they love

their Panthers, that's who they are." Lane acknowledged Jackson's "tremendous tradition" and Brian noted that Jackson valued "keeping a sense of community" as it grew along with "so much tradition and pride." When asked to identify the strengths of Jackson, Ben replied, "The involvement of the community. People were very passionate about their school and about their legacy and history of accomplishments." David mentioned that Jackson felt like "a small town and they prided themselves as being a unique city" and that "everyone in the community really cared about the school system and its success."

This sense of community required involvement in the change process and the participants in this study recognized this fact. Katherine said, "We tried to get as many community members involved in the committee work…that was really important." Lane shared, "We went out and sought input from the community." Rene agreed, "Lane certainly recognized the importance of bringing the community folks in." Lane expanded on this, "You just try to build those relationships with folks so that the strong community continues to be a strong community."

Planning and Work

The change to the two pathway high school system required an enormous amount of event sequencing and attention to details to implement. This boiled down to planning and work.

Lane knew from the beginning that this planning would take up most of his time. He shared, "I interviewed at that point and they said a large part of my job for the first

four or five years would be to lead the transition." He also described his philosophy in

planning:

> It's like the mile run. You try to give them their splits so it can be a nice
> completion. Versus if you allow committees or certain topics to be covered too
> slowly, then there's a big rush and push at the end and you may not make it. And
> I was very intentional to not overwhelm people because if everybody has to think
> about everything it becomes literally analysis paralysis.

This change process to two high schools was uncommon territory. Ben noted the

uniqueness of the process and its effect on planning:

> We just kept adding to the list as things came up and came along. And, you
> know, the last time a school district split into a two high school system in the state
> was 1968. And so it'd been over 40 years since that happened and we didn't have
> any templates to follow. We didn't have any administrators who had really been
> through that process that could share with us what types of things to look at or
> what kind of pitfalls to stay away from or how to do it. So we were pretty much
> left up completely on our own to develop this two high school system the way we
> felt it should be implemented.

David noted the challenge involved in trying to "get an organization to rally

behind a similar mission and plan," but he stayed focused on the positive stating, "But

you know it was a lot better than the prior years where there was no plan."

One constant in the Jackson situation was time. Time marches on. Regardless of

whether plans are complete, students continue to grow and move through the school

system. The sixth grade class in Jackson has 150 more students than the 12th grade class

and each class below it has more students than the last.

Participants in this study could hear the clock ticking. "If you look at the 2030

plan that they have in place for the city of Jackson, you will see that they are scheduled to

grow to 75,000," said Ben. David added, "The growth of Jackson is really kind of

occurring in all directions. We aren't landlocked… we still have about 30% more

capacity to grow within our school district." Lane said, "We just added a ninth

elementary and it is 80% full." The demographer that the district hired was able to

present reliable enrollment projections that "helped us establish within the community a

sense of urgency," according to Ben. David did not see things the same way:

> I don't think many in the community, even when this was talked about in 2006, understood the magnitude of the growth and that it was going to continue and maybe even accelerate and what that did to our facilities and the capacity issues that we were facing at all levels.

Facing this pressure of increasing enrollment and limited time, the district leaders

were able to devise a plan that addressed learning, space, finances, and extracurricular

opportunities that they are all proud of. Ben proudly proclaimed, "I believe that for

years and years to come it will be the best option for kids." David agreed:

> I think that in today's world you know we're always so much talking in the short term. In making decisions for the short term. I think we made… 20 years from now I think people are going to wonder what the debate was even about, probably 10 years. I really believe that.

Brian adamantly defended the plan that was ultimately created and implemented

and thought that it would stand the test of time:

> It's going to be proven, in my opinion, I think 10 years from now. Maybe five years, maybe even next fall, but certainly in the future I think when we all look back. I think that when everybody stops and thinks and removes the emotion from the decision. They are going see that there were some decisions made that were right.

The transition process to a two high school pathway was not a simple task.

Participants acknowledged that it required a great deal of work. Lane said, "I don't think

even though I had been in public and private education for 22 or 23 years that I could

anticipate all of the details." Ben shared a story:

> Sometimes it takes a superhuman effort to do that. It exhausts you. Meeting after meeting after meeting being out with staff and answering questions. I can't tell you how many PTO meetings I had. One night I was giving a presentation to a taxpayers group and I told them, 'You guys ought to be honored because tonight's date night. My wife's giving up date night tonight to have me be here.'

Katherine noted that it was "certainly not an eight to five job" and that she worked "probably 18 hours a day" on the task. Brian admitted that he "worked behind the scenes" on the $83 million bond referendum during the spring before he was even on contract with the Jackson district. David described the Board's role in setting the course for the work to be done:

> So you have to have that team in place and they have to be empowered to say, you know, what we're doing it right. And you have the green light of support. Go and get it done. And they have that leadership capability to make it happen.

Communication

Marzano et al. (2007) identified that in second order change, such as adding a second high school to the system, communication is negatively correlated. That means that people can never get enough communication. Regardless of what a leader does, people will perceive this area as not being fulfilled. This does not mean that leaders should not communicate through second order change; it is just a factor that leaders need to be aware of. Jackson leaders recognized this and made significant effort to provide communication to the community.

Rene acknowledged this research when she described communication through the transition process from her standpoint:

> I think… do not take the risk to over communicate. Communicate, communicate, communicate. In the whole communications process we thought of all the different venues for that; electronic communication, paper communication, face-to-face communication, one to one, large group, small group. I think you have to

be intentional about communicating at all levels of the community in all areas and in all avenues. So communication is really, really important.

Katherine echoed this, "I guess I would say the key thing is, too, really focusing on listening and communicating as much as you can." Brian underscored the importance of communication, "Communication… it is important to try and stay out ahead, not of your Board, with your Board and then engage your administration and your team and rally the troops."

Lane noted how the district dedicated staff to the effort, "I would be remiss without recognizing our communications coordinator. A district needs somebody to do that job." It was this coordinator who designed Transition Central, the website that served as the hub of all communications. Ben described this web site, "We even created a website called Transition Central. Questions and answers and details and pathway explanations and all the things that were going to transpire from all the areas of our responsibilities would be funneled into here." Lane praised the site:

> Transition Central probably was the pivotal piece for us. Where we were able to send cards out to tell people to go to Transition Central. And if you look at the website that answers a lot of things. What parents want to know, what kids want to know, what staff wants to know.

Katherine described communication in the form of answering questions posed by community members:

> There were always some clarifying questions that people had in regards to why is it necessary that we change…We would always have to be prepared to have some data and some information to let people know that why we were a good district, we weren't a great district and there were some things that we needed to do in order to get to that level that we anticipated that everybody in the community wanted.

Rene elaborated, "Some of them were just misinformation. Some of them were very simple questions to answer and some would have been more challenging." She identified rumors as a communication issue, "Fighting those rumors… the team would bring any rumors they were hearing in the community and we responded to rumors. We would put the accurate information out there."

<div align="center">Summary</div>

This chapter reviewed the findings based on the data collected in this study. The findings presented in this study were based on the knowledge and perceptions of the participants. Multiple data sources served to strengthen the validity of findings. The summary, conclusion, and implications of this study are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Purpose of Study

This study sought to more fully comprehend the actions of district level leaders in a secondary change effort, to examine the effects of these actions on the change process, and to provide additional information about the dynamics that school district central office administrators confront when making the decision to add another high school. This data was collected through the district leaders' knowledge and perception of the process.

It was decided that the most effective method to collect this data was through a qualitative case study methodology. This methodology included the conducting of semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to more completely and accurately characterize the district leaders' knowledge and perception of the actions that they took during the major change process and how these actions influenced the change process. The success of this study was reliant on the researcher being able to develop a rapport with the participants. This rapport allowed for data rich discussions. Data generated was well-grounded and rich in description and explanation of the process in the context of the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Studying a data rich case such as this allowed the researcher to generate insights and in-depth understanding of the subtleties of the actions that the district leaders steered through in order to implement the transition to two high schools (Patton, 2002).

Conclusions were developed around the five research questions and the three themes that emerged. These themes were allowed to emerge through the data collection process in the grounded theory tradition and the researcher interpreted the data through these themes. The themes and findings that emerged from the interpretation of the data were based in the knowledge and perception of the participants.

<u>Research Question 1</u>

What were the antecedents and major factors used to determine the need for a second high school?

The data collected for this study indicated that there were many factors that led to the decision to add a second high school in Jackson, but three main areas were identified by all participants. These areas were student population growth, increased opportunities for students, and community values.

Population growth probably forced the issue to the table and created a sense of urgency. Wagner (2001) identified understanding the urgent need for change and naming the big problems as one of his four essential conditions for change. All of the participants shared an understanding that this growth in student numbers represented a big problem and created that urgency. The district had what David termed a "tsunami" of students moving through the system. This would demand a change. Katherine stated, "I don't think it was a question of if it was going to happen." And Lane said, "The only question is when." There was no getting around the growth issue. It had to be dealt with.

There was also a community desire to increase the number of opportunities for students both in academics and activities. As the district was growing larger, there was a

perception that there were not enough opportunities for students to become engaged and participate in both academic and extracurricular activities. Lane noted, "We realize that we are limited in the number of kids that can compete." Ben described parents who were, "clamoring for more participation, more inclusion, and opportunities for their kids."

The participants described that tradition was huge in Jackson. It is a very proud community. As is the case in many Midwestern towns, the school is a symbol of the community and a source of pride. David explained that some in the community "viewed a single high school system as almost the face that we were still a unified community." With its rapid growth, Jackson as a community has changed.   There are as many people who have lived there five years or less than have lived there 10 years or more. These new families are interested in a quality education and opportunities for their children and are not necessarily concerned about tradition.

The congruence of these factors may have created what Gladwell (2002) termed the tipping point.   These three factors may have pushed the community to a dramatic moment of change regarding their secondary school pathway structure.

Ely (1990) outlined eight conditions for change. His first condition is dissatisfaction with the status quo. In order for change to be successful, "participants must perceive the status quo to be even less comfortable" (Ellsworth, 2000, p. 68). This probably was the case in Jackson. The concept of a high school with 3,000 to 5,000 students and the probability of diminished opportunities for student participation likely created dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Research Question 2

How did district leaders plan for change?

Reeves (2009) organized the work of change leadership into the four categories of creating conditions for change, planning change, implementing change, and sustaining change. Research question one addressed the first category of creating conditions and research question two addresses the second category of planning for change.

Data collected from the participants in this study regarding planning was plentiful. The participants described district planning from the first exploratory committee work to the detailed work of the actual move of materials to the new high school building.

This planning occurred in phases. The first phase involved the committee assembled to develop a 10 year facilities plan and ultimately an $83 million bond issue. It was this committee that basically agreed on the concept of a second high school, just not when it would be built or how it would be funded. The second phase involved the financial planning to support the facilities plan. This included district finances, real estate, buildings, and ultimately the one cent sales tax. The passing of the revenue purpose statement and the Board decision to utilize sales tax revenue to fund the construction of several buildings including a second high school set the course for the next phase of planning. The third phase focused on the actual transition to a two high school pathway. This included construction, staffing, students, and the details of the logistics required.

Many change experts address the planning phase of change. Fullan (1991) indicated the need for change leaders to have a plan and be flexible. He emphasized the

need to take responsibility and to take action. Wagner et al. (2006) called this period when leaders are preparing and beginning to share the plan with other audiences the envisioning phase of change. Brian described this, "The community has to understand why it is that you are proposing what it is that you are proposing."

Heifetz and Linsky (2002) depicted planning for change as constructively harnessing energy. They also addressed pacing the work. It may be beneficial to move slowly some times and rapidly at others. As Katherine said, "Sometimes slower is faster." Fullan and Miles (1992) asserted that change requires effort in directing action and monitoring. The multiple committees and subcommittees that Lane assembled required a great deal of action and monitoring. He noted the need for "list makers" and that "you have to check with your people on a constant basis."

DuFour and Marzano (2011) described planning as putting a process in motion to address changes. They offered that successful change leaders link vision with the importance of the work and "engage others in clarifying the very specific steps that must be taken" (p. 198). Lane's decision to involve 60 people on the transition committee, the evolution of the details committee, and the subsequent community forums all demonstrate this point.

The planning phase of this major change in Jackson seemed to align reasonably well with research and best practices. There was responsibility and action, flexibility, and a link between the vision for the future and the importance of the work. There was also involvement from many stakeholders. The process was put in motion.

There were two events in the planning process that probably could be identified as creating uncertainty and confusion and thus made the change effort more difficult. The first event occurred when the original facilities planning committee made its recommendations to the community. There was confusion as to whether the recommendation was for (a) two high schools with only a need for funding sources to begin implementation, or for (b) one high school with a community vote at a later date to decide if there would be two high schools. This confusion seems to persist in some form still today in Jackson. The second event concerns the community vote on the revenue purpose statement. It may be that it was not clear to all in the community that if the measure passed then the district would have available funds to build a second high school. So effectively, it was the vote for a second high school since the majority of the Board favored the two high school pathway.

<u>Research Question 3</u>

How did district leaders lead the community through change?

Ely (1990) noted that leadership must be evident in his description of conditions needed for change. The data collected from the participants in this study indicated significant work in leading the community through the transition to a two high school pathway for the district. This work was in a variety of areas and completed through a variety of methods. The areas of relationships, communication, culture, and community involvement came up repeatedly.

Relationship building was crucial in the process according to Brian, "I can't underscore the importance of having a strong relationship enough." Bennis (2009)

singled out relationships as being of significant importance, Fullan (2001) agreed.

DuFour and Marzano (2011) acknowledged the importance of a guiding vision and strong

relationships consistent with the work of Bennis (2009), Fullan (1991), and Wagner

(2001).

Communication was another critical piece of the transition process. Katherine

identified "really focusing on listening and communicating as much as you can" as the

"key thing" in the transition process. Portis and Garcia (2007) recognized that

stakeholders need to understand the details of the change. Reeves (2006) described this

communication needed for successful change to occur as giving relentless personal

attention. DuFour and Marzano (2011) summarized that effective change leaders

"recognize the importance of ongoing communication" (p. 42) throughout the change

process. They also note that "the ability to articulate a realistic, credible, and attractive

vision of the future that connects to the hopes and dreams of others is a defining skill of

an effective leader" (p. 202).

Rene described her concerns for the culture of the community, "I personally feel

accountable to the kids and to the community and to the culture that we have here." She

went on to say that she thought a lot of the transition "has been culture work because it is

helping the culture embrace a change that is challenging." Elmore (2004) stated that

change requires a change in culture. Fullan (2001), Wagner et al. (2006), Reeves (2006),

and Marzano et al. (2005) all noted the importance of culture in the change process.

Community involvement is noted throughout the literature as a critical factor in

successful change efforts. Fullan and Miles (1992) noted that steering change by

involving stakeholders substantially increases commitment to change. Fullan (2011) identified group work to solve problems as a right driver of systemic change. Anderson (1993) identified public and political support as one of his key elements for successful change. Lane described his strategy for leading the transition process, "I intentionally went to a very large committee structure… I think that there has to be community investment and buy in." Covey (2004) outlined synergy as one of his seven habits of highly effective people and defined it as creating a whole that is greater than the sum of the parts. Collins (2001b) said that level five leaders get the right people on the bus. Peterson and Deal (1998) noted that creating a shared vision develops the foundation for change.

DuFour and Marzano (2011) described the effectiveness of giving away the power and inviting others to join in the work, noting that "effective leaders cannot accomplish great things alone" (p. 2). Fullan (2010b) described collective capacity as the key to change results.

Leading the community through the change process to a two high school system was probably the most difficult task that the Jackson district leaders needed to accomplish. By placing a focus on relationships, communication, culture, and involvement, their work would seem to again be aligned with the literature on effective change practices. There were bumps in the road. Not all of the communication was positive and there are relationships that probably need to be repaired or may never be repaired. This is to be expected with adaptive change. Heifetz and Linsky (2002) discussed the fact that there will likely be conflict and resistance in adaptive change work

and that the challenge is then dealing with "differences, passions, and conflicts in a way that diminishes their destructive potential" (p. 10).

Marzano and Waters (2009) noted that for some second order change represents significant personal loss. They suggested scheduling ceremonial events to honor the past and move on to the new. This fits perfectly with the culture literature. The mock teacher draft story that Rene shared is a wonderful example of this in practice. People were able to honor their past and get excited about where they were headed all while having fun as a group. The plans for the first football game in August between the two Jackson high schools is in this same genre.

The idea to create Transition Central as the main communications hub for all things related to the transition process in Jackson probably deserves special attention. The credit could go to Brian for making it a priority to hire a communications director; or to the communications director for the programming and design work; or to Rene for providing the educational leadership on the project and championing the concept in the district and the community. The reality is they all deserve the credit. This one stop central clearinghouse of information has proven to be an extremely effective form of communication and played a large role in the transition process.

It is also necessary to note the extensive curriculum work. Wagner (2001) stated that clarity about the things students should know and deep understanding of teaching best practices is the first essential condition for educational change. Reeves (2006) identified moving to systemic practices and making connections between effective practices as characteristics of effective change leadership. Fullan (2011) said that in

order to catalyze change, leaders needed to focus on learning, instruction, and assessment.

Jackson district leaders recognized the need to address the curriculum at all levels. They also put systems in place to insure fidelity and equity. Ben noted the importance of this and praised Brian's act of hiring Katherine, "I think Katherine was a terrific hire as far as the things that she was able to do." He went on to say that she was able to make "more of a system on the curriculum side of things. Katherine added that "the great thing is that our student data was really adjusting to the changes…it just started to increase."

It is interesting, but not surprising that culture, communication, and community involvement came up repeatedly. Marzano et al. (2005) described four leadership responsibilities that were negatively correlated with second order change. These were culture, communication, order, and input. This means that no matter what a leader does, people will perceive these four areas as not being fulfilled. Sharing these four responsibilities with others when leading second order change is suggested (Marzano et al., 2007). One could probably include order within the planning process which was accomplished mostly through multiple committees. The data suggests that the Jackson leadership team was following best practices according to research when they placed such a focus on these areas.

<div align="center">Research Question 4</div>

What impact has this process had on the district leaders?

The data revealed that each of the participants was no longer in the professional position that they occupied during the time of the transition work in Jackson. It is not

possible in this study to connect this fact in a quantitative manner to the transition work.

It is also not possible to separate the experiences that each of the participants lived

through from their place on their professional career path now.

Fullan (1991) said that educational change was a very personal experience.

Reeves (2009) agreed and called change work technical, personal and political. Heifetz

and Linsky (2002) noted that people can have very negative reactions to adaptive change

and become desperate. They also said that there will likely be conflict in adaptive

change. Argyris (1992) shared that change initiatives may clash with existing cultural

values and when this happens it is not uncommon to see defensiveness and distortion of

important information.

This convergence of personal experience and negative reactions can result in

some difficult situations. Participants in this study shared several examples. Brian talked

openly about a Board candidate who created a website that was personally negative

towards him. David described negative interactions from community members that

involved his children. Ben talked about blame being affixed to him due to the job that

had to be done by whoever would have been in his position. Rene described

misinformation and rumors in the community. Ben summed things up when he said, "We

were all villainized by the things that we had attempted to do."

The transition work in Jackson was all consuming to the participants in the study.

Katherine shared that she "woke up thinking about it and went to bed thinking about it."

Ben said, "I was so overwhelmed by the enormity of the puzzle that I would actually

leave the office." He would go to a city park and walk to relieve the stress and allow his

mind to think. Rene admitted that she was "a little bit misguided" and "too focused" on her career during this process. Brian shared, "I felt like I was a traveling evangelist trying to get people baptized into the two high school merge…mornings, late evenings, every lunch hour you can." Collins (2001a) and Covey (1989) emphasized the importance of balance in the life of leaders. The data revealed that the participants in this study struggled with this. When asked how she maintained balance, Katherine replied, "I didn't."

Even though the transition process was not an easy one, the participants remained remarkably positive. Katherine felt that even though it was difficult work she "grew a lot as a leader." Ben noted that leaders "always have to remain optimistic." Brian gave the advice that leaders need "patience, perseverance, and to keep working with people." The literature agrees with this. DuFour and Marzano (2011) stated that effective change leaders demonstrate "confidence, resilience, and the tenacity to persist" (p. 199). Bennis (2009) discussed the importance of the strength to persist through setbacks and failure.

<div align="center">Research Question 5</div>

What new challenges has this process brought about?

"Change is a journey not a blueprint" (Fullan & Miles, 1992, p. 1). The transition to a two high school system represented a major change for Jackson, but challenges for the district leaders will continue to emerge even after the opening of the new building. Anderson (1993) stated that key change leaders begin to envision even better systems after the new system is put in place. Change is continuous.

Reeves (2006) offered that change leaders focus efforts on challenges that matter most and commit to long term sustainable change. The data revealed in this study would suggest that continued growth in student population and equity are two areas that district leaders can focus on.

Student growth is projected to increase by 4,000 students in the next 10 years. Lane shared that their plan is to build an elementary every three years and another secondary school or additions within 10 years. That could mean four bond issues over the next 10 years. The question could then become at what point if any does the community push back? These are also conservative numbers. If the demographer's estimates are correct and Jackson was to grow from 45,000 to 80,000, then this conversation escalates to a new level.

Student growth can also lead to budget issues. Financial constraints will always be a factor in a public school system. The rapid growth will eventually mean new funds for the Jackson school district, but in the current state funding model these funds lag a year behind. Simplified that means that if the district adds 400 new students, which is the current norm, then it must educate those students for a year before receiving funds from the state. This creates numerous issues from class size to transportation.

Data revealed that equity was an issue that the Jackson district was concerned about from the beginning of the transition process. David described the Board discussing equity issues all the way back in 2004. Katherine talked about the equity issues driving the curriculum changes. Rene and Lane both addressed equity in the staffing process.

Boundaries, buildings, programs, curriculum, and staffing are all areas that have been planned with equity in mind as the transition is implemented.

The data showed that the district is working to address the issue of equity within the entire system. There are numerous examples. This seems to be an area that is likely to always be an issue. Whenever you have two of anything, it is naturally easy to compare and contrast.

<div align="center">Themes</div>

Three themes emerged from the data collected. These were community, planning and work, and communication.

The data revealed that community or key words similar to it were recorded in the interviews 1,322 times. This theme had a strong relationship with research question three relating to how district leaders lead the community through change. Every participant in the study identified the strong sense of community in Jackson as a strength area. Every participant also identified this as a challenge. Ben said, "Every sword that I've ever worked with has two sides to it." Brian noted that sometimes "strengths can become challenges."

Communication or key words similar to that were recorded 1,389 times in the interviews. This theme had a strong relationship with research question two dealing with how district leaders planned for change. It also had a relationship with research question three and leading the community through change. The negative correlation between second order or adaptive change and communication seems to have been recognized by the district. Major effort has been taken to communicate with all stakeholders through

the transition process. Rene summarized this theme by saying, "I think communication is huge."

The data showed that planning and work or key words similar to them were recorded in the interviews 1,919 times. This theme was closely related to research question one associated with the antecedents and major factors used to determine the need for a second high school. It was also related to research questions two and three. Lane said it best when describing the necessity to be strategic in the change process, "then it's just a lot of work."

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Many factors played a role in the decision to add a second high school in Jackson. Two, however, stand out. A rapidly increasing student population and the perception of diminishing opportunities for students in academics and activities/athletics pushed the community to Gladwell's (2002) tipping point.

Key change leadership strategies were used effectively by the district level leaders in Jackson as they moved through the transition planning process to a two high school system. The communication campaign created a link between the vision for the future of Jackson and the importance of the work. Stakeholders were involved in the planning process at every step. District leaders took responsibility for the plans and they took action with the plans. Through this they also remained flexible, adjusting the pace of the work as necessary. Ultimately, a process was put in motion to address change. The district leaders were not afraid to roll up their sleeves and get to work.

As district level administrators led the community through the change process, they focused on relationships, communication, culture, and community involvement. This again aligned with the literature on change leadership. Specifically this aligned to the work of Marzano et al. (2005), who identified culture, communication, order, and input as negatively correlated with second order change. People perceive these areas as unfulfilled regardless of leadership action. Jackson leaders put a heavy focus on these areas as they provided leadership for the community and they shared the work with all stakeholders.

The fact that all participants are in new professional positions as compared to when they were leading the transition to two high schools in Jackson is a significant one. In fact only two participants remain associated with the Jackson district. Change work is personal, especially when it is second order or adaptive change. It can also be full of conflict. This case was no different. Despite this fact, the district leaders demonstrated a remarkable overall positivity concerning the transition process.

While it is probably too early to make any final judgments regarding the transition process in Jackson, after all the new high school building does not even open until next fall, one could argue that the change process has been successful. Ultimately, the new building is constructed, staffed, and on track to open in August of 2013.

<u>Implications for Practice</u>

The findings and conclusions of this study, based on the foundation of the literature review, have led to the following implications for practice.

Fullan and Miles (1992) described change as a journey not a blueprint. The opening of the second high school in Jackson does not end the process of change in the community. Nor does it end the transition to a two high school system. This process will continue for some time. District leaders must continue to lead change and strive for even better systems. As Bennis (1999) explained, leaders will have to be thinking about not just what happens next, but what happens after what happens next. The topics of continued student population growth and equity among all students stand out as areas for leaders to continue to place a focus on.

The ability to orchestrate change is an essential skill for effective school leadership. In this era of school reform, the capacity to adapt to changes while still staying true to the school vision is an important task. This rate of change seems to be increasing. Therefore, concentration on this role is important for school leaders.

The findings in this study showed that Jackson central office leaders demonstrated significant attention to leading through change. The areas of relationships, communication, culture, and community involvement were key focus areas in the change process in the Jackson school district. Each of these areas played a critical role in moving change forward.

Central office leaders were able to develop and cultivate relationships with stakeholders in the school community which ultimately aided in the change process. Significant effort was taken to build relationships with students, parents, staff, and community members. District leaders went to great lengths to meet face to face on multiple occasions with a multitude of groups. All of these actions built relationships

that facilitated the development of mutual respect. This mutual respect became an important agent in accomplishing change.

The communication campaign that supported this change effort was of such high quality that it should be considered as a model for others. The district utilized multiple forms of communication to dispense information regarding the change process. The Transition Central link on the district website was established as a valuable tool. However, open forum meetings, letters, pamphlets, and presentations were helpful as well. The combination of many means of communication proved to be very effective.

District leaders capitalized on the culture of Jackson to facilitate the change process. Education was a strong value of the community and a common value that brought people together. The strong visual symbolic acts of the high school staff mock draft and the planning for the first football game demonstrated this use of culture to help with the change process.

Community members were heavily involved in the process of change in Jackson. District leaders formed several committees with large numbers of community members to help facilitate the change work of adding a second high school. Community members were involved in planning and implementing the change from the beginning of the process. A comprehensive speaking engagement tour of the community was developed to get the word out and to answer questions. Community forums were held for input and feedback was solicited through surveys and email. By sharing the work of the process with members of the community, district leaders were able to facilitate meaningful and lasting change.

Change is here to stay. In a world that is changing faster than ever, schools must be able to change to meet the needs of the community. An effective school leader must be skilled in managing this change. The data in this study revealed that the central office administrators in Jackson acted in numerous ways to facilitate the change process. This included demonstrating several personal leadership characteristics that were vital to the success of the process such as transparency, involvement, relationship-building, vision, organizational skills, total commitment, and even bravery.

Findings in this study are unique to this context and setting. However, districts facing similar situations regarding second order change may benefit from examining the actions of the district leaders in this case. There are school districts that are facing these same circumstances or will be in the near future. District administrators will be able to analyze the data from this unique study and compare the individual contextual information to their own unique situations. The district leaders may then choose how, if at all, to use this information in leading their own secondary change processes.

<div align="center">Implications for Future Research</div>

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made regarding future research.

The Jackson district will open its second high school in August of 2013. This study focused on the leadership activity from the early period near the origins of the transition process through the spring of 2013. A study that examined the same topic one or two years after the new high school building was opened would be useful in providing additional insights into the change process.

This study was limited to one district in one Midwestern state. A study that included multiple districts in multiple states who have gone through similar situations and multiple district level leaders who have participated in this kind of secondary change work would be useful in providing additional information.

This study was based on data collected from district central office leaders and a School Board member. A similar study that involved principals and teachers would also provide additional insights and information regarding the secondary change process and could add to the research base.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dirk Halupnik
4390 Windemere Way
Marion, IA 52302
October 19, 2012

Dear Potential Participant:

My name is Dirk Halupnik, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Post Secondary Education program at the University of Northern Iowa. I am currently in the process of completing my research project titled *Leading Through Change: A Study of the Role of Central Office Leadership in the Process of Secondary Change.*

The purpose of this study was to more fully understand the actions of district level leaders in a major change effort and their effects on the change process. Furthermore this study aimed to provide additional information about the factors that school district central office administrators confront when making the decision to add another high school and the actions taken by these administrators to lead the district through this process so that other school districts and school leaders may learn from this.

Data for this study is being collected through direct observation, document review, and a series of semi-structured interviews. You are being contacted because of your association with the Jackson Community School District and your role in the transition process of the district secondary alignment.

I will be contacting you by phone in the near future to confirm your ability to interview with me. If you agree to the interview, our session will last from one hour to one and one half hours.

If you have any questions, please contact me by telephone at (319)533-5546 or by e-mail at halupnik@q.com. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Dirk Halupnik

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
HUMAN PARTICIPANTS REVIEW
INFORMED CONSENT

Project Title: *Leading Through Change: A Study of the Role of Central Office Leadership in the Process of Secondary Change*

Name of Investigator(s): Dirk Halupnik

Invitation to Participate:

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted through the University of Northern Iowa. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate.

Nature and Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to more fully understand the actions of district level leaders in a major change effort and their effects on the change process. Furthermore this study aims to provide additional information about the factors that school district central office administrators confront when making the decision to add another high school and the actions taken by these administrators to lead the district through this process so that other school districts and school leaders may learn from this. Specifically, this study will focus on district central office leadership actions throughout the decision making process of a major change effort.

Explanation of Procedures:

This portion of the research project involves collecting data through an interview. A semi-structured interview process will be used in each of the interviews. This means that a series of open ended interview questions regarding change and the change process will be utilized. Interviews will be scheduled during the work day (or at a time that is convenient for you) at your place of work (or at a place that is convenient for you) in order to accommodate your schedule. Each interview will last approximately one hour to one and one half hours and will be digitally recorded and transcribed into field notes. The recordings and notes will be kept at the researcher's house in a locked file. These notes will then be analyzed to find common themes and the data will be used to draw conclusions about the findings and determine implications for the field. The recordings and notes will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

Discomfort and Risks:

Risks to participation are similar to those experienced in day-to-day life.

Benefits and Compensation:

There is no compensation for participation in this research.

Confidentiality:

Information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used for all participants, the school district and buildings, and the community. The summarized findings with no identifying information may be published in an academic journal or presented at a scholarly conference.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw:

Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time or to choose not to participate at all, and by doing so, you will not be penalized or lose benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Questions:

If you have questions about the study you can contact Dirk Halupnik at 319-533-5546 or at halupnik@q.com. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Robert Decker at the Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Post Secondary Education, University of Northern Iowa 319-273-2443. You can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

Agreement:

> I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement. I am 18 years of age or older.

_____   _____

(Signature of participant)   **(Date)**

_____

(Printed name of participant)

_____   _____

(Signature of investigator)   **(Date)**

_____   _____

(Signature of instructor/advisor)   **(Date)**

[NOTE THAT ONE COPY OF THE ENTIRE CONSENT DOCUMENT (NOT JUST THE AGREEMENT STATEMENT) MUST BE RETURNED TO THE PI AND ANOTHER PROVIDED TO THE PARTICIPANT. SIGNED CONSENT FORMS MUST BE MAINTAINED FOR INSPECTION FOR AT LEAST 3 YEARS]

APPENDIX C

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE 1

Interview Questions Guide 1

Introduction

- Explanation of the study and the purpose

#	Question	RQ
1	Tell me a little bit about yourself: a. Education b. Preparation c. Job history d. Philosophy e. Key events in background f. Strengths	4
2	Describe the status of the district when you assumed a role as a central office administrator: a. Major strengths b. Major challenges c. Academic profile d. Community context	1
3	When did you realize that growth was an issue?	1
4	When did you begin to plan to address growth?	1 2
5	Who did you involve in this process? a. How did you delegate authority? b. How did you maintain a consistent message?	1 2
6	What factors did you identify that led to the decision to move to two high schools? a. What made you identify these? b. What research did you utilize or incorporate?	1
7	Describe the plan and the process. a. What strategies did you employ? b. How did you communicate? c. What data drove the decisions?	2 3

	d. What were your goals? e. What were your benchmarks? f. How was accountability incorporated into the plan?	

8	What was your specific role in the process?
	    a. Describe your responsibilities.
	    b. Describe your tasks.
	    c. How did your preparation and previous experience help you in this process?
		2
		3
		4

9	How did you specifically engage the community?	3
10	How did you specifically engage the staff?	2 3
11	What was the Board's role in the process?	2 3
12	What surprised you about the process?	4 5
13	How has this process had an effect on you?	4 5
14	What new challenges has this process brought?	5
15	What advice would you have for a leader about to undertake a major change process?	5

APPENDIX D

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE 2

Interview Questions Guide 2

Introduction

- Explanation of the study and the purpose review

#	Question	RQ
1	What role did the community play in this process?	2 3
2	Describe community support for the plan.	3
3	What structures did you have in place to support communication of the district's vision to key stakeholders?	2 3
4	What processes were in place to build relationships with key stakeholders?	2 3
5	What processes were in place to support capacity building?	2 3
6	What kind of training or support was provided to: a. Administrators? b. Teachers? c. Parents/community? d. Students?	2 3 4
7	What role did curriculum and instruction play in this process?	2 3
8	Describe how resources were designated and provided for this process. a. Was a bond levy required? b. If so describe the campaign effort.	2 3
9	Describe the plan for staffing the two buildings.	2 3
10	What unexpected events changed your plans?	4 5
11	What were the greatest challenges in the process? a. How did you respond to these?	3 4 5
12	What are you most proud of about this process?	4

13	What factor had the greatest impact on the success of implementation?	3 4 5
14	What would you do differently if you could do it over? a. Why?	5
15	What else would you like to say about this change process?	5

APPENDIX E

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE –BOARD

Interview Questions-Board Guide 1

Introduction

•   Explanation of the study and the purpose

#	Question	RQ
1	Describe the status of the district when you assumed a role as a Board member: a. Major strengths b. Major challenges c. Academic profile d. Community context	1
2	When did you begin to plan to address growth?	1 2
3	Who was involved in this process? a. How did you delegate authority? b. How did you maintain a consistent message?	1 2
4	What factors did you identify that led to the decision to move to two high schools? a. What made you identify these? b. What research did you utilize or incorporate?	1
5	Describe the plan and the process. a. What strategies did you employ? b. How did you communicate? c. What data drove the decisions? d. What were your goals? e. What were your benchmarks? f. How was accountability incorporated into the plan?	2 3
6	What was your specific role in the process? a. Describe your responsibilities. b. Describe your tasks. c. How did your preparation and previous experience help you in this process?	2 3 4

7	Describe how resources were designated and provided for this process.
	    a. Was a bond levy required?
	    b. If so describe the campaign effort.
		2
		3

8	How did you specifically engage the community?	3
9	Describe community support for the plan.	3
10	Was there resistance to change?	3
11	Was there internal resistance to change?	3
12	What was the Board's role in the process?	2 3
13	What surprised you about the process?	4 5
14	How has this process had an effect on you?	4 5
15	What advice would you have for a leader about to undertake a major change process?	5
16	What unexpected events changed your plans?	4 5
17	What were the greatest challenges in the process? a. How did you respond to these?	3 4 5
18	What are you most proud of about this process?	4
19	What factor had the greatest impact on the success of implementation?	3 4 5
20	What would you do differently if you could do it over?	5