Teacher Professional Development and The Seven 21st Century Survival Skills: A Program Evaluation

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TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SEVEN 21ST CENTURY SURVIVAL SKILLS: A PROGRAM EVALUATION

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Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

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This document was created for the dissertation requirement of the National Louis University (NLU) Educational Leadership (EDL) Doctoral Program. The National Louis Educational Leadership EdD is a professional practice degree program (Shulman et al., 2006).

For the dissertation requirement, doctoral candidates are required to plan, research, and implement a major project within their school or district that relates to professional practice. The three foci of the project are:

- Program Evaluation
- Change Leadership
- Policy Advocacy

For the Program Evaluation focus, candidates are required to identify and evaluate a program or practice within their school or district. The “program” can be a current initiative; a grant project; a common practice; or a movement. Focused on utilization, the evaluation can be formative, summative, or developmental (Patton, 2008). The candidate must demonstrate how the evaluation directly relates to student learning.

In the Change Leadership focus, candidates develop a plan that considers organizational possibilities for renewal. The plan for organizational change may be at the building or district level. It must be related to an area in need of improvement, and have a clear target in mind. The candidate must be able to identify noticeable and feasible differences that should exist as a result of the change plan (Wagner et al., 2006).

In the Policy Advocacy focus, candidates develop and advocate for a policy at the local, state or national level using reflective practice and research as a means for supporting and promoting reforms in education. Policy advocacy dissertations use critical theory to address moral and ethical issues of policy formation and administrative decision making (i.e., what ought to be). The purpose is to develop reflective, humane and social critics, moral leaders, and competent professionals, guided by a critical practical rational model (Browder, 1995).

Works Cited


4.21.14
ABSTRACT

This evaluation examined the extent to which one 6-12 school in an urban school district used professional development to support teachers’ inclusion of 21st century survival skills (Wagner et al., 2008) in classroom instruction. Through collecting quantitative and qualitative data from stakeholders using surveys and interviews, this study revealed how effectively teachers are or are not being instructed to teach the post-graduate survival skills necessary for student success. This study included commentary on the needed changes in leadership determined by the evaluation of the program. Outcomes of this study outline an essential new program and a change in policy that is needed to support student success in every area of post-high school life.
PREFACE

My dissertation, “Teacher Professional Development and the Seven 21st Century Survival Skills,” is a program evaluation study that examined the status of professional development in an urban school in Central Florida. I used multiple stakeholders to conduct this study. It is written in part to fulfill the graduation requirements of National Louis University (NLU) Education Department. The duration of this research was from January 2016 to April 2019. This journey has been diligently guided by my dissertation chair, Dr. Carol Burg, Ph.D., for which I am immensely thankful.

I currently serve as a non-classroom instructional staff member in my district. As a member of the leadership team, I am able to be a part of the maintenance of our instructional practices. I am also afforded opportunities to contribute to the problem-solving efforts as issues arise. While we are historically consistently one of the highest performing schools in our state, we are not slack in acknowledging that there is always room for improvement.

In this study, I documented my research in three portions with the hope that my work on this project will advance our instructional capacity. The background context of my project asserts that even our students, who are traditionally high performers, lack the basic critical thinking skills necessary to be successful in their post high school lives in college or at the workplace. The role I play as a professional development facilitator is to assist in eliminating this issue and fortifying the abilities of our students to excel in their endeavors.

There were significant leadership lessons that I gained from planning and completing this study. The first lesson was that in order to be a contributing factor to the
culture of a school, you have to be consistent, fair, and open minded. Colleagues, administrators, community members, and students alike need to be able to trust the fidelity of your work and work ethic. Secondly, I learned to allow the data to speak for itself and then interpret the multiple meanings that lie within it. One of the hardest and most repetitive steps in this process was to look at data a different way so that the true value could be seen. Finally, one of the biggest take-aways from this project was to always have multiple streams of data preservation and record keeping. The tools our professors supplied us with did not make a lot of sense when we received the nuggets at the beginning of this journey, but were it not for those tools and processes, completing this work would have been quite painstaking.

Overall, this experience has tremendously influenced my growth as a leader and I feel far better prepared to embrace future leadership roles in the world of education. As an institutional leader, I know I have the capability and tenacity to make well informed decisions to establish, promote, and increase student and staff achievement. I am a relational leader who has grown more connected to the heart of the work that is set before me. I definitely attribute this growth to the direction of my instructors as they enriched my participation in this evaluation project.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Nykowanna Karlitosha Brooks Harris Sloan is my real full name with all of the sir names of which life’s journey has blessed me. They say there is a lot in a name and one as captivating as this certainly begs for meaning. My mother was a foreign language major at the prestigious Bethune Cookman College (currently Bethune Cookman University). She fancied her craft by wielding majestic names for each of her children fashioned from one of the languages for which she was fluent. There was Spanish, French, and Swahili.

Being her favorite child, even then, she blessed me with a Swahilian name for which she surmised had no meaning. Rather, it was a collection of well-crafted, melodic syllables that she created. After many years of inquiries on its meaning and countless butcherings of its pronunciation, I met a group of African born students at Oral Roberts University who were fluent in Swahilian. They were finally able to make meaning of this enormous name. “Nykowanna” is a woman with more than enough and “Karlitosha” is a woman who is more than able. WOW! All that name bestowed on a 6lb 13oz baby girl. Unbeknownst to my mother then or me until then, the prophetic power of God was already at work.

Being the intellectual I aspire to be, and as daunting as the definition was, I still had more questions. More than enough what? More than able to do what? As my life continues to unfold, I am empowered by knowing that I have more than enough to accomplish any task that is set before me. I have more than enough to share and give and because I do so freely, I will never suffer any lack as a child of God. I am more than able to handle the issues of life. I am more than able to become whatever God wants me to be and now I am Dr. Nykowanna Karlitosha Brooks Harris Sloan and this is just the
beginning. Praise God from whom all blessings flow for I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!

This expedition of becoming Dr. Sloan has been the longest, most trial ridden three-year journey of any other period in my life thus far. Yet, I was compelled to press through. At times, it felt as if the trials of Job resided in my everyday circumstances, but still I was compelled to press on. I can only attribute that incessant compelling as the call of my Burke Gallon ancestors beckoning me not to give up or give in. That is just not what we do. For that eternal wind beneath my wings, I am grateful. Honey Bees & Daisies, Harris cousins, and family friends, let the fellowships resume. Now I am free.

I could not have made it were it not for the support, prayers, and patience of my family, friends, colleagues, and instructors. Dr. Burg, Dr. Buckman, Dr. Schott, Drs. Moxley, Dr. Minis, Dr. Cornwell, and Dr. McKee, you all make an incredible team of powerful influencers. I know that I have become a better suited leader because of the time and efforts you each have contributed to me. Dr. Burg, you led the charge of building a writer out of me and I truly appreciate your advocacy. I finally made meaning! Dr. Buckman, once a Warrior always a Warrior. You saw something in me years ago when you plucked me out of the classroom ranks and placed me into my first leadership role. I hope I have continued to represent that decision well. Drs. Moxley, I don’t know of a more dynamic educational duo than the two of you. You both lead with authentic care and gracefully instill in your students a rare and earnest goal of rightness toward all. Dr. Minis, the brief time I spent in your course still ripples across the pond of my life. You are a superb representation of what is a woman of distinction. Dr. Schott, you have seen me through three graduations now and I still don’t think you’ve poured out all you have
from the deep reservoirs of your knowledge and wit. We all have much need of the gift that is you. Until the next time, sir.

TA005, every one of you refused to leave anyone behind. Together we made it. Now together we will continue to navigate the waters of our beloved field as competent, knowledgeable, and fearless educational leaders brimming with the fortitude to tackle the inequalities that plagues our profession. Thank you for your love and support. Now, let’s influence this world for the greater good! I love you all.

Finally, it would be negligent not to take this time to offer a multitude of gratitude to my husband and children whom I love intensely, fiercely, and madly. To my husband, Bishop Lawrence Sloan, whom I affectionately refer to as Bible Man, no words could adequately express how blessed I am to have you as my partner for life. Where I am weak you are there to lift me up. Where I am strong you are there to temper me. Whenever and wherever I need you most, you are there. Thank you for always being there even when I wasn’t nor could be. Your constant faith and unending love covers me. Samuel, you are The Harris Son; my first born, my protector and my strength. God’s hands are all over your life because you are greatness in the making. I could not have asked for a better son than you. Lauren, my mini, you are a force to be reckoned with. You are a gift of gifts that God will continue to pour out as a blessing. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt, I could not breathe without each of you. You are my very heart walking around in the flesh.
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my dissertation to three individuals. First, my mother; for your undying support and not so gentle nudges that reminded me that failure is never an option. When people say you are just like your mother, it makes me smile to think that I could possibly be half the woman of excellence that you are. Of all the learned individuals I have encountered, both far and wide, you are still the smartest, most innovative woman I know. I am privileged to call you MY mother. I love you to life.

Always, Your Favorite Daughter Nikki

Secondly, I must always honor the one and only Alexander Harris. Daddy, even in your absence, you still make me want to be better. I believe in life you knew how much I treasured you and still do. You made me believe in me because I always had you. When no one else could even fathom my needs, you were there to meet them quietly, consistently, and fully. You remain my strength and encourager. You were always my true north and you are still the best man I have ever known. I hope I continue to make you proud. I love you Daddy.

Then, Now and Always, Your Songbird, Nikki

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to my niece, LaQuasha Shardae Robinson. The purity of your heart in life and the suddenness of your untimely death guides me to think deeper, work harder, and reach out further to help meet the needs of those whom I care for so profoundly. You are never far from my thoughts and always in my heart. I love you baby.

Waking up to say…Bonjour! Always, Auntie Nikki

vii
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT......................................................................................................................... i  
PREFACE ............................................................................................................................ ii  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................ iv  
DEDICATION .................................................................................................................. vii  
SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION .................................................................................... 15  
  Purpose of the Evaluation .......................................................................................... 16  
  Rationale ...................................................................................................................... 17  
  Goals of the Program Evaluation ............................................................................. 20  
  Exploratory Questions .............................................................................................. 22  
  Conclusion ................................................................................................................... 23  
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE ................................................................... 25  
  Introduction .................................................................................................................. 25  
  What is Professional Development? ......................................................................... 25  
  What are the Seven Survival Skills? .......................................................................... 26  
  How is Professional Development Used? ................................................................ 27  
  What Does the Research say About Teaching the Seven Survival Skills? ............ 28  
  What are the Benefits of Professional Development? ............................................... 30  
  Conclusion ................................................................................................................... 33  
SECTION THREE: METHODOLOGY .............................................................................. 34  
  Research Design Overview ...................................................................................... 34  
    Participants ............................................................................................................... 35  
    Data Gathering Techniques .................................................................................. 36  
    Surveys ...................................................................................................................... 36  
    Interviews .................................................................................................................. 37  
    Ethical Considerations ............................................................................................ 37  
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS ............................................................................................. 41  
  Findings ....................................................................................................................... 41  
    Teacher and Administrator Surveys ...................................................................... 41  
    Community Business Leader Surveys .................................................................. 62  
    Teacher Interviews .................................................................................................. 72
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER SIX: STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies and Actions</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER SEVEN: IMPLICATIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Statement</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Needs</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Analysis</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Analysis</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Analysis</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Analysis</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Analysis</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral and Ethical Analysis</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for Stakeholder and Community Relationships</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Lessons</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Teacher Survey</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Administrator Survey</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C: Community Business Leader Survey</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D: Teacher Interview Questions</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E: School-based Administrator Interview Questions</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F: Community Business Leader Interview Questions</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G: Adult Participant Survey Informed Consent.......................................................163
Appendix H: Adult Participant Interview Informed Consent.................................................164
Appendix I: School Site Administrator Informed Consent..................................................165
TABLES

Table 1. Teachers’ years of service ................................................................. 42
Table 2. Administrators’ years of service ....................................................... 43
Table 3. Community business leaders’ years of service ................................. 62
Table 4. Teacher responses to effectiveness of professional development .......... 73
Table 5. Teacher responses to what is working in professional development .... 74
Table 6. Teacher responses to what is not working in professional development .. 75
Table 7. Teacher responses to practice time, grade level separations, and resources 76
Table 8. Teacher ideas to address problems ................................................... 77
Table 9. Teacher response to professional development impact on students ....... 78
Table 10. Teachers familiar with Wagner’s seven survival skills ...................... 79
Table 11. Teachers’ ability to integrate Wagner’s seven survival skills .............. 79
Table 12. Current professional development incorporating critical thinking skills .... 80
Table 13. Teachers’ belief that seven survival skills can be taught in PD ........... 80
Table 14. Teacher supports needed to teach seven survival skills ................... 83
Table 15. Suggestions for teaching seven survival skills in PD ....................... 83
Table 16. What skills to students lack when entering post-high school professions .... 92
Table 17. Are student prepared to enter workforce, higher education, or service area after high school ........................................................................................................ 92
Table 18. When is the best time to learn survival skills .................................... 93
FIGURES

Figure 1. Teacher survey question #1 ................................................................. 44
Figure 2. Administrator survey question #1 ......................................................... 44
Figure 3: Teacher survey question #2 .................................................................. 45
Figure 4: Administrator survey question #2 ........................................................ 46
Figure 5: Teacher survey question #3 .................................................................. 47
Figure 6: Administrator survey question #3 ........................................................ 48
Figure 7. Teacher survey question #4 .................................................................. 49
Figure 8. Administrator survey question #4 ........................................................ 50
Figure 9. Teacher survey question #5 .................................................................. 51
Figure 10. Administrator survey question #5 ......................................................... 52
Figure 11. Teacher survey question #6 ................................................................. 53
Figure 12. Teacher survey question #7 .................................................................. 54
Figure 13. Teacher survey question #8 .................................................................. 55
Figure 14. Teacher survey question #9 .................................................................. 56
Figure 15. Teacher survey question #10 ............................................................... 57
Figure 16. Administrative survey question #6 ..................................................... 58
Figure 17. Administrative survey question #7 ...................................................... 59
Figure 18. Administrative survey question #8 ..................................................... 60
Figure 19. Administrative survey question #9 ..................................................... 61
Figure 20. Administrative survey question #10 .................................................... 62
Figure 21. Community business leader question #1 ........................................... 63
Figure 22. Community business leader question #2 ........................................... 64
Figure 23. Community business leader question #3 ........................................... 65
Figure 24. Community business leader question #4 ........................................... 66
Figure 25. Community business leader question #5 ........................................... 67
Figure 26. Community business leader question #6 ........................................... 68
Figure 27. Community business leader question #7 ........................................... 69
Figure 28. Community business leader question #8 ........................................... 70
Figure 29. Community business leader question #9 ............................................................... 71
Figure 30. Community business leader question #10 ......................................................... 72
SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

The problem context that sparked my interest in this study was the ambiguity of what is needed, if anything, to assist educators and educational systems in decreasing the global achievement gap. Wagner (2014) noted that business leaders, educators, and parents alike only contribute to a portion of the solution rather than helping to find a consensus on what to address and when. Therein lies the problem statement of discovering whether or not the skills being taught to teachers will empower our students to become better critical thinkers and learners.

My program evaluation is on the state of the current professional development used in my school. I explored what determined the priority of the topics that were chosen for our school-wide professional development instructional time. I discovered how to include more direct approaches for strategies in the sessions that would lead to more effective teacher preparation on how to teach students to think critically within their current subject area curriculums. I examined several undesired and unanticipated outcomes that may lead to the need to adjust how the selections are chosen for the implementation process.

Our public school professional development activities were used to train our faculties on the latest initiatives, educational software systems, and other instructional best practices. They lacked the edge that included how to incorporate teaching critical thinking skills that students need to be successful after high school. With the demand for more post-secondary ready students in both the career and higher education arenas, the focus on determining which initiatives received top priority versus ones that could be scaffolded became a major concern. It was my intent to unveil what the current
professional development practices were and see how those practices supported this growing need. I determined if the current practices only lightly touch on the survival skills, thus leading to the increased gap of knowledge represented by our high school graduates.

**Purpose of the Evaluation**

Professional development is routinely attended by faculty members throughout school districts everywhere. Our school district is not exempt. In fact, it is a requirement for faculty to attend professional development regularly to ensure they are receiving proper introduction and opportunity to refine the skills and strategies of current district initiatives, new technologies, and the latest and greatest best practices of our field. The sessions include a variety of tools to assist with effective instruction or involve modeling a targeted instructional practice. Attending these professional developments equips our teachers with the tools they need to continue delivering high quality, research-based instruction to our students. As an added incentive for attending a professional development session, teachers accumulate points that are used for recertification purposes.

There is also an opportunity for teachers to offer valuable feedback to the professional development facilitators through a standard set of survey questions that rate the effectiveness of the session. This survey requires the teacher to articulate how they will use the information they received in their actual classrooms. The results of these surveys are compiled and used to evaluate the session. While it is a valuable practice, the process itself is subjective and not effectively used to include or evaluate if the seven survival skills are addressed. These seven survival skills can be addressed individually,
but Tony Wagner (2014) has grouped them in twos as follows: critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration across networks and leading by influence, agility and adaptability, effective oral and written communication, accessing and analyzing information, and finally, curiosity and imagination.

The purpose of this evaluation was to conduct a formative evaluation of the professional development in the WOW School (pseudonym) to determine how many facets of the seven survival skills can be interwoven into its existing structure. The specific purpose was to ensure that all teacher professional development in our school included at least one transferable element that prepared our students to become effective critical thinkers in their post-secondary environments. The changes and additions to the current program may significantly transform how strategies relating to the seven survival skills are taught within curriculum guidelines to enhance our student’s college and or career readiness.

My program evaluation was of the current professional development used in my school. I wanted to explore what determined the prioritization of what is taught district wide and discover how to include more direct approaches to include strategies in the sessions that prepare our teachers to teach students to think more critically within their current area curriculums. I also wanted to find out if there was any evidence of any of the survival skills being taught during professional development times.

**Rationale**

I have selected this program to evaluate because I believe professional development has a direct influence on classroom instruction and ultimately student achievement. Ultimately, staff professional development affects a student both during
high school and, most importantly, in their post-secondary endeavors. According to Kraft and Gilmour (2016), doing so would help to mitigate the global achievement gap to an extent. This study assisted in identifying the current instructional use of the seven survival skills as stated in Tony Wagner’s (2008) research on closing this achievement gap.

Our district’s mission in WOW School District was to inspire all learners to reach their highest potential as responsible, productive citizens (Citation omitted to preserve anonymity). Our first indicator that was used to evaluate the efficacy of this goal was in monitoring their success in their post high school activities. In conversations with our local business partners in education, several business owners and college professors that employ or teach our students after high school shared a concern regarding the recent and continuing decline of student aptitude when they received them in the work or higher educational arenas.

I chose this course of study for my evaluation primarily due to Tony Wagner’s findings in his book The Global Achievement Gap (Wagner, 2008). His book documented the results of multiple candid interviews with business leaders and college educators as well as with other post-secondary institutions that receive our high school graduates. The results that echoed throughout the book were that we, as educators, are not preparing students to survive, whether at work or in higher education institutions. After our students leave our schools, they need intense on-the-job training or intense remediation. Wagner produced a list of seven survival skills that, if taught in primary through high school, can render a more productive and better prepared citizen in the post-secondary vernacular.
My intense connection to the seven survival skills was unveiled when I had the opportunity to parent two of my nieces in the middle of their high school years. In primary school, both girls were innovative thinkers and seemed intrinsically driven to succeed academically. During those years, I cheered them on from a slight distance whenever it did not directly conflict with their mother’s parental philosophy. My sister’s attention waned as her life began to spiral out of control as a result of a series of unfortunate consequences. By the time the girls were in high school, their attentions mirrored their mother’s, and it was clear that I needed to take a more hands-on approach to redirect the girls back to sound academic and mental status. One of them went to live with her father and the younger of the two came to live with me.

In an effort to regain the lost ground, I did a quick inventory of her thinking style, life style, and academic profile. While each were in shambles, I surmised that the first and most important step was to focus on the academics. She was approaching sixteen and wanted a job to support her upcoming senior needs and obligations. We began the job search process, and quickly learned that she had no job searching skills and was not prepared to thrive in the workplace or at school. I could not help but wonder how she was able to miss the core critical thinking skills she needed to be independently successful. Was there a point in her education where these skills could have or should have been taught? If there was a point, when and where did she miss out? Questions like these were what led me to dig deeper into whether or not such skills were taught or even required during her regular school day.

This program evaluation is vitally important to each stakeholder because it will provide each of them with a better prepared student who is ready for gainful employment,
academic rigor, and productive citizenship. The school districts around the nation are routinely compared statistically with other districts around the world. To be included as a top performer in these statistics garners immense respect and adulation from the educational community as well as their local and state communities. The rankings often include college readiness data that determines how many graduating students have been prepared to move into the workplace and higher education. This data is gathered by the number of college preparatory courses a student takes or their success in college level courses such as those provided by the College Board Advanced Placement courses.

Producing a well-rounded and high performing graduate is a major win for any school district.

The educational community at large is greatly in need of strong students who can withstand the high academic demand of our higher learning campuses and the ever-evolving needs in our communities. Preparing students who are well versed in critical thinking will afford us the assurance that our students are equipped to handle the rigorous tasks of leading our communities nationwide. When we develop a more well-rounded, independent, critical thinking student, we begin to equip our nation with leaders who are able to guide us through the toughest economical times.

**Goals of the Program Evaluation**

There were two intended goals of this program evaluation. The first goal for evaluating the effectiveness of how professional development is implemented at one Florida middle high school was to assess if it is working to increase teacher knowledge of the seven survival skills. I am interested in what types of sessions were conducted, who was used to facilitate the sessions, and how much teachers were gleaning from them.
Closely exploring the current state of our professional development provided a clear picture for this goal.

The second goal for the study was to find out if there were any signs of the seven survival skills being taught during the professional development times. In order for our students to gain this knowledge, it has to be taught or demonstrated by teachers during instructional times. Discovering if the teachers were doing this or even if they had knowledge of how to do this was key.

The benefits of exploring our current professional development practices provided insight on what was being taught during these settings and demonstrated how such topics, skills, and strategies correlate to better student achievement. It also opened up an opportunity to recommend additional and better practices to enhance post-secondary student achievement. Doing so ensured that our professional developments were more relevant for teachers who were already strong with their curriculum knowledge. Because of implementing this proposal, I observed a sustainable district adjustment in what was actually executed throughout our schools.

Achieving the goals of this study better equipped our teachers to deliver survival skills within their current curriculums and thereby develop a more well-rounded student who can show evidence of proficient critical thinking skills. Doing so would provide for an increase in the economic and social development of our communities. The economic increase would show by having students who enter colleges and work places with less need for remedial courses or training needed to complete the primary work and learning levels required to perform at expected levels. The social development will occur when we begin to produce students who think through issues with rational thought and thus be
empowered to become better decision makers. Better decision makers could result in less crime, less poverty, and a better moral way of life for the students, which benefits local communities and abroad.

**Exploratory Questions**

In order to thoroughly examine the current professional development practices at the school, I needed to begin with inquiring about its current status via the opinions of the participants on every level. This process included requesting volunteers in specific categories to fill out surveys and participate in one-on-one interviews. Some of the questions that I asked were:

1. What do stakeholders (principals and teachers) in the professional development program of WOW School perceive or report as working well with professional development?
2. What do these stakeholders (principals and teachers) perceive or report as not working well in the program?
3. What do these stakeholders (principals and teachers) in WOW School’s professional development program perceive or report as the greatest challenges in the program?
4. What do these stakeholders (principals and teachers) in WOW School’s professional development program suggest as improvements that are needed in the program?

The secondary questions I asked were:
1. What perceptions and or knowledge do the stakeholders (teachers, school administrators, and community business leaders) have of Wagner’s 21st Century Seven Survival Skills?

2. What supports would stakeholders (teachers, school administrators, and community business leaders) need to include more critical thinking skills into their daily responsibilities for students?

3. What type of professional development is needed to include Wagner’s 21st Century Seven Survival Skills?

Wagner’s (2008) research was a great launching pad for my proposal as it was the most thought-provoking book that I have read since beginning this doctoral program. He gathered data from several top employers and secondary educators to find out what our high school students were missing when entering their institutions. Most of them spoke to the need for students to think more critically, the need to be able to analytically approach situations, and their lack of inquiry skills. The implications ran through each of the articles and case studies that we were also reading.

**Conclusion**

The benefits of exploring our current professional development practices would only lead to improvement towards accomplishing our district mission. Developing concrete strategies to infuse the seven survival skills into these practices would allow for an ongoing increase in student success in higher educational institutions as well as in the growing workforce. It would also make our professional developments more relevant for teachers who are already strong with their curriculum knowledge. As a result of
implementing this proposal, I needed to see a sustainable district infusion in what is actually executed throughout our schools.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The main themes that I discuss in this literature review are describing what professional development is, how it is used, and the benefits of using it. I go further to include the seven survival skills with a description of what they are and how they benefit our educational efforts. The context of this program study centered on how we used professional development as the tool through which the survival skills were taught to teachers with the goal of teachers being able to teach them to their students. The main bodies of literature that I examined conclude that the use of professional development is both necessary and vital to the increase of student and teacher achievement.

What is Professional Development?

Professional development is the process of assisting learning institutions’ staff, such as educators and administrators, to improve their competence, knowledge, and skills in teaching through further training (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). This process can be achieved through efforts from school administrations or getting support and funding from the district, state budgets and programs, and private organizations. Post-secondary education prepares students to venture into the outside world but mostly in the business world. For this reason, professional development is significant to prepare teachers to teach the seven survival services for such students.

Through professional development, a teacher can further their knowledge in specific areas of teaching, be it mathematics, history, science or languages. Therefore, they will be in a position to master the concepts and teach them to students more effectively. This initiative would help teachers to teach students a topic in diverse
approaches, making the students acquire skills of understanding a topic in different perspectives. They will be able to think and act faster in solving problems with the new skills learned by the teacher (Wagner, 2008). Furthermore, teachers are trained on specialized teaching techniques such as differentiation or literacy strategies, which assist the students to enhance their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Through differentiation skills, the teacher would be able to know the student’s strengths and weakness (Sparks & Hirsh, 2000). Therefore, they would be able to consider their learning needs and interests. Through literacy strategies, the teacher would be skilled to teach effective oral and written communication skills. The student needs to know how to communicate effectively with peers and managers. The teacher would be able to teach the importance of maintaining eye contact, control their tones and volume, and the use of gestures and body language. Even though technology is advancing at a high rate, the teacher would be taught how to incorporate it effectively into the learning process.

**What are the Seven Survival Skills?**

In Tony Wagner’s research on closing the global achievement gap, he determined that there was a core of seven skills that students must acquire in order to become successful in today’s post-graduate endeavors, but they are not being tested or taught in our schools (Wagner, 2008). These skills were grouped as follows: critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration across networks and leading by influence, agility and adaptability, effective oral and written communication, accessing and analyzing information, and finally, curiosity and imagination. Acquiring proficiency in each of these skill sets would provide assurance that our students were prepared to tackle the tasks that lay ahead of them as productive citizens with a thirst for lifelong learning.
How is Professional Development Used?

In a study conducted by Banilower, Heck, and Weiss (2007), teachers learned how to analyze the students’ performance through techniques such as quantitative and analytical skills. Therefore, they were able to teach students the best approaches in accessing and analyzing information from the library, internet, or any other relevant sources. Currently, the internet offers huge chunks of information, which sometimes can mislead students. Thus, by learning these techniques from teachers, the students were able to know the differences that existed between factual information and factual-sounding opinions. Teachers learned about agility and adaptability in their training. They learned about how to adapt to new changes in the environment. For example, teachers were taught technological skills that were irrelevant some years ago (Russell, Bebell, O'Dwyer, & O'Connor, 2003). They needed to adapt and learn how interactive whiteboards worked, and how to use computers and course-management databases. Through this experience, they taught their students to be comfortable with changes in their environment, especially when working in a company. They did this by creating a dynamic learning environment where students were challenged to complete certain tasks in a certain manner that is uncommon. The teacher was also taught how to work with colleagues in the workplace and acquire leadership skills in professional learning communities. This process helped the teachers to teach their students the significance of collaboration across networks and how to lead by influence. Thus, they understood the significance of teamwork and played different roles as a team member and as a leader (Borko, 2004).
What Does the Research say About Teaching the Seven Survival Skills?

By learning action research through the process of professional development, teachers can learn about initiative and entrepreneurship. They learn how to find problems in a school’s academic program and how to solve them and improve the educational quality (Darling-Hammond, 2005). Once the teachers have a working knowledge of how to spark initiative and entrepreneurship through this experience, the students then learn the significance of contributing to the world by solving day to day problems. Therefore, they were taught how to be creative and take risks even if they fail the first time (Scheer, Noweski, & Meinel, 2012). On the other hand, this will also help the student to fulfill their curiosity and imagination, which they usually have as students. Through curiosity, many inventions have been discovered, and teachers would allow their students to explore their untamed imaginations.

According to Saavedra (2012), preparing students for life, citizenship, and work is a highly complicated process in the 21st century. Students need to develop knowledge and skills to overcome challenges related to globalization, technology, politics, international competition, migration, transnational environment, and changing market conditions. The attitudes, ethics, values, knowledge, and skills of the 21st century can be categorized into ways of working, ways of thinking, living in the world, and the tools for working. Tony Wagner proposed survival skills for students to be successful in the 21st century. The seven survival skills can be defined as collaboration and leadership, adaptability and agility, problem solving and critical thinking, analyzing and accessing information, effective written and oral communication, imagination and curiosity, and entrepreneurialism and initiative (Saavedra, 2012). As claimed by Hill, Beisiegel, and
Jacob (2013), a problem-based learning approach plays a vital role in preparing teachers to deal with real-world challenges. The teaching profession is no longer confined to conveying basic theories or frameworks to students. Quantitative and qualitative research suggested that the trend of professional development has gradually shifted towards small-scale research integrated with cluster-randomized trials. It can be argued that the entire approach of professional development has been upgraded due to presence of such small-scale rigorous trials (Hill, Beisiegel, & Jacob, 2013).

The concept of the ‘global achievement gap’ is inter-linked with the prevailing difference between the way of teaching and testing is being conducted in rural, suburban, and urban public schools versus what should be taught to students to survive in the global knowledge economy. To a great extent, Kraft and Gilmor (2016) structured the widget effect to evaluate competencies of teachers. This formulated policy now plays a significant role in the professional development of teachers. In the current scenario, professional development draws a correlation between teacher’s effectiveness and the knowledge base of students. The evaluation system is designed to eventually motivate teachers with a lower rating to improve their performance standards, as mentioned by Kraft and Gilmour (2016). Professional development courses have also been restructured in recent times to effectively address educational needs of the 21st century. It is evident that some of Wagner’s suggested skills revolve around analyzing information, critical thinking, and other 21st century skills.

As stated by Cochrane and Narayan (2013), the effectiveness of professional development courses can be judged on the basis of mobile web 2.0 technologies. Technically competent teachers were able to teach students the importance of
collaborative networks, critical thinking, and information technology. The community of practice (COP) model was suggested by researchers to facilitate pedagogical transformation in relation to lecturer professional development. As per the student survey results, reconstructing teaching in terms of encouraging student engagement definitely made it easier for students to communicate the seven survival skills. The professional development of lecturers is centered toward adopting technology-based platforms (Cochrane and Narayan, 2013). The use of mobile technologies enabled teachers to enhance the student’s creative and critical thinking skills.

**What are the Benefits of Professional Development?**

We have witnessed the professional community expanding at a rapid pace in the recent scenario. According to Canagarajah (2012), TESOL conferences held in the United States clearly denoted specific teaching practices that need to be adopted by individuals to remain competent in the industry. The conference served as a platform where teachers from across the globe can attend and share their valuable opinions or experience. A collaborative platform forms another facet of the professional development of teachers (Canagarajah, 2012). Emphasis on the overall development of teachers has increased the effectiveness of professional development. Arguably, the concept of the ‘global achievement gap’ is closely knit with building capacity within the schools as well as with teachers where importance is given to a balanced approach between learning and teaching. The author argued it is not justifiable to focus only on the development of teachers and ignore the capacity of schools. Teachers would perform their job properly when an advanced learning environment was designed by school authorities, as claimed by Johnson (2012). It becomes increasingly important to teachers
and the overall culture of the school to see the administrators with a hands-on approach to professional development. By demonstrating their knowledge and skills through professional development, teachers continued to build their trust in the administrative academic capacity.

Teaching quality is one of the critical factors related to Wagner’s work of the ‘global achievement gap’. Kunter et al. (2013) asserted that there are certain aspects of professional development that are ignored while upgrading the knowledge base and competency of teachers. These aspects included critical thinking and other survival skills noted in Wagner’s research. A sample of 194 mathematics classes in a German secondary school was taken to analyze the competence and instructional quality of teachers. The study revealed that the teacher’s enthusiasm, content knowledge, and self-regulatory skills influenced student outcomes, which indicated the teacher’s zeal for teaching. However, the academic ability of teachers was not enough to drive the creative, critical thinking, or analytical skills of students. The teacher’s content knowledge was increased in professional development, but that was not inclusive of any of the skills students needed to survive. A multidimensional model of professional competence was necessary for teachers, which encompassed cognitive aspects, motivational, self-regulatory, and learning variables (Kunter et al., 2013). Clearly, there was still a need for the teachers in this study to learn how to teach the critical thinking and other survival skills that would produce a more well-rounded student.

In recent professional development research, Luft and Hewson (2014) revealed that collaborative practices between teachers, peers, and educational communities were a common phenomenon. For instance, in the science community, the teaching profession
was not only limited to acquiring content knowledge but they also involved reflecting upon experiments conducted by other teachers. Including real world examples and personal experiences fortified learning in the classroom. It moved the topic off of the pages of books and into a realm that students could relate to and apply to their everyday life situations. A survey conducted with 5000 urban school students revealed teachers who were actively engaged in a Professional Development Program (PDP) were relatively more efficient in their professional field. Large-scale PDPs were arranged across the globe to align teachers with the basic needs of the globalized economy (Luft & Hewson, 2014). A teacher’s ability to connect their curriculum to real world scenarios became the key to embedding the necessary survival skills that students needed.

As discussed by numerous scholars, content knowledge and academic ability helped teachers understand the seven survival skills. Hence, importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in professional development has increased in modern times. As stated by Voogt, Knezek, Cox, Knezek, & ten Brumhellius, (2013), ICT has a positive effect both on learning and teaching. The gap between informal and formal learning has been reduced due to implementation of ICT in educational practice. ICT-related changes were exhibited in the curriculum highlights in the same manner that the learning and teaching process is restructured (Voogt et al, 2013). In overall context, scholars expressed their opinions within the context of the new models being introduced into the teaching profession, changes in professional development, new skills being adopted by teachers, and loopholes still prevalent in professional development of teachers. Arguably, scholarly evidence denotes that Wagner's survival skills were necessary to eliminate the global achievement gap. The resistance to change from
traditional teaching strategies to practical theorizing was overcome due to development of multi-dimensional professional development courses. The integration of multiple perspectives within a professional development course triggered responsive and critical attitudes toward innovation, which in turn is communicated as survival skills to students, as claimed by Caena (2011).

**Conclusion**

WOW School for the Arts consistently produces the most highly performing students in its district and in the state. After an intense review of the literature regarding the seven survival skills and how they can be taught, I obtained a better understanding of why these skills are necessary for WOW students to remain successful in their post-secondary environments. If teachers are taught how to teach these skills in their professional development times, it may provide evidence of these students being able to sustain their success after high school as well. Strengthening our professional development times to reflect and meet this need is paramount. More research is required to gain a better understanding of how to connect professional development with the seven survival skills that students need. As I conclude this literature review, the purpose was to further support with scholarly evidence that there is indeed a need for my study. In the following chapters, I will describe the detail behind how I will collect the data for my study, explain the results of said data, and give my interpretations and judgements.
SECTION THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design Overview

My initial plan to gather information was to discover how my school rates the success of its professional developments. I investigated how priority was assigned to the sessions that needed to be delivered and how personalization of professional development was practiced specifically for our school needs. I also researched how the success of these professional developments correlated with student achievement. In gathering this information, I met and interviewed the three members of the professional development team at my school. I also conducted interviews of the academic coaches and other administrative personnel responsible for executing school training sessions.

I created a survey for faculty members to gather their opinion on how well professional development prepared them for teaching and if they utilized any of the seven survival skills for students from Wagner’s research. I also prepared a survey for administrators to discover if their perceptions of our current professional development, their knowledge of the seven survival skills, and their skill at observing these skills in a classroom.

I felt the need to include community business leaders in this research to gain their perspective on how well our students were performing beyond their secondary school years. With that in mind, I created a survey for them as well as a set of specific questions for them to elaborate on during an interview.

I believe my research methodology helped me respond to my research questions because these questions directly reflected the areas that I needed to know more about. The secondary questions allowed for further, more in depth inquiry to the primary
questions. Once all of the questions were answered, I was able to ascertain a clear understanding of how participants viewed professional development and its topics at WOW School for the Arts.

Participants

I recruited the participants (one school principal, two assistant principals, two academic coaches, three guidance counselors, and sixteen classroom teachers) with prior permission from both district and site-based authorities. The participants were interviewed cautiously, and any unwilling respondent was not be forced to answer. The teachers were interviewed by introducing the objective of the research. A written consent was taken from the teachers and the administrators. The participants were initially selected by their staff position at the school. The positions included administrators, teachers, coaches, and guidance counselors. The teachers taught a variety of subjects and most taught multiple grade levels. The years of service for each participant was noted at the top of the survey, and the years ranged from first year teachers all the way up to teachers with more than thirty years of service. Each of them were given an opportunity to voluntarily participate via the survey placed in their mailboxes after school hours. They were not coerced to participate and there were no repercussions if they did not participate. The ages of my participants were between 24 and 61 years. They taught a variety of subjects including math, language arts, social studies, fine arts, performing arts, science, world languages, and reading. All participants ranged in years of service from first year teachers to veterans of more than 25 years.
Data Gathering Techniques

I used surveys and interviews to collect my data. Each was personalized into three categories: teachers, administrators, and community leaders. Included in the teacher category were both instructional coaches and guidance counselors. I chose these methods because they statistically provided the least obtrusive and most protective processes for collecting professional opinions in the workplace. A written consent was taken from the respondents that stated they have no objection and offered full consent to taking the survey.

Surveys

I conducted surveys of the teachers (Appendix A), administrators (Appendix B), and community business leaders (Appendix C) who signed the informed consent. Each of the surveys inquired about the efficiency of the professional development processes implemented in their school. I used the surveys to determine if the stakeholders felt the need for the seven survival skills within the professional development process. If they were unaware of what the seven survival skills were, they were able to clarify that in an interview.

I hoped to survey up to one principal at WOW, up to two school administrators at WOW, up to 50 teachers at WOW, and up to five WOW community business leaders. It was my goal to gather their perceptions of local professional development and any concerns they had. The surveys took approximately 15 minutes to complete for the administrator, teachers, and business partners. I was able to successfully survey one principal (100% of goal), two administrators (100% of goal), and 21 teachers (42% of goal).
Interviews

The interviews were conducted with those who indicated in the survey their willingness to participate in an interview. If participants indicated their willingness to be interviewed by checking “yes, I am willing to participate in a 30-minute voluntary interview” on the bottom of their survey, I interviewed them. During the interview, I collected data about the problems teachers faced while implementing skills and strategies from the professional development they attended. This included up to 50 teachers (Appendix D), up to 3 school administrators (Appendix E), and up to 5 community business leaders (Appendix F). I gathered firsthand accounts from teachers, administrators, and community business leaders on their perception of professional development as it involved the seven survival skills during the interviews. The goal of the completed interviews was to use the data to evaluate how well students were prepared to think critically through professional development at WOW School for the Arts. I made audio recordings of all interviews and transcribed the audio tapes of each interview. The interviews for all participants were approximately 30 minutes each for the administrator, teachers, and business partners.

Ethical Considerations

I took several steps to ensure that my research demonstrated ethical practices. All participation was voluntary and any participant could discontinue their participation at any time without any negative consequences. All participants in and with this project were volunteering. I was sure to inform each participant that their participation on a survey or an interview was strictly voluntary both in writing via their written consent as
well as to verbally inform them that they may cease their participation at any time. The written consent indicated the voluntary nature of the study.

I obtained two copies of signed, written permission from all administrative, instructional staff and community business participants that were surveyed and/or interviewed during this project evaluation. I gave the Informed Consent Adult Participant Survey form (Appendix G) to all participants to obtain their written consent to participate in the survey. This provided the participants an opportunity to pose any questions to me that they might have pertaining to the survey and or interview process. This also provided me with an opportunity to explain the study to all participants.

For interviews, I gave the Informed Consent Adult Participant Interview form (Appendix H) to all participants to obtain their written consent to participate in the voluntary interview process. I obtained signed interview consent forms from each of the participants prior to their participation. I asked the participants to sign two consent forms. I kept one of the participants’ signed forms, and provided the participant with the second signed form.

I gave the Informed Consent School Site Based Administrator form (Appendix I) to the targeted school’s site based administrators to obtain permission to conduct research at the targeted school. I obtained signed, written consent from all administrative, instructional and community business participants involved in my project evaluation utilizing approved IRRB informed consent forms.

I requested approval from the WOW School District through written communication and approval from my school principal as required by the school district.
and NLU. No person who voluntarily participated in the study was coerced in any way. Before any interview or survey, I reviewed with the participants the purpose and intent of the research by providing them the respective informed consent form. I collected a written and signed consent from the respondents who stated that they had no objection and full consent regarding the survey. The teachers or the administrators might have felt reluctant to answer the questions, which could have created a degree of psychological pressure on them. To mitigate this risk, I informed the teachers, administrators, and community business leaders of my study objectives to obtain their informed free consent.

My survey helped to reveal the problems faced by the teachers while teaching. This also helped me in sorting effective means of teaching by eliminating the problems. To protect the rights of the participants, I ensured the anonymity of the participants by using pseudonyms for individuals and the school.

While there were extremely limited potential risks, there were benefits to conducting this research for all entities: education, our school district, and our school site. Education would benefit from seeing the results of a professional development program that is infused with the seven survival skills with fidelity. It provided solid evidence of the more successful post high school students. Our school district would receive data that identified the current state of our school’s professional development, which would be evidence of the need to maximize the learning opportunities district wide. I believe this would happen through the active search our district has on finding ways to increase student achievement. Our students may provide evidence of substantial success in their post high school endeavors. Participation in this study did not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While participants were likely to not have
any direct benefit from being in this research study, their taking part in this study contributed to our better understanding of the implementation process of professional development at our school and what changes, if any, needed to be made.

The data was stored electronically on a computer with a password. Moreover, the notes, transcripts, and surveys were kept in a confidential place. As the researcher, I was the only person who viewed the information and data collected to maintain confidentiality. To ensure anonymity and privacy, I kept the identity of the school, the district, and all participants confidential, as it was not attached to the data and I used pseudonyms for all participants in the report. Only I had access to all of the survey data, which I kept in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to five years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all survey data.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, I collected both qualitative and quantitative data to discover and create a model for any needed change in professional development. The intended goal was to document whether the professional developments in my school presented opportunities for instructing teachers on how to teach critical thinking to their students. Collecting the data required thorough research of my topic with the greatest of confidentiality and fidelity to provide me with the most accurate portrait of what is currently being practiced. These data will further assist me with formulating proposed changes that may be needed.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Findings

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of the qualitative and quantitative data collected as part of the evaluation portion of this project. Within this section, I included my detailed interpretation of my findings for both the quantitative statistics of the data and the qualitative value of the data to reveal any trends, themes, and/or basic patterns of responses regarding the effectiveness of professional development as it pertains to teaching critical thinking skills at my school. I also explained how the combined interpretation of these data led to the recommended change in policy that will be discussed in the following chapter.

Teacher and Administrator Surveys

I was afforded the opportunity to distribute the voluntary teacher surveys (Appendix A) and administrator survey (Appendix B) at the end of a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. The goal was to reach up to 50 teachers and up to three administrators, with a request to participate in my voluntary research opportunity. During that meeting, there were 37 teachers and two administrators present. All 37 teachers took a survey as well as a consent letter. Of the 37 teachers who initially took the surveys, I received 21 (57%) teacher consents and surveys. The consent letters were returned directly to me while the surveys were placed in my mailbox with no identifying information on them. We had three administrators who gave consent and participated in the survey portion of this research, totaling 100% administrative participation.

The questions on the survey were aligned to answer each of the primary and secondary questions submitted in my research proposal. The first five questions on both
the teacher and the administrator surveys were identical and thus as I reported my findings. These five questions will be reviewed coupled together to compare the data between the two.

The surveys for each category began by asking brief demographic information such as what subject area they taught and how many years the participant has been in their current position. Each category of participants had a wide range of years of service. The teacher’s subjects were across the board and included all core subjects such as two math (10%), three language arts (14%), three sciences (14%), two social studies (10%), one world languages (5%), and two fine and performing arts (10%). There were also five non-classroom instructional personnel (23%) who were included, which covered areas such as guidance counselors, instructional coaches, and deans. Three surveys (14%) were returned without a specific subject area. There was also a wide spectrum in years of service ranging from one teacher with less than four years of service all the way up to teachers that had been in the field for more than 21 years. The results in years of service for teachers were:

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 6 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 10 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 15 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 20 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 or more years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.05%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were only three administrators involved in this study. Each of them had more than twenty years of service in education. The results in years of service for administrators surveyed were:
Table 2

Administrators’ years of service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>Number of Administrators</th>
<th>Percentage of Administrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 or more years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The years of service was important for my study because knowing how long they taught could reveal what strategies they were exposed to, and it also helped determine who was most open to receiving and learning new best practices. There was a time when critical thinking was included in course availabilities. The course was focused towards the eighth and ninth grade school years in the early 2000’s. Some teachers, administrators, and community business leaders were involved with students during that time and others were not. Knowing this information helped to shed light on how the skills were referenced.

Teacher and administrator survey questions 1 through 5.

Statement #1 on the Teacher Survey stated: Professional development on our campus is effective. The most frequently reported category for question one on the teacher survey with 12 out of 20 (60%) teachers reporting they agree that professional development on our campus is effective. Another 5 teachers (25%) reported that they strongly agreed that our professional development was effective. Only three teachers (15%) responded neutrally to this question. There were no responses in the disagree or the strongly disagree categories for this question; however, there was one respondent who skipped this question. These data indicate that 85% of the respondents believe that the professional development on our campus is effective. For my study, this finding unearths a need for deeper questioning. I had to find out what about the many facets of our
professional development was considered effective. I addressed this inquiry later in the results section of the teacher interviews.

Statement #1 was the same on both the teacher and the administrator surveys:

Professional development on our campus is effective. The most frequently reported
category for this question on the administrator survey was three out of three (100%) strongly agreed. This indicates that 85% of teachers and 100% of administrators agree that professional development is effective on our campus. For my study, this indicates that on the surface level, most teachers and administers have the same perspective regarding the effectiveness of the current professional development at WOW School for the Arts. Teacher survey item #2 stated: Professional development is implemented with fidelity on our campus. The most frequently reported category with 11 of 21 (52%) teachers reporting that they strongly agreed that professional development on our campus is implemented with fidelity. Eight out of 21 (38%) agree that professional development is implemented with fidelity, while two teachers (9.5%) remained neutral on this question.

![Teacher survey question #2](image)

**Figure 3:** Teacher survey question #2

Statement #2 of the administrator survey asked the administrators the same question regarding the implementation of professional development with fidelity. The
most frequently reported response for the administrators was consistent with that of the teachers where 100% (3 of 3) strongly agreed that professional development was implemented with fidelity on our campus. There were not any responses that were neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with this question. This indicates that 92% of our teachers and administration surveyed agree that professional development is executed with fidelity on our campus. This is important to my study because I had to look at the entire program to evaluate every aspect involved with our professional development program and ascertain the value of each portion. What I found to be important was that all of the administrators, who are able to go from class to class to inspect professional development implementation, agreed that they could see it being done. Two teachers remained neutral. This leads me to believe they were probably unsure because they do not get the privilege of seeing inside the classroom of their peers.

Figure 4: Administrator survey question #2
Statement #3 of both the teacher and administrator survey asked for the participant to rank whether professional development is implemented with consistency on our campus. The most frequently reported category with 14 of 21 teachers (67%) and 100% of the three administrators agreed or strongly agreed that professional development was implemented with consistency on our campus. This question began to show the first evidence of a wider gap in opinion as 29% (6) of teachers recorded that their response was neutral to this question. There was one teacher, 5%, who recorded that he/she disagreed with this question. There were no responses that strongly disagreed with this question.

These data indicate that our teachers and administration are not in total agreement with professional development being implemented with consistency on our campus. This could be because teachers have a limited view and rarely get the opportunity to visit the classrooms of their peers. Administrators have the ability to visit any class and thus are
able to see evidence of the fidelity of professional development implementation. This data provided a deeper meaning to my study as it was the first sign that unveiled a potential issue with our professional development. While there were no responses of strongly disagree from either the teacher or the administrator groups, the meaning of this data point reiterates that our school is in need of attention regarding the purity of our professional development sessions.

Figure 6: Administrator survey question #3

Statement #4 on the teacher survey and on the administrator survey was: Although my school has on-site professional development, teachers participate out of compliance rather than commitment. This was designed to elicit the perceptions of the participants regarding whether participation in professional development was out of compliance versus commitment. For the teachers, the highest response category, with 7 out of 21 (33%), ‘agreed’ that participation is out of compliance rather than commitment. The next highest response rate was 6 out of 21 (29%) for ‘disagree.’ Coming close behind that response rate was 5 out of 21 (24%) of teachers who reported that they
‘strongly agree’ this to be the case regarding participation. Three out of 21 teachers (14%) were neutral on this question while no response was reported as strongly disagreeing. This neutrality again speaks to the teacher’s inability to see what takes place in the classrooms of their peers. Beyond the collaboration that takes place in the professional development time or during their professional learning community time, there are few opportunities for them to view evidence of the consistency of implementation.

![Teacher survey question #4](image)

**Figure 7. Teacher survey question #4**

For the same item on the administrator’s survey (item #4), the highest response category with 2 out of 3 (67%) reporting was ‘agree’. The next highest response rate was 1 out of 3 (33%) reporting as ‘neutral’ to this item. This question was the first where the administrators did not all agree or strongly agree. In fact, both the teachers and the administrator results reported over 14% as neutral to this question, with the teachers resulting in 29% (6) disagreeing with the question. This indicated that our teachers and administration are not in total agreement with the level of commitment versus compliance
participation of teachers in our professional developments. This could be because each participant only has a limited perspective on how others view their responsibility to engage in professional development.

![Figure 8. Administrator survey question #4](image)

Statement #5 of both the teacher and administrator survey asked for the participant to rank whether teachers work collaboratively to implement professional development skills and strategies in their classrooms. The most frequently reported response rate was 10 out of 21 teachers (48%) for ‘agree.’ The second most reported response was 5 out of 21 teachers (24%) stating that they strongly agree on the collaborative implementation efforts in the classrooms. There were four teachers of the 21, (19%) that responded as being neutral in their response to this question and 2 out of 21, (10%) who disagreed that the collaboration from professional development was happening. No teacher responded with a ‘strongly disagree’.
For item #5, administrators all had the same response. 3 out of 3 (100%) responded that they ‘agree’ to this question. This indicated that 75% of our teachers and administration (18 of 24) agree that teachers are collaboratively working on using the skills and strategies that are shared during professional developments on our campus. This was meaningful for my study because it indicated that the teachers would work collaboratively on any professional development topic. With over two thirds of the teachers and all the administrators surveyed, it would appear that there is an effort amongst teachers to collaborate on sharing their learned skills. There were still 6 teachers who either were neutral or disagreed with this statement. This could be because these teachers are singletons, which is not rare on our campus. Many teachers teach subjects that only they teach and thus they do not have another teacher to collaborate with in specific areas of curriculum.
The remaining five questions on both the teacher and the administrator surveys varied slightly in what they were asking and can no longer be shared together; therefore, these data will now be reported in separate participant categories.

Item #6 on the teacher survey was: Teachers within my school perceive that professional development is truly functioning as it is intended to function was designed to elicit the perceptions of the participants regarding whether professional development was functioning as designed. The most frequent response category with 7 out of 2 (33%) reporting was ‘disagree.’ The next highest response rate was a tie between agree and neutral at 6 of 21 each (29%). Only 2 teachers (10%) responded with ‘strongly agree.’ No teachers responded as ‘strongly disagree.’
I was hoping to find a wider margin between agree and disagree responses with fewer respondents in the neutral zone for this question. For my study purposes, this meant that the differences in perceptions were evenly spread for this area of the study.

Statement #7 on the teacher survey stated: Teachers within my school are committed to professional development as an important factor in attaining increased student achievement. The highest response category with 10 out of 21 (48%), reporting was ‘agree.’ The next highest response rate was 6 out of 21 (29%) for ‘neutral’. 19% (4 of 21) of the respondents rated a ‘strongly agree’ for this category. One teacher (5%) responded with a ‘disagree’ on this item. No teacher responded with a ‘strongly disagree.’ For my study purposes, it did concern me that the number of neutral responses is remaining consistent. It was my hope that at this point in the year, teachers would have a firm, whether positive or negative, on how they felt professional development weighs in
on student achievement. Perhaps the reason behind these numbers reveals that teachers do not know if there is a correlation between their professional development and their student’s achievement levels. Better teaching increases student achievement and better teaching skills are gained through professional development (Whitaker & Breaux, 2013).

![Figure 12. Teacher survey question #7](image)

Statement #8 on the teacher survey asked if teaching students post-secondary critical thinking skills and strategies will increase student achievement. The highest response category with an 18 out of 21 (85%) reporting was ‘strongly agree.’ The next highest response rate was 3 out of 21 (14%) for ‘agree.’ There were no responses for the neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree categories. This directly supports a portion of the purpose of this study. Teachers are aware that post-secondary critical thinking skills and strategies are necessary components to increasing student achievement.
On statement #9 of the teacher survey, it asks if post-secondary skills and strategies are taught during our professional development times. This question was designed to interpret whether teachers recognized if post-secondary skills and strategies are being taught during their professional developments. The highest response category with 8 out of 21 (38%) reporting was ‘neutral.’ The next highest response rate was 6 out of 21 (29%) for ‘agree.’ 4 out of 21 (19%) of teachers felt like the ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement for item #9. Two (10%) of teachers were in the ‘disagree’ category while only one (5%) ‘strongly disagreed.’ For the sake of this study, these data speak volumes. Fifty three percent, 11 of 21 teachers, either cannot determine, disagree, or even strongly disagree that post-secondary skills are being taught during the professional development times. These data were powerful for my study because they began to illuminate the need for clarifying these skills when they were being taught. If they were being taught, it may be that teachers did not recognize them in demonstration. It becomes important for the
teachers to be able to connect what they are teaching to one of the specific survival skills that the students need.

**Figure 14. Teacher survey question #9**

On item #10 on the teacher survey it asked if, as a teacher, I was aware of the seven survival skills needed by post-secondary students. This questioned if the teacher was aware of the survival skills that are needed for post-secondary students. The highest response category was a tie between ‘agree’ and ‘disagree.’ Both the agree and disagree categories reflected that 6 out of 21 (29%) of teachers agreed and 6 out of 21 (29%) disagreed with this item. The next highest response rate was 4 out of 21 (19%) for ‘strongly disagree.’ Three teachers (14%) strongly agreed that they were aware of the needed seven survival skills. Two teachers of the 21 (10%) were neutral on this item. These data clarified that teachers either did or did not know what the needed survival skills were at the time of this study. After reviewing data from this question (#10), I was able to determine that there was a serious need of knowledge of these skills and a definite
need to increase the conversation about why they are needed. Communicating with the teachers about the need is definitely an area that must be addressed.

![Graph showing survey responses](image)

**Figure 15. Teacher survey question #10**

On the administrator survey, statement #6 asked if administrators felt that they observed professional development skills and strategies being implemented in classroom instruction. The most frequently reported category on the 6th question of the administrator survey with 2 out of 3 (67%) was ‘strongly agree.’ The remaining one of the three (33%) reported as ‘agree.’ No responses were reported for the neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree categories. This led me to believe our administrative team members observed the skills and strategies from professional developments being implemented within our classrooms. While these data made it appear that all of the administrators have observed the seven survival skills, for the purposes of my study, I would question which skills they have actually seen and how was it being taught or demonstrated. Were they
seen in every subject area? Were they embedded into the teaching or displayed through activities and/or exercises?

Figure 16. Administrative survey question #6

Statement #7 on the administrator survey asked if administrators were committed to professional development as an important factor in attaining increased student achievement. The most frequently reported category on the 7th question of the administrator survey with 3 out of 3 (100%) was 'strongly agree.' No responses were reported for the agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree categories. This led me to believe all of our administrative team members perceived there was a connection between professional development and student achievement. This is what I was hoping to find for this study, because it is vital to know the perception of the administration towards this powerful connection to student achievement.
Finding out if administrators hold all professional development facilitators accountable for clear and appropriate standards based sessions was statement #8 on the administrator survey. The most frequently reported category on the 8th question of the administrator survey with 2 out of 3 (67%) was ‘agree.’ The remaining one of the three (33%) reported as ‘strongly agree.’ No responses were reported for the neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree categories. These data further signified the accountability that was in place to govern how topics are being chosen and taught during professional development times, which is extremely valuable to my study. The value comes in when we identify if the topics were given or if input was requested from the teacher or if the topic was chosen out of a data determined need.
Statement # 9 asked if administrators believe post-secondary skills and strategies should be taught in professional development sessions. The most frequently reported category on the 8th question of the administrator survey with 2 out of 3 (67%) was ‘strongly agree.’ The remaining one of the three (33%) reported as ‘agree.’ No responses were reported for the neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree categories. This data led me to believe that our administrators were not opposed to including these strategies in our professional developments. This leads me to question if they truly believe professional development is the place where these strategies should be taught and what are they doing to ensure that these strategies are taught to the teachers in that setting.
Figure 19. Administrative survey question #9

Statement # 10 asked if the administrator was aware of what survival skills were needed of students in their post-secondary educations and careers. The most frequently reported category on the 10th question of the administrator survey with 2 out of 3 (67%) was ‘strongly agree.’ The remaining one of the three (33%) reported as ‘disagree.’ No responses were reported for the agree, neutral, or strongly disagree categories. Here again, the majority of the administrators were in agreement that they knew these skills and strategy needs. The one administrator who admitted to not knowing what these strategies were was the one with the least leadership experience. It is possible that the administrator has yet to come in contact with the research itself. This study will become a strong reference for that administrator.
Community Business Leader Surveys

The surveys for each category began by asking what position the participant held at their current workplace and how many years the participant had been in their current position. The positions were site supervisor, director, co-owner, manager, and a shift leader. They all had very different years of service in their current positions. The position and level of experience were vital for my study because each of the participants needed to have enough experience in a leadership role to effectively determine that they had worked with recent graduates long enough in a supervisory role to make a valid interpretation on how well students were functioning in their post-secondary workplaces.

The results in years of service for community business leaders surveyed were:

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>Number of Business Leaders</th>
<th>Percentage of Business Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 6 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 10 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These data were important to my study because they revealed how recently their time in leadership exposed them to supervising or employing students. I felt this was valid because it would establish the amount of time they were able to experience the habits displayed by students in their post-secondary areas.

Community business leader survey question 1 asked if students knew how to think critically. The most frequently reported category on the first question on the community business leader survey with 3 out of 5 (60%) was ‘agree.’ The second highest response rate was tied with neutral and disagree, each coming in with a 20% response rate. There were no responses for either strongly agree nor strongly disagree. These data were important to the study because they began to form a non-educator perspective of the study. The opinion of the business leaders came from a direct result of working with or employing our students after they graduated high school. They have the first-hand knowledge of how our students perform the necessary skills they have acquired.

![Students know how to think critically.](image)

*Figure 21. Community business leader question #1*
Community business leader survey question 2 asked if students knew how to problem solve. Item #2 of the community business leader survey asked participants to rate whether students they employed knew how to problem solve. The most frequently reported category on this survey question with 3 out of 5 (60%) was ‘agree.’ The second highest response rate was tied with neutral and disagree, both coming in with a 20% each response rate. There were no responses for either strongly agree nor strongly disagree.

![Students know how to problem solve.](image)

*Figure 22. Community business leader question #2*

These data were important to the study because they continued to form a non-educator perspective of the study. Problem solving is a vital asset for students especially after high school. Students are weaning themselves from the immediate care and direction of their parents and teachers and having to do life on their own. The ability to problem solve becomes crucial in the workplace as well as this is where you are expected to do a great deal of thinking on your own. Our student’s ability or inability to demonstrate problem solving skills is information that we need to know so we can do a better job teaching them this skill.
Community business leader survey question 3 asked if students knew how to collaborate across networks. The most frequently reported category on item #3 of the community business leader survey with 4 out of 5 (80%) was ‘agree.’ The second highest response rate with 1 out of 5 (20%) was ‘strongly agree.’ There were no responses for neither neutral, strongly agree, nor strongly disagree. These data may indicate that our students are able to collaborate across networks because they have multiple streams of communication with their peers. I believe this is because of the ease in social media accessibility and other methods of mass communications that our students are digital natives to. From apps that allow for them to quickly question others and gather opinions and information to the many social circles they form, our students venture into many arenas to collaborate with their peers on projects and events.

Figure 23. Community business leader question #3

Item #4 of the community business leader’s survey asked if the students they employed knew how to lead by influence. The most frequently reported response was a tie between neutral and disagree with both reporting 2 out of 5 (40%). There was one
respondent of the five (20%) that recorded ‘agree.’ There were no responses for either strongly agree or strongly disagree. These data were important to me because they revealed that students were not using their previous status as high performing students in high school to present themselves as leaders in their post-secondary areas of involvement. It may be because it takes more time for them to get their bearings in a new environment where they are thrust back into a learning capacity versus their previous station of high performing achievement.

Figure 24. Community business leader question #4

Community business leader’s survey question 5 asked if students knew how to adapt. The most frequently reported response was another tie between agree and neutral with both reporting 2 out of 5 (40%). There was one respondent of the five (20%) that recorded ‘disagree.’ There were no responses for either strongly agree or strongly disagree. This question is worded to only inquire about one portion of one of the seven survival skills. I believe the wording should have included the full skill of agility and adaptability. Its wording may have confused the participant as the term adapt alone could
have been defined in many different ways. For purposes of this research, I noted this and took the opportunity to further flesh it out in a clearer fashion during the business leader interviews.

Community business leader’s survey question 6 asks if students show initiative. The most frequently reported response with 3 out of 5 (60%) reporting was ‘agree.’ The second most reported category with 2 out of 3 (40%) was ‘disagree.’ There were no responses for either strongly agree, neutral, or strongly disagree. After reviewing the data, I was able to conclude that students were either clearly showing initiative or not. This could be due to a student’s knowledge base as well. If a student is in an area where they are knowledgeable, they may tend to be more inclined to be a self-starter. Not being comfortable with your newly assigned tasks could limit the amount of initiative a student shows in the workplace preferring that they are directed how and when to complete assigned tasks. This question also was written in partiality of what the actual survival skill was. The actual skill was initiative and entrepreneurialism. As the researcher, I
realize the importance of writing a fully comprehensive and inclusive question. I took
the liberty of digging deeper on this question in the interviews as well.

Community business leader’s survey question 7 asked if students had effective
written and oral communication skills. The most frequently reported response with 3 out
of 5 (60%) reporting was ‘disagree.’ The second most reported response was a tie
between neutral and strongly disagree with both reporting 1 out of 5 (20%). There were
no responses for either strongly agree or agree. These responses, unfortunately, were not
surprising. This particular survival skill is one that causes much grief at the secondary
level as well. It indicated that the same issue followed our students beyond their high
school years. Students have adapted to the brevity and colloquialisms of texting and
tweeting as their social media jargon demands. That same practice is raising its head in
our student’s ability to write and orally communicate without slang, abbreviated words,
and other practices that limit their ability to communicate at the appropriate and expected
levels of adult literacy and communication. I don’t believe they don’t know how. I
believe they struggle with the practice of when the appropriate communication should be displayed.

Community business leader’s survey question 8 asked if students knew how to analyze information. The most frequently reported response with 3 out of 5 responding was ‘neutral.’ The second highest response reported with 2 out of 5 reporting was ‘disagree.’ There were no responses for either strongly agree, agree, or strongly disagree. While not all business leaders may need their employees to be able to analyze information, the leaders surveyed recognize that the students may be unfamiliar with how to do that. Deeper meaning around the use of this skill was exposed in the interview, but for this point, I needed to know what each leader thought this meant to truly ascertain this question’s value for my study.
Community business leader’s survey question 9 asked if teachers should teach these survival skills in their classrooms. The most frequently reported response with 3 out of 5 (60%) reporting was ‘strongly agree.’ The second highest category reported with 2 out of 5 (40%) was ‘agree.’ There were no responses for either neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. This could easily be a sign of the age-old adage of who is really responsible for teaching this, but for my study, it was not surprising to have the business leaders respond this way.
Figure 29. Community business leader question #9

Community business leader’s survey question 10: Parents should teach their students these survival skills. The most frequently reported response with 5 out of 5 (100%) reporting ‘strongly agree.’ No other categories received responses. This again even further emphasized that business leaders believed these skills should be taught by another entity before students arrive at their places of employment or higher educational facilities. This also made me believe that most if not all of these skills are expected to be in a student’s knowledge bank prior to leaving high school.
Teacher Interviews

For my teacher interviews, I received 9 participants out of the 21 teachers who completed the teacher survey, rendering a 42% response rate. The range of the interviews was 17 minutes to 41 minutes in length, with the average duration of the interviews being 29 minutes. The response rates from the teacher category was percentage wise the lowest. It was far less than I had anticipated. I attributed timing as a huge factor as to why the response was so low. Once I received approval to conduct my research, it was during the height of our spring testing season and just before our summer break. Teachers may have been more accessible had the research been conducted in a less busy time of year. Nonetheless, I was still able to find valuable and meaningful trends within the responses of those that did participate.

In response to the first teacher interview question #1, (How do you view the effectiveness of professional development at your school?), the most frequently reported theme was time. Most teachers felt like our 30-minute morning sessions allowed for just
enough exposure to best practices and collaboration activities. Other comments on time were not as positive. Some teachers felt like the brevity was a constraint that did not allow for enough depth on the topic for them to gain a sufficient level of comfort in which to practice the skill or strategy displayed. One teacher commented that more of professional development time should be focused towards acclimating teachers to the internal systems that we use internally. These data was important to my study because it revealed that while time was a main factor, it shared double meanings of both good and bad from most of the participants.

Table 4

*Teacher responses to effectiveness of professional development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>1, 4, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>2, 3, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #2 (What do you believe is working well with professional development at your school?), the most frequently reported theme was collaboration. Teachers remarked that they enjoyed the collaboration time they are afforded during professional development. They add to that theme with the comments that were supportive on how, often times, the sessions would begin by having everyone sit in department teams. “Because many teachers have an opportunity to share their best practices, the culture of collaboration is nurtured.” Receiving this information was important to my study because it reveals that teachers greatly appreciated professional developments that enabled them to work together on a regular basis.
Table 5

*Teacher responses to what is working in professional development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>1, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #3 (What do you believe is not working well with professional developments at your school?), the most frequently reported theme was time with a response rate of 4 out of 9 (44%). The respondents mentioned that the new schedule for the twenty-minute professional development sessions are just too little time to go into the depth that some topics need. The second highest reported theme was differentiation with 3 out of 9 (33%). These respondents perceived the topics chosen for professional developments were “mostly anecdotal” and “procedural” topics rather than differentiated topics that would benefit everyone. The least reported theme was teacher buy in with a 2 out of 9 (22%) response rate. Both of these respondents mentioned how often times our professional development is fragmented because teachers don’t always believe in what is being taught. One even mentioned that teachers are the worst students because they behave in these sessions in ways that they would not accept from one of their own students. In reviewing these data from question #3, I realized the issues that most plagued teacher’s perceptions of our professional development sessions were common themes that raise their heads in multiple areas in our educational environment. I am able to infer that removing or minimizing some of these complaints would bring greater value to our development times.
Table 6

*Teacher responses to what is not working in professional development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Buy In</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Enough Time</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>2, 4, 5, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>3, 6, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #4 (What do you perceive as the biggest challenge with implementing these professional development skills and strategies within our current professional developments?), the most frequently reported theme was planning time with a 4 out of 9 (44%) response rate. Teachers felt like there was not enough planning time for the professional developments to really produce effective sessions. One suggested that planning be completed over the summer for the entire upcoming school year. The second most frequently reported theme was attitude with a 2 out of 9 (22%) response rate. The respondents felt like adding one more thing to the existing instructional requirements would quickly cause teachers to “turn on you” in a professional development session.

There was a three-way tie for the remaining three themes reporting a 1 out of 9 (11%) response rate. The three themes were practice time, grade level separations, and resources. The practice time referred to how little time there was for teachers to actually intertwine their new strategies in with the old ones during their instructional time. The grade level separation was mentioned by one respondent who felt there needed to not only be partnerships by departments but also by grade levels. This type of separation would allow for more vertical articulation which would ensure that students are getting the appropriate instruction they need at each level. The final theme of the three-way tie was resources. This respondent remarked that teachers are not always provided the resources needed to deliver the strategies that are taught in professional development. I
believe this was an isolated response that referred to the school not providing, what this participant felt was, adequate technology for each classroom.

Table 7

*Teacher responses to practice time, grade level separations, and resources*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning Time</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>9, 8, 6, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Time</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level Separation</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #5 (What ideas do you have to address these challenges?) the most frequently reported theme was a variety in choices with a response rate of 3 out of 9 (33%). Teachers responded that they would prefer that we had at least two selections to choose from in the Wednesday morning sessions that were specialized by topic. They were trying to find a way to attend the less procedural sessions if they felt they were already proficient in the area being shared and use the time to learn more on a topic of their choice. The second most reported theme was a three-way tie with 2 out of 9 (22%) each. Those three themes were more hands on activities, cross curricular topics, and more time. The respondents who chose the solution of more hands-on activities felt like the current sessions were more of a sit and get situation with very little opportunity to incorporate any activities. In fact, one participant said while some of our sessions are interactive, “more interaction with manipulatives would help decrease teacher inattentiveness.” The theme of cross curricular topics arose when the respondents shared how they wanted to have sessions that would enlighten them on what the other area teachers were teaching. This was discussed as a means of finding out how they could infuse the art area curricular topics into their academic subjects. The final theme of the three-way tie was what seems to be an overarching theme throughout this
study. Teachers reported the need for more time to go deeper with the subjects being taught through professional development. Our current professional developments were described as “a snack where some areas need more of a sit-down dinner”. The various perspectives on this question provides several themes that are helpful to my study because it demonstrates that teachers are willing to work together to present solutions for improving professional development with worthy ideas.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher ideas to address problems</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More Hands on Activities</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Curricular Topics</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>3, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of Choices</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>5, 6, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Time</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4, 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #6 (How do you think professional developments impact student achievement?), the most frequently reported theme was overwhelmingly that it increased student achievement with a 6 out of 9 (67%) response rate. Teachers remarked that effective professional development provided teachers with either more tools for their toolbox or new methods for using the tools they already have. When teachers continue to improve their teaching practice, students can be the focus of the learning experience in new and adaptive ways the can definitely impact student achievement. The second most reported theme was addresses new learning styles with a 2 out of 9 (22%) response rate. I believe this data was a direct correlation to a specific session we had for professional development on looking at instruction from a gifted point of view. That session provided teachers an eye opener to how gifted and exceptional education students sometimes learn differently. The least reported theme was that it doesn’t increase student achievement with a 1 out of 8 (11%) response rate. While I
found these data to be disheartening, they remained relevant. When a teacher freely expresses that professional development does not increase student achievement, a couple of thoughts come to mind as I reviewed these data. This teacher does not believe the time spent in professional development promotes an increase in student achievement. This may also cause me to derive that this teacher may not be focused during these required times of training.

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addresses New Learning Styles</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increases Achievement</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It doesn’t</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #7 (Are you familiar with Tony Wagner’s research on the Seven Survival Skills which describe the skills students need to be successful in post graduate life?), the most frequently reported theme was no with 6 out of 9 (67%) reporting that they are not familiar with the research. These data were relevant for my study because they drill down to the root of why these skills and strategies may not be taught during instructional times. It also further illuminated the need to communicate with our teachers the importance of these skills. The second response was yes indicating that 3 out of 9 (33%) of the participants were familiar with Mr. Wagner’s research. With only 33% of teachers noting that they were aware of these skills and strategies, it emphasized the need to communicate and educate the entire faculty on each of the survival skills.
Table 10

*Teachers familiar with Wagner’s seven survival skills*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>2, 3, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #8 (Are you adequately prepared to integrate any of the seven survival skills within your daily lessons?), the most frequently reported theme was again no, with 6 out of 9 (67%) reporting. While this portion of the interview was clearly connected to the previous question, at this point, teachers did express their willingness to research and learn more about Mr. Wagner’s research. The 3 out of 9 (33%) who responded yes to this interview question were the same ones who admitted knowing about the research. These data were vital to my study because they revealed that the majority of our teachers are not currently able to demonstrate these skills for our students. It allowed me to begin addressing the need of training to get the teachers informed and then work toward proficiency with these skills.

Table 11

*Teachers’ ability to integrate Wagner’s seven survival skills*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>2, 3, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #9 (How do your current professional developments assist you in incorporating critical thinking skills in your curriculum?), the most frequently reported theme was higher order teaching and thinking strategies reporting 3 of 9 (33%). The second most frequently reported theme was a tie between modeling and no correlation with each reporting 2 of 9 (22%). The third most reported theme was a tie as well between collaboration and reflection reporting 1 of 9 (11%) each.
Some teachers reported they do not experience a direct correlation from all professional developments to these skills. These data allowed me to infer that most professional developments are not designed, presented, or titled as a topic that meets the criteria of any of the seven survival skills. Rather, the skills are intermingled on a personal inference and through individual application.

Table 12

*Current professional development incorporating critical thinking skills*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher order teaching/thinking strategies</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Correlation</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #10 (Do you think each of these seven survival skills can be taught to teachers during professional development times? If so, how?), the most frequently reported themes were:

Table 13

*Teachers’ belief that seven survival skills can be taught in PD*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survival Skill</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking and Problem Solving</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agility and Adaptability</td>
<td>1, 2, 5, 9</td>
<td>3, 7</td>
<td>6, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative and Entrepreneurialism</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7</td>
<td>6, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Oral and Written Communication</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9</td>
<td>6, 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing and Analyzing Information</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9</td>
<td>1, 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity and Imagination</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6, 9</td>
<td>3, 5, 7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this question, there all seven survival skills were listed for the participant to view as well as verbally asked to each participant for a response.

For Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, respondents thought it might be best taught through teachers participating in role play, observing situations, considering solutions
and justifying outcomes through discussion with peers. For Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence, respondents mentioned that leading by example would be useful and can be achieved by having colleagues develop and share out during professional development times. In response to Agility and Adaptability, respondents were not sure that this could be taught directly as it is perceived as more of a learned behavior. They did, however mention that specific professional developments about adjusting pacing may be an avenue that can begin the conversation about these skills.

Initiative and Entrepreneurialism was one of the areas where I had to dig a little deeper for thorough responses. I added the entrepreneurialism to this portion of the question for the interview to ensure that I receive full responses on the entire skill and strategy that is in question. Respondents remained consistent in their perception that these skills cannot be taught. Instead, it was noted that they both could be concepts that a teacher can excite a student about once it is discovered. One approach to meet this training goal was by modeling this skill through using professional development time to fix a school-wide problem with the entire faculty.

Effective Oral and Written Communication received a definitely doable response from the respondents. By reviewing the ‘how tos’ and they whys of effective communication, teachers can build capacity in their students in this area. One respondent went as far as to say effective communication skills both oral and written, when taught consistently, are “key components to a healthy, well-functioning school culture.” Another teacher suggested incorporating more public speaking opportunities for the teachers during professional development times as well as in the classroom setting as a way to ensure these skills are in good practice.
For Accessing and Analyzing Information, respondents generally referenced that these skills probably lend themselves better to mathematical or scientific courses. Two language arts teachers felt like their courses could also tap into this survival skill set. For Curiosity and Imagination, respondents felt that the nature of our arts school provided ample opportunity for this skill set to be taught. Several teachers mentioned that they felt our students already came to us with a level of both curiosity and imagination. The challenge comes with curtailing it to relate to their academic courses as well.

In response to teacher interview question #11 (What supports would you need during professional development to better assist you in teaching these survival skills?), the most frequently reported theme was administrative support reporting 5 out of 9 (56%). Teachers stated that administrators may want these skills and strategies taught, but how are they able to assess them in the classrooms. These data were further described as the teachers wanted lessons with these skills to be modeled for them during our professional development times by administrators as well as the instructional coaching staff. The second most reported them was a tie between time and resources. Both received 2 out of 9 (22%) responses. Teachers felt like one of the biggest resources they would need is time to form small groups for collaborations on these skills and strategies. Such collaboration was further defined as a time where teachers of like subjects could get together and choose which of the seven survival skills they could effectively teach. After doing so, as a team, they could create lessons that involve similar examples or real-life scenarios that go along with their specific curriculum. Resources and time, or lack thereof, were mentioned a few times in this study. This led me to believe that this study unveiled a data set that is limiting our teachers from their best experiences due to a lack
of resources to do the things they see necessary in teaching these skills and strategies and even less time to execute them with certain precision.

Table 14

*Teacher supports needed to teach seven survival skills*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to teacher interview question #12, (What would be some suggestions for facilitators for coaching how these skills can be taught during professional development times?), the most frequently reported theme was creating engaging participation opportunities with 5 out of 9 (56%) of the respondents reporting they would like to see more participant involvement in our professional developments. Second most reported theme was time for practice with 3 out of 9 (33%) reporting they just need more time to practice with the coaches and facilitators before having to do the instruction on their own. This leads me to believe that Paul Bambrick-Santoyo was accurate when he stated “Your professional development is only as good as what your participants practice” (2016). Our teachers need more time to practice what they have learned. The least reported theme was administrative support with 1 of 9 (11%) reporting they want to see more administrators facilitating professional developments where they are demonstrating some of these skills and strategies.

Table 15

*Suggestions for teaching seven survival skills in PD*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create Engaging Participation Opportunities</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>4, 5, 6, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for Practice</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Administrator Interviews:

For my administrator interviews, I received 2 participants out of the 3 administrators that completed the administrator survey rendering a 67% response rate. The range of the interviews was 27 minutes to 36 minutes in length, with the average duration of the interviews being 32 minutes. Our campus is very small and only has three administrators. Because only two of them participated in the interview portion of this study, the responses were reported as narrative summaries of each question.

In response to administrator interview question #1 (How do you view the effectiveness of professional development?), both administrators expressed that they perceived professional development to be appropriate, needed, and ongoing. When further questioned about the appropriateness response, it was further explained to mean how well our professional developments are chosen to fit our instructional needs. One administrator shared that we have the best professional development available to increase our teacher’s knowledge of the new skills and tools that our district wants us to share. This lead me to believe that both administrators felt our professional developments were effective.

In response to administrator interview question #2 (What do you believe is working well with professional development?), the most frequently reported theme between the two administrators was the way the sessions chunk lessons into digestible portions for the learners. Our professional development is delivered during a twenty to thirty-minute morning session as a bit of a teaser of what is to come in the afternoon Professional Learning Community (PLC) time. The administrator added that doing the sessions this way made for a wider diversity of offering for the teachers. The same
administrator elaborated on the differentiation of how information was shared in the professional development times by saying this was another facet that is working well. “It keeps the learners on their feet when we have different people delivering lessons with their own personal styles and activities.”

In response to administrator interview question #3 (What do you believe is not working well with professional developments at your school?), the most frequently reported theme was the lack of teacher buy in. One administrator felt that while teachers were a type of captive audience at the scheduled professional development times, it was frequently evident that they were paying attention only out of compliance. That led me to dig a little deeper with a clarifying question. I asked both administrators what they thought was the reason for the disengagement to which they both had a similar answer; teachers often failed to see the relevance and thus did not alter their mindset to receive from the facilitators. One of the administrators went on to emphasize the teacher’s need to know the “why” behind what they were being asked to do or learn from the sessions. This in important to know for my study because teachers just being compliant in the forum used to teach them is not enough if they don’t pay attention enough to take the skills and strategies with them and use them in their classrooms.

In response to administrator interview question #4 (What do you perceive as the biggest challenge with implementing these professional development skills and strategies within our current professional developments?), the most frequently reported theme was changing the mindset the receivers during professional development. One administrator said that too often our sessions are filled with teachers who feel like they know it all and
don’t need to learn anything new which limits their ability to receive what might be a better practice for them to adopt as an instructional practice.

The second biggest challenge that was mentioned was the limited quantity of teacher leaders with the skill sets to lead professional developments. They both mentioned that an incredible weight is levied on one or two individuals to create and facilitate professional developments. In both cases, doing so was not the primary job of either. This was important for my study because it indicated how the role of facilitating professional development was assigned.

Time was the third theme that appeared as a response to this question, and appeared in two different ways. One administrator felt as if our twenty to thirty-minute sessions were a well-fitting nugget that lead into a more developed session during small group times in the afternoons. The other administrator felt like the time was too short citing that the teachers only received the tip of the iceberg for some subjects that she felt needed more manipulations time for the teachers. With both administrators seeing time as a theme in such a different manner, it led me to believe both perspectives were valid and both were issues that needed to be addressed.

In response to administrator interview question #5 (What ideas do you have to address these challenges?), the most frequently reported theme was to build capacity in teachers who were seen or identified as aspiring leaders. The second theme or suggestion was to find individuals to cover morning duty spots to enable the administrators to facilitate some professional developments. Either of these actions would allow for the weight of planning and presenting sessions to become more of a shared responsibility. The only other theme that appeared for this question was regarding the brevity of the
sessions. One administrator felt it would be a better use of the short session to utilize it as a demonstration time where teachers could see the tools and strategies being used and maybe even offer them an opportunity to model it for their peers.

In response to administrator interview question #6 (How would you describe the level of impact professional development has had on student achievement throughout our school?), the two administrators had very differing responses to this question. One administrator reported the level of impact is evident in the pockets of growth that are seen. To further describe what this meant, I asked a clarifying question: what types of growth do you see and where is it happening? The administrator elaborated by saying the pockets of growth are showing up in the data of the kids of teachers who are utilizing the strategies. Now that we have had sessions in place for three years, teachers realize it is not going away. Staff members are becoming more receptive to trying the new strategies when they see the growth being made in another colleague’s classes.

The other administrator had a totally different perspective. This administrator felt that if the professional development is designed correctly and the topic is worthwhile achievement is going to happen. Both of these varying perspectives brought value to my study because it if there is a different opinion on how or even if professional development impacts student achievement, then it also locates the level of emphasis that is put on improving it.

In response to administrator interview question #7 (What do you perceive as the biggest challenge with implementing these professional development skills and strategies within our current professional development?), the most frequently reported theme was time again. This time referred to not having enough time in the day for the teachers to
practice or implement the skills and strategies they were being taught. The group of teachers that one administrator felt this most effected were the new teachers. One administrator explained that new teachers have a bevy of non-negotiable mandates on them that may make another skill or strategy pale in comparison to other requirements they may be facing such as securing permanent credentialing and learning the and meeting evaluation requirements and its constraints. New teachers really had no more room to receive additional items to incorporate in their already overwhelming new roles.

In contrast to this perception of how time is a major factor, the other administrator added that the biggest challenge with implementing new strategies in longer sessions would become too boring for teachers to stay engaged. This administrator clearly preferred the shorter more segmented sessions of professional development, but admitted with the shorter sessions it would be difficult to completely add in more specific skills and strategies especially since the teachers did not appear to be engaged beyond a compliance level.

In response to administrator interview question #8 (Are you familiar with Tony Wagner’s research on the Seven Survival Skills which describe the skills students need to be successful in post graduate life?), this question’s results were a clear fifty-fifty. One administrator was very familiar with the research while the other confessed the contrary. That administrator relayed the similarities of the seven survival skills that that of the 21st Century Skills. With only one administrator even being aware of the valuable research and how it affected our students, it was important because it unveiled the need to ensure that those in leadership roles also needed to be professional developed to understand the skills that needed to be taught to teachers as well.
In response to administrator interview question #9 (Are you adequately prepared to identify any of the Seven Survival Skills when they are being taught in a classroom?), only the administrator who was aware of the study could answer affirmatively to this question. That administrator elaborated that the skills so readily intertwine with one another that identifying them all might be a challenge at first, but for the most part, the skills were easily observable. This is vital to my study because, if the administrators don’t know what to look for in the classroom instructional time, they would not be able to confirm whether or not the skills are being taught.

In response to administrator interview question #10 (How do you feel current professional development assists with incorporating critical thinking skills into our curriculums?), and again, only one administrator could answer this question. That administrator said it would be difficult under the current design of professional development on the campus of WOW, but with purposeful planning it is definitely doable especially if it leads to increased student achievement. This administrator added that many of these skills can be taught simply by increasing the rigor in the classrooms and allowing students to think all the way through to the analysis level. The second administrator chimed in with the thought that regardless to whether we call them survival skills or not, we are working towards higher thinking skills and we are still doing much better in this area than we were 20 years ago. These data were relevant for my study because there needed to be a willingness present to at least try to add the skills training if it were indeed missing from our professional developments.

In response to administrator interview question #11 (Do you think each of these seven survival skills can be taught to teachers during professional development times? If
so, how?), the most frequently reported theme was yes, they can be taught. After reviewing the list of all seven survival skills, both administrators were in agreement that the skills can all be taught. One did present a caveat to the response by adding that it would be difficult to do so effectively in the twenty to thirty-minute sessions. It would take attending an initial conference or seminar to allow for effective implementation. One administrator felt that teaching these skills were far more important than teaching one of our current programs, character education and felt like we could switch the two and have ample time to teach the survival skills to students effectively.

In response to administrator interview question #12 (What supports would you need during professional development to better assist you in teaching these survival skills?), the most frequently reported theme was funding. Both administrators offered the suggestion that teachers be compensated for taking such trainings without losing instructional time to do it. If the trainings have to be offsite or after hours, our district has to show them how much we value them and their willingness to add one more thing on their plates to help our students. This data was meaningful for my study, because it displayed the administrator’s willingness to find another way to make the needed trainings happen and included a potential opportunity for teacher financial compensation.

In response to administrator interview question #13 (What would be some suggestions for facilitators for including these skills to develop better Professional Development within our school?), the most frequently reported theme was to continue doing what we are currently doing but also find a way to purposefully embed the skills in where we can. Both administrators felt like the facilitator were doing an excellent job
with consistently presenting relevant and relatable topics. They added that the ability to add these skills into future sessions would help us in going from good to great.

**Community Business Leader Interviews:**

For my community business leader interviews, I received 5 participants out of the 5 who completed the survey, rendering a 100% response rate. The range of the interviews was 19 minutes to 31 minutes in length, with the average duration of the interviews being 25 minutes. The response rates from this category was percentage wise the greatest.

In response to community business leader interview question #1 (What types of information do you find our current students lack when exiting high school and entering post high school professions?), the most frequently reported theme was the ability of students to demonstrate teamwork with 3 out of 5 (60%), reporting that students frequently have difficulties working with other coworkers. One respondent specifically mentioned that students seemed to still operate under a more competitive mindset versus coming together with other coworkers to achieve common tasks. The second most reported theme was initiative, with 2 of 5 (40%) reporting that students often have to be given specific directions to complete tasks rather than showing the initiative to begin a task. This is important to my study because it indicated that the mindset of the student has not translated into one that is more indicative of the ability to think on their own or even to embrace being a part of a team. Oftentimes in the arts, student have to depend on one another to pull off successful performances, whether it be orchestral or dramatic. These data do not support that those skills are transferring into the workplace after high school. There were no other data themes on this question.
In response to community business leader interview question #2 (Do you believe that students are well prepared to enter the workforce, college, or other service areas immediately after high school? Why? Why not?), the most frequently reported theme was ‘no’ reporting 3 of 5 (60%). In explaining why they did not think students were well prepared to enter the workforce, each of the three respondents mentioned they perceived that students are now being prepared to pass tests rather than think critically to solve problems. “The over saturation of test as a measurement of how much a student learns has become more of a practice of learning only for the test rather than for lifelong applicable knowledge.” (Respondent 3). Another respondent (Respondent 2) remarked that students still demonstrate selfish thinking on the jobsite which makes it increasingly more difficult to for them to work with and as a team. The other 2 (40%) respondents who reported ‘yes’ to this question regarding the preparedness level of our students in the workplace or college. These data were relevant to my study because they confirmed the conversations I previously had with our business partners and college professors that employ and or teach our students after their high school graduations.

Table 17

<p>| Are student prepared to enter workforce, higher education, or service area after high school |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>1, 3, 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

92
In response to community business leader interview question #3 (Where do you think is the best teaching time for students to learn the needed survival skills, during elementary school, middle school, high school, or as on the job training for each skill?), the most frequently reported theme was at all school levels.

Table 18

When is the best time to learn survival skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survival Skill</th>
<th>Elem.</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Job</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking and Problem Solving</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agility and Adaptability</td>
<td>1, 4, 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative and Entrepreneurialism</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
<td>2, 4, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Oral and Written Communication</td>
<td>1, 1</td>
<td>2, 4, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing and Analyzing Information</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2, 4, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity and Imagination</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
<td>2, 4, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this question, there all seven survival skills were listed for the participant to view as well as verbally asked to each participant for a response. For Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, the most frequently reported theme was 4 of 5 (80%) respondents reporting that this strategy should be taught at all grade levels. For Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence, the most frequently reported theme was a tie with 2 out of 4 (40%) each for this skill being taught at home or at all school levels. This information was pertinent to my study because it represented how respondents felt about when and where students should encounter these skills in an instructional setting.
Organizational Changes

Professional development is the organizational change that I would make based on my program evaluation topic, and I would incorporate specific pre-planned sessions that directly relate to each of the seven survival skills over the course of a school year. I would create lessons that demonstrated with real world examples on how easily these skills and strategies can be interwoven into any curriculum. I would like to create a task force to complete this undertaking over the summer. This would have to be a team comprised of three to five individuals who are either already familiar with Tony Wagner’s research or are willing to do a quick study on his work to apprise themselves before our planning times begin. The next step would be to develop a workable set of lessons to be shared during professional development times. We could share this information district-wide for overall implementation consideration.

I selected this issue because the data revealed that the biggest hindrance to teaching these needed post-secondary skills is teachers’ lack of knowledge regarding these skills and strategies. From my professional experience, whenever teachers lack such necessary information, it is crucial that we begin the process of informing them through means that will eventually get them to ownership and mastery on the topic. Deciding to develop their knowledge has to be intentional in order to demonstrate the level of priority it has for them.

The current status of WOW School of the Arts is described in my “AS IS” model (Appendix J). The AS IS model is a method of describing the current context, conditions, culture, and competencies of a specific problem context. Tony Wagner describes it as a systematic approach to thinking about the challenges and goals of needed changes.
(Wagner et. al, 2006). The following is a comprehensive description of each of the areas as they currently are in our school.

**Context**

Tony Wagner’s research revealed that there is an increasing number of students leaving high school without the survival skills necessary to be successful in either higher educational or workplace settings. Our schools are doing a great job of teaching students to pass test, but when it comes to the basic critical thinking skills they need, our educational facilities are woefully lacking thorough instructional practices that promote higher level thinking in areas students will need after high school.

Historically, for the current context of our school, teachers have been provided professional development to increase rigor in their instruction which directly relates to the curriculum of their subject areas. Occasionally, the professional development is subject specific to further deepen the instructor’s standards based knowledge, but more often, the professional development sessions are used to introduce new tools and strategies to the instructor for classroom use.

**Culture**

The current culture at the school is filled with invisible mindsets that contribute to or detract from the effectiveness of professional development. WOW is not exempt from such mindsets. The most prevalent culture ripple is that teachers believe professional development is only for disseminating district programs and protocols. The next overly present cultural distractor to professional development is that there is no clear knowledge of the need to improve post-secondary student success. One final detractor from our successful implementation of professional development is teachers don’t believe that
critical thinking skills can be taught; that somehow students either have or don’t have the innate ability to think things out.

**Conditions**

The current conditions related to my study are embedded within our teacher expectations. Currently, our lesson plan process and documentation do not allow for an opportunity to pen the strategies that can be used while teaching that will demonstrate specific critical thinking skills. In review of our current lesson plans, of which no one specific form is required rather several templates are available to the teacher (Appendix K), none of them have a section where critical thinking skills and strategies can be documented. We have sections to list relevant standards, accommodations for special education needs, and even sections for extra curriculum strengthening activities, but nowhere on any of the forms is there an opportunity for a teacher to list which specific survival skill their lesson is most inclined to divulge for the learners.

**Competencies**

The data from this research supports the current competency needs of our teachers and administrators. Teacher lack the skills and strategies to teach the seven survival skills because they do not recognize them as a skill set and they have not been taught to teach them innately in their classes. The professional development time is intended to continue the growth of our teachers by exposing them to new instructional skills and strategies as well as continuing to build up and enhance the skills and strategies that they currently demonstrate during instructional times. Unfortunately, the data reveal that the seven survival skills are not readily present in any of the current professional development offerings.
The facilitators of professional development were not opposed to including these skills and strategies but they were also unaware of the skills as a set identified as a need for student academic success both in school and in student post-secondary lives. The knowledge of these skills and strategies have escaped the very individuals held responsible for instructing both teachers and students on how to operate within the skills. This is evidence of a lack of competency for providing these trainings to the teachers, coaches, and administrators.

The unanswered question remains: will teachers be committed to learning how to teach these survival skills to students? It is difficult for teachers to address concerns that are not a part of the teacher or student evaluative process. There isn’t an assessment attached to teaching these skills and thus it remains to be seen if teachers will make teaching them a priority. A method of reassessing the priority we place on the methods we use to gain the results we need out of our students is the best way to ensure that our teachers find value in teaching seven survival skills.

The next steps that need to be taken to ensure that this question is answered is to begin the process of seeking out the best manner of teaching these skills. First, I will need to research to find the most cost-effective way to attend a conference or seminar where they focus on the 21st century skills embedded in Tony Wagner’s research. Secondly, we will need to create a cohort of teachers and administrators to attend said conference with the understanding that they will be expected to return to our campus and share out on their new-found information with their peers. Finally, I would need to create lessons that are subject specific for teachers to try in their instructional time. Ongoing
dialog with teachers and administrators will be paramount to keep a pulse on how well the tools and strategies are working.

I can collaborate with community members in collecting and analyzing the information pertinent to the needed changes by including them (community members) as a part of a guiding coalition. It would be expressly important to continue receiving feedback from our community business leaders on whether or not our students are improving in the skills we are hoping to increase. Auerbach (2012) speaks to how rich it is to involve community members as resources and co-researchers when dealing with organizational change.

**Interpretation**

The results of my data collection through surveys and interviews delivered and understanding of the current state of professional development at WOW School for the Arts. The results confirmed that there was no evidence of the seven survival skills in our professional development times. The skills were not present and thus the teachers were not aware of the need to know and teach them to their students. I was also able to confirm that if given the opportunity, teachers, coaches, and administrators are willing to learn more about these survival skills.

What the data did not tell me was whether or not teachers taught these skills by happenstance within their instruction without knowing that they were required survival skills. In other words, some teachers may present lessons with real life scenarios that relate to their curriculum not knowing that they may be embedding a survival skill in the lesson for students. Many times, teachers reflected on how they felt these skills are being
taught but they emphasized that they were not necessarily within the construct of Wagner’s body of research.

An explanation would be that teachers do teach some of the skills but because they did not know about Wagner’s research, they were not able to confirm that they put all of the survival skills together. This demonstrates an area where more research could be done to evaluate teacher’s lessons to actually see if there is evidence of the skills being taught in the classrooms. One administrator remarked that they would be able to recognize the skills if being taught in the classroom. Determining what it looked like would be critical to resolving this unclear area.

I also interpreted from these data that it was difficult for teachers to definitively say what was or was not happening in another teacher’s classroom. The current instructional set up confines teachers to their own classrooms and limits their scope of one another to whatever is shared with in their professional learning communities. There would have to be an intentional rotation model put in place to allow for such teacher to teacher visitations to one another’s classrooms during instructional times.

The significance in the results was that I was able to pinpoint a true area for growth in our professional development program. I believe the data clearly indicated not only a need for informing the teachers of the seven survival skills but it also delineated a need to include a school-wide plan on how best to communicate these much-needed skills to our students, staff, and administrators. If our community business leaders are not seeing these skills demonstrated by our students in their post-secondary positions of schooling or employment, it becomes increasingly vital that we find a way to expose our students to these skills and strategies before they leave the high school environment.
Judgments

The goal of my program evaluation was to identify and report on how well the professional development program at WOW School for the Arts was preparing teachers to teach the seven survival skills as researched by Tony Wagner (2008). In this section, I will provide a comprehensive description of how the results answer my research questions and how the data influenced my findings. The data spoke specifically to my questions and while there were a few outstanding outliers, most of my findings were not surprising. The study did address the overarching four primary and three secondary questions for this research.

1. What do stakeholders (teachers, school administrators, and community business leaders) perceive or report as working well in the Staff Development program?

According to my research of the data, teachers and administrators report that they like the segments of professional development that are shared in the morning 30 minute sessions because it is consistent and serves as a perfect nugget to kick off their one to two-hour professional learning community time after school. Both groups stated that they felt the collaboration time was meaningful and allowed for an opportunity for them to see and hear from their peers as instructional leaders. One teacher noted that it was an effective use of time that provides for unifying thoughts and procedures amongst colleagues. These data led me to believe that several things are working well with our staff development and thus the results are positive for this question.
2. What do stakeholders (teachers, school administrators, and community business leaders) perceive or report as not working well in the Staff Development program?

According to my collected data, teachers and administrators reported that limited time is a serious factor that limits that ability to have meaningful and in depth professional developments. Several teachers remarked that the thirty minute segments do not allow for sufficient time to do anything more than introduce a topic rather than get to any significant depth on the topic. Three of the teachers reported the common theme of not having enough variety or differentiation in the professional development sessions stating that the sessions seemed a bit repetitive and contained what they considered as routine, common sense information. These data led me to believe that the results of this question are positive in identifying that is not working well with our professional development program.

3. What do stakeholders (teachers, school administrators, and community business leaders) perceive or report as the biggest challenges in the program?

According to the data I obtained, the biggest challenge mentioned by the teachers was not being able to provide enough time to get to the more rigorous portions of the topics. I found it interesting that both administrators mentioned time as a challenge but in more of an implementation manner. Administrators both felt like teachers needed more time to go deeper with the topics. An additional answer to this interview question that came from one administrator was that our staff has a limited number of individuals with proficiency in staff development areas that it forces the weight of the trainings to be on a couple individuals as full-time facilitators. This brought out a deficiency in the skill set
of the facilitators to effectively demonstrate all the needed topics. The challenges that arose for this question are data sets that render a positive result because they present challenges that can be addressed effectively with a few proposed changes to our professional development program.

4. What do stakeholders (teachers, school administrators, and community business leaders) suggest as ways to improve the program?

According to the results of my research data, the administrators and teachers had a bevy of ideas on how to improve the professional development program. One administrator addressed increasing capacity in teachers by identifying aspiring leaders on our campus and allowing opportunities for them to cover serve as facilitators or cover the duty of an administrator so that the administrator could facilitate professional development from time to time. This question provided a workable solution for getting more administrative facilitation during professional development times, which was one of the suggested ways to improve the program that was mentioned by the teachers. Teachers also suggested having a professional development calendar set for the entire year each year. One final solution submitted was to provide options on what topic they could attend. While this was a helpful suggestion, it directly conflicts with the perception of the administration that says we do not have enough people to facilitate the sessions. Providing other options would require additional facilitators.

My secondary exploratory questions were used to further support my exploratory questions.
1. What perceptions and or knowledge do the stakeholders (teachers, school administrators and community business leaders) have of Wagner’s 21st century 7 survival skills?

The respondents were remarkably unaware of Tony Wagner’s 21st Century Seven Survival Skills as a collective work, but when read to them individually as necessary skills, all but one of the participants could acknowledge each of the skills as a necessity for students to acquire. According to my data, teachers, administrators, and community business leaders all felt as if these skills needed to be taught within the current curriculum so that students would gain mastery before they graduated high school. The community business leaders perceived that this was a practice already in place.

2. What supports would stakeholders (teachers, school administrators and community business leaders) need to include more critical thinking skills into their daily responsibilities for students?

The respondents perceived that all stakeholders need to be educated in what the actual seven survival skills are. Teachers remarked that they needed to know what type of activities best demonstrated real life scenarios of critical thinking. Administrators added that they knew what the skills were but not all of them could recognize them being taught in a classroom. The supports administrators and teachers need to better include these skills would be to attend or participate in a conference or book study of Mr. Wagner’s research. I believe doing so would educate each stakeholder on the survival skills and thus make it easier for them to teach others which would render a positive result.

3. What type of professional development is needed to include Wagner’s 21st century 7 survival skills?
The respondents perceived more time and knowledgeable facilitators are needed to add these skills to our current professional development program. While no immediate plan was offered, the data collected to answer this question presents a real solution to improving our professional development by getting more instructional leaders and administrators trained on identifying the seven survival skills within instructional time. This professional development can come in the form of attending a conference or even an online course centered on these critical thinking skills. In regard to the need for more time, it was suggested that professional development time be modified to resemble more of a working professional learning community time of one to two undivided hours weekly.

The results were positive in that they reflect that stakeholders agree that professional development is working effectively. They also believed that the tools and strategies from the professional developments are being implemented in the classrooms. This is important because it led me to infer that teachers take the topics of professional developments seriously enough to apply what they learned in the instruction. It is my hope that they will have the same reception to topics centered around the seven survival skills.

The negative result was finding out that so few of our teachers were even aware of the research involving the seven survival skills. While many of the teachers, once prompted with descriptions of each of the skills, could relate the skills to prior knowledge of other skillsets, they still overwhelmingly were unaware of why these skills were in such demand for students. Some teachers even went as far as to say that they didn’t think
students could be taught these skills. These results were negative in that they represented a need in a mindset shifting.

The portion of the results that are unclear is whether or not teachers discovering that some of the supports teachers thought they needed were commonly mentioned. Supports such as time or lack thereof resulted in very mixed perceptions. Some participants said the brief professional development times were chunked in digestible chunks while others perceived that the brevity of the sessions limited the opportunities to go in depth enough to really own the skill or tool. Next I will make a few recommendations to counter the unclear and negative results.

**Recommendations**

In this section, I will provide a comprehensive description of what should be done regarding teaching the seven survival skills during professional development times for our teachers and in our classrooms for our students. The first recommendation is to begin by teaching teachers and administrators about the seven survival skills and clarifying why it is important that students be taught these skills. With more than half of our staff (67%) and half of our administrators (50%) not knowing what the skills are, it became very clear that our first steps would need to be to communicate and or teach the staff about these skills. Many of them recognized the skills as individual needs for students but the majority of the respondents were not aware that the skills were compiled to be a part of a specific skill set.

My recommendations of what organizational change should be done to increase how the seven survival skills are taught to teachers is to begin developing lessons that can be used during professional development times that will focus on one set of skills at a
time. I would like to create an annual calendar and designate at least one session a month towards digging deeper on the chosen set of skills. These sessions would include real life examples that can be used in their classrooms. In my past experiences with designing professional developments, it has proven valuable to begin with a guiding coalition of teachers, coaches, and administrators who are familiar with the topic to spend time collaboratively to develop the lessons.

The area that needs some change would be adjusting the schedule of needed professional developments from the district level to include the sessions we need to implement for the seven survival skills. Currently, the district periodically obtains new programs and strategies that must be rolled out district-wide. Generally, these programs are delivered in site based professional development times. Finding the consistent opportunity to incorporate the needed seven survival skills trainings will the challenge. Another area that would need to be adjusted would be to look at building critical thinking classes for students into the graduation requirements. Teachers will need to be fluent in the survival skills to effectively enable them to teach these skills and strategies to students.

The overarching organizational change that I selected was to focus on a policy change that would make it a graduation requirement for students to successfully complete a critical thinking course. If we can change the graduation requirements to include a critical thinking course, it may allow for a more concentrated time of instruction that is focused specifically on developing the seven survival skills. I chose this issue for change because it indicates the quickest way to garner the most efficient change in our organization as it relates to increasing post-graduate success for our students. If there
was an established class specifically focused on the seven survival skills, it would be a class that every student would take that would expose them to the skills and strategies that they may only see in segments in their other daily classes. More on this premise will be discussed in the policy change recommendation section of this research.
CHAPTER FIVE: TO-BE FRAMEWORK

Introduction

According to my data analysis from chapter four, the organizational change that needs to happen is an adaptive change. The stakeholders at WOW School for the Arts are predominantly unaware of the 21st century survival skills, and they need information about what the skills are and how teaching them will increase student achievement. For the information regarding what the seven survival skills are to be taught to at all levels from teachers and coaches to the administration, if this information is taught, stakeholders will begin to see the need for having a shift in how we do business in our classrooms to include connected sections of instruction that teach these survival skills to their students. Currently, our staff has specific needs that must be addressed to get us to the desired TO BE goals of this study.

Review of Literature Related to Change

The teacher in the modern education sector is a very important figure not only based on imparting knowledge, but also serves as the building figure for the new generation, tasked with building the personality of the new crop of citizens. This, therefore, requires so much passion, zeal, determination, patience and high expertise concerning different subjects. The teacher must have a deep understanding of their roles, methods of teaching, proper use of evaluation tools, student’s psychology, and the ability to motivate students. According to Duncan (2009), a teacher who possesses the above characteristics is not only a great teacher but also a leader with the capabilities to transfer these qualities to the future generations. Teachers play important roles in the lives of the students while in the classroom. The general understanding of the major reason for
undertaking the teaching profession is educating the students. However, the modern teacher has several roles in an out of the classroom. Some of the roles of the teachers are discussed below.

**Teaching knowledge**

According to Duncan (2009), the main reason a teacher finds himself in a classroom is to impart knowledge to students. Teaching follows a given curriculum and the teachers must follow it to the letter. Throughout the year, the teacher follows this curriculum dispensing all the knowledge and information to the students. The teachers can use several means to convey the teachings such as lectures or group discussions.

**Creating a Classroom Environment**

The teacher forms an integral part of the classroom and without their presence; it is hard to have a learning environment. According to Duncan (2009), students mimic the teachers’ behavior and a teacher with a warm personality makes a happy learning environment. Teachers are responsible for the student behavior within the classrooms and if a teacher sets a bad atmosphere, the mood will negatively affect learning.

**Teachers as Role Models and Mentors**

Despite the fact that teachers do not think themselves as role models, in the real sense, they influence the student’s life. Students spent the majority of their young lives in schools, with their teachers, and the majority of their behavioral traits originate from the teachers. The effect can be either negative or positive depending on the teacher. However, the role of teachers includes showing love and affection for the students (Birky, Shelton, & Headley, 2006). The fact that teachers are highly respected people in the society, automatically qualifies them to be role models.
The Tony Wagner Seven Survival Skills

To improve the quality of education in the US, Tony Wagner introduced the seven survival skills. He believes that the modern teacher should have knowledge and training to help the students survive the current unforgiving world. These survival skills are important to the lives of the students and they go a long way in helping them become good citizens and responsible people in the society. The survival skills are discussed below:

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Critical thinking in schools or in the learning process is exhibited through student participation and asking good questions. As stated by Wagner (2010), the education system in the United States and practically all over the world, students must write the correct answers. Students throughout their studies go through vast amounts of information and the main idea is to find out what is accurate or important and what is not. Wagner says “in schools, critical thinking has long been a buzz phrase. Educators pay lip service to its importance but few can tell me what they mean by the phrase or how they teach or test it.” Wagner believes that schools must offer this form of teaching to help students develop skills in critical thinking and abstract thinking, probably at the lower grades. He believes that this skill will help students in their university studies and help them advance in their careers.

Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence

In the previous work environment, people mostly worked alone, but that has changed and people normally work as teams to accomplish tasks. The schools, on the other hand, teach individualism, which is not ideal for today’s working environment. The
same principle should then apply within the classrooms and instill the concepts of teamwork and collaborations.

**Agility and Adaptability**

Schools teach students that there are right answers, and rewards only come after getting the right answers. However, that is not always the case in real life situations. According to Wagner (2010), there is a need to teach students about the concept of adapting to different situations. There is a great deal to gain in not always getting the correct answer. It allows for an opportunity of growth for the student. It opens up the “why” question that often leads to deeper understanding.

**Initiative and Entrepreneurialism**

Wagner argues the world requires proactive people with the capability for innovations. Creativity and establishment of solutions to particular challenges is important in life, but the schools do not attempt to nurture it and instead, they end up destroying it. Our schools create concrete programs and curriculums that don’t allow for much room for students to show initiative. There are even fewer curriculums that even entertain entrepreneurialism.

**Effective Oral and Written Communication**

The current employer requires a workforce with proper communication skills. According to Wagner, many English teachers spend much time teaching students on the grammar, spelling punctuations, which are only tested during the exams. The teachers should, however, focus on teaching the students to be effective speakers, and instill aspects of energy, passion and focus in their speech.
Accessing and Analyzing Information

Throughout their lives, people deal with large chunks of information. There is a growing need to find the relevant information and evaluate it. Therefore, there is a need for the students to analyze information from different sources and develop skills to synthesize it.

Curiosity and Imagination

Children are usually born with curiosity and imagination, but along the way, they lose it. One of the factors why children lose this critical skill has been attributed to schools. The manner in which curriculum is presented to students is so structured that it leaves very little room for exploration without an intentional effort from the teacher to include such activities and or opportunities during instructional time.

Organizational Change Plan

To equip teachers with the capability to teach and offer the students with the survival skills, there is an urgent need to change the way schools are run and how teachers handle students. The world today requires more than just good grades and the teachers have an immense role in shaping future leaders. To offer success to the change and adoption of the seven survival skills, there is an urge to invest in various teaching aspects such teacher evaluation, training, communication strategy, leadership professional development, and organizational best skills.

Teacher Leadership Strategies

Teacher leadership is seen as the major contributor to the successful attainment of the seven survival skills for students. From Grant (2006) sentiments, teacher leadership means the” leadership beyond headship or formal position, teachers become aware of and
take up informal leadership roles both in the classroom and beyond. It includes teachers working collaboratively with all stakeholders towards a shared and dynamic vision.”

Patterson & Peterson (2004) state that a teacher is someone who works with colleagues, has a formal or informal capacity, and is responsible for improving teaching and learning. According to Grant (2006), teacher leadership takes form in four zones, namely, the classroom, leading in general school issues, whole school development and finally leading the school to the community. There is an urgent need for the development and adoption of teaching strategies that will help students adopt the seven survival skills, which are vital to survival outside the classroom.

Grant mentions (2006), there six roles in teacher leadership and include: improvement in one’s teaching, offering curriculum development and knowledge, assisting other teachers, evaluation of other teachers, organization peer reviews in schools and taking part in the decision-making process, at the school level. From Public Impact (2012), there are two major categories, which can transform students and give them the ability to succeed. This model involves teacher leadership at the classroom level and at the school level. Developing teacher leaders, helps them pass their knowledge to other teachers and their role is to teach the high-priority subjects and handle the most challenging roles.

According to Public Impact (2012), these types of teachers possess high leadership skills, which can be used to teach other teachers. This mode of admiration gives the teacher an administrative role and they can choose, to develop and evaluate new team members. Curtis (2013) depicts that there exists no right way to understand teacher leadership. However, there is an emphasis to develop a system geared towards the
realization of teacher leadership. There is a need to create spaces for innovation that helps
end challenges in the invention, creativity and instruction delivery (Curtis, 2013).

**Teacher Evaluation**

According to Nolan & Hoover (2011), teacher evaluation is an important exercise
that helps to establish and maintain high standards of learning, while achieving goals and
objectives. It is a process to provide a focus to generate the improvement of an institution
while holding the educational stakeholders accountable for their work. It involves a
summary, which is based on an agreed criterion, and involves the collection of data and
interpreted through a variety of evaluation experiments. In order to equip the students
with the seven skills of survival, teacher evaluation is important as it helps to ascertain
the ability of teachers to deliver content in the best way possible.

Kennedy in his 2008 publication argued that the educational authorities determine
how and when the evaluation process is undertaken. According to Toch, (2008), current
evaluations consist of teacher behavior and the conditions of the classrooms. Toch,
(2008) believed that this form of evaluation does not yield much and does not help
improve the conditions of the learner. He identified the Teacher Advancement Program,
as a standard based approach, which would be ideal in helping teachers equip students
with the seven survival skills. The model involves designing and planning how teachers
give instructions and the learning environment.

According to Danielson (2010), the teacher evaluation process should not only
focus on the instructional elements, but should focus on the behind the scene activities,
such as planning, interaction with students, the community and development. According
to Santiago & Benavides (2009), all educational stakeholders must have a shared
understanding of what constitutes good teaching. The stakeholders should come up with the best definition of teaching that helps students, rather than a binary system, which looks at the satisfactory elements, based on teachers’ performance. Stronge, Ward, Tucker & Hindman (2007) stated how teacher evaluation should incorporate student achievement, where there is an emphasis on high-level skills, communication, and cognitive skills.

**Effective Communication Strategies**

The current student needs much more than just mere class lessons because the world outside class is so demanding. Communication in the learning centers is much more complex than earlier imagined. According to Alberto et al. (2013), communication refers to a set of speech features that determines the characteristics of a person when communicating. On the other hand, communication style refers to the ways of receiving the message, understanding it, interpreting it and different ways of expressing the response. Communication is also an indicator of how a person is structured to social relations. As depicted by Panisoara (2010) there is a need to have a combination of the best styles in context and not relying on one style. According to Duta, Panisoara and Panisoara (2014), effective teaching is dependent on how the teachers communicate with their students. Teachers communicate with students through various ways such as by using gestures, speaking and other forms of body language. It is very important that teachers consider how they communicate because effective communication ensures presence within the classroom. This type of presence helps to motivate students and ultimately facilitates learning.
Understanding the new demands of the job market, students need not only to be good in grammar and writing skills, but they also require to be taught how to communicate with energy and precision. Moore (2007) argued that without communication, no learning or teaching can take place. He notes that teachers with better communication skills offer better learning outcomes and ambiance to the students. In the 2006 publication by Guerrero & Floyd, teachers with the best communication skills have the ability to influence the students, which translates, to better relationships with the community and also their wellbeing. He believes that teachers, who equip students with these vital skills, make them to be successful in the future.

Lambrechts (2013) listed three strategies that could help students develop better communication skills. These strategies involved feed-up, feedback, and feedforward. Feed up involves giving the relevant examples during an evaluation process. Using this strategy, teachers offer explicit and transparent evaluation criteria to the students regarding the assessment. In the feedback strategy, the teacher gives feeding back to the student and allows them to learn as much as possible, from the exercise. Finally, in the feed-forward strategy, the teacher offers the students with tips on how to enhance their learning and how to improve their communication skills.

**Teacher Coaching**

The need for teachers to be fluent in their craft is paramount. While the most predominant method is through professional development whether in house or via off site conferences. Many campuses have an in-house expert at utilizing learning resources. This person is often referred to as a coach. Coaching is an adult learning strategy used to build the capacity of a parent or colleague to improve existing abilities, develop new
skills, and gain a deeper understanding of their practices for use in current and future situations (Rush & Shelden, 2005). Coaching may vary in different aspects such as time, type and settings. Due to the nature of the 21st-century student, there is a need to undertake teacher coaching because it helps them learn new skills and improve on their current ones, to meet the demands of the students. Teacher coaching is a never-ending strategy that helps students develop the seven survival skills and transform into better citizens.

Hanft et al. (2004) presented the five important aspects of coaching, which include the initiation or point planning, observation, action or practice, reflection, and feedback evaluation. In the above process, the teachers are offered the opportunity to observe, practice, reflect and get feedback concerning their progress in attaining those goals. There have been several findings for the outcomes of incorporating teacher coaching and the level of the student performance. There has been a positive relation between teacher coaching and improved classroom instruction, curriculum implementation, teacher-child interactions, and child academic and social-emotional outcomes. The above outcomes may help prepare the teachers towards equipping students with the seven survival skills.

According to Kretlow, Wood, and Cooke (2011), there exists a positive relationship between coaching and classroom instruction. In their study, they evaluated practice teachers in North Carolina at the first-grade baseline and post coaching. They relied on a quasi-experimental, multiple-baseline design and found out that after coaching, the teachers improved immensely.
A study conducted by Benedict et al. (2007) established that preschool classrooms offering early childhood special education, (ECSE), showed a positive teacher curriculum implementation after receiving the positive behavior support consultation. The study established that there was a high percentage in an increase of the practices of PBS in early childhood education.

Several studies have established a relationship between teacher coaching and the improvement of environment markers ratings. Caverly (2010) established that within the third year of implementation of the Early Reading First project, the approach yielded the best results at the end the children scored even better. Many studies have shown that there exists a positive correlation between coaching and the quality of child-teacher interaction. Arguing from Mashburn and Pianta’s (2010) perspective, when teachers are offered the Myteaching partner web with access to video clips, there is an increased interaction between the teachers and the students.

**Envisioning the Success TO-BE**

The goal of my “TO BE” model (Appendix L) was to develop an organizational plan for change that directly provides evidence that WOW School for the Arts’ professional development sessions include the seven survival skills and their teachers are proficient at teaching them. To accomplish this goal, all four areas must have definitive actions completed to ensure the optimal success of my vision for WOW. In this past year, we were able to begin creating some pertinent pieces to completing this puzzle. We built time in our schedule to facilitate PLC times with specific agendas. We are aiming to use a portion of that time to dig deeper into infusing more survival skill trainings.
Contexts

The WOW school district and all of its stakeholders deeply value retaining the reputation we have earned as one of the top performing schools in Central Florida. To successfully maintain this standing, we must continue to infuse critical thinking skills into our curriculums and classrooms. The ideal context of the professional development at WOW School for the Arts will indicate that our students are graduating with knowledge and the ability to demonstrate critical thinking skills and strategies. There are two major areas that require addressing in order to see WOW become the school I envision. First is providing students with exposure to seven survival skills during instructional time. Teachers will use activities and lessons that directly address one or more of the survival skills.

Second is allowing for opportunities for them to demonstrate their proficiency. Students will be granted public forum times in classes where they can openly discuss problem solving issues and gain input from their peers and teachers. Fostering this type of ready feedback will present students with multiple perspectives from which they will be able to make better decisions regarding the presented situation. When they bring in their real-world situations, they will gain a deeper understanding of the maturity involved in critically thinking through a situation.

Culture

Culture denotes the evidence of shared beliefs, assumptions and behaviors where a group of people have an understanding and are in agreement. The ideal culture of our school will be one where professional development for teachers are fashioned to include instruction and coaching on the seven survival skills. The notion that teachers cannot
teach the seven survival skills is a thing of the past in this new culture. Not only will the teachers be proficient in teaching the skills, the students will find it common place to hear or see examples of these skills in their everyday instructional times.

Teachers will be able to identify which survival skill(s) best fit with their subject area curriculum and as a norm, they will have evidence of how they are teaching these skills to their students. They will use lesson plans with activity descriptions to serve as documentation of their regular use of the survival skills in their classes. Administrators will be fluent in recognizing these skills as they are observing classroom teachers as well. The specific steps to gaining these areas of proficiency are incorporated in the strategies and actions chapter which is forth coming.

An additional piece that is present now at WOW is the self-reporting system used by graduates to keep us up to date with their post high school agendas for up to two years. Our students are hugely proficient with social media usage and we now use this to our advantage. We have a secure restricted access page called “What’s Happening Now” on all of the most popular social sites. On these pages students are able to update us on how life after high school is going for them. It would allow for them to update their activities, locations, and it provides space for them to fill in a quarterly survey that updates more information as a data collection method. That data is tabulated quarterly and it is shared with the guiding coalition which has now evolved into a post-graduate task force.

**Conditions**

The ideal conditions at WOW School of the Arts will be that teacher experts with the seven survival skills will be identified and they will match their curriculums to
correlating survival skills. A lesson plan template has been designed that includes an area to properly document how teachers will demonstrate specific survival skills to their students. Professional development will be scheduled and facilitated by various teacher leaders who have been trained on the seven survival skills. They will chunk lessons into digestible portions to teach during professional development times. These trainings will be included on the annual professional development calendar that is created by the course facilitators. Teacher leaders and or aspiring leaders will take the lead in developing a new template for teachers to document their usage of activities and strategies that demonstrate one or more survival skills. The conditions needed for this to happen involves setting aside sacred time during the duty day for these individuals to properly plan out this roll out for the remainder of the faculty of WOW School for the Arts.

Competencies

The ideal competencies needed for WOW to reach its goal will come by means of sending a guiding coalition of teachers and administrators to a conference. Based on my research, there is an urgency to educate the teachers and administrators on the survival skills research. Administration would have to provide funding to get members of a guiding coalition to these conferences as soon as possible. Our teachers are familiar with collaborating within their established PLCs but this will provide an opportunity for them to come together in a different way to serve a different purpose. The coalition is made up of a representative from all subject areas at WOW to ensure contributions and considerations from all current curriculums are available as they work towards a school-wide roll out. With the new trainings that this team will receive, administrators and
teachers alike, several individuals will be able to lead professional development sessions to guide the faculty as a whole.

**Conclusion**

The issues affecting the world today has necessitated the need to for the students to be able to communicate, create and personally develop in the aspects such as of socially, economically and politically. Similarly, equipping students with these skills helps them to participate and excel in national and global levels. The teachers, therefore, have a huge role in guiding them to participate in real-life; real-world issues to help them develop the necessary skills that will make them succeed in this world. The Wagner’s seven survival skills are critical for the new crop of students and with proper implementations; students will achieve a lot in the competitive world.

To equip the students with these skills, the teachers and the education stakeholders need to develop strategies that will ensure that the teachers acquire the necessary capacity to cater to the emerging needs of the 21st century. Since teachers cannot offer more than what they have, there is a need to come up with teacher coaching practices. Teacher development is picking pace and many educational facilities are investing in teacher development to help transform how they teach and instill skills to the students. Teacher development is taking into consideration aspects such as leadership strategies, effective communication, and teacher evaluation.
CHAPTER SIX: STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Introduction

In order to conceptualize the main areas that need to be addressed in the form of strategies and actions needed to improve the AS IS status of our professional development that currently lacks evidence of the seven survival skills, multiple strategies will need to be put in place organizationally, within the leadership, and with our teachers through professional development. These efforts must be monitored, evaluated, and protected to ensure the change continuum is effective. The main areas that need to be addressed for this organizational change are within the structure and content of our professional development times. This type of change will require a shifting in the mindset of both teachers, coaches, and administrators.

Strategies and Actions

There are several intentional strategies that need to be enacted for an effective organizational change to be maintained at WOW School for the Arts after I reviewed my research data (Appendix M). The areas that need the most attention are communication, mindset, and professional development. This chapter of my research will give a comprehensive description of each of the following strategies and its corresponding actions that need to be put in place.

- An immediate urgency to address the lack of knowledge regarding the seven survival skills

- Development of quality professional development to teach the skills inclusive of an annual calendar with monthly sessions dedicated to teaching the survival skills through real world examples
• Redevelopment of the current lesson plans to reflect inclusion of survival skills, strategies, and or activities usage within instruction

• Evaluation tool that clearly monitors and provides feedback for teachers as they use the skills and strategies in classes.

• Develop a tool to track current seniors and their post high school engagement in college or the workplace.

According to John P. Kotter’s research on the stages of change management, after developing a sense of urgency dictating the need for change, the second stage recommends putting together a guiding coalition (Kotter, 2011). In my personal experience, it is always best to form a core of stakeholders to address any problem to be most inclusive in solving the problem. For this strategy, we would solicit the input from any staff member that would be interested in learning more about the seven survival skills. There are a few who indicated that they were already aware of the skills and they would make an excellent contribution to this coalition. We would even include local community business leaders to contribute to this coalition as their perspective is uniquely different from our teachers and administrators.

The guiding coalition will need established times to meet to discuss how to create the needed pieces for rolling out several new facets to the current professional development program. Securing these times will include creating an incentive for the participants. Teachers that attend professional developments are awarded professional development points that can be used towards their state license recertification requirements. The amount of points awarded is determined by the hours spent at the professional development. The guiding coalition will perform more like a task force and
will require many hours of their time. As a small incentive, one point per hour will be allotted to each member of the guiding coalition. The hours that are spent will be registered with the district professional development department for approval. Because the results of this task force will become a school-wide implantation, its members will gain valuable instructional leadership experience as well.

Once the guiding coalition is put into place, the next strategy would be to seek out a training that would best serve the purpose of coaching all members to a level of proficiency on the seven survival skills. Tony Wagner frequently offers seminars on his research. It would be an excellent idea to seek out opportunities for the coalition or a sample of them to attend one of his seminars. That could prove to be costly, but if this is a plan of action that is attached to increasing our student achievement, it may prove to be money well spent to send a few people to participate. If that is not possible, there are some online recordings of Mr. Wagner’s seminars on his website. The coalition could view and learn to become effective at teaching the survival skills. The sessions can be set up as professional development and points can be awarded to all who participate. The key is to not allow participants to just sit on the newly gained knowledge, but in turn, share out the information with members of the coalition and eventually share out to the entire staff as an instructional leader in our professional development time.

That bring us to the next strategy of compiling an annual professional development calendar. By planning our professional development topics ahead of time, we are able to determine the best point in the year to meet the teacher’s needs. Naturally we would front load the calendar with the routine start of the year topics such as setting up gradebooks, campus routines and procedures. We would then add in any district
mandated sessions such as testing trainings, safety reviews, etc. By then we would be able to see the available open sessions that could be used to teach the survival skills.

The next strategy would be to begin making specific connections between the strategies and the course content that best lends itself to the ease of incorporating it within established standards. For instance, it may be a natural fit for the social studies classes to couple their unit on paying taxes with the survival skill assessing and analyzing information. From this matchmaking session, we would develop lesson plans with activities that directly reflect the selected survival skill while continuing to teach the standard intended for the day’s lesson. With this step, teachers would now need a manner in which to document when and how they use the survival skills in their instructional time on the lesson plan template. The current lesson plan template does not provide a section to address this need. One of the key outputs of the guiding coalition will be an addition to the lesson plan template. This revision will include a section that lists a check off area where the strategy in use can be selected. Each selection will also have brief section where the teacher can include details on the activity or exercise they will use to demonstrate the selected survival skill.

A primary area in need of attention is the erroneous mindset that students can’t be taught critical thinking. The data collected revealed that teachers believed several of the survival skills can be taught and while critical thinking is sometimes innate, the onus remains on the teachers to provide opportunities for students to learn these skills during instructional time. The guiding coalition will be tasked with developing a skeletal set of lessons that can be used by any teacher and adapted to any subject. The diversity of subject area certifications on the coalition will lend itself to having curricular
representation from each of the core subjects and all the art areas. This will provide input from every area as the plans are being developed. This is paramount because it will also allow for the subject area teachers to determine which survival skill is easiest attached to their subject.

Leading the charge toward and effective school-wide change includes the need to periodically evaluate any processes that is put in place. We will have to evaluate any intended or unintended results from the implementation of these lessons. In his research on leading change, Douglas Reeves reminds us that feedback as an essential element if it is timely and effective (Reeves, 2009). Feedback from both participating coalition members as well as from the teachers and administrators will be collected monthly to ensure any issues of implementation are addressed. Monitoring this feedback adjusting in response to any emerging problems will capture, maintain and secure the fidelity of the program changes we intend to implement.

Conclusion

For effective change, specific strategies and corresponding actions must be prescribed with precision if the change is going to be successful. Such strategies and actions are important but remain just a site based institutional solution to the goal of my program evaluation. I am encouraged that implementing these strategies and actions will garner the results that is desired to increase the survival skills on our campus but for the change to be most effective, there is a need for additional policy change state-wide. In the next chapter of my study, I will explain the type of policy change I believe is necessary to fortify the success of this change plan.
CHAPTER SEVEN: IMPLICATIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The policy issue related to my findings is one that is overwhelmingly looming over our teachers. Nationwide, in school districts and school sites alike, value is placed on items that are assessable. Teachers have the burden of having to prioritize which tool or strategy will give them the best bang for their buck. They tend to strive toward increasing in areas that are assessed because those are the areas that are used to evaluate them as instructors. Until we find a way to place greater value on the need for these skills in a manner where they become a priority, infusing them into curriculums might easily be overlooked.

Although the educators have made numerous and significant efforts to improve the learning processes, most of the school systems in the nation would still be considered obsolete (Suskie, 2018). It is because the teachers fail to focus on the critical thinking and problem-solving skills of the students and instead require them to memorize facts and conducting tests using the multiple-choice schemes. This policy proposal regards the implementation of critical thinking units in the courses that the students would be required to complete before graduating. This approach would be crucial because it would enable the teachers to train the students about real-life experiences and issues, which would ensure that they acquire the necessary survival skills. Such issues are not limited to any specific income-group school, which means that the many learning institutions do not teach and assess the most critical skills that would be required in the global knowledge economy.
The education system threatens the future generation workers and economy because the students graduate with skills that would only be suitable for undertaking the jobs and careers that are dramatically disappearing from the marketplace (Meleis, 2016). It is also threatening mainly when one considers the high rates of competition that learners from other regions and nations pose, which makes it hard for the American students to acquire the most prestigious careers globally. Some of the education experts such as Tony Wagner have commented about the variations in the content taught in the classes and the expectations or requirements of the potential employers (Wagner, 2014). Some of the critical skills that the modern employers require in the workforce include critical thinking, creativity, and practical communication to ensure that they can handle the activities in the dynamic business environments (McMurray, Dutton, McQuaid, & Richard, 2016). The 21st-century students require a proactive and inspiring education manifesto to ensure that they acquire the essential skills that would make them productive employees and citizens.

**Policy Statement**

A vast gap exists between what students learn and are tested in the schools and requirements for career and citizenship in the modern society (Friedlaender, et al., 2014). This aspect has left the American education system lagging behind other international education sectors and standards (Wagner, 2014). The educators in the nation do not realize the need for evolving their teaching practices to help their students to develop the qualities that their society requires. It is essential to create an education system that would enhance the students thinking receptors to promote critical thinking, effective communication of ideas, and creativity (Schechner, 2017). This policy statement regards
the incorporation of courses and creation of an education system that would improve the students’ critical thinking skills before their graduation. This policy approach would ensure the development of a skilled and competent labor force that would be a crucial force in the national and social development. It would help in transforming the social life and many other aspects that would improve the welfare of individuals. This approach would develop individuals that actively and critically engage with their environment and society to resolve the current issues and improve the living standards.

In many ways, the local education system has emphasized memorization of facts that are then tested through multiple-choice assessment. This approach does not challenge the students to improve their thinking abilities, creativity, and communication skills. Europe is among the best cases that have surpassed the American education practices mainly in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Such nations use multiple evaluation approaches on their students to gauge their performance (Suskie, 2018). They conduct oral tests, written examinations, and interviews to assess the qualifications and competence of their students. The use of effective assessment methods could have a transforming effect on the nature of our education systems, and it would influence improvements in the teaching practices. The educators have to realize the importance of producing society members with the required skills to ensure the sustainability of its institutions and other important aspects (O'Sullivan & Dallas, 2017). Developing the students’ thinking capacities would benefit the society because “thinkers” have a high potential of contributing to social development.

The American education system has several limitations such as the lack of teaching methods that show the learners how to reason through critical analysis of facts
and how to systematically arrange ideas, record them, and effectively communicate them (Wagner, 2014). Effective education policies should avoid taking the students through a tedious and boring education system that would not ensure preparation and acquisition of skills required for the current careers and society. America also faces another challenge of school dropouts mainly because of boring education systems and ineffective teaching methods that make it hard for some students (Darling-Hammond, 2015). This aspect makes the nation score low on international graduation rates, unlike other European nations that have reinvented their teaching practices. Such countries have implemented high national standards in their education systems (McPeck, 2016). They require their educators to be creative and develop adequate programs to ensure that their teaching and evaluation approaches achieve such milestones. The use of such standards would transform the American teaching practices and improve the student skills from assembly line competencies to make them knowledgeable employees and society members.

**Analysis of Needs**

According to Iwai et al. (1999), an analysis of needs generally refers to the activities that are involved in collecting information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the needs of a particular group of students. In the case of my study the students are two faceted. First are our teachers as students with the needs they have regarding the need to adjust their teaching methods to meet the need of infusing survival skills into their curriculum. Secondly, I address the students as the actual learners. The results of each learner will positively increase in multiple categories.
Educational Analysis

It is essential for educators to adjust their teaching methods and avoid focusing on test preparation. It is crucial to develop programs that would allow the students to explore their skills, identify their strengths, and improve their weaknesses. Some of the critical aspects that educators should ensure that their students attain are effective communication and interpersonal skills that would promote effective expression of ideas (Howard, Tang, & Austin, 2015). Conducting oral tests has proven an effective way of testing effectiveness in the communication skills because it helps the educators to determine the students’ language proficiency, self-presentation, self-esteem, and organization of ideas to ensure a seamless communication process (Holmes, Wieman, & Bonn, 2015). The education system focuses on preparing the students for tests and promotes minimal improvements in the students’ test scores because performance would be based on one’s ability to memorize (Suskie, 2018). Such scores would not be useful for determining the essential qualities such as reading, writing, and thinking the skill that the current careers require. The educators should select various promising evaluation techniques and test them by sampling student populations to determine the suitability of such methods in the institution. The district education officials would then select the best option and implement as the official local evaluation approach that would be used for all the courses and education levels.

Economic Analysis

The education plan resembles a system that was developed to ensure sustainability of the status quo where the dominant group would retain its financial and production resources while the minority would undergo a planned process that would
give them the required skill to provide a continuous supply of skilled and unskilled labor (Walker, 2017). This aspect means that the education system has been a strategic tool for promoting the oppression of the minority groups to turn them into servants. Children from well-off families will always have an unfair advantage over those from the poor backgrounds if radical changes are not implemented in the current education programs (Wagner, 2014). Such systems are a significant obstacle to economic development because they inhibit the thinking and creativity skills of the students and turn them into mere career machines for running the systems without contributing to ensure improvements or innovation.

The American education system focuses on developing a skilled workforce to occupy the prestigious position of the social institutions such as the managers, executive officers and other highly regarded careers owned by a few elites in the society that dominate other groups. Implementing effective education policies to promote critical thinking would reveal to the student the various social realities and challenges that limit their abilities to attain the desired life. Effective education systems would help the learners to identify opportunities and ways that could increase their mobility between economic classes, which would promote the distribution and redistribution of social resources (Walker, 2017). The education system only favors the children from the affluent backgrounds that can afford a private education that suits their learning capacities, which makes it easy to meet the test requirements. On the other hand, students from low-income families struggle with their tuition and often miss lessons. These aspects make it hard for them to catch up with the syllabus and pass their exams. Such trends ensure that the elites retain the top positions in their institutions while the other
people occupy the subordinate ranks. Effective education policy should ensure the implementation of practical teaching and evaluation methods that would be standard for all the learners regardless of their economic backgrounds (Moraros, Islam, Yu, Banow, & Schindelka, 2015).

**Social Analysis**

America has not been immune to the achievement gaps witnessed in many education systems globally. One of the significant and widely discussed are in the policymaking platforms is the variation in the quality of school systems between the well-off children and those from the poor or minority backgrounds. Most of the children from the middle-class households have the opportunity to attend high-quality schools or get private tuition while those from poor backgrounds have to enroll in the public learning institutions whose programs have been identified for lowering the quality of education. This aspect creates an unfair situation compounded by an unfair learning and evaluation systems that leave the learners from low economic backgrounds severely challenged, which cause significant disparities in the test scores (Walker, 2017). The education systems cannot be a useful tool for determining the variations in intellectual capacities of the students and keeps locking out intelligent, talented, and competent learners from low economic backgrounds, which promotes the vicious poverty circle.

Race and ethnicity have been a crucial determinant of economic status and access to quality education services. Non-whites have been considered the minority group in the United States, which has significantly curtailed their efforts to afford quality education services that suit their needs (Zhao, 2015). The dominant group in the nation has been the prominent facilitator of the present education system, and they have designed it to
promote their interest (O'Sullivan & Dallas, 2017). Effective education systems should not gauge the ability of the students to memorize content but should determine their understanding, interpretation, and critical evaluation of such matters. This approach would help in developing individuals that perceive and understand their world. It would ensure that the learners attain holistic lives and create sustainable societies (Wagner, 2014). It is essential for the teachers to recognize that education is a crucial tool that shapes the students’ understanding of their social world. The implementation of adequate education policy to promote critical thinking would ensure the creation of virtuous societies that would overcome the various social issues such as racism, corruption, and inequality that are major obstacles to social integration.

Political Analysis

Training the learners to improve their thinking receptors and enhance their curiosity would encounter numerous technical issues during the implementation process that would require more than interdisciplinary collaboration (Schechner, 2017). It is because the policymakers need understanding the variations in the learning experiences from one generation to another. Politicians should pass bills that require the modernization of education systems that would involve a continuous research process that would determine and enforce the education standards progressively (Collins & Halverson, 2018). Technology is a crucial tool that could be used to enhance the education processes, for instance, learning because it ensures the availability of large volumes of data (Bowen, 2018). The implementation of such techniques would aid the educators to create flexible and customized learning plans for their students which would enhance their understanding and critical analysis of content.
The improvement of our education system would ensure the production of competent individuals that would be highly qualified to occupy various positions in all institutions, including the political arena (Robinson & Aronica, 2016). This aspect would ensure that the public leaders would be adequate and competent individuals that would ensure smooth and successful operation of the system. A nation’s leadership is an essential force driving its performance, reputation, and significance in the global arena. Effective education systems would nature effective leaders that would push the nation towards prosperity and general social welfare (McPeck, 2016). Sufficient understanding of the leadership world and critical thinking skills would ensure that such leaders develop practical policies and solutions that would eliminate the barriers of development and increase the nation’s reputation in the international platforms. The Congress should analyze the bills concerning the education system and consult with professionals as well as specialists to develop the best policies that would transform the education system.

**Legal Analysis**

Education is an essential tool because it promotes the enlightenment of the society members. The residents of a nation with high levels of literacy are most likely to be aware of their civil rights than those that record high rates of illiteracy. Educated individuals can read and understand their nation’s constitution, which would ensure that they are aware of their rights and obligations (Holmes, Wieman, & Bonn, 2015). Implementation of the education policy would ensure that students understand the nation’s laws and that they grow up and become abiding citizens. Effective education system would create practical leaders that understand the needs of their publics and devise effective policies as well as other workable solutions (Howard, Tang, & Austin,
Transformation of the education systems would produce highly qualified and talented law professionals such as lawyers and judges that would ensure effective resolution of civil suits and other disputed cases. Currently, in our state, middle school students are required to take a Civics course that exposes them to many of the laws and processes available to them as citizens. This provides further opportunities for our students to acclimate themselves with our legal systems while still in school.

**Moral and Ethical Analysis**

One of the prominent barriers to the American education system is that inequality, where students from the poor financial backgrounds cannot access quality education unlike from wealthy families (Sallis, 2014). This aspect has an adverse effect because it inhibits the performance of such learners as similar evaluation approaches are used for all the students. This aspect is ethically and morally wrong because it creates an unfair advantage for the children from well-off backgrounds that would in most cases attain better scores than those from poor backgrounds. It is unethical to create a system that depicts various forms of biases and unfair favors to promote and sustain exploitation. The education system favors the children from the wealthy families because they can afford high-quality services while those from poor households miss out or opt for the low-quality system. The education systems should be fair by offering equal opportunities for the learners to optimize their skills and ensure high levels of competence, required for the current careers (Walker, 2017). Educators should create a standardized teaching model that would provide high-quality learning for all students and effective evaluation of their skills and competencies. Transformation of the education system would also help in the creation of a virtuous society because it would ensure that the students learn about the
importance of observing social ethics and virtues to live mutually useful lives (Dabell, 2016). The education system could be a helpful tool for the transformation of the society because it would promote the installation of morals that would fight other vices such as drug abuse.

**Implications for Stakeholder and Community Relationships**

The policy implications for staff relationships will show greater signs of improvement as a result of its implementation. Workers that would have undergone through the reformed education system would have the necessary knowledge, qualification, and skills to work in the international arena (Marope, Chakroun, & Holmes, 2015). Competent workers would ensure the creation of healthy business environments that would enhance the workers’ relationship, coordination, and positive attitude when handling their tasks. The education policy would help to create highly skilled workers that would increase productivity and growth (Moraros et al., 2015). The more competent the staff members are with the results of the policy implementation, the more likely they are be open to share their personal best practices with their colleagues. This will make room for a more collaborative learning community experience.

The education policy would also enhance the community relationships, as the citizens would have adequate interpersonal skills that would help them create lasting and mutually beneficial networks. This aspect would ensure sustainability of peace, security, and happy lives that would be critical for the health and wellbeing of community members. Effective interpersonal skills would also be crucial for the resolution of conflicts that could arise during the interaction processes (Wagner, 2014). Another association to consider is the relationship with the religious or spiritual community.
Effective education systems would enhance an individual’s relationship with the spiritual community because it would ensure understanding of one’s faith, which would help in perceiving the importance of various religious practices such as worship, community service, and almsgiving among others. In essence, implementation of this policy would develop a better, more well-rounded student to present to society.

Implementing the proposed education policy would create positive benefits for the stakeholders. It is because enhancing the critical thinking skills of the students promotes the development of other essential competencies such as communication and interpersonal skills. Better communications skills lead to fewer opportunities of being misunderstood and the ability to clearly articulate ones needs and desires. “The ability to express one’s views clearly in a democracy and to communicate effectively across cultures is an important citizenship skill” (Wagner, 2014). The proposed policy would provide for an increase in the appropriation of these skills and that ability will further nurture stakeholder relationships. Better interpersonal skills will provide learners with an increased ability to be more adaptable in any environment they may find themselves.

**Conclusion**

The current education system does not equip the students with the skills that are required to excel in the modern careers and social life. The focus on memorization of facts for testing has lowered the quality of the American education system compared to other international institutions. This policy recommends the implementation of critical thinking courses in the syllabus that would be critical among the essential requirements of graduation. This policy would transform the education system to enhance the thinking abilities as well as other crucial skills such as communication, creativity, and
interpersonal skills. It is vital to change the education system to ensure that it serves the current needs of the society and produces competent students that can compete in the international job markets. Education is a strategy that could be useful for promoting socioeconomic equality and growth. Reforming the education would also enhance the functions of the political and legal sectors by ensuring the availability of skilled and talented workers. Education would create crucial skills that would improve relationships in the community, spiritual groups, and the workplaces.
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

Introduction

As a review of my dissertation, I would like to revisit its theme of addressing the need for the seven survival skills to be taught at WOW School for the Arts in one small urban school district. The data collected on the issue of how effectively the existing professional development was at including these specific skills spoke mainly of the need to be informed on what these skills were and why they were important for student success. My findings were that the current professional development rarely if at all included anything about the survival skills. At best, there were scarce occasions where a skill may have been mentioned but it was not overtly done, rather it was more of an implied concept. While community business partners and other stakeholders agreed that the skills needed to be taught, there was little to no evidence that is was being done in these sessions.

It greatly relates to student learning by developing opportunities for students to receive instruction on these skills and strategies while they are still in high school. Doing so will increase the opportunity to be more successful in their post-graduate endeavors. Whether students are entering the workplace or matriculating to higher educational facilities, the need for mastering basic critical thinking skills are a must.

Discussion

WOW School for the Arts professional development is designed to present relevant skills and strategies to teachers to better assist them with implementing best practices in their instructional times. These best practices can come in many forms such as anecdotal programs for procedural knowledge, reminders of processes and protocols,
or even an introduction of a new tool for the proverbial teacher tool box. The goal of all of these processes is to assist in increasing student achievement.

The two goals for this research were to determine if we were meeting all of the established goals of professional development, and to discover whether or not needed critical thinking skills were being taught during these sessions. Through this research, it was found that this major key was unintentionally missing and that was the opportunity to teach teachers how to teach the seven survival skills that students need for post-secondary success.

Through the plan for organizational change suggested in this research, the issue raised has been addressed by developing a guiding coalition of stakeholders to first learn what the seven survival skills are through a book study. By providing dedicated time to create a viable plan to roll out a school-wide professional development series with the subsequent documentable artifacts such as a revised lesson plan template. This affords the teachers on site with a solution that would include instruction of these strategies within their lessons, but without a policy in place, the growth would be limited to just WOW School for the Arts.

The policy for which I chose to advocate for due to the issues raised in my program evaluation would be far reaching beyond just our campus. This policy is to advocate for a change that would make completing a critical thinking course a mandatory graduation requirement for all students. As an organizational change plan, our district could put the requirement in place for its graduates by including it in the course requirements even if it is listed as a required elective just like a HOPE or personal fitness course.
Leadership Lessons

The leadership lessons I have gained in this process focuses on completely developing our professional development sessions to include more critical thinking skills. I have learned that the first and most important step towards incorporating these survival skills that is in simply educating the teacher by communicating what the Seven Survival Skills are and why they are needed. Secondly, I learned that they why had to be addressed; why do the students need the skills. The final piece that had to be communicated was how doing so would lead to higher academic achievement for our students.

As an academic coach greatly responsible for constructing effective professional developments, I will use the information and knowledge generated through this study to restructure how topics for professional development are being taught. I also learned that teachers desire to hear more from their administrators in the learning sessions. We have many teachers that are experts in specific teaching methods and strategies. The data says that allowing them to lead professional development sessions is also well received by the faculty.

Going forward as an instructional leader, I feel comfortable and well informed to petition our site based leadership for implementing the changes that we can based on the findings in my study. I will start by sharing my findings with my principal and our leadership team. I believe doing so will open an opportunity for them to allow for a guiding coalition to be assembled as a start to implementing some needed changes. I have learned in this process that there are opportunities for growth for me to become a more proactive instructional leader. Discovering Tony Wagner’s research opened my eyes to a
problem that did not just exist in my personal world with my niece. It was a problem that is alive and well right on my school campus. I have an opening to be an agent of change on my campus to directly affect and promote greater success for our students after graduation. The results of the data collected in this program evaluation addressed the goals I wanted to achieve. I am still very interested in developing the policy that would bring critical thinking to the forefront of our classrooms for both the sakes of teachers and students.

As a doctoral student on this journey, I have gained a deeper respect for the writing process and those who have mastered it. I was a reluctant learner in the beginning blinded by the miniscule success of my previous writing acumen in a completely different vernacular. Learning a true scholarly approach to writing at the doctoral level was at times painful and frustrating. My customarily colorful, captivating, and emotion evoking style of writing just would not cut it at this level. For every moment of frustration, I had a well versed and deeply nurturing instructor that continued to push me beyond that boxed in style of writing to what I hope to be a more professional level of writing that is worthy of earning my doctoral status. They helped me go from barely good to great; I am still yet becoming.

**Conclusion**

As a reflective thought, I must return to the present. Remember my niece? She struggled for a while longer, but she eventually got her legs beneath her and was able to embrace a life on her own by successfully obtaining a job reaching an assistant supervisory position while pursuing her Associates degree at a local college. I would like to think that by now she would have attained her aspirations of becoming a business
owner and owing her own home and vehicle of her dreams. In fact, I’m sure that she would have done that and so much more. Unfortunately, fate would deliver a fatal blow to her and her dreams on one God forsaken evening as she was waiting to catch a city bus home from a late night at work. Her legs to life on this side were snatched away in exchange for her heavenly wings. It was a devastating blow that unexpectedly and often creeps into my every day. While the gaping hole of her absence will always overshadow me, I find solace in the fact that the discovery I made in her lifetime has developed into a study that will continue to benefit students like her for the remainder of my educational career. She would be proud that in some small way, she is still giving of her huge heart from firmaments away. In that, I am privileged to continue the work.

Why is this relevant to us? If we as educational stakeholders take time to continue the work of developing ourselves, we will in turn provide better instruction for our students who greatly depend on us be the best at what we do every day. We are responsible to teach beyond our prescribed textbooks through mind-numbing lectures and venture into a level of real life based instruction that will avail our student to the skills that will ensure their survival beyond our classrooms and into all the wonderful places they will go. One of the most outstanding statements of the late Oral Roberts, founder of my alma matter, Oral Roberts University, was to teach and prepare each his students to go into every man’s world (personal communication, February 28, 1992). No matter the goals of our students after high school, our ability to coach them into acquiring solid critical thinking skills will undoubtedly increase the thrust to their trajectory to success in life.
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153
Appendix A: Teacher Survey

Dear Teacher:

I am currently a doctoral student at National-Louis University completing my dissertation, “Teacher Professional Development and the 21st Century Seven Survival Skills: A Program Evaluation Project”. As a part of my research, I would like to survey your responses to the following statements, in order to assess perceptions of the impact of the professional development on our campus. Your participation is voluntary, and you may discontinue this survey at any point. All respondent information will be kept confidential. If you are willing to participate in a follow-up interview, please indicate your approval below.

What is your current subject area/title? ______________________ Years of experience in education? ___

Read each phrase, then place an X in the appropriate column for each item.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Professional development on our campus is effective.</td>
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<td>2. Professional development is implemented with fidelity on our campus.</td>
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<td>3. Professional development skills and strategies are implemented with consistency within our school.</td>
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<td>4. Although my school has on-site professional development, teachers participate out of compliance rather than commitment.</td>
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<td>5. Teachers within my school work collaboratively to implement professional development skills and strategies in their classrooms.</td>
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<td>6. Teachers within my school perceive that professional development is truly functioning as it is intended to function.</td>
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<td>7. Teachers within my school are committed to professional development as an important factor in attaining increased student achievement.</td>
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<td>8. Teaching students post-secondary critical thinking skills and strategies will increase student achievement.</td>
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<td>9. Post-secondary skills and strategies are taught during our professional development times.</td>
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<td>10. As a teacher, I am aware of the seven survival skills needed by post-secondary students.</td>
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_________ Yes, I am willing to participate in a 30 minute voluntary interview and will email my contact information to LadyNikkiSloan@aol.com with WILLING TO INTERVIEW in the subject line.
Appendix B: Administrator Survey

Dear Administrator:

I am currently a doctoral student at National-Louis University completing my dissertation “Teacher Professional Development and the 21st Century Seven Survival Skills: A Program Evaluation Project”. As a part of my research, I would like to survey your responses to the following statements, to assess perceptions of the impact of the professional development on our campus. Your participation is voluntary, and you may discontinue this survey at any point. All respondent information will be kept confidential. If you are willing to participate in a follow-up interview, please indicate your approval below.

What is your current job title? ___________________ Years of experience in education? ________

Read each phrase, then place an X in the appropriate column for each item.

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Our school based professional development is effective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Professional Developments are implemented with fidelity within our school.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Professional Developments are implemented with consistency within our school/classrooms.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Although my school has implemented on-site Professional Development, it is perceived that teachers participate out of compliance rather than commitment.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Teachers within my school work collaboratively to incorporate skills and strategies from PDs into their instruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Administrators within my school observe Professional Development skills and strategies being implemented in classroom instruction.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Administrators within my school are committed to Professional Development as an important factor in attaining increased student achievement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Administrators hold all professional development facilitators accountable for clear and appropriate standards based sessions.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Administrators believe post-secondary skills and strategies should be taught in professional development sessions.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>As an administrator, I am aware of the seven survival skills needed of students in their post-secondary educations and careers.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_________ Yes, I am willing to participate in a 30 minute voluntary interview and will email my contact information to LadyNikkiSloan@aol.com with WILLING TO INTERVIEW in the subject line.
Appendix C: Community Business Leader Survey

Dear Administrator:

I am currently a doctoral student at National-Louis University completing my dissertation “Teacher Professional Development and the 21st Century Seven Survival Skills: A Program Evaluation Project”. As a part of my research, I would like to survey your responses to the following statements, to assess perceptions of the impact of the professional development on our campus. Your participation is voluntary, and you may discontinue this survey at any point. All respondent information will be kept confidential. If you are willing to participate in a follow-up interview, please indicate your approval below.

What is your current job title? ___________________________ Years of experience in your field? _______

Read each phrase, then place an X in the appropriate column for each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Students know how to think critically.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Students know how to problem solve.</td>
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<td>3. Students know how to collaborate across networks.</td>
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<td>4. Students know how to lead by influence.</td>
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<td>5. Students know how to adapt.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Students show initiative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Students have effective written and oral communication skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Students know how to analyze information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Teachers should teach these survival skills in their classrooms.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Parents should teach their students these survival skills.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

________ Yes, I am willing to participate in a 30 minute voluntary interview and will email my contact information to LadyNikkiSloan@aol.com with WILLING TO INTERVIEW in the subject line.
Appendix D: Teacher Interview Questions

1. How do you view the effectiveness of Professional development at your school?

2. What do you believe is working well with Professional developments at your school?

3. What do you believe is not working well with Professional developments at your school?

4. What do you perceive as the biggest challenge with implementing these Professional Development skills and strategies within our current Professional Developments?

5. What ideas do you have to address these challenges?

6. How do you think Professional Developments impact student achievement?

7. Are you familiar with Tony Wagner’s research on the Seven Survival Skills which describe the skills students need to be successful in post graduate life?

8. Are you adequately prepared to integrate any of the seven survival skills within your daily lessons?

9. How do your current Professional developments assist you in incorporating critical thinking skills in your curriculum?

10. Do you think each of these seven survival skills can be taught to teachers during professional development times? If so, how?

   a. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

   b. Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence

   c. Agility and Adaptability

   d. Initiative and Entrepreneurialism

   e. Effective Oral and Written Communication

   f. Accessing and Analyzing Information
g. Curiosity and Imagination

11. What supports would you need during professional development to better assist you in teaching these survival skills?

12. What would be some suggestions for facilitators for coaching how these skills can be taught during professional development times?
Appendix E: School-based Administrator Interview Questions

School-based Administrator Interview Questions

1. How do you view the effectiveness of Professional development?

2. What do you believe is working well with Professional Development?

3. What do you believe is not working well with Professional developments at your school?

4. What do you perceive as the biggest challenge with implementing these Professional Development skills and strategies within our current Professional Developments?

5. What ideas do you have to address these challenges?

6. How would you describe the level of impact Professional Development has had on student achievement throughout our school?

7. What do you perceive as the biggest challenge with implementing these Professional Development skills and strategies within our current Professional Developments?

8. Are you familiar with Tony Wagner’s research on the Seven Survival Skills which describe the skills students need to be successful in post graduate life?

9. Are you adequately prepared to identify any of the Seven Survival Skills when they are being taught in a classroom?

10. How do you feel current Professional Developments assist with incorporating critical thinking skills into our curriculums?

11. Do you think each of these seven survival skills can be taught to teachers during professional development times? If so, how?
a. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
b. Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence
c. Agility and Adaptability
d. Initiative and Entrepreneurialism
e. Effective Oral and Written Communication
f. Accessing and Analyzing Information
g. Curiosity and Imagination

12. What supports would you need during professional development to better assist you in teaching these survival skills?

13. What would be some suggestions for facilitators for including these skills to develop better Professional Development within our school?
Appendix F: Community Business Leader Interview Questions

1. What types of information do you find our current students lack when exiting high school and entering post high school professions?

2. Do you believe that students are well prepared to enter the workforce, college, or other service areas immediately after high school? Why? Why not?

3. Where do you think is the best teaching time for students to learn the needed survival skills, during elementary school, middle school, high school, or as on the job training for each skill?
   a. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
   b. Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence
   c. Agility and Adaptability
   d. Initiative and Entrepreneurialism
   e. Effective Oral and Written Communication
   f. Accessing and Analyzing Information
   g. Curiosity and Imagination
Appendix G: Adult Participant Survey Informed Consent

My name is Nykowanna H. Sloan, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Tampa, Florida. I am asking for your consent to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: “Teacher Professional Development and the 21st Century Seven Survival Skills: A Program Evaluation Project”. The purpose of the study is to understand and evaluate how professional development is implemented at one Florida secondary school. The study will also examine how professional development subjects, skills and strategies might impact student achievement.

My project will address the process of how specific initiatives and platforms are chosen and delivered as staff development classes and how it impacts those involved at your school. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding staff development at your school. I would like to survey you in regard to your thoughts on the implementation of staff development at your school.

You may participate in this study by signing this consent form indicating that you understand the purpose of the study and agree to participate in a printed survey that I will give to you, to be completed and returned using specific instructions I will include at the end of the survey. It should take approximately 15 minutes for you to complete the survey. All information collected in the survey reflects your experience and opinion as a stakeholder in receiving staff development at your school.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time with no negative repercussions. I will keep the identity of you, the school, the district, and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants in the report. Only I will have access to all of the survey data, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all survey data. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of staff development process at and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at NSloan@my.nl.edu.

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: [redacted] If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.

Thank you for your participation.

Participant Name (Please Print)
___________________________

Participant Signature                                             Date

Nykowanna H. Sloan
Researcher Name (Please Print)

Researcher Signature                                             Date

163
Appendix H: Adult Participant Interview Informed Consent

My name is Nykowanna H. Sloan, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Tampa, Florida. I am asking for your consent to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: “Teacher Professional Development and the 21st Century Seven Survival Skills: A Program Evaluation Project”. The purpose of the study is to understand and evaluate how professional development is implemented at one Florida secondary school. The study will also examine how professional development subjects, skills and strategies might impact student achievement.

My project will address the process professional development and how it impacts those involved at your school. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding professional development program at this school.

You may participate in this study by signing this consent form indicating that you understand the purpose of the interviews and agree to participate in one 30-minute interview, with possibly up to 5 email exchanges in order clarify any questions I may have regarding your interview data. I will audio tape the interviews and transcribe the tapes. All information collected in the interviews reflects your experience and opinion as either a teacher who provides instruction, an administrator who supervises instruction, or community business leader who employs high school graduates.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time with no negative repercussions. I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all interview transcripts, tapes, and notes. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of the implementation process of professional development at your school and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at NSloan@my.nl.edu.

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: [redacted] or via email. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.

Thank you for your participation.

_______________________________________    ______________
Name (Please Print)                                             Signature     Date

_______________________________________    ______________
Researcher Name (Please Print)                                   Researcher Signature     Date
Appendix I: School Site Administrator Informed Consent

School Site Administrator: Consent to Conduct Research at School Site

My name is Nykowanna H. Sloan, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Tampa, Florida. I am asking for your consent for selected staff at your school to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: “Teacher Professional Development and the 21st Century Seven Survival Skills: A Program Evaluation Project”. The purpose of the study is to understand and evaluate how professional development is implemented at one Florida secondary school. The study will also examine how professional development subjects, skills and strategies might impact student achievement.

My project will address the process of staff development selections and how it impacts those involved. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding current staff development practices. I will survey and interview up to 1 principal, 2 assistant principals, and up to 50 teachers in regard to their thoughts on staff development at your school.

I will give teachers and administrators who volunteer a printed survey to be completed and returned using specific instructions as included, and an Informed Consent form indicating that they understand the purpose of the survey and agree to take the survey. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Also, participating teachers and administration may volunteer for one 30-minute interview with possibly up to 5 email exchanges in order clarify any questions I may have regarding interview data. I will conduct one 30-minute interview with those participants who have completed an Informed Consent form indicating that they understand the purpose of the interview and agree to be interviewed. I will audio tape the interviews and transcribe the tapes. All information collected in the surveys and interviews reflects their experience and opinion as a teacher regarding staff development.

By signing below, you are giving your consent for me to ask for voluntary participation from selected stakeholders to participate in this research study: to complete a survey and to participate in one interview. All participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time with no negative repercussions. I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all surveys, interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all data. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of staff development and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at NSloan@my.nl.edu.

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: [redacted]
If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.

Thank you for your participation.

Principal Name (Please Print) ________________________________
Principal Signature ____________________ Date ______________
Nykowanna H. Sloan

Researcher Name (Please Print) ________________________________
Researcher Signature ____________________ Date ______________

165
Appendix J: AS-IS 4 C’s Analysis

Context
- High rate of students graduating without the skills critical for success in college.
- Students are graduating from high school unprepared for the real world.

Culture
- No clear direction on the need to improve post-secondary student success.
- Teachers think professional development is only for disseminating district programs and protocols.

Competencies
- Teachers lack the skills and strategies to teach critical thinking skills.
- Professional development offered to teachers does not include methods to weave in any of the seven survival skills.

Conditions
- Lesson plans do not require documentation of strategies that demonstrate specific skills.
- Professional development is pre-selected by lead non-classroom personnel.

Professional Development lacks evidence of the 7 Survival Skills and thus teachers do not adequately teach them during their instructional times.

Baseline AS IS 4 C’s Analysis for O.C.S.A.’s Professional Development Program
APPENDIX K: Sample Middle/High School Lesson Plan Template

Week of: Enter Dates Here

Teacher Name: Enter Name Here  Academic Subject Area: Enter Subject Area Here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards Based Planning: These should be addressed in EVERY UNIT. This is just a reminder of the key points. (Previously Domain 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Planning Standards- Based Lesson/ Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aligning Resources to Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Planning to Close the Achievement Gap Using Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard(s) to be covered in lesson/unit: You need to copy and paste the standard into the lesson plan from the district CUP.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goal(s): What is the overall goal of the unit? What are the learning targets (I can) for the unit based on the goal?</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Targets:</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whole Group Instruction: Describe all portions of the lesson directed at or to be completed by the entire class for each day.</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differentiated Instruction: Describe all portions of the lesson directed at small groups and/or different levels of student performance abilities for each day. i.e Gifted, Learning Modalities</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials: List all materials necessary for the completion of each day's lesson. Examples include (but are not limited to) textbook, audio/visual equipment, specific supplies.</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assignments:</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classwork: List any work to be completed during class AND the Learning Target that will be addressed with it.</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homework: List any work to be completed at home and the Learning Target(s) that it will align. This should also be written on the board.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Assessment/Student Evidence:
Select any method utilized in the Unit to verify student comprehension of the subject matter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Retelling/Dictation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jigsaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Self-Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Demonstration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Notes/Book Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Journal/Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Notebook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Conditions for Learning:
(Previously Domain 2 and 3) Select all that apply.

- Using Formative Assessment to Track Progress
- Providing Feedback and Celebrating Progress
- Organizing Students to Interact with Content
- Establishing and Acknowledging Adherence to Rules and Procedures
- Using Engagement Strategies
- Establishing and Maintaining Effective Relationships in a Student-Centered Classroom
- Communicating High Expectations for Each Student to Close the Achievement Gap

### Standards Based Instruction:
(Previously Domain 2 and 3) Select all that apply.

- Identifying Critical Content from the Standards
- Previewing New Content
- Helping Students Process New Data
- Using Questions to Help Students Elaborate on Content
- Helping Students Practice Skills, Strategies, and Processes
- Helping Students Examine Similarities and Differences
- Helping Students Examine Their Reasoning
- Helping Students Revise Knowledge
- Helping Students Engage in Cognitively Complex Tasks

### ESE Strategies:
Select all that apply.
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E01</td>
<td>be permitted the use of learning aids (calculators, worksheets, study guides, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E02</td>
<td>be allowed to work in shorter segments (time and/or materials).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E03</td>
<td>be given adjusted grading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E04</td>
<td>use taped texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E05</td>
<td>have access to peer tutoring and/or group instruction (cooperative learning).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E06</td>
<td>be able to drill with a peer and/or aide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E07</td>
<td>be permitted to use a tape recorder in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E08</td>
<td>graded for master of content rather than the mechanics of the production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E09</td>
<td>be allowed to take tests orally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E10</td>
<td>be able to substitute oral projects for written assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E11</td>
<td>self-monitor behavior through graphs, points, checks, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E12</td>
<td>be allowed extra time for assignments, tests, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E13</td>
<td>reprimanded in private and expectations will be explained in a clear manner as well as repeated and/or written by the student “contract” to ensure comprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E14</td>
<td>expected to make small changes – one at a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E15</td>
<td>be able to take content material and relate it to real life situations that make learning meaningful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E16</td>
<td>be involved in the decision-making when/where applicable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E17</td>
<td>be responsible for the tested knowledge, comprehension, and application levels of the material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E18</td>
<td>Other-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

169
**ESOL Strategies:** Select all that apply.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1: simplified directions</td>
<td>S29: problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2: categorize, classify</td>
<td>S30: provide true cognates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3: centers (listening, writing, etc.)</td>
<td>S31: provide cues or individual charts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4: character diaries</td>
<td>S32: provide visuals for class rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5: chart progress</td>
<td>S33: provide word association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S6: cloze exercise</td>
<td>S34: questionnaires/interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S7: compare/contrast</td>
<td>S35: reading log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8: cooperative learning</td>
<td>S36: real literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S9: dialogue journal</td>
<td>S37: realia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S10: discover learning</td>
<td>S38: repetition/rephrasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S11: drama/role play</td>
<td>S39: researching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S12: experiments</td>
<td>S40: schema/prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S13: flow charts</td>
<td>S41: semantic webbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S14: games</td>
<td>S42: show patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S15: identify main ideas, vocabulary, concepts</td>
<td>S43: small groups/share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S16: illustrations</td>
<td>S44: story summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S17: illustrations: maps, photos</td>
<td>S45: strip story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S18: information gap</td>
<td>S46: summarize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S19: jazz charts</td>
<td>S47: thematic approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S20: labeling: classroom, equipment, etc.</td>
<td>S48: theme listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S21: language experience approach</td>
<td>S49: timelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S22: mapping</td>
<td>S50: total physical response (TPR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S23: modify assignments</td>
<td>S51: use of student cultural background/experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S24: multiple methods of evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>S25: outlines</td>
<td>S52: use overheads &amp; pictorial presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>S26: peer tutoring</td>
<td>S53: VENN diagrams</td>
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<tr>
<td>S27: pictorial</td>
<td>S54: “Wh” questions to assist comprehension</td>
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<td>S28: predict</td>
<td>S55: writing headlines</td>
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<td>S56: Other -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy Strategies: Select all that apply.</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Building Background Knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Summarizing</td>
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<td>☐ Cooperative Learning</td>
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<td>☐ Vocabulary Building</td>
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<td>☐ Main Idea</td>
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<td>☐ Compare / Contrast</td>
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<td>☐ Identify Main Ideas &amp; Vocab.</td>
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<td>☐ Visualizing</td>
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<td>☐ Reading Fluency</td>
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<td>☐ Supporting Detail</td>
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<td>☐ Predicting</td>
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<td>☐ Cause / Effect</td>
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<td>☐ Analogies</td>
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<td>☐ Predict Problem-Solving</td>
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<td>☐ Cloze Reading Activity</td>
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<td>☐ Teacher Modeling</td>
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<td>☐ Interpreting Charts / Graphs</td>
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<td>☐ Researching</td>
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<td>☐ Repetition / Rephrasing</td>
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<td>☐ Timeline</td>
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<td>☐ Tone</td>
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<td>☐ Questions / Mapping</td>
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<td>☐ Role Play</td>
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<td>☐ Inference</td>
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<td>☐ Sequencing</td>
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<td>☐ Use Child’s Experience</td>
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<td>☐ Two Column Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Wh. Questions</td>
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Appendix L: TO-BE 4 C’s Analysis

**Context**
- Students graduating with skills critical for success in college.
- Students are graduating from high school prepared for the real-world workplace.

**Culture**
- Post-secondary student success is tracked up to two years after graduation.
- Professional development is tailored to by subject to meet 7 survival skill according to teacher need.

**Competencies**
- Teachers receive training on specific survival skills and are provided a bank of resource scenarios.
- Professional Development Facilitators must have training.

**Conditions**
- Lesson plan template includes documentation of strategies that demonstrate specific survival skills.
- Professional development is scheduled according to need and facilitated by classroom experts.
- Teacher experts match and group their curriculums with chosen correlating survival skills.

*Evidence of the 7 Survival Skills are present in professional development sessions and teachers are proficient in teaching them in instructional time*

Vision TO BE 4 C’s Analysis for WOW’s Professional Development Program
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take inventory for a group of individuals who are aware of the Seven</td>
<td>✓ Communicate the desire to institute a guiding coalition for developing professional development sessions surrounding the seven survival skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survival Skills or are interested in learning about them.</td>
<td>✓ Ensure that the group is inclusive of teachers of multiple subjects, instructional coaches, administrators, and community business leaders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create a database of “Where are you now” for current graduating seniors as</td>
<td>✓ Guidance Counselors will facilitate a senior meeting to discuss the project and gather the baseline information</td>
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<tr>
<td>a manner of keeping in touch with our most recent graduates.</td>
<td>✓ Contact information from all current seniors with a brief synopsis of their post-graduate plans. (College, Work, Military, etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Pulse checks will be conducted at specified intervals over the course of the next year.</td>
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<td>✓ Data will be shared with the guiding coalition.</td>
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<td>Determine the level of training that is needed for the coalition members</td>
<td>✓ Seek out a training module for the coalition to attend.</td>
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<tr>
<td>to be on an even playing field to effectively teach their colleagues in</td>
<td>✓ Provide Tony Wagner’s text on “The Global Achievement Gap”</td>
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<td>the specific subject areas.</td>
<td>✓ Participate in a book study on the text.</td>
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<td>Provide time and professional</td>
<td>✓ Set weekly meeting times and agendas</td>
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<td>development points for a guiding coalition to participate in a book study.</td>
<td>✓ Register the professional development online with the district.</td>
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<td>✓ Gather monthly feedback via the district survey of the session.</td>
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<td>Subject specific connections will be made to each of the survival skills.</td>
<td>✓ Coalition members will identify which skills can best be taught in their subject areas.</td>
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<td>✓ Coalition members are provided time in their PLCs to share and collaborate with their subject area colleagues.</td>
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<td>✓ Ideas and collaborative output is returned to the coalition for further fine tuning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>STRATEGY</td>
<td>ACTION</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop lessons for professional development roll out.</td>
<td>✓ Each subject will design lessons to share with their peers in a professional development session.</td>
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<td>✓ Any of the seven skills that are not developed by a department will be developed by the coalition members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a lesson plan template inclusive of a manner to document when a lesson will connect the topic (standard) to a survival skill.</td>
<td>✓ Shared with the coalition members.</td>
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<td>✓ Submit to administration for approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set a professional development calendar that includes monthly sessions on the seven survival skills.</td>
<td>✓ One session a month for thirty minutes to an hour will be dedicated to displaying strategies to teach a chosen survival skill through an activity.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ The sessions will be during the first half of the PLC time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate the implementation for fidelity and gage its success</td>
<td>✓ Exit surveys will be given to the teachers that will solely focus on evaluating the effectiveness of these specific sessions on the survival skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Surveys will be reviewed and reported out to administration with suggested changes or tweaks that the data may indicate the need for.</td>
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