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Trust In Leadership To Develop Collaborative School Culture And Effective Implementation Of Professional Learning Communities

Kara Mieszanek

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DISSERTATION: TRUST IN LEADERSHIP TO DEVELOP COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL
CULTURE AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
COMMUNITIES

Kara N. Mieszanek

National Louis University

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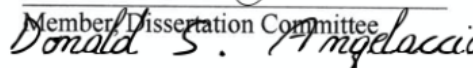
Approved:


Chair, Dissertation Committee


Director, EDL Doctoral Program


Member, Dissertation Committee




Dean, National College of Education

Dean, National College of Education

Dean's Representative

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ABSTRACT

In education, we are constantly working toward increasing student achievement. Often, we pursue technical elements such as implementing programs, data analysis, utilizing assessment tools, embedding evaluation systems, etc. However, there is another critical element that may all too often get overlooked—the culture. The purpose of this study was to strip away all the layers required to achieve systemic change by observing what is at the core of it all: trust. Through qualitative and quantitative research, I took a deep dive into trust and its effects by observing it within the realm of professional learning communities. I also focused on how a building leader's role and the level of trust created with this individual and with the other staff members within her building affect trust and collaboration across the system. With this research collected, an analysis of the data was conducted, strategies were reflected upon, and policy implications were determined to strengthen the system further.

PREFACE

It started for me when I was 8 years old. I had not had the greatest experience in school before then. I was shy, quiet, and frequently felt misunderstood. Many days of my elementary school experience before and even after 2nd grade were spent in tears. I was an excellent student by typical standards; I received good grades, never got myself in trouble, did all my work, and stayed to myself. However, I strongly disliked being at school because of fear. At that time, I could not understand my fear and didn't understand what made me feel the difference until years later. What I yearned for was more than my grades could ever determine—I needed psychological safety. It changed in 2nd grade because I had a teacher who provided that for me. I felt safe with her. I felt that it was ok to be me. I trusted her.

As I got older, I realized this trend happened time and time again. The teachers who provided me with a trusting environment, I flourished in. It was also incredible how easy it was for me, for years, to revert to that introverted, fearful, shy self. At some point, I also realized that if I had moved into education and was provided the opportunity to be a teacher, I could have this “power” too and provide this safe learning environment for other students who might also be like 8-year-old me.

Along my journey, I also recognized that children are not the only ones who need trusting environments to flourish; adults do too. Or at least, that's what I was determined to find out, and this research was built to do just that. I had worked in multiple environments in which I did not feel that psychological safety, and in it was an absence of trust. Now it was my turn to lead, create an environment founded in trust, and determine its effects on education as a whole.

This research was a beautiful and terrifying journey for me. To conduct this research took what is a foundation of trust—vulnerability. I knew that if I wanted to determine if what I in

theory could be put into practice, it meant I would need to evaluate and collect data on my leadership practices, beliefs, and environment. I knew this data would prove this work can be done, or maybe that it couldn't. However, I knew it was worth every risk because this is the heart of why I am in educational leadership.

As a result, I feel even more passion and commitment to the work we are doing. My hope is not just to continue to grow in trust, courage, and collaboration within my building, but to see others find value in this work as well. I believe we will continue well on to achieving higher levels of success for our students because of the foundation we have built.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this to the following individuals, who have all been a part of my journey that started many years before I even knew it began...

My husband, TJ—you have been my support and encouragement every step of the way. You have always stood behind me and supported my dreams by being there by my side, helping them come true. In marriage, we know that big dreams can only be achieved when you reach for them together.

My daughter, Remingtyn—you became an inspiration to me the day you defied all of science's standards and overcame all the odds to be here with us today. I cannot wait to see how you trailblaze your path in this world around you. I am so proud to be your mommy.

My parents—from the time I was little, you reminded me of all I was capable of, even when I couldn't see it myself. In the challenges, you reminded me to keep going; you celebrated with me in the triumphs. I am who I am because of you.

Anne Marie, my 2nd grade teacher—you saw me, you made me feel important, and you taught me the power of trust at the age of 8 years old. I will never forget how you made me feel, and because of you, I walked into education all those years later, knowing that I, too, could do that for others.

Carolyn, my supporter and friend—you saw in me things I didn't even see in myself at that time. You challenged me, encouraged me, and helped shape me into what I am today as a leader. You pushed me to take the jump into administration, and it was the best move I could have ever made. I am doing what I know I was meant to do.

LaTesh, my encourager and friend—you were there for me and reminded me of who I was and what I could do when I couldn't remember. You picked me up when I fell and

encouraged me always to stand strong in what I believed and that my day would come. You have been my rock in some of my most challenging days.

Terri, my inspiration and friend—you were the leader I didn't even know I needed in my life. You model for me the raw and real challenges *and* beauty in this work of leading courageously. There are many days where I couldn't imagine making this journey without you, and I'm glad I don't have to. You inspire me to become the leader I truly desire to be.

My staff—you have made me so incredibly proud and determined. I want to become a better leader because of you. The things you have taught me, the grace you have given me, and the trust we have built fuels my passion for this work. Together, I truly believe that we are changing education for the better, and I am honored to be a part of this work with you.

My students—YOU are my why: Always have, and always will be.

Thank you to each of you for being on this journey with me—I am here because of *you*.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Many believe that education is one of the most important aspects of an individual's life. It's also one of the few experiences in which almost all of us engage. However, when we turn to the media regarding education, it often reminds us how our current system fails. Yet we continue to push forward with evolutions of the same educational models, expectations of grueling work environments, unrealistic expectations, and competitive cultures. Several questions emerge. What are things we have the power to change? Where do we start within the system? Are educators capable of making shifts that will create a positive impact for all?

The educational system is very much like an onion—there are many layers. As we keep peeling away the layers, at the very center, we find one critical component: trust. Can the development of trust impact the rest of an organization's layers to create more systemic educational success? Brown (2018) identified trust as “the product of vulnerability that grows over time and requires work, attention, and full engagement.” How can school systems believe in the importance of this definition of trust and nurture it?

As a teacher, I wondered what it would take to get an entire building focused on one vision and collaboratively supporting it to ultimately lead to greater student achievement? My first educational experience as a teacher was in a well-to-do district with resources and community involved, but something was missing. I knew there was likely a greater hurdle keeping us from achieving higher results in our testing. It felt as if there was a disconnect, and there was a distinct division between teachers and leadership. Decisions were top-down, and we, as teachers, followed through with those expectations. This curiosity led me into obtaining my Type 75 shortly into my teaching career. Through that work and knowledge gained, I realized

that one teacher does not have the level of influence necessary to impact an entire building's culture positively – but maybe a building leader could.

Work as a building principal invested in creating a culture founded in trust would shed light on the level of impact it can truly have in further developing a culture of collaboration and fostering effective professional learning communities (PLCs), ultimately leading to a better educational experience for students. “Unless the school achieves positive stability through a large coalition of its members, it is incapable of sustaining growth over time” (Muhammad, 2009, p. 59). The work may start with leadership identifying principles that they must embody and employ, but it cannot be sustained if only one person believes in it. Creating a culture that collaboratively has built this vision should provide a level of sustainability.

Background

Community School District (SD), a pseudonym used throughout this study, serves six neighboring communities. Students are serviced in grades pre-K through 8th grade among six buildings: two primary buildings (grades pre-K-2), two intermediate buildings (grades 3-5), and two middle school buildings (grades 6-8). The students' demographics within Community SD are 70.7% Hispanic, 21.7% Black, 4.3% White, and 3% other. Among that population, 54% are low income, 35% are second language learners, 14% have disabilities, and 1% are homeless. Student mobility is at 6%, and 1% of students are considered chronically truant. Community SD is at 63% adequacy for evidence-based funding, currently at \$25 million final resources outcome and a \$40 million adequacy target. Teacher retention is at 78%. Five schools are currently commendable, and one is targeted (Illinois State Board of Education, 2019).

The district office team in Community SD includes a superintendent, assistant superintendent of human resources, assistant superintendent of special services, assistant

superintendent of curriculum and instruction, assistant superintendent of business services and directors of technology, English learning, nutritional services, special education, and transportation. Within each building, there are two school administrators: one principal and one assistant principal. I served as assistant principal for 3 years in two schools and am currently serving as a principal of WJ School for 3 years.

Seventy percent of Community SD's student population are Hispanic students, compared to the state of Illinois's average of 24%. There are triple the number of students who do not identify English as their first language compared to the state average. This creates a unique lens through which we must approach our vision for learning; in all curriculum and instructional decisions we make, it is imperative that we regard our second language learners and how these programs and tools can further support their unique learning needs.

During the 2016-2017 school year, a proposal to the Board of Education suggested that the district move from Pre-K-5th grade buildings to grade-level centers with pre-K-2nd grade and 3rd grade-5th grade bands to help ensure equitable learning experiences for all students. The Board of Education approved this change at a March 2017 board meeting. The movements and conversations that took place during this shift still impact the culture that exists across the district and in each of the buildings.

At the start of the 2017 school year, the district provided a collaborative opportunity for our stakeholders to develop a mission and vision. This operation included students, staff, parents, board members, district administrators, and building administrators. Faculty and staff were guided by a professional in this area who assisted in determining our core values.

Working together to develop a mission and vision was critical after the monumental changes the district instituted. However, the work could not stop there; that was merely the

beginning. The district needed to continue to evaluate the mission and vision's consistency in the years to come. This will continue to be necessary at both a district and building level, as the cultures have greatly shifted with staff and student populations' changes.

After shifting the district to grade-level centers and moving approximately 50% of primary and intermediate staffing, along with building leaders, it is taking years to rebuild the culture and reidentify. “The effectiveness of a new culture depends on the strength of the people behind the change and the strength of the pre-existing culture” (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015, p. 5). The changes that incurred impacted the entire district and community stakeholders; being cognizant of that transformation has been, and still is, a present focus. Work at a district and building level was necessary to further support and develop teachers, students, and parents, especially in trust. They want to know that this move was worth the effort and directly impact students positively.

The movement to grade-level centers set the stage for rebuilding. However, the next steps were where the work truly began. During the 2018-2019 school year, the district partnered with TeachPlus Illinois. TeachPlus did an initial audit of the school and district cultures by conducting district, building, and grade level interviews. Their role was to identify grade-level team leaders that could serve in that role for their PLCs. The administrative team worked to create a schedule that would allow teachers to have a collaborative plan every day for 50 minutes. If done with trust at the core and building administrative support, this should help the district build collaborative school culture.

Purpose

The study looked at the level of trust that teachers have in their building leadership and determined the level of influence it has on creating a collaborative culture between teacher and

leader(s) and among teachers. When thinking of educational reform, the focus is likely on programs, policies, curriculum, standards-based testing, state and federal funding, and so on. However, how often do we stop to think about educational reform concerning culture? Culture is “the shared values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and behaviors related to students and learning, teachers and teaching, instructional leadership, and the quality of relationships within and beyond the school” (Wagner & Kegan, 2006, p.102). If thinking about education like building a house, culture would be the foundation. The culture needs to be built strong and firm. When a culture is weak or built upon a sandy shore, it can’t withstand the building's weight atop of it composed of all the technical components. Are we too often building our educational institutions on weak foundations? Can PLCs be a means of helping develop solid cultural foundations?

In my research, my focus will primarily be set on the building I lead: WJ School. Beyond the reorganization of the district to grade-level centers, there have been many building leaders in continuation of one another who developed very limited trust by the staff at WJ. There was a culture where people learned to fend for themselves because that was the most effective way to function. There was a lack of understanding around the vision and mission or if one existed. The building leadership did not function in cohesion but created two separate camps. The instructional direction was nearly non-existent, and many identified with fear as a part of the workplace.

Rationale

Marzano et al. (2005), one of the many to research culture, discovered a direct impact on relationships between staff and building leadership and how it positively affects student outcomes, which is ultimately what every school district wants to achieve. However, this current

research will take an approach to look more directly at what those relationships comprise and how they create a collaborative culture among a building required to implement PLCs effectively. According to Gruenert and Whitaker (2015), “Culture is not some mystical power that thrives on superstition; the locus of control is within the scope of leadership” (p. 111). Going back to what it takes to build that foundation to achieve student success as the outcome, cultural elements need to be established in the relationships to make up a solid foundation.

As stated before, the ultimate goal in all aspects of education should be placed on student growth and achievement. Educators analyze programs and policies quite frequently, but it may be necessary to reevaluate the systems put into place to take a deeper look at the cultural components of education and how they influence student success. The critical piece to take a look at is what is in place within a culture to achieve student success. Cultures thrive when they are collaborative and that principals can influence a culture. However, we need to focus on the critical components that create collaborative cultures and how much a building leader can influence them. When stripping it down to that level, there may be more understanding of how one can achieve it.

As of March 2020, education, and the world, was flipped on its head as we experienced the first pandemic of our lifetime due to COVID-19. Educators have been experiencing uncharted waters as we navigate the unknown that comes with a global pandemic. The impact this has had on education is elaborate and complex. Everything that we once “knew” about how we served our students and communities was impacted, and we had to shift within hours, literally. Because of the opportunity to also work on this research amid this pandemic, I also could highlight its effects on our building, leadership, and culture, and how it correlates directly with trust and collaboration.

Goals

Through this study, I identify what elements are necessary to establish trust, a collaborative culture, and the effectiveness of utilizing PLCs as a platform. This work also establishes the depth in which a building leader has created a flourishing collaborative school culture. The level of trust between teachers and building leaders is analyzed to determine its influence and affect culture. Since having the privilege of serving as a building administrator, my mission has been to model and foster an environment around trust and collaboration. As much as it has been a journey for us as a team, it has largely been a personal journey as well. We have truly evolved together and continue to do so.

As a leader, I want to ensure that our students have the best learning opportunities possible. Understanding how much of that I can directly influence this role is critical. “The culture should be the sentry at the door rather than the monster under the bed” (Grunert & Whitaker, 2017, p.8). If, as a leader, I am either pushing culture to thrive, I must know what areas I can reflect on and evaluate and what can be done differently.

Research Questions

The main question explored is the following: to what extent, and how, does trust in building leadership influence a collaborative culture? Secondary questions from this study focus on the following elements:

1. What elements develop trust in building leadership?
2. What leadership style(s) do building leaders need to possess a strong collaborative culture?
3. What qualities/characteristics must building leaders possess to develop a culture of collaboration?

4. How does trust in leadership transpire into strengthening teacher efficacy and development of PLC's?

Conclusion

Education is like peeling an onion. Before you get to the core, there are many layers: educators must peel away at each layer to determine what resides in the middle. “When a school has a healthy culture, the professionals within it will seek the tools that they need to accomplish their goal of universal student achievement; they will give a school new life by overcoming the staff division that halts transformation” (Muhammad, 2009, p. 25). At the core, you find building leadership and the relationships those individuals develop precede any aspects relating to curriculum, standards, and testing. The trust that leaders develop within their buildings among their staff will then correlate with an increase in collaborative culture development.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Culture is a complicated component in educational systems. There are many influences: the established norms within a building created over time, the shared beliefs, the attitudes and feelings among the personnel, and the behaviors of the group of individuals that make up the building. However, is there an area of great influence on the culture of a building? Does building leadership and trust have the ability to transform school culture? In this study, the effect leadership has on one building's culture is closely examined to determine the level of influence leadership has in creating a collaborative, trusting, and positive school culture.

The building at the center of the study, WJ School, experienced a myriad of leadership styles, longevity of leadership, and underwent a complete personnel shift as the district restructured the buildings from pre-K-5 buildings to grade-level centers. When this restructuring took place, there was another change in leadership 1 year after, when I was privileged to step into the principal role. Staff members were tasked with creating collaborative PLCs, and teacher leaders were appointed for each grade level. Although those teachers were identified by an outside organization and provided with ongoing leadership training, that task within an established organization is monumental. Is it possible to develop a trusting culture, develop flourishing PLCs, and encourage a distributed leadership model in an environment such as the one described above? The work outlined above around culture has been studied in various ways in educational settings by numerous individuals. The common trends among most of the studies are the following:

- Leadership styles
- Trust and examining the different types

- Collective efficacy & collaboration
 - Effective PLCs
- Shared norms and values

Reviewing each of these critical topics allowed for context around the essential components in an effective PLC to inform success in implementation.

Leadership Styles

As mentioned above, trust plays a large factor in the influence of culture. But that trust also derives from leadership styles. As Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) reported, the focus on distributed leadership allowed for a form of shared decision-making to take place, increasing trust between other stakeholders, “rippling” back to that trusting relationship between the principal and building staff. The way the principal included students, community members, and students indirectly increased trust between the principal and teachers.

Wang and Hsieh (2013) studied how trust was influenced by a leader displaying an authentic leadership style: “Authentic leadership means leader behavior that draws upon and promotes positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate that nourishes self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency for how leaders work with employees, fostering positive self-development”, which they drew from Walumbwa et al.’s work in 2008.

Heifetz et al. (2009) discovered that leaders presented with adaptive challenges often treated them with technical solutions. Technical problems can be diagnosed and applied prescriptions can be applied to remedy the situation. However, the same doesn’t apply to adaptive challenges. “Adaptive challenges can only be addressed through changes in people’s priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties. Making progress requires going beyond any authoritative

expertise to mobilize discovery, shedding certain entrenched ways, tolerating losses, and generating new capacity to thrive anew” (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 19). The even greater challenge is that many of our complex social systems within education typically do not fall completely in one category or the other, making them a blend of both technical and adaptive. This adaptive leadership requires leaders to connect with more than just managerial skills and lead with heart—to connect with others outside of logic and facts (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Another type of leadership, resonant leadership, is one that invokes passion and creates results. These leaders utilize emotional intelligence as a key ingredient in understanding how to make shifts within their organizations. “Resonant leaders are in tune with those around them. This results in people working in sync with each other’s thoughts (what to do) and emotions (why to do it)” (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005, p. 4). This understanding of emotional intelligence includes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Resonant leadership requires relationships that, again, are built around trust. They also are cognizant of the relationship their own emotions are on others’ moods and even performance” (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005).

In Bregman’s (2018) work, *Leading with Emotional Courage*, he identifies through his research that there are four essential elements required to be a powerful presence that inspires action: confident in yourself, connected with others, committed to purpose, and emotionally courageous. Element one, Building Your Confidence, requires knowing who you are and the potential you hold. Element two, Connect with Others, at the root, evaluates the importance of building trusting relationships to develop mutual respect. Element three, Commit to Purpose, requires connecting with others to work towards a larger shared purpose. Element four, Cultivate Emotional Courage, really brings all four elements together, including the vulnerability to feel

and then the courage and trust to act upon it (Bregman, 2018). Once again, we see a clear focus on what is referred to as soft skills or emotional intelligence to further an organization's success. There are definite trends observed throughout each of these different leadership styles: trust, emotional intelligence, collaboration, and shared leadership. Although they may seem to have different names, they support the same characteristics and values.

Trust and Examining the Different Types

Covey (2006) argued that we find one thing in common across all individuals and organizations—trust. The absence of it could destroy even the most thriving organizations and relationships. He also further understood how trust is not something you have or doesn't but can make an actionable, attainable goal.

Covey (2006) developed a model called the 5 Waves of Trust, in which he identified how trust operates in our lives. The first wave is self-trust, and it focuses on credibility. "It's about developing the integrity, intent, capabilities, and results that made you believable, both to yourself and others" (Covey, 2006, p. 45). Self-trust is being able to determine if you trust yourself and if others can trust you. The second wave is relationship trust is about consistent behavior—really getting down to whether one can "walk the talk." In Waves 3, 4, and 5, Covey (2006) focused more on the context in which trust is applied: organizational trust, market trust, and societal trust. The study will focus on the key points in Wave 3, organizational trust, that Covey outlines are frequently identified in high-trust organizations:

- Information is shared openly.
- Mistakes are tolerated and encouraged as a way of learning.
- The culture is innovative and creative.
- People are loyal to those who are absent.

- People talk straight and confront real issues.
- There are real communication and real collaboration.
- People share credit abundantly.
- There are few “meetings after the meetings.”
- Transparency is a practiced value.
- People are candid and authentic.
- There is a high degree of accountability.
- There are palpable vitality and energy—people can feel the positive momentum (Covey, 2006, p. 237).

Wave 4, market trust, is about brand and reputation. Although this may be in the realm of corporations that sell goods or services, it can also be applied to schools and districts and the reputation they receive among their community or outsiders. It may even be the reputation of one school within a larger district organization. Wave 5 is societal trust, and it measures the level of impact of our impact on the larger context.

In Flood and Angelle’s work (2017), they identified two different types of trust within a building. “The first is institutional trust, which is ‘the expectation of appropriate behavior in organized settings based on the norms of that institution’ and the second is relational trust, ‘the inevitable result of repeated interactions with others in modern organizations.’” Flood and Angelle articulated that an environment that is made up of trust is fostered by supportive individuals who display integrity and cordiality, and, in particular, have a relationship between the principal and the teachers.

Bryk and Schneider (2002) did a similar study looking at the different types of trust and their effects on three schools. They discovered through their research that there are also multiple forms of trust.

Organic trust predicated on the more or less unquestioning beliefs of individuals in a particular social institution's moral authority and characterizes closed, small-scale communities. In such social systems, individuals give their trust unconditionally; they believe in the rightness of the system, moral character of its leadership, and others who commit to the community. (Bryk & Schneider, 2002, p. 17)

They shared that this kind of trust can frequently be observed in religious schools due to the shared nature of the moral context in which many of those are part of that institution's belief.

Contractual trust, as identified by Bryk and Schneider (2002), "the basis for social exchange is primarily material and instrumental" (p 17). This trust is based on the contract developed with clearly written and observable expectations regarding work to be completed and the product to be expected. This can often be observed in commercial executions and transactions.

After looking at these two types of trust, Bryk and Schneider (2002) concluded that the trust developed in education systems were much more complex and could not be simply defined through either of these forms.

The social relations of schooling are not just a production mechanism but are a valued outcome in their own right. In this regard, we recall John Dewey's long-standing observation that a good elementary school is more akin to a family than a factory. While families are organized to provide many 'goods and services' for their members, family life participation creates the deepest forms of personal meaning and identity. The quality

of social exchanges that occur here and how various parties understand and interpret them is of great human significance. Similarly, social exchanges occurring around schooling also shape participants' lives in powerful ways. They provide opportunities for self-identification and affiliation around an enterprise of much social value (p. 19).

Due to this complex nature around schools, self-identification, and multiple dependencies across various stakeholders, Byrk and Schneider (2002) identified schools to encompass what they named relational trust. It is "...a three-level theory. At its most basic (intrapersonal) level, relational trust is rooted in complex cognitive activity of discerning the attentions of others" (Byrk & Schneider. 2002, p. 22). The interpersonal is developed through the school structure and fostered through the individual school culture, history, and school standing. These two relations transpire into the development and transactions including, "decision-making, enhanced social support for innovation, more efficient social control of adults' work, and an expanded moral authority to 'go the extra mile' for the children" (2002, p. 22).

Brene Brown, a shame researcher, studied trust and its effects on organizations for decades. In her work, *Dare to Lead*, she shared, "Trust is the stacking and layering of small moments and reciprocal vulnerability over time. Trust and vulnerability grow together, and to betray one is to destroy both" (Brown, 2018, p. 34). In her work, she discussed a rather taboo thought process regarding how there must be vulnerability for there to be trust because at the heart of all humans is emotion. She also concluded that without vulnerability, this cornerstone of trust, creativity and innovation are absent because the two require risk.

The question then becomes the following: How is trust built between a principal and her staff members, and how does that level of trust influence the rest of the organization? "The influential elements that develop employees' trust for their supervisors are integrity, goodwill,

and professional competency; these are necessary components that determine whether or not supervisors can be trusted (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). This perspective captures a moral essence to a leaders' ability to develop trust. Building leaders must be able to do what they say and hold to their promises, providing transparency when necessary.

Collective Efficacy & Collaboration

Collective efficacy refers to 'the perception[s] of teachers in a school that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the courses of action required to have a positive effect on students' (Goddard & Goddard, 2001, p. 809). Although one's self-efficacy influences an overall collective efficacy, if the group, as a whole, can influence positively, they can bring up those who are not necessarily strong on their own. A large amount of work around this focuses on teacher leadership within a building and its influences on building collective efficacy. Still, teacher leaders often need a supportive, nurturing relationship with their principals to support these challenging roles. "Unless the school achieves positive stability through a large coalition of its members, it is incapable of sustaining growth over time" (Muhammad, 2009, p. 59).

Babaoglan (2016) specifically studied the relationship described above and whether a principal could directly influence the teachers' relationships within an educational setting. His work identified that there was a "significant relationship between the leadership behaviors of the school principals and the teachers' perception of "trust in colleagues," and the leadership behaviors of the school principals have significant predictive power over teachers' trust in colleagues" (Babaoglan, 2016, p. 129).

Further examining that individuals create collective efficacy, Mehdinezhad and Arbabi (2015) looked deeper into this component in building trust and the individual relationships with

the building leadership. They studied principals who displayed a collaborative leadership style to determine the influence it had on self-efficacy. They found that there was “a significant positive correlation between the collaborative leadership style of school principals and teachers’ self-efficacy.” That meant that a building leader who created shared decision making worked alongside staff and built trust increased teachers’ self-efficacy, ultimately positively impacting the collective efficacy of a building. This work aligned with Ghasemi (2009), Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999), Mirkamali (1998), Hoy et al. (2006), and Fallahi (1995).

In DuFour’s (2008) work, he articulated, “If shared purpose, vision, collective commitments, and goals constitute the foundations of a PLC, then the collaborative team is the fundamental building block of the organization (p. 15.). However, one challenge that commonly exists is that teams that work together are not necessarily collaborative. This is where collective efficacy and collaboration collide—when partnered together, you find cohesive teams of individuals that can and will work toward a common goal (Garcia et al., 2015).

Shared Norms & Values

Nanus (1992) pointed out that, “A vision is little more than an empty dream until it is widely shared and accepted.” Far too often, visions can be created with little to no input from those who carry out the work capture within the vision. Having a clear understanding of what an organization desires to achieve or provide allows the stakeholders to develop a deeper understanding of what norms and values exist within the organization. Deal (1999) described norms as becoming the behavioral blueprints among an organization in which people follow. He also warns that they can be developed formally or informally, and without a strategic approach, they can become dysfunctional. As for values, these go much deeper. An organization is founded

on values and defines what people care about, such as standards of goodness, quality, or level of excellence (Ott, 1989).

Louis and Wahlstrom (2011) argued that part of collective efficacy is a shared set of norms and values: these are the driving mechanisms for an organization and are embedded in all the major functions. They articulate that there also be sharing of common practices and ongoing feedback from all levels. “Our study found that the major factor associated with higher levels of professional community in a school was the principal’s shared leadership” (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011, p. 52).

One of the expected norms necessary to create a more positive school culture is developing instructional leaders in the school environment. This requires the use of PLCs, and that expects all teachers to value being a part of shaping the instructional capacity of a building. Going back to Louis and Wahlstrom’s work (2011), they recognized that the principals were the catalyst in creating these important conversations among their staff. “Principals themselves did not need to model good teaching, but they did require everyone in the school attend to instruction and learning on a regular basis” (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011, p. 54).

Conclusion

The authentic relationship among the principal with her staff, the use of a collaborative leadership style, the institution of trust and integrity, setting shared and expected values and norms, and strengthening collective efficacy and collaboration has been proven time and again through research that it has a direct effect on developing a positive school culture. Based off of work that former researchers have completed, they argued that the “single most important factor in school effectiveness is the principal” (Hauserman, p. 190). In fact, the leadership style and manner in which the principal presents herself become critical, if not the most critical, factor in

cultivating trust, developing authentic relationships, and fostering collaboration. The next chapter will provide you with an overview of how the research was collected to determine the level of trust and collaboration at WJ School.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Research Design Overview

When looking at program evaluation, the very first necessity is to look at the “why.” Why evaluate this program? Why does it support or not support its target audience? Why would it need to be changed? Patton’s (2008) work provided multiple purposes as to why programs would need examination. Still, when evaluating the work being done for this particular study, the primary use of this evaluation has been to learn to be program improvement.

Using evaluation results to improve a program turns out, in practice, to be fundamentally different from rendering judgment about overall effectiveness, merit, or worth. Improvement-oriented evaluation forms include formative evaluation, quality enhancement, learning organizational approaches, and continuous quality improvement (CQI), among others. What these approaches share is a focus on improvement - making things better - rather than rendering summative judgment. (Patton, 2008, p. 116)

The results we have been hoping to yield in our district, student growth, have not come to fruition, so it is imperative that we also evaluate why that is not occurring. To achieve more understanding around “what” needs to change, this program review utilizes quantitative and qualitative research to provide a full scope around the story the data spells out.

We put systems in place, adopt programs, provide professional development, hire “strong” teachers, expect educators to meet rigorous content standards. Despite all of these efforts, we don’t all find that we are achieving our ultimate goal of student success. Why is that? What is missing? What should we have changed that we didn’t? Muhammad (2009) discussed that two parts make up a school culture—technical and cultural. The technical components relate

to “tools and mechanisms professionals use to do their jobs effectively... in a school context, it refers to changes in structure, policies, or teaching tools” (Muhammad, 2009, p. 23). The cultural “requires something more profound... it requires leaders to become adept at gaining cooperation and skilled in the arts of diplomacy, salesmanship, patience, endurance, and encouragement. Substantial culture change must precede technical change” (Muhammad, 2009, p. 25). The question then becomes, how to develop cultural change before technical change, and who makes that happen in schools? My “why” for this research was simple—as a leader, it is not only my passion but my responsibility, to create the change and equitable educational experience our students deserve. It meant that I needed to take a hard look at the data I felt was required to yield these results.

Methodology

This study focused on developing growth in trust, collaboration, and leadership skills through quantitative and qualitative tools. The participants were certified staff members committed to this study from the building in which I currently have the privilege of serving as their principal. Originally, I had envisioned this work built solely around qualitative research. Still, after studying different quantitative tools, it was ideal to look at the hard numbers around something that may not be easily measured. Hoy, one of the developers of the tools used in this research, described quantitative research as a way of “developing and testing hypotheses and the generation of models and theories that explain behavior” (Hoy & Adams, 2016, p. 1)—having that “hard data” could only strengthen this study if measurable growth was able to be observed around the theories that explain behavior.

The participants were provided the same subset of questions during the 2018-2019 school year and then again during the 2019-2020 school year to determine if there was growth or

regression. In addition to the survey, I utilized various tools: reflective memos, informal observations, document analysis, and professional experience.

Participants

This study consisted of an in-depth analysis of a school building, WJ School, one out of the six within the Community SD. I analyzed the building's conditions upon my arrival as a new building leader and tracked the development of trust and collaboration over 2 school years. The survey's participation was provided to all certified staff members during the 2018-2019 school year and explained that they would then again be asked to complete the same survey 1 school year later. Out of the 34 certified staff members in the 18-19 school year, 28 committed to this work. During the second administration, 15 staff members again completed the survey. This may have been due to a variety of things: change in certified staff members because of enrollment shifts, retention, and the fact that it was administered a second time during the global pandemic.

Data Gathering Techniques

For this study, I utilized a mixed-methods approach, focusing largely on quantitative data derived from surveys with support qualitatively through the opportunity I have been granted by conducting this research within my building. The blend of these two methods allows for a focus on understanding social and human behavior through qualitative research and the partnership of measurement in quantitative research to build upon the empirical observations (Hoy & Adams, 2016).

Surveys

Two formal surveys supported this research. The first tool was the School Culture Survey, designed by the Middle Level Leadership Center. “The School Culture Survey provides insight into the shared values/beliefs, the patterns of behavior, and the relationships in the school.

Each factor measures a unique aspect of the school's collaborative culture" (University of Missouri, 2009). In addition to this survey, I also distributed the Omnibus T-Scale created by Hoy and Tschannen-Moran. This test is designed to measure three dimensions of trust: trust in the principal, trust in colleagues, and trust in the community (parents and students) (waynekhoy.com, 2003). These surveys were administered during the 2018-2019 school year and the 2019-2020 school year through an anonymous Google Form.

Reflective Memos and Informal Observations

Reflective memos have been recorded for personal reflection that has been observed concerning the hypothesis regarding one's research (Patton, 2008). If in alignment with the hypothesis, they can serve as another means of credibility toward the research. Both reflective memos and informal observations were valuable data tools embedded in this research. Over the 2 years of this study, I compiled notes for my reflection in my journal and noted when they unintentionally supported this research. As a leader, reflecting on my practices is a personal expectation of achieving more successful results. Throughout the 2 years in this research, I embedded my informal observations to substantiate evidence around the observations in conjunction with the quantitative results.

Document Analysis

I also utilized document analyses to interpret and provide additional meaning around some of my quantitative findings. Document analysis determines meaning or contextual understanding when consistent trends can be observed by examining and evaluating documents (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). When I took on the leadership role at WJ, we began utilizing running agendas for our shared meeting work: building level committees, staff meetings, PLCs, and

specialized team committees. In addition to those agendas, I also reviewed additional public survey data and organizational reports that supported this researcher's intention.

In 2018, the district partnered with ILEmpower TeachPlus. They worked to assist in the development of PLCs. For the 2 previous school years, they have collected district-wide data through surveys to highlight areas of success and growth and further help us determine areas of need. I utilized these surveys to substantiate our building level growth and its impacts on our overall organizational growth around trust and collaboration through PLCs.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics were a high priority for the study. During this work, I collected sensitive information that required vulnerability from those I directly evaluate for job performance. Although this may contribute to some lack of transparency due to human nature to protect oneself, I feel I could still gain full disclosure, and those involved did not fear any negative discourse. All surveys were anonymous; hopefully, this allowed people to feel as if they could be honest in their ratings and thoughts. Taking into consideration the American Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles for Evaluators was advantageous to ensuring ethical consideration.

- Systematic inquiry: Educators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries about what is being evaluated
- Competence: Evaluations provide content performance to stakeholders
- Integrity/honesty: Evaluators display honesty and integrity in their behavior and attempt to ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process
- Respect for people: Evaluators respect the security, dignity, and self-worth of the respondents, clients, and other stakeholders with whom they interact

- Responsibilities for general and public welfare: Evaluators articulate and take into account the diversity of interests and values that may be related to the general and public welfare. (Patton, 2008, p. 27)

Data Analysis Techniques

Patton (2008) noted, “thoughtful consideration of how the data will be used, grounded in common sense and pragmatism, is a decision that should be made by the intended users with the intended uses in mind” (p. 389). Having utilized quantitative and qualitative research, I identified the themes of trust, collaboration, and leadership.

Surveys

The quantitative surveys allowed for comparative analysis from 1 school year to the next as trust measures were put into place between leadership and staff. I was able to conclude how much influence a leader can have on a collaborative culture through building trust. Additionally, a correlation analysis determined which influences trust in leadership has toward building collaboration within a culture.

Reflective Memos and Informal Observations

My notebook allowed me to refer back to specific events and review the discussion points and outcomes. These reflective memos allowed me to add in additional credibility toward the quantitative data collection. As for the agendas, these are a collection of all of our committees’ work located in one place and truly allowed for review of the evolution in our thinking over the 2 years in which this research was collected through document analysis.

During the pandemic, as a building leader, I found it advantageous to schedule individual meetings ongoing with nearly all team members within my building since we started our school year remotely and staff did not work on-site. Although I meet with my teams weekly or bi-

weekly, I felt that the meeting's unique opportunities also helped me make appropriate building-level decisions. These meetings became one of the most critical. They also were deeply appreciated times throughout my weeks as they allowed me to understand on a much more granular level how my staff was feeling, what supports they needed, and where our challenges were. In this research, these informal observations allowed me to discover certain trends to support this work additionally.

Document Analysis

ILEmpower TeachPlus provided surveys to all certified district staff members and administrators after our 18-19 SY and 19-20 SY to determine growth regarding their work with PLCs. I reviewed these documents to look for additional emerging themes that could further support the development of trust and collaboration through PLCs.

Conclusion

Far too often in education, we focus on what Muhammad (2009) refers to as the “technical” components. These program changes are important, but they are not where our work needs to start. Instead, we must focus on the cultural components. However, where does one begin when looking at culture? Through these methods, we can scale back to a foundational component where cultural change must begin—at the leadership level. Through that change, focusing on building trust, hopefully, a culture of collaboration is born. Ultimately, when you have a trust and collaboration culture, you can then work on refining those technical components resulting in student growth. In the following chapters, I will take you through a deep dive into the data and build meaning behind the collected evidence that helped evolve this change leadership plan.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results (Appendix A)

As mentioned, the purpose of this research is to create meaningful change that is going to impact our students in a way that results in what I feel we have seen a lack of systemically—academic achievement. We have tried a myriad of technical approaches in the past that have failed to make a substantial or consistent change, so this shift to developing a culture of trust, deriving first with leadership and transpiring to teams through the use of effective PLCs, gets at the heart of where change must begin. This chapter will discuss Wagner’s and Kegan (2006) four C’s: context, culture, competencies, and conditions concerning this change plan. These four components will allow for a diagnosis regarding the effectiveness of the implantation of PLCs. I will also provide interpretations regarding the informal observations collected, reflective memos, and document analysis, allowing me to make informed judgments and recommendations aligned to the themes pulled from an analysis of each data source.

As-Is Analysis

Wagner and Kegan (2006) introduced us to a “change system” in the work, *Change Leadership: A Practical Guide to Transforming our Schools*. The purpose of looking at change as a system is the many interrelated components within an organization. However, Wagner and Kegan (2006) also articulated that a change system must be looked at from both the beginning state and the desired state, and he utilizes the 4 C’s to do this. “We offer an approach to thinking systematically about the challenges and goals of change in schools and districts, which we can the 4 Cs’—competency, conditions, culture, and context” (Wagner & Kegan, 2006, p. 98).

Context

As mentioned before, Community SD formerly comprised six schools—two middle schools and four K-5 buildings. These buildings were split equally, with half residing on the district's north side and the other half on the district's south side. Three years ago, we made the change to grade-level centers. The former superintendent had been in her role for 8 years and served other administrative roles before the superintendent role. She had displayed a firm belief in running the district with policy and procedure. All answers seemed to be able to be found somewhere in black and white. There were also consequences when people did not follow the written policies, mirroring a zero-tolerance approach.

Six years ago, following the former superintendent's retirement, a new superintendent with a very different vision for CSD came in. Her beliefs were deeply founded in distributed and servant leadership. She began sharing her values around building a foundation grounded in trust and authenticity. This context around the new superintendent's leadership is paramount because it is in complete alignment with the leadership style executed within WJ School. A superintendent that is also focused on developing authenticity, trust, empowerment, and courageous leadership makes this same work within a building much more capable of flourishing. In addition to considering the district level change in leadership, it is important to consider that the previous leadership of virtually all staff at WJ School had not mirrored this trusting, distributed leadership model with an emphasis on collaboration at a building level either.

The new superintendent also determined that the district lacked development around PLCs and worked to secure the funds to institute PLCs across the district. This not only took

financial support, but it also took the development of a vision of ongoing professional development and coaching for each of the buildings and grade-level teams.

Culture

One of the most critical elements that make up a building culture is the people who are working within it. In Gruenert and Whitaker's (2015) research, they noted that "the culture of a building is built by the adults in the building" (p.7). Teachers spend their days in classrooms with students. They are essentially on the "frontlines." They are a direct impact on the students' academic and social well-being. However, are teachers being emotionally supported to the extent that they need, and should have the greatest positive impact on their students? How do we ensure that they are receiving what they need? Whose job is it to support them in their work?

One of the more recent tools put into place by federal mandates was the Illinois 5Essentials (University of Chicago, 2017). This tool measured more than academics and examined building culture, specifically how teachers and their direct administrators worked together, along with how teachers felt their ability to work with their colleagues. For the first time, there was a focus on how people felt about their jobs and their relationships. This tool brought attention to something that had been ignored for far too long—culture.

Although having a tool to analyze cultural data has been helpful, where does one go from there? Culture, when looking back at that definition, encompasses so much. Is there one single influential factor that is the greatest contributor to a school culture? This work was set out to determine just that. It has been said that when a principal sneezes, the whole building catches a cold. This quote paints a picture that building leadership has a significant effect on its surroundings. That one individual can influence a much larger population. If we peel off one

more layer, what is the single most important element for a principal to develop a culture of collaboration?

As mentioned previously, there was a culture of compliance in Community SD. All answers were determined by building or district leadership, and there were no expectations to explain those decisions. If someone asked a question, it was considered disrespectful, and it was frequently followed up with a conversation by the building administration. Principals developed all agendas, ran meetings, and disseminated most information. There was also a clear delineation between a principal and an assistant principal—the assistant principal only supported the principal and not expected to make any decisions. Staff, including leadership, often felt a sense of fear—expecting a memo to record any mistakes or failures to follow policy.

Before the reconfiguration of our buildings, there was an underlying context of isolation and competition. Instead of working together to find better and best opportunities for learning and teaching, it was often used as a way to one-up another school, grade level, or classroom. This highly impacted the foundation of a collaborative work environment. People wanted to contain their great work and use it within their classrooms or schools to highlight their greatness instead of sharing it out for all of our district's students and teachers to relish in.

When the work with PLCs was first adopted, they were very protected because they were only to be attended by the grade level team members. Instructional coaches and administrators were only allowed to take part in the work when invited. This was part of the language used within the contract at the time. It unintentionally created a separation of this work between teachers and administrators. It also implied a different level of trust between teacher teams with or without the presence of their administrators or coaches.

Competencies

When the new superintendent came in with a more focused vision on soft skills and embraced the importance of emotional intelligence, this came with its challenges, especially with the tenured building leadership because they had been previously equipped with managing the role with more of the hard skills. Suddenly, the focus was less on office duties and more about relationships, conversations, and building up leaders. Wagner and Kegan (2006) mentioned this up in their work.

As difficult as it is for positional leaders to sufficiently put aside their expertise and become collaborative public learners, we find the greatest challenge for leaders of schools and districts may be to move their systems away from highly autonomous work habits that can result only in ‘random acts of excellence’ and toward accountable ‘communities of practice.’ Everyone’s work becomes more visible – beginning with the leaders. The leader models learning, teamwork, and openness to others’ feedback – behaviors very different from those that are traditionally associated with school or district leadership. (p. 16)

In addition to the varied philosophy around leadership, we also had very minimal systems to build up distributed leadership opportunities for our building administrators. We had a chain of command. This did not allow the administration to freely engage with one another or learn from another’s perspectives. Instead, it created silos for our leaders and did not allow for there to be shared leadership even among the building and district administrators, let alone set them up for success to pass on that leadership to their staff. However, there was also no formal training for teachers to build their capacity for leadership or change. They were used to an environment that required them to follow directions from “above” and rarely had the opportunity to be

provided with transparency about decision making, much less be a part of it. “To make organizations more effective, to lead what has increasingly come to be labeled ‘culture change’ or transformation, the relationships between the emergent leader and the organizational followers who will implement the changes has to become more personal and cooperative...” (Schein & Schein, 2018, p.12). This was not a system built to support transformation.

Conditions

When trying to create a culture of collaboration, time for collaboration must be dedicated to the cause. This is necessary both for the building and district leadership and for the teachers within a building. Originally, district leaders, principals, and assistant principals had completely separate meetings, and only a few district leaders ever met with the assistant principal group. Their meetings also included less information and opportunity for discussion and little to no collaborative leadership skills development. To some, this practice sent an informal message about the significance of a building principal compared to an assistant principal. It also left them less equipped to understand some of the larger contexts, although they were still expected to handle those situations in the building, should they arise.

The teachers did not have significant time to plan or work together within a week collaboratively. They also did not have any norms, structures, or protocols to guide their work. The structures often created silos within the building as well, each classroom working toward their own goals, focused on only their students, and operating in complete isolation from one another. Teachers participated in building and district level committees, but their role was solely a participant and not a facilitator. They were not included in the development of agendas or action items but instead followed the administrator's direction leading the meeting.

Findings

For this program evaluation, I utilized two different quantitative surveys and distributed them in March of 2018 and then again in March of 2019 for the participating certified staff within my building at WJ Intermediate School. The two surveys used were the School Culture Survey and the Faculty Trust Scale (Hoy, n.d.), in which participants responded utilizing a five-point Likert scale rating. In addition to these surveys, I review the qualitative data outlined previously: reflective memos, informal observations, document analysis, and professional experience.

Faculty Trust Scale

In this survey (26 Likert items), the three dimensions are trust in the principal, trust in colleagues, and trust in clients (students and families). Hoy (2003) characterized the dimensions of trust around “vulnerability, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness.” The first administration of this survey to staff took place in the first year of implementation with PLCs. The second administration was when during the second year of implementation. There was a turnover of two of the three originally designated PLC Team Leaders throughout the 2 years and between the first and second administration of this tool.

Dimension one: Trust in principal. As one of the foundations for effective collaboration, principals and teachers' relationships must be founded in trust. This is a critical key to success within an organization, especially to see growth in all four C's that Wagner identifies. For the 2 years in leadership at WJ School, the heart of the work was to establish trust with the staff (at all levels). This was proceeding two back-to-back building administrators that had deeply ruptured trust across the organization.

When looking at the data from the two administrations of this survey by averaging the responses and comparing all eight questions regarding trust in the principal, there was positive growth. The strongest question upon initial implementation was Question #18, that the principal was competent in doing her job (Table 7). The question that showed the most significant growth was Question 11 (Table 5) regarding the principal showing concern for the teachers. The average for this response went from a 4.19 to a 4.73, and by the second administration, 73% of teachers strongly agreed while 27% agreed. In this work, where people should feel valued, supported, and empowered, this was a critical aspect in supporting that it is evident here at WJ School.

The next three areas that showed the highest growth were: Question 23, the principal tells teachers what is going on (Table 8), Question 15, teachers in this school can rely on the principal (Table 6), and Question 7, the teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of the principal (Table 3). Seeing the comparison of growth in these three particular areas and the fact that WJ School shifted to include administrators as active participants in the planning, participation of, and debriefing of PLCs, this increase is likely because of that partnership. PLCs are an intimate time for teams to work together. Having the principal seen as a collaborator in that environment requires trust and vulnerability and shows that both can grow together.

Table 1

Teachers Trust in the School Principal (Q1)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	32%	9	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	50%	14	73%	11
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	18%	5	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.14		4.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.13	

Table 2

The Teachers in This School Are Suspicious of Most of the Principal's Actions (Q4)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	35%	9	40%	6
<i>DISAGREE</i>	54%	14	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	19%	5	0%	0
<i>AGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.14		4.4	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.26	

Table 3

The Teachers in This School Have Faith in the Integrity of the Principal (Q7)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	23%	6	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	62%	16	73%	11
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	23%	6	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.0		4.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.27	

Table 4

The Principal in This School Typically Acts in the Best Interest of Teachers (Q9)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	36%	10	60%	9
<i>AGREE</i>	46%	13	33%	5
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	14%	4	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	3%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	1
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.14		4.4	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.26	

Table 5

The Principal of This School Does Not School Concern for the Teachers (Q11)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	37%	10	73%	11

<i>DISAGREE</i>	52%	14	27%	4
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>AGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.19		4.73	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.55	

Table 6

Teachers in This School Can Rely on the Principal (Q15)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	32%	9	53%	8
<i>AGREE</i>	54%	15	47%	7
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	14%	4	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	3%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.18		4.53	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.36	

Table 7

The Principal in This School is Competent in Doing His or Her Job (Q18)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	32%	11	53%	8
<i>AGREE</i>	54%	16	47%	7
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	14%	1	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	3%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.36		4.53	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.18	

Table 8

The Principal Doesn't Tell Teachers What is Really Going On (Q23)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	21%	6	47%	7
<i>AGREE</i>	57%	16	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	15%	4	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.93		4.47	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.54	

Dimension two: Trust in colleagues. The responses in this particular dimension were of utmost importance in supporting this work or potentially identifying that the increase in leadership trust does not necessarily mean that there is also a correlation with an increase of trust

across the staff. However, once again, between the two administrations of this survey, all eight areas showed growth, thus showing favor between the correlation.

The area that showed the most significant agreement across both administrations was Question 12: teachers can depend on each other (Table 11) with an average of 4.25, increasing to 4.4. Interestingly, the question that showed the most significant growth was Question 21: when teachers tell you something, you can believe it (Table 15), increasing from 3.56 to 4.33. Then, factoring in Question 13, teachers in this school do their jobs well (Table 12), which was the highest average of all subgroups going from 4.29 to 4.43. When taking into consideration the scores of these three, along with the growth, it can be argued that their trust is not only growing in one another as individuals but as educators, which are critical differences worth noting. This would most appropriately be fostered by using effective PLCs in which teachers are starting to share in the instructional practices and student growth on a much deeper level. It's also worth observing that the average by the second administration was a 4.0 (agree or strongly agree) or higher in all questions.

Table 9

Teachers in This School Trust Each Other (Q2)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	11%	3	20%	3
<i>AGREE</i>	64%	18	67%	10
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	21%	6	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.82		4.07	

<i>GROWTH</i>	<i>.25</i>
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Table 10

Teachers in This School Typically Look Out For Each Other (Q5)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	28%	8	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	36%	10	67%	10
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	36%	10	6%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.93		4.2	
<i>GROWTH</i>			<i>.27</i>	

Table 11

Even in Difficult Situations, Teachers in This School Can Depend on Each Other (Q12)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	25%	7	40%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	75%	21	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.25		4.4	
<i>GROWTH</i>			<i>.15</i>	

Table 12

Teachers in This School Do Their Jobs Well (Q13)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	39%	11	40%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	50%	14	50%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	21%	3	6%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.29		4.43	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.14	

Table 13

Teachers in This School Have Faith in the Integrity of Their Colleagues (Q16)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	14%	4	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	64%	18	73%	11
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	21%	6	6%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.93		4.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.34	

Table 14

The Teachers in This School Are Open With Each Other (Q19)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	7%	2	13%	2
<i>AGREE</i>	68%	19	87%	13
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	21%	6	6%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.79		4.13	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.34	

Table 15

When Teachers in This School Tell You Something, You Can Believe It (Q21)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	15%	4	33%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	37%	10	67%	10
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	37%	10	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	11%	3	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.56		4.33	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.77	

Table 16

Teachers in This School Are Suspicious of Each Other (Q8)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	14%	4	27%	4
<i>DISAGREE</i>	64%	18	67%	10
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	14%	4	6%	1
<i>AGREE</i>	8%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.86		4.2	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.34	

Dimension three: Trust in clients (parents and students). Our utmost importance lies in one thing: students. As mentioned early on, this work is like an onion with layers and layers you have to keep peeling away. Teachers who are a part of a trusting, collaborative, empowering workplace will hopefully find a highly positive correlation between our students' perceptions and their achievement. In all transparency, this area was the one I had been most fearful of reviewing the data because all our work evolves around. If there wasn't a positive trend in this realm, then the focus of my leadership and teacher growth may not have been grounded in the work it truly needs to be. However, once again, the data revealed growth in all subgroups in this section of the data. The most valued was that there was also a more trusting, appreciated, and positive perception around our parents and guardians.

The most significant growth area was Question 17 [students can be counted to do their work (Table 21)] with an average of 2.92 in 18-19 and an increase to 3.73 in 19-20, a fascinating growth. When teachers are engaged in creating more meaningful learning opportunities to find a deeper value around their work through PLCs, I would imagine that the work completion would

also increase because students find more relevance in work. I also would like to focus on Question 10 (Table 19), students in this school care about each other, and Question 3 (Table 3), teachers in this school trust their students. These questions were relatively strong in both administrations and comparatively: Question 10 went from a 3.79 to a 4.53, and Question 3 went from a 3.5 to a 4.07. This relationship between the perception teachers have regarding their students, and their character correlates with the way students view one another. As one increases, so does the other—and both are positive perceptions.

Table 17

Teachers in this School Trust their Students (Question 3)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	1
<i>AGREE</i>	57%	16	93%	14
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	36%	10	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.5		4.07	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.57	

Table 18

Teachers in This School Trust Their Parents (Q6)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AGREE</i>	25%	7	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	57%	16	40%	6
<i>DISAGREE</i>	14%	4	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.04		3.6	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.57	

Table 19

Students in This School Care About Each Other (Q10)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	7%	2	53%	8
<i>AGREE</i>	68%	19	47%	7
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	21%	6	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.79		4.53	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.74	

Table 20

Parents in This School Are Reliable in Their Commitments (Q14)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	4%	1	7%	1
<i>AGREE</i>	14%	4	27%	4
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	50%	14	47%	7
<i>DISAGREE</i>	32%	9	20%	3
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	2.89		3.2	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.3	

Table 21

Students in This School Can Be Counted on to Do Their Work (Q17)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	4%	0	7%	0
<i>AGREE</i>	14%	9	27%	11
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	50%	9	47%	4
<i>DISAGREE</i>	32%	9	20%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	1	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	2.93		3.73	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.81	

Table 22

Teachers Can Count on Parental Support (Q20)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AGREE</i>	18%	5	33%	5
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	39%	11	47%	7
<i>DISAGREE</i>	43%	12	20%	3
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	2.75		3.13	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.38	

Table 23

Teachers Here Believe Students Are Competent Learners (Q22)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	13%	2
<i>AGREE</i>	57%	16	73%	11
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	29%	8	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	14%	4	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.43		4.0	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.58	

Table 24

Teachers Think That Most of the Parents Do a Good Job (Q24)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AGREE</i>	29%	8	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	46%	13	40%	6
<i>DISAGREE</i>	25%	7	7%	1
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.04		3.47	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.43	

Table 25

Teachers Can Believe What Parents Tell Them (Q25)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	4%	0	7%	0
<i>AGREE</i>	14%	7	27%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	50%	15	47%	3
<i>DISAGREE</i>	32%	6	20%	4
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.03		3.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.24	

Table 26

Students Here Are Secretive (Q26)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	14%	18	27%	12
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	50%	4	47%	2
<i>AGREE</i>	32%	5	20%	0
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.53		3.93	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.4	

School Culture Survey

The second survey utilized was the School Culture Survey. This tool was ideal because it assists schools in looking at the depth of collaboration. As Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) mentioned in their book, *School Culture Rewired*, this level of collaboration, “... to mean much more than simply teachers working with other teachers—in this case, we also mean the existence of trust, peer observations, a compelling mission, and so on” (p. 80). This survey also takes a deeper dive into six different subgroups: collaborative leadership, teacher collaboration, professional development, unity of purpose, collegial support, and learning partnership. Taking this more granular lens allowed me to investigate the depth of trust and collaboration further.

Collaborative leadership. “A collaborative school culture uses the expertise of the faculty to solve many of its problems. In these schools, the adults in the building trust each other, and each has an equal voice” (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2017, p. 49). To achieve school-wide collaboration, it begins with building leadership modeling and facilitating it. When reflecting on

the data in this subset, there was a significant amount of growth and all but one area, by the second year of implementation, averaged above a 4.0.

The area that measured the most significant growth was Question 26 [Teachers are rewarded for experimenting with new ideas and techniques (Table 34)], with a .74 increase. For teachers to apply new ideas and techniques, they have to feel trusted to do so. Another substantial area of growth was Question 20 [Teachers are kept informed on current issues in the school (Table 32)], with an increase of .63. This area's significance is that this would reflect transparency and vulnerability with staff in keeping them abreast of changes or building level direction.

In alignment with our implementation of PLCs, Question 32 [Administrators protect instruction and planning time (Table 36)], observing an increase of .61, and Question 18 [Leaders in this school facilitate teachers working together (Table 31)], an increase of .48, this growth and correlation would argue that not only do they feel leadership sees the need for this time but provides collaborative opportunities regularly. However, it's important to also look at Question 7 (Leaders in the school trust the professional judgments of teachers) (Table 28) with an average of 4.27 and Question 14 (Teachers are involved in the decision-making process) (Table 30) with an average of 4.07. These two questions, both averaging over a 4.0, show that the time is valuable and that the use of that time is should be considered valuable by the building leadership.

Question 22 [Teacher involvement in policy or decision making is taken seriously (Table 33)] was the one area in which there was regression going from a 3.57 to a 3.4 average, resulting in -.17. Although a 3.4 still shows that there is agreement that it is generally taken seriously, the fact that this area suffered will need to be a focus moving forward. Through informal

observations, the general assumption regarding this shift would be that there were less immediate changes in instruction during the first year in leadership. In contrast, in the second year, there was a higher level of accountability placed on teachers based on my general observations. Some were expected to change long-standing instructions. These decisions were made based on collective instructional observations, but that expectation of changing despite comfortability can be challenging.

Table 27

Leaders Value Teachers' Ideas (Q2)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	36%	10	20%	3
<i>AGREE</i>	39%	11	80%	12
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	21%	6	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.07		4.2	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.13	

Table 28

Leaders in this School Trust the Professional Judgments of the Teachers (Q7)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	25%	7	77%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	64%	18	73%	11
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	8%	2	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.07		4.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.16	

Table 29

Leaders Take Time to Praise Teachers who Perform Well (Q11)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	18%	5	40%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	61%	17	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	18%	5	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.93		4.4	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.48	

Table 30

Teachers Are Involved in the Decision-making Process (Q14)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	14%	4	13%	2
<i>AGREE</i>	46%	13	80%	12
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	32%	9	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.68		4.07	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.4	

Table 31

Leaders in the School Facilitate Teachers Working Together (Q18)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	11%	3	13%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	71%	20	80%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	11%	3	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.86		4.33	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.48	

Table 32

Teachers in this School Are Kept Informed on Current Issues in the School (Q20)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	14%	4	33%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	46%	13	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	32%	9	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	11%	3	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.64		4.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.63	

Table 33

Teacher Involvement in Policy or Decision Making Is Taken Seriously (Q22)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	14%	4	7%	1
<i>AGREE</i>	46%	9	47%	7
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	32%	14	27%	4
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	20%	3
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.57		3.4	
<i>GROWTH</i>			-.17	

Table 34

Teachers Are Rewarding for Experimenting with New Ideas and Techniques (Q26)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	25%	7	33%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	18%	5	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	36%	10	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	21%	6	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.46		4.2	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.74	

Table 35

Leaders Support Risk Taking and Innovation in Teaching (Q26)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	36%	10	40%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	57%	16	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	4%	1	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.25		4.33	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.08	

Table 36

Administrators protect instructional planning time (Q32)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	14%	4	47%	7
<i>AGREE</i>	64%	18	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	14%	4	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.86		4.47	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.61	

Table 37

Teachers are encouraged to share ideas (Q34)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	29%	8	40%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	64%	18	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.21		4.4	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.19	

Professional development. The mindset around professional development is a shift with the introduction of PLCs. Often, instead of thinking of the skills and intelligence that are collaboratively in existence within the group of people already existing within a building, teachers thought of it as something you had to attend externally. Gruenert and Whitaker (2017)

suggested, “in terms of teaching, we have suggested that the best professional development may come from another teacher in the building, usually in a more informal setting. When there is trust, people are more willing to share what *does* not work” (p. 48).

When observing this data set, Question 16 (The faculty value professional development) (Table 40) showed the greatest increase of .56, going from a 3.57 average to a 4.13. However, Question 1 (Teachers utilize professional networks to obtain information and resources for classroom instruction) (Table 38) decreased from a 4.04 to a 3.93, with a -.1 comparison between the 2 years. This data could show one of two things: that teachers are finding that they are using more of their internal members to learn from and don’t need the external as greatly in the past, or they have not quite shifted their thinking regarding professional development (PD) and still don’t see how learning from one another is one of the most advantageous forms of PD.

Table 38

Teachers Utilize Professional Networks to Obtain Information and Resources for Classroom Instruction (Q1)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	21%	6	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	64%	18	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	11%	3	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	7%	1
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	4%	0	7%	1
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.04		3.71	
<i>GROWTH</i>			-.1	

Table 39

Teachers regularly seek ideas from seminars, colleagues, and conferences (Q9)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	25%	7	20%	3
<i>AGREE</i>	39%	11	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	18%	5	20%	3
<i>DISAGREE</i>	18%	5	7%	1
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.71		3.87	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.16	

Table 40

Professional development is valued by the faculty (Q16)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	18%	5	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	46%	13	67%	10
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	14%	4	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	18%	5	7%	1
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.57		4.13	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.56	

Table 41

Teachers maintain a current knowledge base about the learning process (Q24)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	29%	8	40%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	61%	17	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	7%	2	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.14		4.33	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.19	

Table 42

The Faculty Values School Improvement (Q30)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	29%	7	33%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	61%	17	67%	10
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	7%	4	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.11		4.33	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.23	

Teacher collaboration. At the beginning of the review of the last subsection of data, I referenced a quote that stated that the best PD comes from those within the building, but that requires trust. This is truly the foundation of PLCs: learning from one another and building collective efficacy. Out of all 61 questions, there were administered, the one question that

showed the most substantial amount of growth was Question 15 (Teachers take time to observe each other teaching) (Table 45). This question went from a 2.36 average to a 3.6 with a growth correlation of 1.25. In addition to this question, the second-highest growth area out of all of the questions administered was Question 8 (Teachers spend considerable time planning together) (Table 44), moving from a 3.12 to a 4.0, resulting in .86 growth.

The growth in this area is critical in supporting the initial research question: as trust in leadership grows, it transpires among the teachers, increasing their trust and developing a collaborative culture. Question 33: Disagreements over instructional practices are voiced and openly discussed (Table 48) also went from a 3.36 to a 3.87 with an overall growth correlation of .51. They are planning together more and observing one another, but feeling a higher level of trust in a way that allows them to discuss instructional practices. This is how rich dialogue learns how to flourish in a school, and achievement can be shifted to ensure our students get a more rigorous educational environment.

Table 43

3. Teachers have opportunities for dialogue and planning across grades and subjects.

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	21%	6	40%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	54%	15	33%	5
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	14%	4	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	13%	2
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.82		4.0	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.18	

Table 44

Teachers Spend Considerable Time Planning Together (Q8)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	18%	5	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	21%	6	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	25%	7	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	29%	8	13%	2
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	8%	2	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.14		4.0	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.86	

Table 45

Teachers Take Time to Observe Each Other Teaching (Q15)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	4%	1	7%	1
<i>AGREE</i>	7%	2	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	18%	5	33%	5
<i>DISAGREE</i>	64%	18	7%	1
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	2.36		3.6	
<i>GROWTH</i>			1.25	

Table 46

Teachers Are Generally Aware of What Other Teachers Are Teaching (Q23)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	71%	20	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	21%	6	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.64		4.0	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.34	

Table 47

Teachers work together to develop and to evaluate programs and projects (Q29)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	4%	1	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	57%	16	47%	7
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	29%	8	20%	3
<i>DISAGREE</i>	11%	3	7%	1
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.53		3.93	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.4	

Table 48

Disagreements Over Instructional Practices Are Voiced and Openly Discussed (Q33)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	14%	2
<i>AGREE</i>	50%	14	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	36%	10	27%	4
<i>DISAGREE</i>	14%	4	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.36		3.87	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.51	

Unity of purpose. Having a clear understanding of expectations and a sense of shared purpose can be powerful if collectively embraced. WJ works towards compassion and accountability for all of our stakeholders. That can be a challenging balance; if you tip in favor of one side more than the other, you can lose out on growth. This has been an area of constant refinement for us, but the data shows we are trending in the right direction. The greatest area of improvement was Question 12 (The school mission provides a clear sense of direction for our teachers) (Table 50), shifting from a 3.53 to a 4.2 with growth of .67. Question 19 (Teachers understand the school's mission) (Table 51) also moved from 3.57 to 4.2 with growth of .63. As people embrace and live out our mission, it has become something we do versus something we say.

Table 49

Teachers Support the Mission of the School (Q5)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	18%	5	33%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	57%	16	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	18%	5	20%	3
<i>DISAGREE</i>	14%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.86		4.23	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.46	

Table 50

The School Mission Provides a Clear Sense of Direction for Teachers (Q12)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	7%	2	40%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	50%	14	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	39%	9	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	11%	3	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.54		4.2	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.67	

Table 51

Teachers Understand the Mission of the School (Q19)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	7%	2	33%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	50%	14	32%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	36%	10	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.57		4.2	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.63	

Table 52

The School Mission Statement Reflects the Values of the Community (Q27)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	11%	3	20%	3
<i>AGREE</i>	50%	14	67%	10
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	32%	9	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	11%	3	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.54		4.07	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.53	

Table 53

Teaching Performance Reflects the Mission of the School (Q31)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	14%	4	33%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	54%	15	32%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	29%	8	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.79		4.2	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.41	

Collegial support. The two highest areas of growth in the subgroup were Question 25 (Teachers work cooperatively in groups) (Table 57) moving from a 3.93 to a 4.27 with a comparative growth of .35; and Question 4 (Teachers trust each other) (Table 54), going from 3.82 to 4.13 with the growth of .31. Once again, as trust increases, there is a correlation with cooperative work. Along that same strand, Question 17 (Teachers' ideas are valued by other teachers) grew from 4.07 to 4.26, with an overall comparative growth of .2. As their work has become more collaborative, and they feel more trust to share their instructional practices, they also feel others have more value regarding their ideas. PLCs have truly been the perfect springboard to foster all of these areas.

Interestingly, a small decrease in Question 10 (Teachers are willing to help out whenever there is a problem) (Table 55), going from 4.36 to 4.27, with a negative growth of -.09. Although this is very minimal, I want to monitor this area moving forward. Drawing conclusions around the time of this second administration of this survey, it went out during the pandemic's initial

weeks. It was a challenging shift for our team. It could have influenced how people were feeling about one another and their willingness.

Table 54

Teachers Trust Each Other (Q4)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	7%	2	20%	3
<i>AGREE</i>	68%	19	73%	11
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	25%	7	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.82		4.13	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.31	

Table 55

Teachers Are Willing to Help Out Whenever There Are Problems (Q10)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	43%	12	40%	6
<i>AGREE</i>	50%	14	47%	7
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	7%	2	13%	2
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.36		4.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			-.09	

Table 56

Teachers' Ideas Are Valued by Other Teachers (Q17)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	25%	7	33%	5
<i>AGREE</i>	57%	16	60%	9
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	18%	5	7%	1
<i>DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.07		4.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.2	

Table 57

Teachers Work Cooperatively in Groups (Q25)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	21%	6	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	57%	16	73%	11
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	14%	4	0%	0
<i>DISAGREE</i>	7%	2	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.93		4.27	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.35	

Learning partnership. If we look at the question that had the most measurable growth, it is Question 35 (Students generally accept responsibility for their schooling). For example, by being mentally engaged in class and completing homework assignments (Table 61) went from an average of 3.07 to 3.53, with a .46 comparative growth. However, the most significant question in alignment around trust would be Question 13 (Parents trust the teachers' professional

judgments) (Table 59), shifting from a 3.71 to a 4.07 with a comparative growth of .36. Out of all the questions in this strand, that was the strongest. Once again, we note that as trust grows among all stakeholders, all other areas observe growth.

Table 58

Teachers and Parents Have Common Expectations for Student Performance (Q5)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	7%	1
<i>AGREE</i>	33%	9	47%	7
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	52%	4	27%	4
<i>DISAGREE</i>	39%	11	20%	3
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	11%	3	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	2.70		3.4	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.7	

Table 59

Parents Trust Teachers' Professional Judgments (Q13)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	11%	3	27%	4
<i>AGREE</i>	54%	15	53%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	32%	9	20%	3
<i>DISAGREE</i>	4%	1	0%	0
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.71		4.07	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.36	

Table 60

Teachers and Parents Communicate Frequently About Student Performance (Q21)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	0	20%	3
<i>AGREE</i>	68%	19	47%	7
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	18%	5	27%	4
<i>DISAGREE</i>	14%	4	7%	1
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	0%	0	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.54		3.3	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.26	

Table 61

Students Generally Accept Responsibility for Their Schooling, For Example by Being Mentally Engaged in Class and Completing Homework Assignments (Q35)

<i>ANSWER CHOICES</i>	<i>Response 18-19SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response 19-20SY</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	0%	2	7%	1
<i>AGREE</i>	33%	8	47%	8
<i>NEUTRAL</i>	52%	9	27%	4
<i>DISAGREE</i>	39%	8	20%	2
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	11%	1	0%	0
<i>AVERAGE</i>	3.07		3.53	
<i>GROWTH</i>			.46	

Reflective Memos and Informal Observations

As part of my responsibility as a leader during the pandemic in a district that had been fully in remote teaching since March of 2020, I decided to spend time with each of my staff

members for an individual check-in for 30 minutes. I utilized the same set of questions with everyone but kept the checks in very informal. At the time, the intention was to build understanding around trends with challenges or successes across the building while separated. However, what it unintentionally provided was qualitative support with this research. Upon reflection, themes seemed to emerge: trust, collaboration, and approachable leadership open to objectively supporting. These themes were evident across all roles and grade levels.

Document analysis. As part of the use of EBF funding and grant opportunities, Community SD began a partnership with TeachPlus to assist in creating and developing PLCs. At the end of the 2 school years, teacher leaders, administrators, and teachers on the team (only 18-19 SY due to COVID in 19-20 SY) were surveyed utilizing the Wallace Teacher Leadership survey to measure the impact of this program (Appendix C and D). This survey was provided to all six buildings encompassing pre-K-8. For this study, I pulled a few of the survey questions that align around trust in leadership, teacher collaboration, and PLCs' implementation to review and determine growth between the 18-19 SY and the 19-20 SY.

When looking at Table 62, between both the 18-19 SY and the 19-20 SY, by the EOY, there was strong agreement that the implementation of PLCs and their roles as teacher leaders made an immediate increase in the quality of collaboration within the buildings (60% extremely or quite positive to 100% extremely or quite positive by year two). In Table 63, we also see that there was growth in which teacher leaders felt empowered to make decisions within the school, which could also be due to an increase in trust as observed throughout the previous data outlined in this research (54% extremely or quite positive to 84% extremely or quite positive).

In Table 64, 65, and 66, we looked at the program's impact in the following three areas: administrative support, student engagement, and overall teacher collegiality. We observed

measurable growth in all three of the areas. Table 64 asked about the influence the program had on the school's culture regarding administrative support, and in that area alone, we went from 40% positive to 83% within 1 additional year of implementation. In Table 65, we saw only marginal growth between the two EOY surveys regarding the impact the program has had on the school's culture regarding student engagement, with only 3% more positive from 1 year to the next. However, the most incredible shift can be observed in Table 66 when looking at the program's influence on the school's culture regarding overall teacher collegiality growing from 10% to 83% positive.

It was important to pull one of the survey questions that was provided just to administrators. Table 67 asked administrators how comfortable they were with observing PLCs weekly. For context, when we initially implemented this program, our past practice had been that the time teams had together was to be without administrator involvement. There was an unspoken cultural rule around this area. For us to get to an agreement with implementing PLCs, it was expected that administrators only attend when teacher leaders invited them to participate or observe. We see that administrators went from indicating they were "very comfortable" attending from 17% to 80% between the two administrations of this survey. This increase supports the shift in a truly collaborative culture at all levels and would argue because of an increase in mutual trust.

Table 62

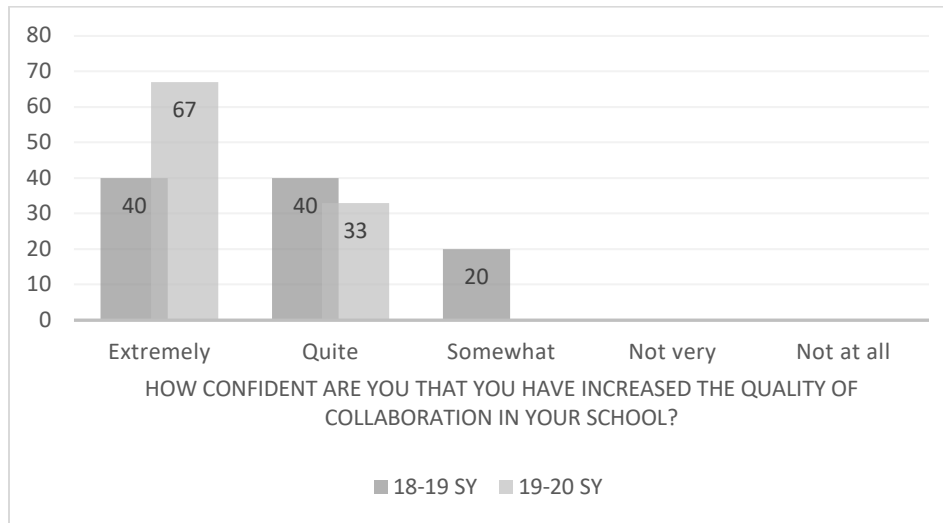


Table 63

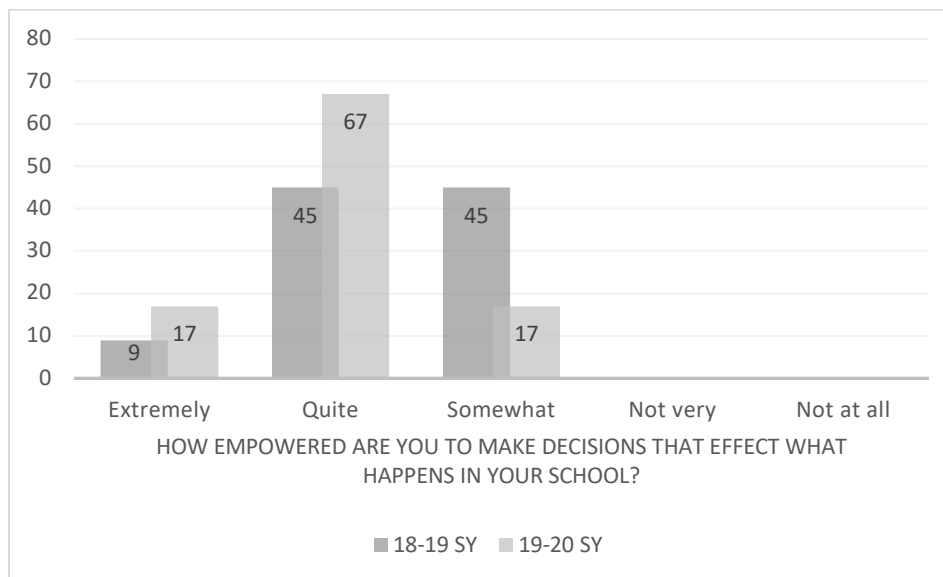


Table 64

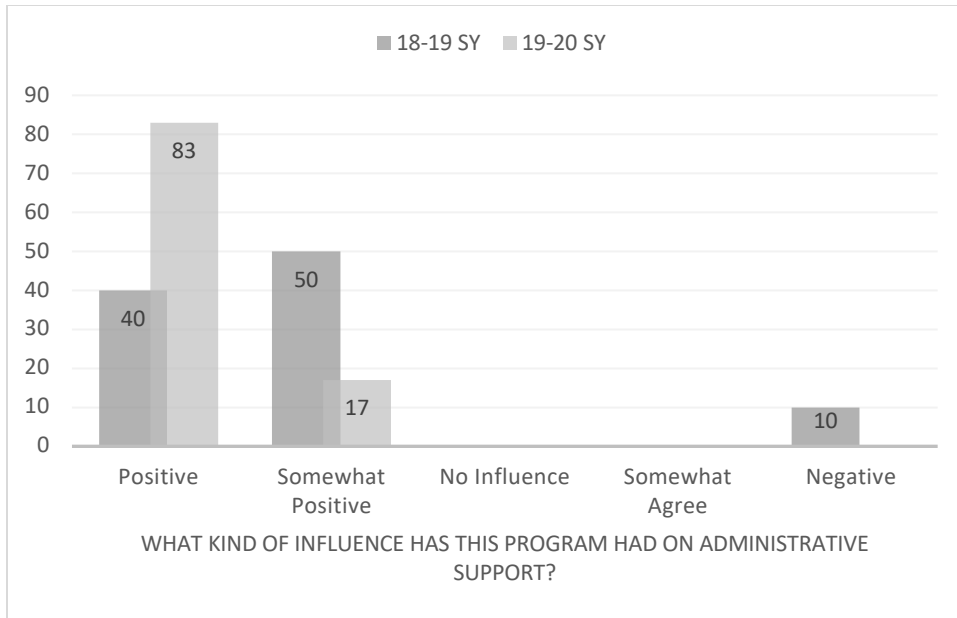


Table 65

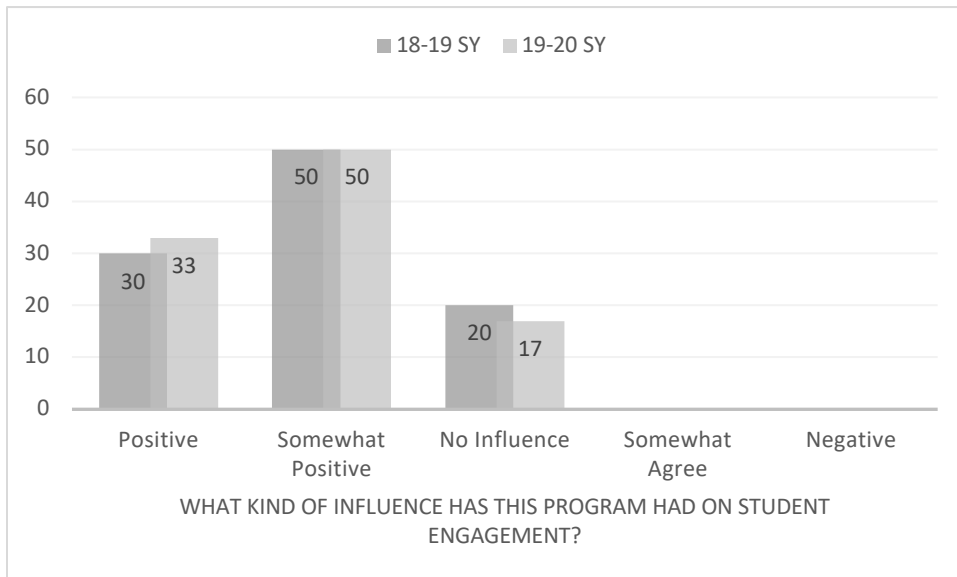


Table 66

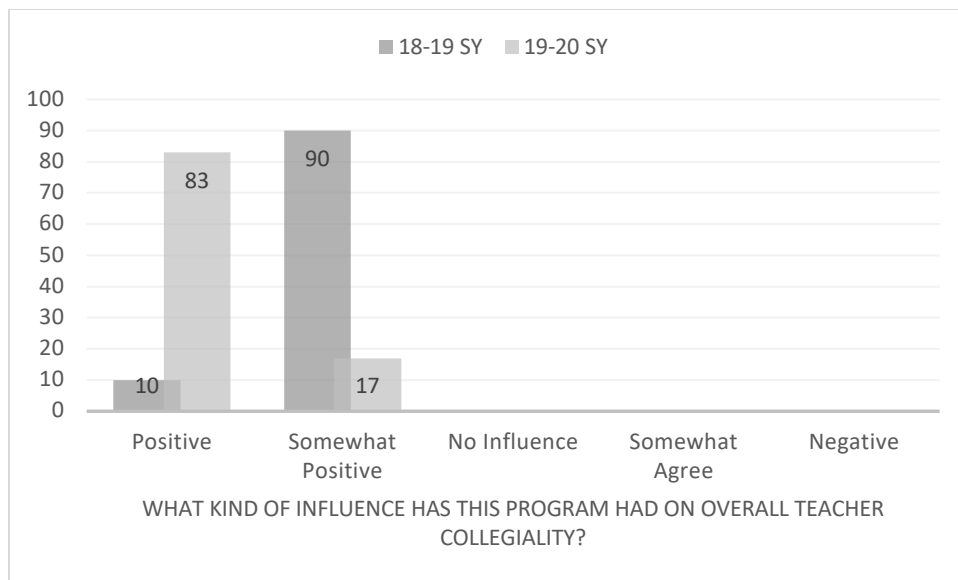
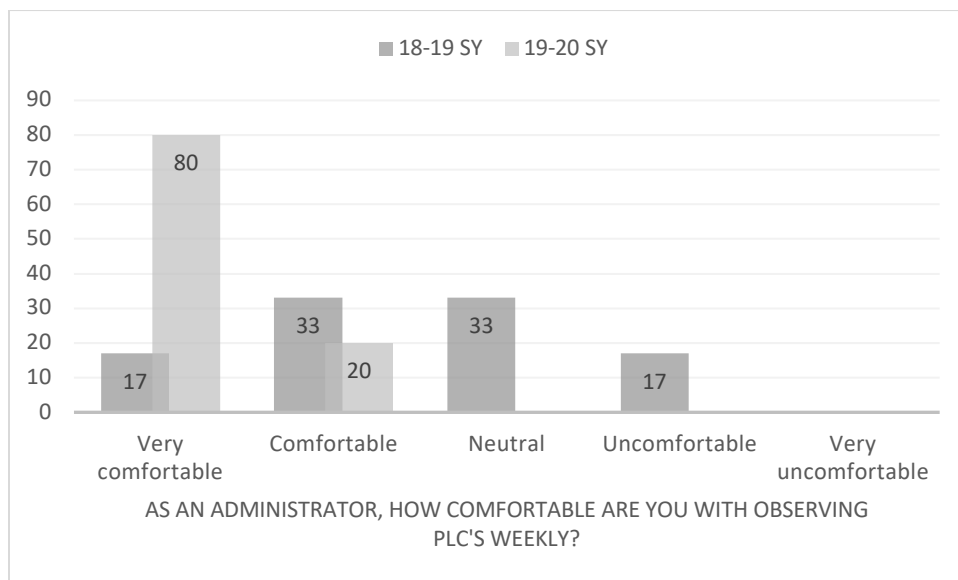


Table 67



Interpretation

After the second administration of the survey with my staff, amidst a pandemic, I was terrified. I had feared two things: the story this data would tell and if it would even be credible to compare 1 year to the next while dealing with the most stressful experience any of us had gone through as educators. About a month after the school year began, I reviewed the data. The data

show growth; it was significant and far exceeded my expectations that could be expected within 1 year of leadership. To think that the feelings of trust and collaboration could overcome the emotional exhaustion we are all experiencing at the time of that second survey gives even greater substantiation to this work. As the saying goes, one should never let a good crisis go to waste – in this case, it was one that wasn't wasted in the slightest. The data proved that it may have been a contributing factor in more trust and collaboration.

As trust in leadership grew and became stronger, there was a correlation among increased trust between staff. The bonus, that the trust teachers had around our students and families was also evident. Through professional experience at WJ, I would attribute this perception around our students, based on the adjustment in our thinking around the simple but extremely crippling phrase “our kids can't.” This has been a large mindset shift in which we have much work yet to do. Having the privilege to serve in the community with the demographics it does can and should not mean that our kids have a lower bar. For too long, we have enabled because we want our students to have short-term success, but spoon-feeding them their education does not provide them any long-term success. It often is utilized not to allow our children to flourish truly but for us, as adults, to feel better about the mediocre education we are providing them. Inflating grades, lowering levels of instruction, and providing unnecessary scaffolds is injustice.

During the 18-19 SY, I decided to build up each of my staff members to see themselves as leaders. Brown shared that, “A leader is anyone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes, and who dares to develop that potential” (Brown, 2018, pg. 4). Isn't that exactly what every educator does for a living? Why can't we see ourselves also in that light among our colleagues? This led me into a yearlong process of using the *Dare to Lead* book to guide the staff PD, both formally and informally. Instead of just focusing on our student data,

the staff looked at our strengths and challenges. In Brown's research, she discovered that there are 10 behaviors and cultural issues that get in the way of organizational success. The staff identified the following three as the biggest barriers:

1. We avoid tough conversations, including giving honest, productive feedback.
2. Too much shame and blame, not enough accountability and learning.
3. When something goes wrong, individuals and teams are rushing into ineffective or unsustainable solutions rather than staying with the problem identification and solving.

When we fix the wrong thing for the wrong reason, the same problems continue to surface. It's costly and demoralizing. (Brown, 2018)

Once we had determined our greatest obstacles, this language guided the discussions at both a building and PLC level. We often referred back to one of these three areas if we felt stuck in our decision making. Each month, we took another activity from Brown's workbook and worked through our understanding of what being brave, courageous, empathetic team members required us. After analyzing reflective memos and running agendas, there was a culmination of our work over the year and how, over time, we were able to dive into much deeper topics around empathy, vulnerability, and grace. Although some may believe that these soft skills can't change an organization, this is the work that allowed us to get to this deeper level of trust.

Educators are now living out an education in a way we never have before. The district went remote on March 13, 2020, and we have not returned to the buildings with the children since that date. Although it seems unlikely, a consistent review of instructional practices showed an increased collaboration level among grade-level teams and specials. The ongoing individual meetings with staff indicated a high level of success.

The district had an opportunity to capitalize on different things that would have been impossible in a typical school year where this pandemic never happened. Through this challenge, some of the district's greatest shifts have been born. One of the greatest opportunities at Community SD was the teachers' autonomy in their classroom instruction. Although every teacher should allow their personality and teaching style to be reflected in their classroom, certain expectations are necessary. When there are not tight enough expectations around instruction across a grade level, building, or district, students may experience something different in each classroom. This also led to challenges in the PLC because every classroom on a grade-level team could potentially be utilizing different strategies, classwork, formative assessments, and even different summative assessments. This makes it very challenging for a grade level to have similar data, even determine what is or isn't shifting student achievement. Upon the start of this school year, I asked my grade-level teams to stay consistent in their lesson objectives, strategies, and assessments. Although this was a huge ask, I knew our teams would be capable of it and felt we were ready to take this jump into consistency. It also took into consideration our students' parents and their stake in doing remote learning, as they deserved consistency.

The beauty in this has been that it has challenged and pushed the grade level teams in a new way. We shifted from collectively working on separate things to collaboratively working together to accomplish the same instructional things. It was the catalyst that has allowed us to shift into true collaboration. In my professional experience and my teachers' meetings, the two strongest themes that have emerged are increased trust among colleagues and increased collaboration. Educators do not just believe in norms and values; we are truly living them in a shared capacity.

Educators were deeply invested in creating a culture of shared leadership, trust, and collaboration, which helped prepare teachers for the current challenge. “Adaptive challenges can only be addressed through changes in people’s priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties. Making progress requires going beyond any authoritative expertise to mobilize discovery, shedding certain entrenched ways, tolerating losses, and generating new capacity to thrive anew” (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 19). WJ spent the past 2 years focused on developing individual leaders, learning how to see the strengths that each individual on the team possessed, and embracing failures as avenues to discover growth opportunities. Had we not invested this time in our culture and shared leadership, this success may have never come to fruition.

Judgments

Through quantitative surveys, reflective memos, professional experiences, document analyses, and informal observations, answers to both the primary and secondary research questions can be concluded. The questions in this study were as follows:

- To what extent, and how, does trust in building leadership influence the development of a collaborative culture?
 - What elements develop trust in building leadership?
 - What type of leadership style(s) do building leaders need to possess in a strong collaborative culture?
 - What qualities/characteristics must building leaders possess to develop a culture of collaboration?
 - How does trust in leadership transpire into strengthening teacher efficacy and development of PLC’s?

The data reviewed in this research reflected that as trust in leadership increased, collaboration and trust also increased among the staff and families, and students. There was a strong positive correlation among all three of these areas throughout all means of research collected. Out of the 61 survey questions gathered, there were only two areas in which there was any measurable decrease. Even with that, both were already areas that had indicated an average above a 4.0, showing that there was a positive agreement in those statements. The TeachPlus surveys also substantiated this data across the district, allowing this growth to be observed beyond the primary school.

Recommendations

One recommendation is to evaluate how other buildings would perform on these surveys. Future research should examine if their surveys indicate the same level of growth or variations in this success, depending on the grade level center. Although the district saw an overall increase in TeachPlus district-wide data, if we systemically want to ensure student achievement by developing deep levels of trust, the district would want to implement this work and data review across the district.

Based on the survey data, the next area that needs attention at WJ School will be professional development. Schmoker stated, “If there is anything that the research community agrees on, it is this: the right kind of continuous, structured teacher collaboration improves the quality of teaching and pays big, often immediate, dividends in student learning and professional morale in virtually any setting” (Birk & Larson, 2019, p. 18). Although it is evident that teachers at WJ trust one another and find value in their collaboration, it is clear that they don’t quite see how the work is done in their PLCs is a form of ongoing professional development.

The research pointing to positive effects of teacher collaboration is clear, but not just any collaboration. It needs to be instruction-focused, and assessment focused collaboration, not just about classroom management and student work. And there lies the challenge—keeping busy and diverse members of a collaborative team focused is a difficult task. (Birk & Larson, 2019, p. 28).

Due to the pandemic situation, WJ planned to shift PLCs' instructional focus further to improve student learning. As we continue to move forward, we are going to utilize various elements from the PLC 2.0 framework outlined below:

- Co-creating a clear school-wide vision with the broader school community
- Using multiple sources of evidence (products, conversations, and observation) to assess the progress of and for student and educator learning formatively
- Designing activities and assessments for students that take into account student prior knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and that do their thinking and learning observable for teachers
- Using collaboration, active learning, observation, focused reflection, and discussion around instructional practice impact (Birk & Larsen, 2019).

Conclusion

If WJ spends time intentionally focused on creating an understanding around ongoing, embedded professional development, not only should this provide an even more substantial focus in the PLC work, but teachers should also see an increase in trust once again when there is more learning that they can glean from one another. It should also further our students' achievement as we collectively take a much more granular look at our student data to determine where instructional shifts can and should take place. Although this can be a very vulnerable aspect of

teaching, the data reflects that the teams should be ready to engage in these rich, meaningful discussions.

CHAPTER FIVE

To-Be Framework (Appendix B)

Educators always examine current practices to determine their effectiveness or influence on student achievement. Chapter Five will focus on context, conditions, culture, and competencies in continuation of the previous chapter. Specifically, this chapter will discuss the future after considering the data collected from this study and a reflection on the previously outlined current state.

Envisioning the Success To-Be

It is time to begin planning for where the district wants to be, both in continuation as a school and as an organization, yielding the positive results acquired regarding trust and collaboration. The focus of this “to-be” will be a broader context that can funnel down to all the individual buildings. The beauty of this is that it does allow for autonomy as needed to create flourishing building cultures, as each is unique and has different needs.

Context

At the heart of this research, trust is the measurable factor of growth deriving with building leadership; the utilization of consistent surveys across the six schools would also allow us to evaluate further where our opportunities for challenges or successes lie. We could also integrate development around distributed leadership across our entire administrative team, allowing for a shared sense of understanding of what this type of leadership entails and further investing in a common language around expectations.

Now that we have established PLCs within our buildings, we can utilize more development around horizontal and vertical opportunities to discuss grade level and district data. We need to begin building urgency around understanding what our grade level or building level

achievement means and how it systemically relates. This is particularly true because we are built as grade-level centers—our students will move through the three buildings (K-2, 3-5, and 6-8) as part of the elementary experience. If we are not furthering our understanding of our students' achievement through the duration of their educational experience K-8, we could perpetuate unintentional gaps in their academic growth.

Culture

As WJ and all of Community SD strives toward growth, we must develop a shared set of norms and values that can be practiced across all schools, grade levels, and content areas. There is value in having a common understanding of expectations. In developing a new district vision and mission, we adopted the mission statement of “One district. One team. One mission.” It served as a reminder to embrace the concept of all working together to serve the students and community better. At the beginning of each school year, we receive t-shirts with our district logo on them and wear them in unity on Fridays and our district-wide events. We have even started an attendance incentive for all staff and students that allows them to be out of uniform and even wear jeans on Fridays. These seemingly rather simple things start to shift an entire culture to see how we are “one” and begin developing trust in the larger context.

However, we must continue to capitalize on what our mission looks like in action and across all realms of our system. With our partnership with TeachPlus, we can begin work to develop rubrics to uniform reflections around our practices and instruction. Now that we are beginning to see that our system is growing in trust and collaboration, we need to get to the root of achievement: rigorous, meaningful instruction founded in data inquiry cycles.

When we initially began our work with PLCs, building administrators were only allowed to attend when invited by the team. At this point, across the district, we see that administrators

are becoming a part of the PLCs, not as facilitators or leaders, but as active participants in the work. We want to continue to foster these relationships, as they encourage and develop the trust between building leadership and their teams, which is critical in working towards instructional shifts that can result in higher student achievement levels.

As a district, we have begun our initial work in building an understanding of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). The first pillar is a collective responsibility. To develop instructional capacity, we have to identify individual roles and how we serve toward the greater realm of our students' educational experiences. As schools, this required us to reflect on the things we would identify as serving towards this collective efficacy and the barriers that get in the way. Now that we have had the opportunity to do that, we need to seek opportunities to overcome those barriers and move forward.

Competencies

With the superintendent modeling a distributed leadership philosophy, it is developing within each of the buildings. Building administrators now recognize that there is more to work than the checklist of management responsibilities, and we are encouraged to spend more time working with staff and students. This is only possible when you embrace distributed leadership because now you partner with many others to accomplish the tasks needing to get done, rather than completing them alone.

Teachers are now taking an active role in decision-making, committee work, and other building functions. The leadership becomes a facilitator and support, versus the only responsible party in everything. Within my building, teachers develop much of the agendas at our meetings. My role, along with my assistant principal, is to provide additional support, a bigger picture perspective, and engage in dialogue as we problem solve. We do not solely run the show. This

has developed a much greater sense of appreciation, and buy-in from staff as their ideas and input often determine the direction we go with critical decisions.

Now that we have moved into our third year of PLCs and analyzing both classroom and grade-level data, we will want to facilitate more opportunities to interpret data and how grade-level data is also connected with building level data. We will need to shift into taking more schoolwide opportunities to observe the relationship between what happens within a classroom and grade level and its impacts on the overall school system. With this deeper level of trust now observably in place, these more vulnerable conversations should be able to be had without there being such a sense of shame or blame.

Conditions

Adults need to work together to solve core problems of practice to develop, or at least contribute to, standards of practice and an authentic knowledge base. Sharing problems of practice helps provide the means of identifying and exploring standards of practice, which can then be adapted to the particular situation... collaboration ensures that professionals can share in the trials and successes... (Wagner & Kegan, 2006, p. 73)

To achieve what Wagner points out in the quote above, we needed to create conditions to allow for this to happen. One of the first changes to take place was to create leadership meetings that included everyone. We reconfigured those meetings into two separate opportunities that meet every other week. One was building leadership, and a few district administrators and those are focused on the curriculum. The other includes all district administrators and building leadership, and the focus is on the greater context in our roles. These meetings allowed us to build a more collaborative leadership setting, encouraging meaningful dialogue to engage all levels of leadership in the decision-making process. This reconfiguration ultimately demonstrates what

distributed leadership looks like, therefore modeling all leaders to apply the same practices to their buildings.

When we rolled out our PLC implementation, we reconfigured our master schedules to accommodate a daily block for entire grade levels to have 50 minutes daily for common planning time, with 1 day designated to be utilized for PLCs. This was critical in the initial success we wanted to see to move forward. However, as we grow in our understanding of success and how it requires collaboration, we want to foster environments in which this time outside of PLCs is also used to plan collaboratively. We see this happened in pockets, and in some grade levels, it is more effectively used than others. We need to continue to understand the benefits of collaboration and its impact on our teaching. One of the most effective ways we can do this is to observe our data concerning when we collaboratively plan and what we can accomplish compared to the results we see without it. This, too, dives deeper into trust levels as teams begin planning for beyond their classroom, and instead, across a grade level and even buildings.

Conclusion

Although we are just in the early phases of some rather monumental work, this focuses on creating a culture of empowered, trusting teachers who will hopefully change our entire district's trajectory. Ultimately, the hope will be that a greater deal of trust will exist, encouraging teachers to take worthwhile risks to develop their skills and capabilities further instructionally. This, in turn, will benefit our students as their learning will be enhanced. “Whatever else each of us derives from our work, there may be nothing more precious than the feeling that we truly matter—that we contribute uniquely to valuing the whole, and that we’re recognized for it.” (Chapman & White, 2012, p. 27)

CHAPTER SIX

Strategies & Actions

As outlined previously, there were six different subsections that the data could be broken down into on the School Culture Survey and the Faculty Trust Survey: collaborative leadership, teacher collaboration, professional development, unity of purpose, collegial support, and learning partnership. After determining the average for each question, I placed them in order from highest to lowest score. The highest rating was provided for the competency of the principal in her job. The second highest area in leadership was that the principal supported risk taking and innovation in teaching. With questions focused specifically on teacher relationships, the two highest-scoring questions regarded teacher dependability on one another. However, teachers' trust in one another scored a 3.8, lower than dependability in one another and their overall trust in the principal (4.34).

These initial findings show a need to continue to grow the trust teachers have in leadership and one another. Although the overall average consensus agreed that it exists, there is much room for growth to make it stronger. This would ultimately lead to growth in some other areas, such as planning together, professional development, and observing one another for growth opportunities. The focus of year three would be to continue strengthening PLCs to provide meaningful conversation around instructional practices and review data to determine grade level areas of strength and challenge. Integrating more data analysis protocols would build a structured understanding of what we know and what we need. This would also help develop teachers' empowerment as they continue to have opportunities to strengthen curriculum and be a part of the decision making.

Strategies and Actions

Gajda (2004) shared an incredibly simple yet valuable point in her article “Utilizing collaboration theory to evaluate strategic alliances”: “collaboration is a journey, not a destination.” In keeping this in mind, WJ can embrace another critical opportunity to determine the current status and depth in which each grade level feels they are currently operating collaboratively. In *Game Plan*, Garcia et al. (2005) provided the following tool (Figure 1) that allows teams to reflect on an analysis of collaboration as determined by classifying progress into the following five categories: (a) networking, (b) cooperating, (c) connecting, (d) merging, and (e) unifying. This can be used at the end of the start of the school year, and then again at the end of the year to determine areas of growth and hold teams accountable to where their challenges may be.

Five Levels of Collaboration

Teams should identify the characteristics listed in this tool that best resemble their current level of practice. Periodically, teams can use the tool to reassess integration of team process, structures, and purpose.

Level	Team Characteristics
1 Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A base of support is created. • The group explores common interests. • Roles are loosely defined. • Members make decisions independently. • Members address few tasks. • Little conflict exists.
2 Cooperating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members identify mutual needs but work independently. • Roles are somewhat defined. • Leadership is autonomous. • Members demonstrate some personal commitments and investments. • Minimal conflict exists.
3 Connecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members share resources to address a common interest. • Members reach mutual goals as a unit. • Roles are defined. • Members show autonomous leadership focused on common issues. • There is evidence of problem solving and productivity. • Some conflict arises.
4 Merging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members share ideas and resources. • Team develops commitments for longer periods of time. • All members have a voice in decision making. • Team develops specific tasks. • Members share leadership. • High levels of commitment and investment exist. • Conflict is apparent.
5 Unifying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members belong to one system interdependently. • Members relinquish autonomy. • Consensus is used in shared decision making. • High levels of communication, trust, leadership, and productivity exist. • Ideas and decisions are equally shared. • Conflict can be high.

Figure 1. Five levels of collaboration.

As aforementioned, the strongest area of trust in the building was among the principal and the staff. This is a solid starting point, and it may be beneficial in leveraging more trust among staff, specifically through the effectiveness of each grade level's PLCs. When teachers can see the value in their conversations around growing one another, tied to a collective goal and their gains in their profession, they are authentically dedicated to the work they are doing. In

turn, this should also increase the trust they have in one another. This level of vulnerability could change the dynamics of the entire building.

In addition to the focus on PLCs, we can spend more time analyzing and understanding the subcultures within the building as building leadership. “The actions of a strong subculture can evolve into norms that will differ from those of both the main culture and of other subcultures (Horowitz, 1987), but could come back to influence the parent culture” (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015, p. 44). As building leaders, we will need to be able to start understanding and predicting how certain groups/cliques will respond to initiatives. Once we can do this, we will be able to roll out action plans better, have a part in sharing those messages, and leverage the right people to be involved.

Concerning distributed leadership, one critical component is to create authentic buy-in with staff. As part of my action plan, I intend to share the data that I have collected and create discourse opportunities among different leadership committees within my building. Having the opportunity to review this data with different individuals will provide me with an understanding of moving us forward. It will also become integral to the people within my building, as it will have meaning for them. One specific protocol outlined by the Middle Level Leadership Center will also be utilized this year with staff to further reflect on our current perspective around our school culture is outlined below:

1. Split staff into groups of six. Provide print out of data from the survey.
2. Group ranks the categories from high to low on chart paper include the median score.
3. Discuss whether they feel the scores are accurate representations of current school culture.
4. Review 35 items and list five highest and lowest rated.

5. Discuss whether these are accurate and if the categories of some represented more than others.
6. List each group's four to five most pressing concerns around school culture and practical strategies that might address them.
7. Share each group's findings and how to move forward. (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015, p. 88-89)

The following chart is a visualization of the To-Be and what strategies look like in a concrete action plan.

Area	Strategy	Action Plan	Implemented By
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All committees focus on one "greater" goal Embrace growth mindset/Team Collaboration Distributed Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff development of goal and embed in all areas – SIP and inquiry cycle alignment Building Leadership model this in all aspects & Grade Level PLCs utilize Levels of Collaboration Rubric Committees and PLCs are led or co- led by teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff & Administration Staff and Administration Building Leadership Staff & Administration
Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributed Leadership Problem Solving Shared Decision Making & Transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually model and provide PD around this leadership style Teams of teachers and building members do problem-solving for building level issues/Utilize protocols for problem-solving and data analysis Building Leaders are transparent as possible and provide teacher input/Culture data analysis and review with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration and Building Level Coach Staff Administration & Staff
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared Norms Collaborative Planning Time Teacher Leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a shared set of norms & values practiced in all areas Time set aside daily for all teachers to have collaborative opportunities Work with TeachPlus to identify and train grade level teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration & Staff Administration Administration & TeachPlus

Figure 2. Visualization of the To-Be.

Conclusion

As we move forward both as a school and district, it is important to know where we have come from and where we want to be. The direction of building shared leadership must be intentional and needs to be mapped out over a few years to ensure it becomes commonplace. Community SD is on a course that is “going slow to go fast.”

CHAPTER SEVEN

Implications and Policy Recommendations

Throughout this research study, I have focused on the “heart” of developing collaborative school cultures residing in the trust in leadership. However, for that to translate across the culture of the building, that trust must be distributed. Others within the building must take on the opportunity to be extensions of that leadership. PLCs are one of the greatest ways to leverage collaborative, distributed leadership. Leaders alone are limited, despite how dynamic they may be in their abilities. To ensure that teachers and teacher leaders can produce this support for a collaborative learning culture, policies need to be put in place both to protect the teachers’ time and also allow building and district leadership the ability to ensure the appropriate work is taking place, along with a sufficient time allotment.

Two years ago, Community SD took a hard look at their contract to determine if the amount of time provided to teachers was sufficient if the institution of PLCs across the district was put into place. Although all teachers had a minimum of 150 minutes of plan time in their day, with many classroom and content teachers having an upwards of 270, one thing became very apparent—the planning time was not collectively built into the schedule. This was surely going to be a common denominator that would influence the effectiveness of PLCs being instituted. This changed the language of the contract to reflect what is outlined below:

PLANNING/LUNCH/RECESS

1. The District and the BEA both value and recognize the importance of allotting reasonable time for teachers to engage in individual and group planning for the delivery of quality instruction. Teachers shall utilize plan time to work on professional responsibilities to serve the needs of students which may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Conferencing with parents
 - b. Grade level/department collaboration
 - c. Student Problem-Solving
 - d. Lesson preparation
2. At the start of each school year, teacher teams, along with building administrators, will meet to create a mutually-agreed upon schedule for the purpose of collaboration. Any changes that may occur during the year must also be mutually agreed upon.
3. The following minimums shall not be considered a limitation on the availability of additional planning time within the school day. All planning minutes shall occur within the instructional day.
 - a. All Primary and Intermediate teachers will be provided with an equal number of planning minutes with a minimum of 270 planning minutes in a typical week.
 - b. All Middle School Teachers will be provided with an equal number of planning minutes with a minimum of seven planning periods in a typical week.

Figure 3. Contract.

This policy has developed a strong basis for the implementation of grade-level PLCs. However, the language around “teacher teams, along with building administrators, will create a mutually-agreed-upon schedule” has opened up some inconsistencies across the district.

Policy Statement

A proposal for more concrete expectations regarding PLCs is that “teacher teams will meet for a minimum of one 50-minute block per week for PLCs in which all grade level individuals are expected to participate.” Although DuFour stated in his work that a minimum of 90 minutes per week should be utilized for a PLC (Dufour & Fullan, 2013), this would allow for a foundation of time that can expect all teacher teams. The other PLC time required could be built-in across multiple days with an appropriate schedule built.

Another important factor to consider is the schedules created to ensure teams' ability to meet for both their designated 50 minutes and for additional time in which they may need to collaborate. The current language in the contract is rather vague: “teacher teams, along with building administrators, will create a mutually-agreed-upon schedule.” If each building is allowed to develop their schedules that could potentially not mirror one another, this creates unintended perceptions around what could be considered equitable. Instituting language instead that includes, “this schedule must consist of a minimum of 50 minutes each school day for teachers to host their PLC or be provided common planning time” would eliminate the buildings' ability to vary in their delivery.

One critical factor that is completely missing from the current policy writing is that of professional development. PLCs are not just about creating a common time for grade-level teams to meet, but also must be focused, have goal development, data analysis, and cycle reviews. This requires training and direction. Included in the policy should be language that outlines, “additional professional development that is in alignment with the school or grade level goals can be instituted during this common planning time at maximum three times per trimester.” This part of the policy protects this time from being used alternatively too frequently and allows the

district or building leadership to implement ongoing professional development during the school day.

Analysis of Needs

In *Visible Learning* (2009), John Hattie found some factors that influence learning, including connections between students and educators, the design tasks and feedback, and a climate where educators believe that their efforts have impact. These factors largely overcome many obstacles that are often beyond locus of control of the school, such as student socioeconomic status and home environment. (Birk & Larson, 2019)

This is the basis of why PLCs are an effective foundation for creating a powerful learning environment for all students. They break down the silos of teaching in isolation, allow for group learning and innovation, and when effectively functioning, should ultimately, make a positive impact on student learning.

Educational Analysis

One of the greatest challenges in an educational setting is developing a shared vision for teaching and learning. This can be both at a district and school level and can sometimes even be as micro as a grade level. When all systems are operating completely differently, there is no shared purpose, no way of collecting data to determine what learning is most effective, and creates an every-man-for-himself mentality, totally deteriorating that of the distributed leadership model founded in trust often referenced throughout this research. PLCs are truly the next level in the development of shared leadership as it allows for the vision to be carried out collectively, not by a sole individual.

When districts say they want to improve student performance, it is a combination of dedicated time, shared leadership, and trust. In isolation, any of the three of these imperative

things will only take a school so far in improving. However, together, they are a combination that can help students and teachers reach an entirely different level of success.

Economic Analysis

If this policy change were to incorporate the additional changes outlined above, there could potentially be no, to minimal, impact on the financial influences it could have. Increasing the time within the already allotted school minutes would not require an increase in contractual time; it would simply require a reworking of current scheduling within the buildings. The only portion of this that could come with a cost would be professional development. If the district were to choose to do their professional development as an administrative team and instructional coaches and then collectively embed it into ongoing, embedded professional development with the staff during the outlined time for it each trimester, along with the inclusion of it at their district-wide Institute Days, the cost association would be nothing more than the book study or research used. However, another option that exists is to partner up with an external organization to come in and do professional development and coaching. The contracts for those resources can vary greatly.

Social Analysis

Elmore (2002) asserted that “the practice of improvement is largely about moving whole organizations—teachers, administrators, and schools—development in the service of student learning” (p.15). As Community SD has made a concerted effort to build shared leadership both at a district and within buildings, there has never been a better time. The district staff has been developing trusting relationships with their administrators that have been more focused on how “together we are better” rather than a top-down, hierarchical approach to leading. Although this transition takes time, requires deeper relationships to be built, and levels of vulnerability unlike

before, with policies that favor assisting teachers and teacher leaders to be a part of the development within schools, it outlines a clear effort to create a much more collaborative system.

The portion of the policy change that focuses on the buildings creating schedules that are mirrors of one another also helps support that this is a unified vision and approach to the development of collaborative, distributed leadership and an effective implementation of PLCs. Without it, if a building chooses to operate more independently, it could create unintentional perceptions around the value of teacher planning time.

Political Analysis

The messaging of this policy change shows that there is value in the time that teachers have time to plan and collaborate. It also shows that there is a respect for some professional development and support in the work that teachers are going to be expected to do. The amount of time allotted for teachers daily should allow them to feel supported and respected for the amount of work required in the planning part of the job before effective teaching can occur. In many cases, teachers desire to be a part of the process and do not want to be told what they must do in their classrooms. PLCs allow for a blend of autonomy and collaboration.

There is a level of vulnerability that is required to be able to plan together with a team. For years in education, we operated in isolation, and our measures of performance still support this. This is why it is imperative that the leadership at both and building and district level support shared leadership. If that is not effectively in place, PLCs could have all the time and support globally, yet still not flourish. In addition, there is a shift in how teachers' planning time will be used. It no longer will be entirely up to their discretion. They will now be expected to share that time at a minimum of 50 minutes per week, where they formerly were allowed to dictate how they used their time. This could potentially create some pushback.

The changes in this policy might create a tad bit of challenge if they were to be implemented among the first-year change in policy to include PLCs. However, in Community's case, by the time this policy is up for negotiations again, the district will already be in its third year of implementation of PLCs. At this point, the hope will be that there is enough of a foundation in the need and support of PLCs by both teachers and building leaders that this would not cause strife between the negotiating parties. With logical rationale in how it protects both the time for teachers and allows for the further development of their practice, there should be a level-headed response. There should always be a balance in what is being presented—something that favors teacher needs and supports that of what leadership can expect.

Moral and Ethical Analysis

In times of the past, every effort was made to make things black and white—just like the zero-tolerance policy instituted in schools across the nation for years. We have learned from that that it is truly not an effective way to create equitable school systems. Putting some more language in place to outline amounts of time, an appropriation of PD, and creating consistency in schedules should outline the need to support teachers in implementing effective PLCs that are supported both within the district and their schools. In addition to protecting their time for common planning, it also allows for professional development to take place but not in excess. If that varied from one building to the next, that could create some moral issues for the leadership. In particular, what message does it send when one building “requires” a great deal more of professional learning than another?

This policy isn't just about staff and leaders: at the center of it are students. It is creating an environment grounded in developing teachers and growing them in their capacity so that they can be better for their students. The focus of PLCs is rooted in instructional capacity and student

data; oddly enough, there never seems to be enough time to invest in during the busy school days. This policy ensures that it is no longer a hurdle.

Implications for Staff and Community Relationships

Great leaders are not those who lead alone or from the front; they lead alongside. Policies such as this outline that this is essential by making it so sacred that it is included in the contract, solidifying that it is a collective effort by both formal leadership and teachers alike.

Professional learning community principles will undoubtedly remain timeless and critical for school improvement. Yet, some school leaders continuously struggle to bring PLC principles to life because they have trouble transitioning from theory to practice. To avoid having PLC principles become just another improvement initiative, leadership teams must understand that it takes much more than passion and enthusiasm from leaders or a few staff members to truly implement a new idea or change long-held beliefs. It requires leadership teams to be crystal clear about their schoolwide game plan for success, using all available staff as leaders. (Garcia et al., 2015)

Conclusion

Fitzpatrick (2020) wrote, “Even when people are falling a little short, you can coach them up and help them succeed. In short, you want a culture of leaders on your team” (p. 15). Trusting leaders see their teachers' needs collectively and advocate for policy adoptions that can make them better, support their growth, and ultimately further support student learning. Although there may be work required to influence the importance of these initiatives and policies, a culture already rooted in trust, vulnerability, and support should see the value quickly and stand behind the importance of these shifts. It's time for Community to continue to develop that culture of leaders.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

Here we are, coming full circle back to where this work originated—trust and its impact on creating a collaborative culture. Four main areas originally emerged when embarking on this study: leadership styles, trust and examining the different types, collective efficacy and collaboration, and shared norms and values. Out of the leadership styles reflected on, they are deeply rooted in trust and shared empowerment. They focused on emotional intelligence and relationships. When examining trust, we saw this as the center of many successful organizations both within and outside the educational setting. We recognized a large part of this was consistency in one's behavior coupled with vulnerability. Collective efficacy and collaboration seem to be birthed out of the combination of an empowering leader who instilled trust in the workplace. This largely is developed based on a collection of perceptions around their level of impact on the organization. When norms and values reflect that of an organization in which individuals feel a part of, they breathe life into the work.

To truly embrace a depth of understanding around these four areas, this research answered the following questions:

1. To what extent, and how, does trust in building leadership influence the development of a collaborative culture?
2. What elements develop trust in building leadership?
3. What type of leadership style(s) do building leaders need to possess in a strong collaborative culture?
4. What qualities/characteristics must building leaders possess to develop a culture of collaboration?

5. How does trust in leadership transpire into strengthening teacher efficacy and development of PLC's?

This research truly allowed for a deep study around trust with the building leader, among stakeholders, and the level of collaboration instituted within PLCs. As we continue to strive for equitable, high-level educational experiences for each of our students, we discovered that it doesn't start with tools programs, but with us—as educational leaders, both in formal and informal roles in education.

Discussion

Unintentionally, this research and data collection began at the same time as the implementation of our PLCs. This was a huge benefit because as we were living out this work, I utilized data and review cycles that shaped the next steps as we have continued to walk through this implementation. It has substantiated the foundation we have built and given me clear direction on where we need to go based on the data collection findings.

I attended a Dr. Anthony Muhammed conference the summer in which I stepped into building administrator. I had the opportunity to ask the following question, “Is it possible to grow both cultural and technical components together, as they are both critical to student success?” At that time, I knew what I wanted but wasn't sure of the path on which to get there. Through my experience, I realized that they could both grow simultaneously, but the key is the order in which you choose to grow them. I have been a part of multiple school systems now, focusing on the most critical aspect of education and student success. Still, they solely think about the technical aspects that are required for academic achievement. This work proved to me that when you invest in cultural aspects of education, the technical components inadvertently are

a part of the work. As a culture of trust and collaboration blooms grows, student growth comes hand in hand. However, reverse this order, and success is limited.

Community SD is on the right path in achieving this success for our students with the commitment to PLCs and development around a contract that supports teacher collaboration. However, as we evolve in our understanding of what collaboration comprises, we will need to evolve our policy to encompass greater opportunities for embedded professional development and collaboration consistently, beyond one weekly PLC.

Leadership Lessons

This research breathed new life in me and my work as a building leader with my leadership colleagues and my staff members. It substantiated theories in which I have believed in for a large part of my educational career. Still, now I can stand behind this work as I am watching it become real because we are truly experiencing it. The greatest value in this work is the hard data to prove that trust is at the heart of everything we do, and once it is established, so much can flourish because of it.

The greatest challenge in this work has been that it requires a personal journey before you can even begin to approach it as a leader with others. It requires a deep commitment to reflection, evaluation, and evolution of your thinking. Herein lies the greatest challenge. To see system success, you must be ready to invest in this personal journey.

The most sobering and difficult part of this work has been around vulnerability. Many people believe vulnerability was weakness. To overcome that, thinking requires a constant reflection on core values. This trusting leadership means we need to lead with vulnerability. Leaders need to be ok with not having all the answers: to expose weaknesses and overcome them. Leaders need to be real, raw and express emotion. These are all initially hard to embrace; it

takes unlearning of the traditional perception of leadership. Now, I couldn't imagine leading any other way—but once again, this is because it has been an evolution of who I am as an individual, not just as a leader.

Conclusion

“Leadership is not about titles or the corner office. It’s about the willingness to step up, put yourself out there, and lean into courage. The world is desperate for braver leaders” (Brown, 2018, p. 270). This work allowed me to expose the heart of leadership and unlock the potential for our students’ success. However, this journey has only begun for me, for WJ, and for Community SD—we now must commit to what it takes to ensure educational change. We have a long road ahead, but I accept the role of being the braver leader. If there is anything I do know, I will “choose courage over comfort. Choose whole hearts over armor. And choose the great adventure of being brave and afraid. At the exact same time.” I hope to be a part of an educational revolution, and I will continue to learn and grow in whatever capacity I can to serve it.

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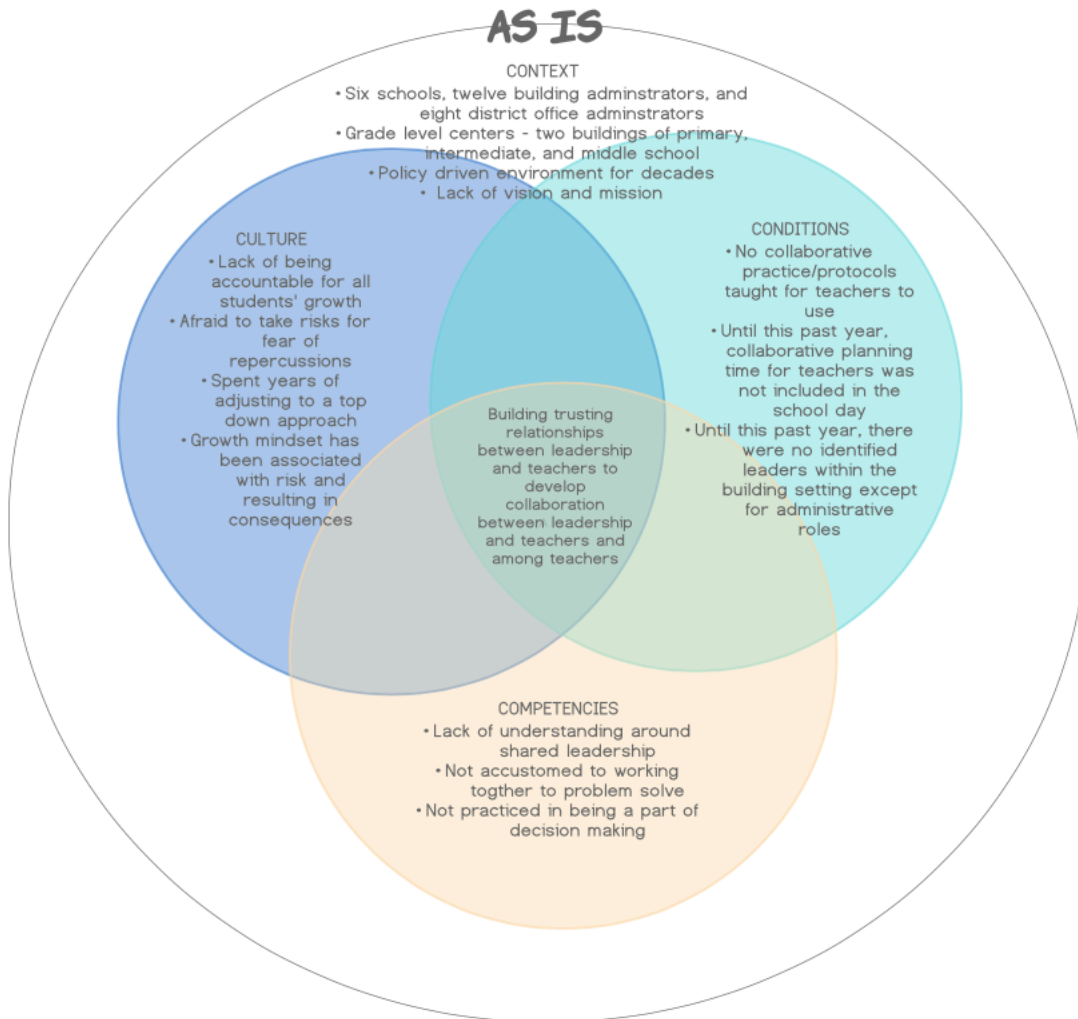
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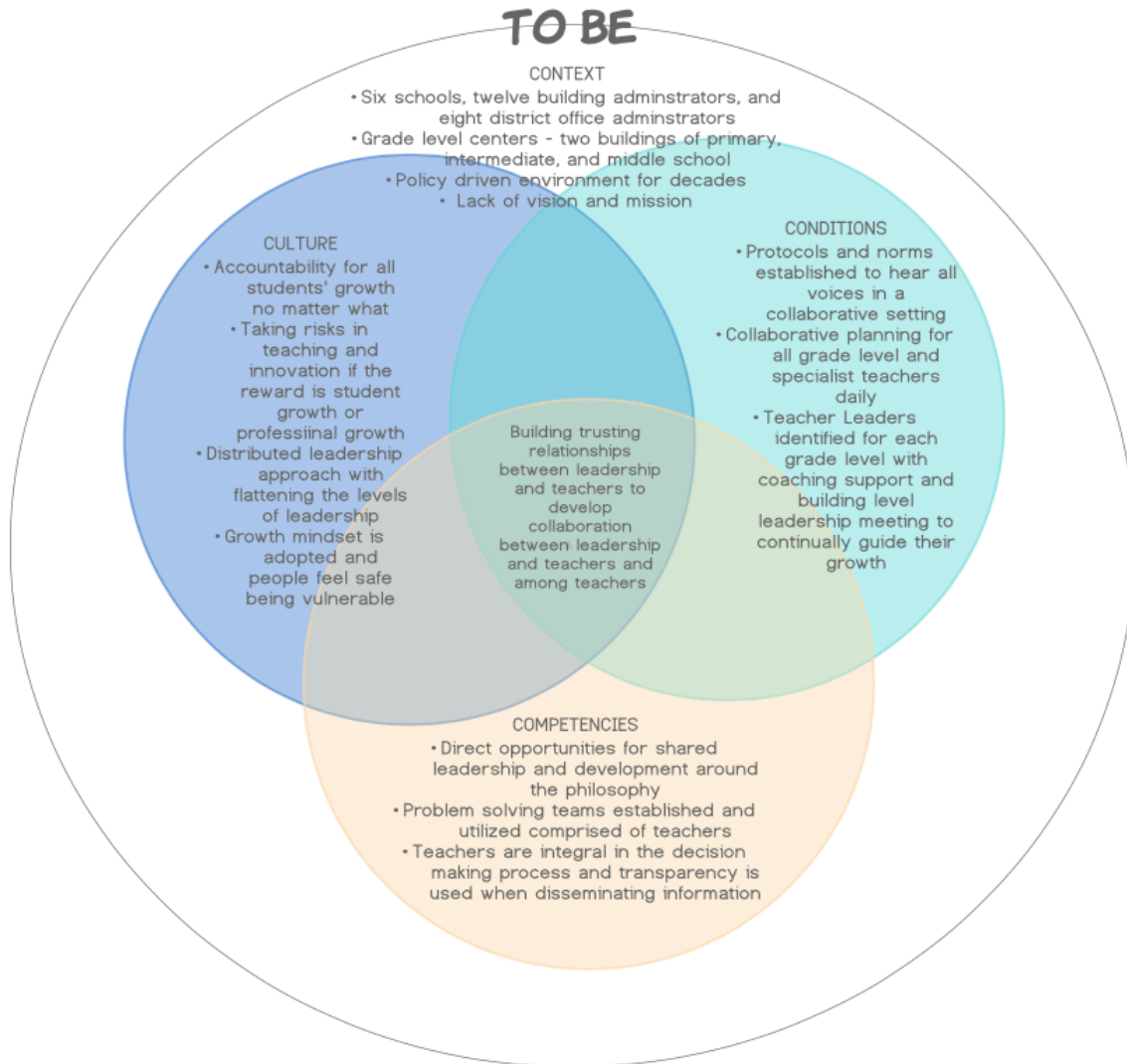
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APPENDIX A: AS-IS



APPENDIX B: TO-BE



APPENDIX C: TEACH PLUS SURVEY 1



To:

From:

Subject: EOY Surveys: Teacher Leaders, Teachers on Teams, Administration

Date: August 9, 2019

This memo summarizes the responses to the End of Year Survey of Teacher Leaders, Teachers on Teams, and Administrators from the six schools in the Teacher Leadership Initiative. See Appendix A for mean responses to all items.

Main Findings

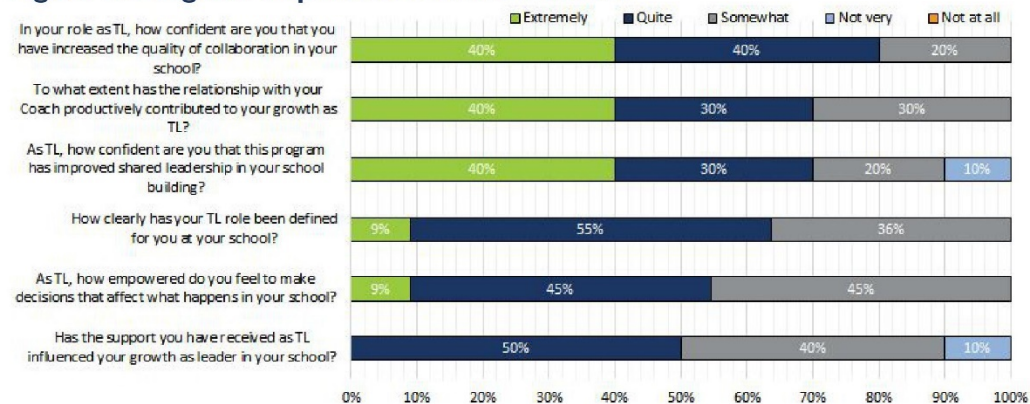
- Teacher Leaders, Teachers on Teams, and Administrators identify positively overall with the program, with a belief that their work is bringing about change in their schools.
- Teacher Leaders feel there is room for improvement in the level of support they receive from administration.
- Teacher Leaders report a strong belief that their Coach has impacted their leadership growth this year.

Teacher Leaders

Of the 18 Teacher Leaders in the cohort, 11 completed End of Year Survey, for a response rate of 61%. These TL respondents represent all of the six schools in the program and they have an average of 12.7 years of full-time teaching experience.

When we asked TLs about the impact this program has had on a number of aspects of leadership in their school, most responded at least somewhat favorably on all items. There was strong agreement that TLs have increased the quality of collaboration in their schools (n=8, 80% quite or extremely positive). However, a group of respondents surveyed are still only somewhat clear on their TL role at the end of the program year (n= 4, 36%) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Program Impact on Teacher Leaders

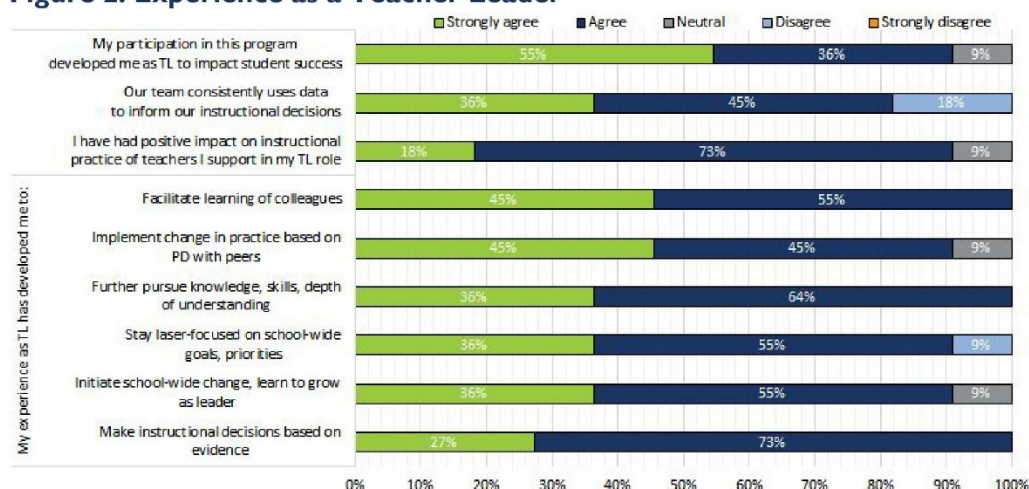


www.teachplus.org



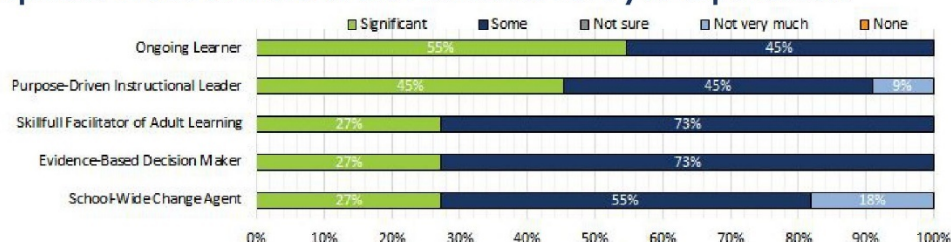
Nearly all Teacher Leaders (91%) ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they have positively impacted the instructional practice of teachers on their teams; only one TL marked neutral. While the responses to this item remain positive overall, one TL disagrees that this experience as a has developed them *to stay laser-focused on school-wide priorities and goals* (9% disagree), and two TLs disagree that *their team consistently uses data to inform our instructional decisions* (18% disagree) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Experience as a Teacher Leader



In terms of development, Teacher Leaders reported the most significant personal development in becoming an Ongoing Learner, a Purpose-Driven Instructional Leaders, and a Skillful Facilitator of Adult Learning. Though still positive overall (82%), Teacher Leaders reported the least amount of development in becoming a School-Wide Change Agent (18% reporting not very much development) (see Figure 3).

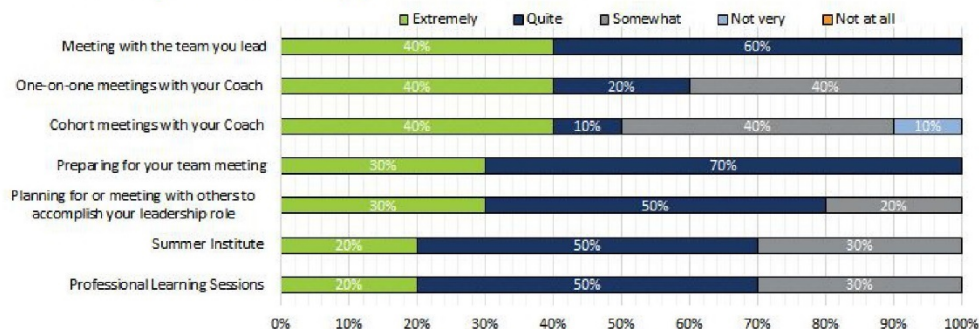
Figure 3: Given your learning at this point in the Program, how much development in one or more of the Attributes have you experienced?



More specifically, Teacher Leaders in this program cite *meeting with the team they lead* and *preparing for team meeting* (100% quite or extremely effective) as the activities most effective in helping them

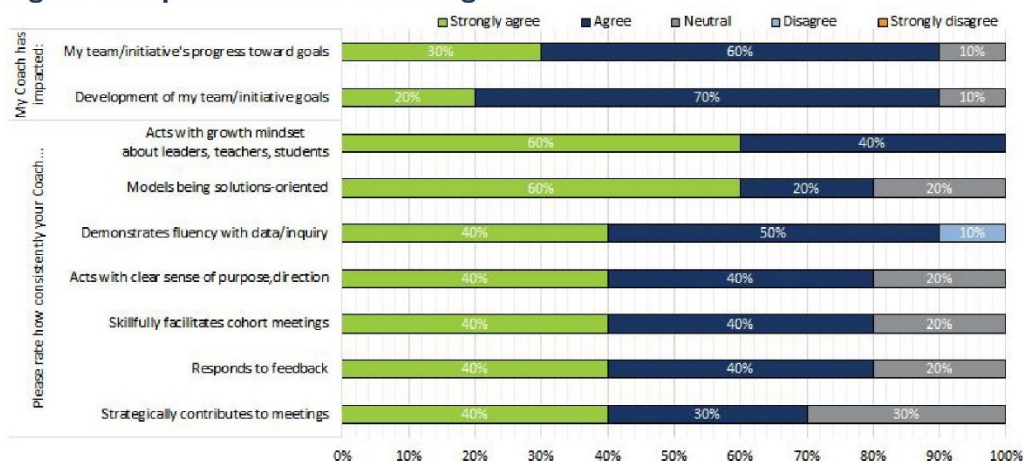
grow as a Teacher Leader. Only *cohort meetings with their Coach* was reported to be not very effective by one TL (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: How effective have the following activities been in helping you grow as a TL and improve teaching practices across the school?



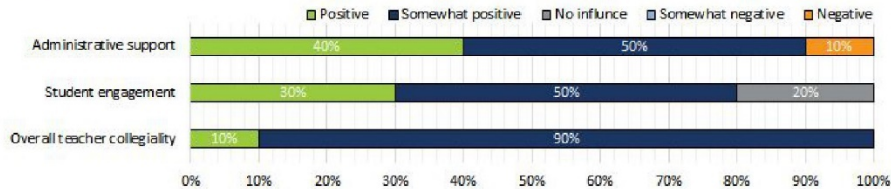
Coaching was rated particularly high, with a single negative response across all items (though there were some neutral marks for most). Coaches received the highest ratings for the following areas: *acts with a growth mindset about leaders, teachers, and students* (100% agree or strongly agree), and *demonstrates fluency with data/inquiry* (90% agree or strongly agree). Nearly all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their coach has impacted development of (90%) and progress towards team goals (90%) (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Experience with Coaching



Teacher Leaders agreed that this program has had a positive influence on the culture of their school: a majority report a 'positive' or 'somewhat positive' influence on overall **teacher collegiality** (100%), **administrative support** (90%), and **student engagement** (80%) (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: What kind of influence has this program had on the following aspects of your school's culture?



There were two questions in the survey about Teacher Leaders' near-future career plans, and whether their participation in the program has had any influence on them. No responding TLs report plans to leave the teaching profession in the next five years (see Figure 7). When asked how important their role as a Teacher Leader has been in their decision to continue their career in the classroom, 80% responded it has been 'important' or 'somewhat important' (see Figure 8).

Figure 7: Within the next five years, how likely is it that you will leave the teaching profession to go into some different occupation?

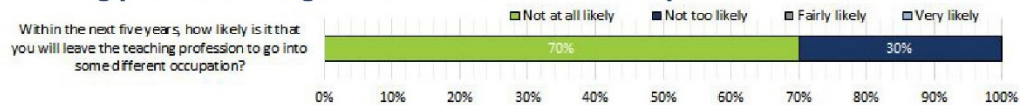
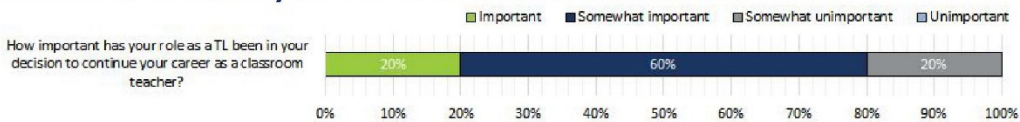


Figure 8: How important has your role as a Teacher Leader been in your decision to continue your career as a classroom teacher?



Responses to Open-Ended Questions: Teacher Leaders

We also included ten open-ended questions in the survey to assess TL feedback and concerns.

What additional support do you need to implement the items above?

Ten of the 11 (91%) responding TLs commented on this item, with a variety of support areas:

- More time with coach (n=5)
- Clear expectations from district (n=1)
- More time with team (n=2)
- Data support (n=1)
- Inquiry cycle support (n=1)

To what extent do you feel empowered as a Teacher Leader to make decisions that affect what happens in your school?

Ten of the 11 (91%) responding TLs commented on this item:

- Feeling supported by admin (n=3)
- Learning and building leadership (n=2)
- Built strong team (n=2)
- Increasing teacher buy-in (n=1)



- Providing resources for team (n=1)
- Admin support lacking (n=1)

What additional support do you need to feel empowered as a Teacher Leader to make decisions that affect what happens in your school?

Ten of the 11 (91%) responding TLs commented on this item:

- Additional admin support (n=7)
- Release time for teachers (n=1)
- Continued coach support (n=2)

How effective have the following activities been in helping you grow as a Teacher Leader and improve teaching practices across the school?

Ten of the 11 (91%) responding TLs commented on this item:

- Collaboration with other teachers (n=3)
- Need more time as cohort with coach (n=1)
- Working with coach (n=3)
- Did not feel prepared by summer session (n=1)
- Room for improvement in cohort meetings (n=2)

To what extent has the relationship with your Coach productively contributed to your growth as a Teacher Leader?

Ten TLs commented on this item. Nine (82%) offered praise for the Coach; the other desires more time working with Jen to plan PLCs.

My Coach has had an impact on the development of my team or initiative goals.

Ten of the 11 responding TLs (91%) commented on this item, eight of them offering praise for the Coach and the support she provides, one noting that their goal was developed based on external factors, and the other noting room for improvement in coaching.

My Coach has had an impact on my team or initiative's progress toward our goals.

Ten of the 11 responding TLs (91%) commented on this item, all offering praise for the coaching they have received.

What additional support do you need from your Coach?

Twelve of the 13 responding TLs (92%) commented on this item:

- Adult facilitation support (n=4)
- More structured coaching time (n=1)
- Continue support provided (n=2)
- Inquiry cycle support (n=1)
- More time with coach (n=2)

In your role as a Teacher Leader, how confident are you that you have increased the quality of collaboration in your school?

Nine of the 11 responding TLs (82%) commented on this item, all reporting an increase in teacher collaboration in their schools.

Please provide any additional comments or thoughts.

Eight of the 11 responding TLs (73%) commented on this item, all with praise for the program and coach.

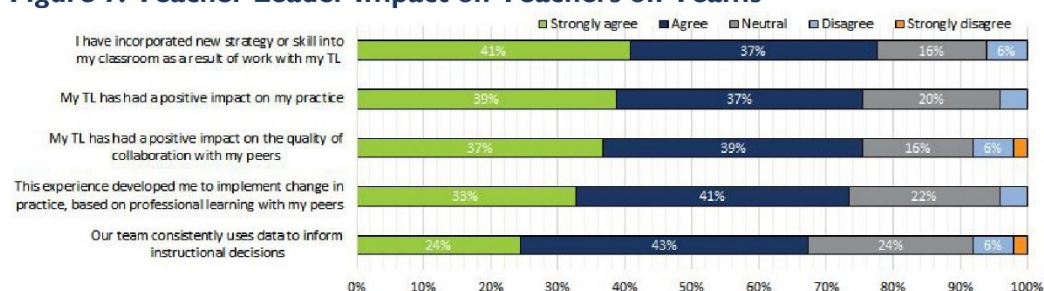


Teachers on Teams

Of the 150 Teachers on Teams in the cohort, 49 completed the End of Year Survey, for a response rate of 33%. These teachers represent all six schools in the program, and have an average of 14.4 years of full-time teaching experience.

We asked these teachers about different types of impact their TLs and this program made this year. At least 67% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with all items, with slightly less agreement that *the team consistently uses data to inform instructional decisions* (33% neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree) (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Teacher Leader Impact on Teachers on Teams



Responses to Open-Ended Questions: Teachers on Teams

We also included two open-ended questions throughout the survey to assess teacher on teams' takeaways, feedback, and concerns.

What additional support do you need to implement the items above?

Twenty-five teachers (51%) commented on this item:

- Praise for TL, coach (n=5)
- Do not have TL or meet regularly (n=3)
- More time (n=2)
- Clearer plans, with teacher input (n=2)
- Took time for team members to adjust (n=2)
- Stronger admin support (n=1)

Please provide any additional comments or thoughts on the impact of Teach Plus in your building.

Fifteen of the responding teachers (31%) commented on this item:

- Praise for TL, coach, program (n=5)
- Not inclusive of specials teachers (n=3)
- Need more time (n=2)
- Need clear plans with, teacher input (n=2)
- Took time for team members to adjust (n=2)
- Need more admin support (n=1)



Administrators

Of the 16 administrators in the cohort schools, six completed End of Year Survey, (response rate of 38%) representing four of the six schools in the program (17% Northlake, 17% Sunnyside, 33% Riley, 33% Whittier).

Administrators feel comfortable overall with creating the conditions for successful PLCs on their campus, though one administrator marked 'uncomfortable' for *observing PLCs weekly* (see Figure 10). 100% of surveyed administrators agree or strongly agree that Teacher-led PLCs are beneficial to changing teacher practice on campus, and that they are sufficiently supported by Teach Plus to implement these PLCs with their school's teacher leaders. However, there is less agreement around whether Teach Plus has *developed them to support TLs as they lead school-based PLCs* (67% agree) (see Figure 11).

Figure 10: How comfortable are you creating the conditions for successful PLCs on your campus in the following areas:

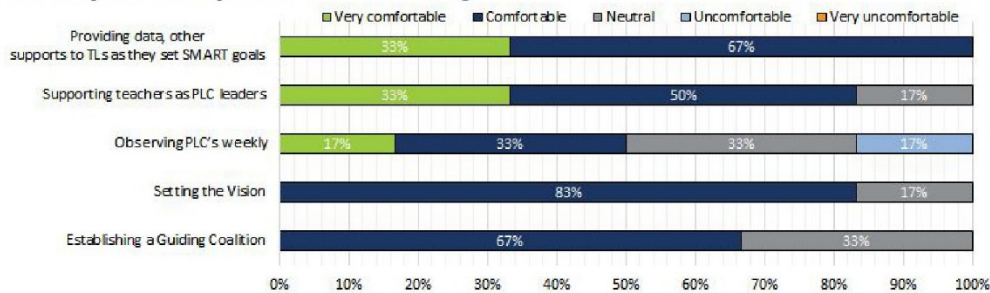
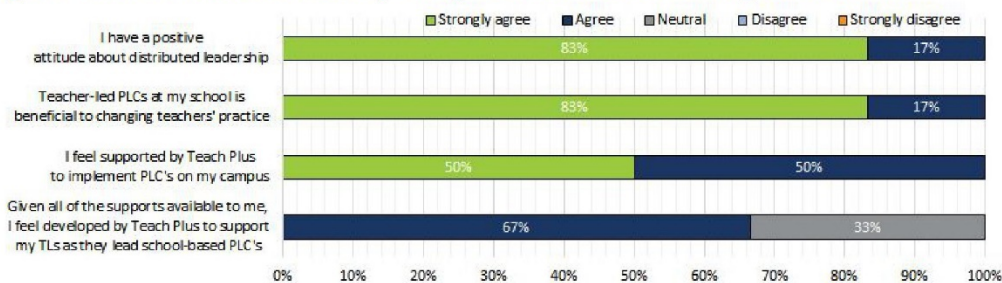


Figure 11: To what extent do you agree with the following statements:



Figures 12 through 14 summarize the administrators' evaluations of their own school's leadership capacity. A majority of respondents report that their school is making good progress or has the condition in each area well-established (see Figure 12). The areas of Broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership (mean 3.6 out of 5.0), Roles and actions reflect broad involvement, collaboration, and collective responsibility (mean 3.3), and Inquiry-based use of information to inform decisions and practice (mean 3.3) were rated highest by administrators, while areas Shared vision results in program coherence (mean 3.0) and Reflective practice consistently leads to innovation (mean 3.1) were less positively marked.

Figure 12: In our school, we:

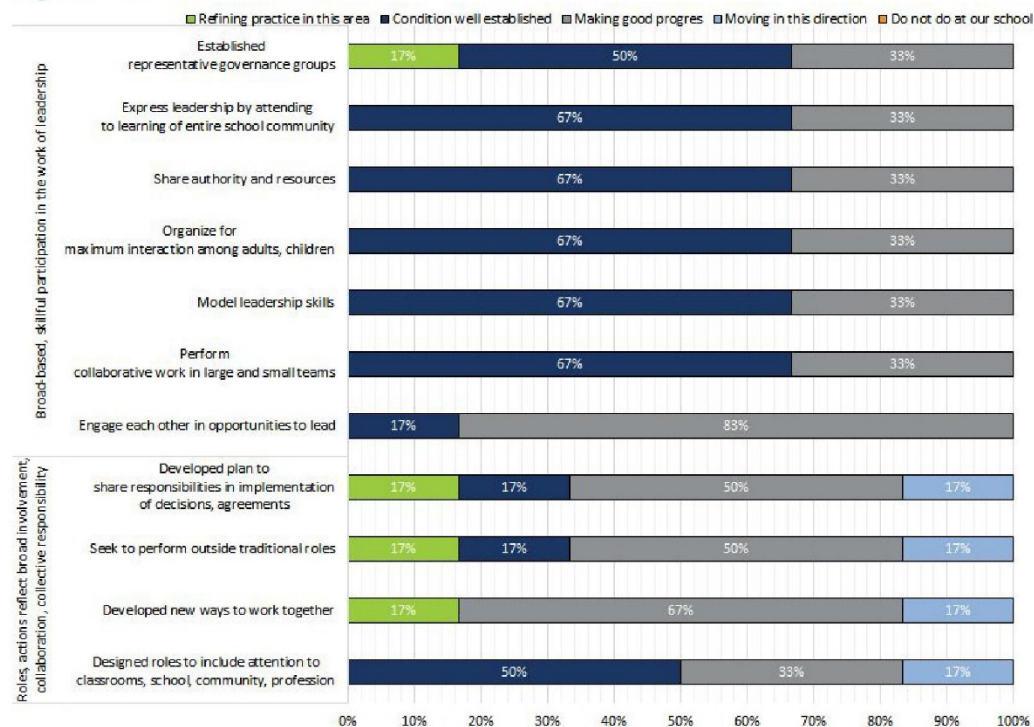


Figure 13: In our school, we:

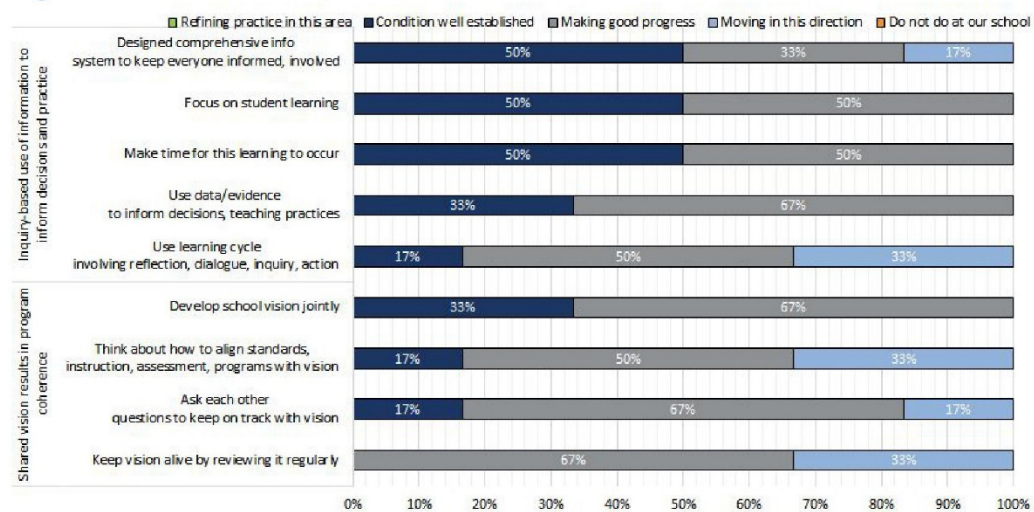
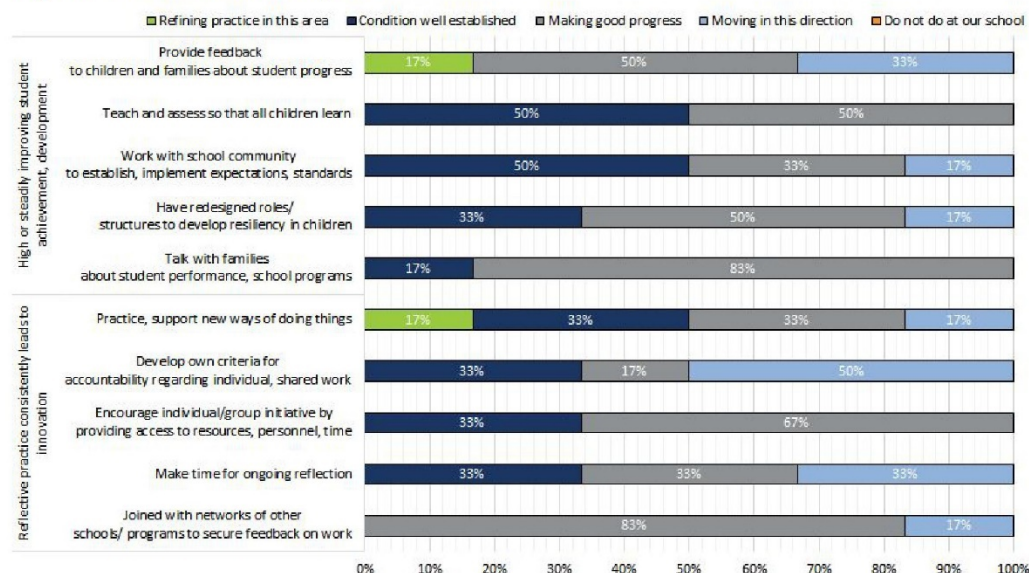


Figure 14: In our school, we:



Responses to Open-Ended Questions: Administrators

We also included an open-ended question to assess administrator support needs.

What additional support do you need to implement the items above?

All six responding administrators commented on this item, four (66%) noting the need for *more time spent with PLCs*, and two (33%) noting the need for *more time and support from Teach Plus*.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Coaches should continue to work with Teacher Leaders and school administration to support Teacher Leaders in becoming school-wide change agents, and to create the conditions for distributive leadership to thrive within schools. In addition, increasing the response rates of surveys will improve the quality of data collected. The NET can assist with strategies to increase survey response rates if interested.



Appendix A: Mean Responses

All means are based on a five-point scale unless indicated otherwise.

Teacher Leaders

SURVEY ITEM		MOY MEAN	EOY MEAN
How clearly has your TL role been defined for you at your school?		3.5	3.7
My experience as a TL has developed me to...	...make instructional decisions based on evidence	3.8	4.3
	...facilitate the learning of my colleagues	4.2	4.5
	...stay laser-focused on school-wide goals and priorities	3.8	4.2
	...further pursue knowledge, skills, and depth of understanding	3.8	4.4
	...initiate school-wide change and learn to grow as a leader	3.8	4.3
	...implement change in practice based on professional learning with peers	3.7	4.4
Given your learning at this point in the Program, how much development in the following attributes have you experienced?	Evidence-Based Decision Maker	3.8	4.3
	Skillful Facilitator of Adult Learning	4.2	4.3
	Purpose-Driven Instructional Leader	4.2	4.3
	Ongoing Learner	4.4	4.5
	School-Wide Change Agent	3.7	3.9
How strongly do you agree with the following statements?	Our team consistently uses data to inform our instructional decisions	3.6	4.0
	My participation in this program developed me as a TL so that I can impact student success	4.2	4.5
	I have had a positive impact on the instructional practice of the teachers I am supporting in my TL role	3.8	4.1
To what extent do you feel empowered as a TL to make decisions that effect what happens in your school?		3.5	3.6
How effective have the following activities been in helping you grow as a TL and improve teaching practices across the school?	Meeting with the team you lead	4.5	4.4
	Preparing for your team meeting	4.3	4.3
	Planning for or meeting with others to accomplish your leadership role	4.4	4.1
	One-on-one meetings with your Coach	3.9	4.0
	Cohort meetings with your Coach	3.8	3.8
	Professional Learning Sessions	4.0	3.9
	Summer Institute	3.7	3.9
In what ways has the support you have received as a TL influenced your growth as a leader in your school?		3.8	3.4
Please rate how consistently your Coach...	...acts with a clear sense of purpose and direction	4.0	4.2
	...demonstrates fluency with data/inquiry	3.9	4.2
	...skillfully facilitates cohort meetings	3.8	4.2
	...strategically contributes to meetings	4.1	4.1
	...responds to feedback	4.0	4.2
	...models being solutions-oriented	4.2	4.4
	...acts with a growth mindset about leaders, teachers, and students	4.3	4.6
To what extent has the relationship with your Coach productively contributed to your growth as a TL?		4.1	4.1
My Coach has had an impact on the development of my team or initiative goals.		4.2	4.1

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My Coach has had an impact on my team or initiative's progress toward our goals.		4.1	4.2
What kind of influence has this program had on the following aspects of your school's culture?	Administrative support	4.5	4.1
	Overall teacher collegiality	4.1	4.1
	Student engagement	4.0	4.1
As a TL, how confident are you that this program has improved shared leadership in your school building?		3.5	4.0
In your role as a TL, how confident are you that you have increased the quality of collaboration in your school?		4.0	4.2
Within the next five years, how likely is it that you will leave the teaching profession to go into some different occupation? <i>(four-point scale)</i>		1.5	1.3
How important has your role as a TL been in your decision to continue your career as a classroom teacher? <i>(four-point scale)</i>		2.6	3.0

Teachers on Teams

SURVEY ITEM		MOY MEAN	EOY MEAN
How strongly do you agree with the following statements?	Our team consistently uses data to inform our instructional decisions	4.0	3.8
	My Teacher Leader has had a positive impact on my practice	4.0	4.1
	My Teacher Leader has had a positive impact on the quality of collaboration with my peers	4.1	4.0
	I have incorporated a new strategy or skill into my classroom as a result of my work with my Teacher Leader	3.9	4.1
	This experience has developed me to implement change in practice, based on professional learning with my peers	3.8	4.0

Administrators

SURVEY ITEM		MOY MEAN	EOY MEAN
How comfortable are you creating the conditions for successful PLCs on your campus in the following areas	Establishing a Guiding Coalition	3.8	3.7
	Setting the Vision	4.0	3.8
	Providing data and other supports to TLs as they set SMART goals within the PLC	4.1	4.3
	Observing PLCs weekly	3.9	3.5
	Supporting teachers as PLC leaders	4.6	4.2
To what extent do you agree with the following statements:	Teacher-led PLCs at my school is beneficial to changing my teachers' practice	4.6	4.8
	I feel supported by Teach Plus to implement PLC's on my campus	4.3	4.5
	Given all of the supports available to me (Principal PLCs, One-on-Ones), I feel developed by Teach Plus to support my teacher leaders as they lead school-based PLC's	4.1	3.7
	I have a positive attitude about distributed leadership	4.8	4.8
In our school, we: <i>Broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership</i>	Have established representative governance groups	3.3	3.8
	Perform collaborative work in large and small teams	3.3	3.7

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	Model leadership skills	3.7	3.7
	Organize for maximum interaction among adults and children	3.4	3.7
	Share authority and resources	3.8	3.7
	Express our leadership by attending to the learning of the entire school community	3.6	3.7
	Engage each other in opportunities to lead	3.4	3.2
In our school, we: <i>Shared vision results in program coherence</i>	Develop school vision jointly	3.1	3.3
	Ask each other questions that keep us on track with our vision	2.9	3.0
	Think together about how to align our standards, instruction, assessment, and programs with our vision	3.0	2.8
	Keep our vision alive by reviewing it regularly	2.6	2.7
In our school, we: <i>Inquiry-based use of information to inform decisions and practice</i>	Use a learning cycle that involves reflection, dialogue, inquiry, and action	2.9	2.8
	Make time available for this learning to occur (e.g., faculty meetings, ad hoc groups, teams)	3.6	3.5
	Focus on student learning	3.6	3.5
	Use data/evidence to inform our decisions and teaching practices	2.9	3.3
	Have designed a comprehensive information system that keeps everyone informed and involved	2.9	3.3
In our school, we: <i>Roles and actions reflect broad involvement, collaboration, and collective responsibility</i>	Have designed our roles to include attention to our classrooms, school, community, and profession	3.1	3.3
	Seek to perform outside of traditional roles	3.1	3.3
	Have developed new ways to work together	3.2	3.2
	Have developed a plan for sharing responsibilities in the implementation of our decisions and agreements	3.0	3.3
In our school, we: <i>Reflective practice consistently leads to innovation</i>	Make time for ongoing reflection (e.g., journaling, peer coaching, collaborative planning)	2.7	3.0
	Encourage individual and group initiative by providing access to the resources, personnel, and time	3.2	3.3
	Have joined with networks of other schools and programs, both inside and outside the district, to secure feedback on our work	2.1	2.8
	Practice and support new ways of doing things	2.8	3.5
	Develop our own criteria for accountability regarding individual and shared work	2.8	2.8
In our school, we: <i>High or steadily improving student achievement and development</i>	Work with members of the school community to establish and implement expectations and standards	2.9	3.3
	Teach and assess so that all children learn	3.2	3.5
	Provide feedback to children and families about student progress	3.1	3.0
	Talk with families about student performance and school programs	2.9	3.2
	Have redesigned roles and structures to develop resiliency in children (e.g., teacher as coach/advisor/mentor, school-wide guidance programs, community service)	3.0	3.2

APPENDIX D: TEACH PLUS SURVEY 2



To:
From:
Subject: 2019-2020 EOY Surveys: Teacher Leaders, Administration
Date: July 15, 2020

This memo summarizes the responses to the 2019-2020 End of Year Survey of Teacher Leaders and Administrators from the six schools in the Teacher Leadership Initiative. See Appendix A for mean responses to all items. Due to school and program disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, Teachers on Teams were not surveyed about the program. All educators in the district were invited to participate in the Wallace Teacher Leadership survey, the results of which will be summarized in a forthcoming memo.

Main Findings

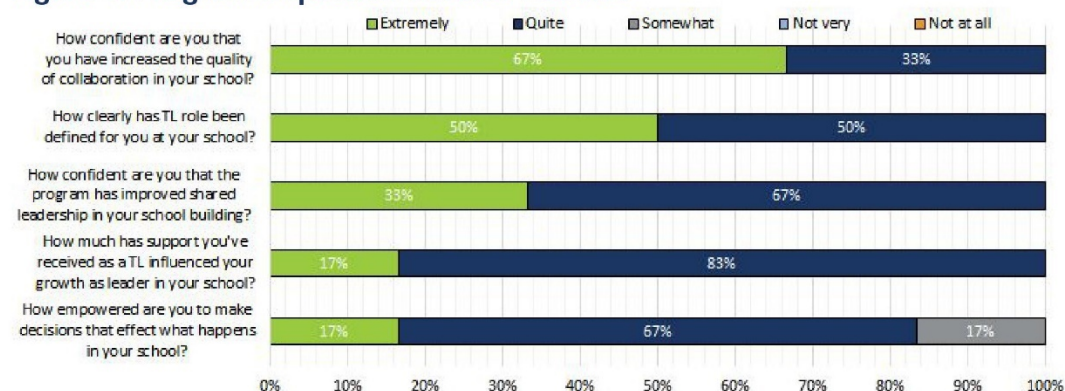
- Teacher Leaders and Administrators identify positively overall with the program, with a belief that their work has brought about change in their schools.
- Teacher Leaders continue to report a strong belief that their Coach has impacted their leadership growth this year.

Teacher Leaders

Of the 18 Teacher Leaders in the cohort, six completed the End of Year Survey, for a response rate of 33%. These TL respondents represent five of the six schools in the program, and they have an average of 13.8 years of full-time teaching experience.

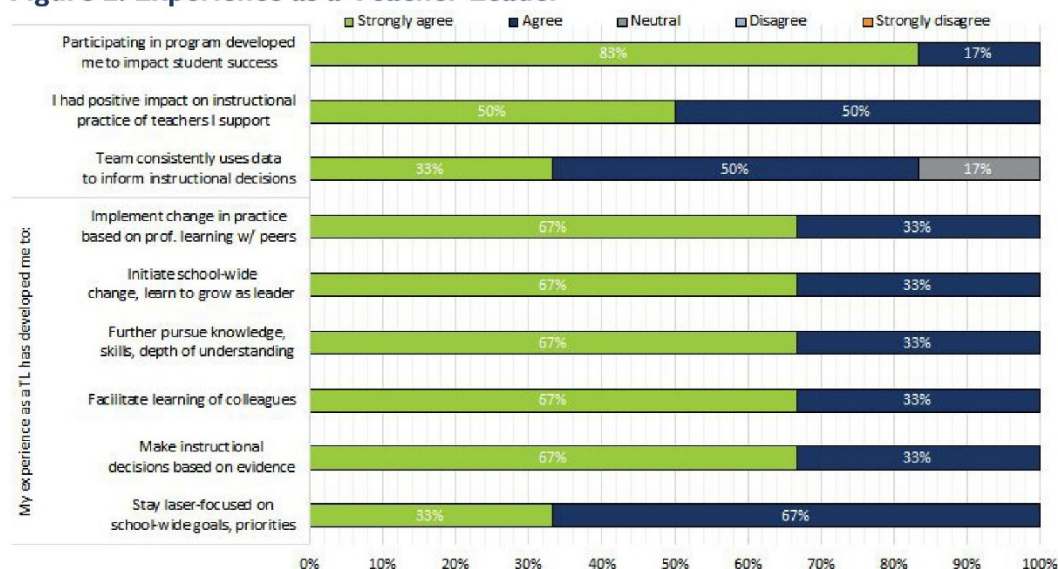
When we asked TLs about the impact this program has had on a number of aspects of leadership in their school, all responded at least somewhat favorably to all items. There was strong agreement that TLs have increased the quality of collaboration in their schools, and that the program has improved shared leadership in their schools, and that the role was clearly defined for them (100% quite or extremely positive). One TL feels only *somewhat empowered* to make decisions that affect what happens in their school; the others feel extremely or quite empowered (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Program Impact on Teacher Leaders



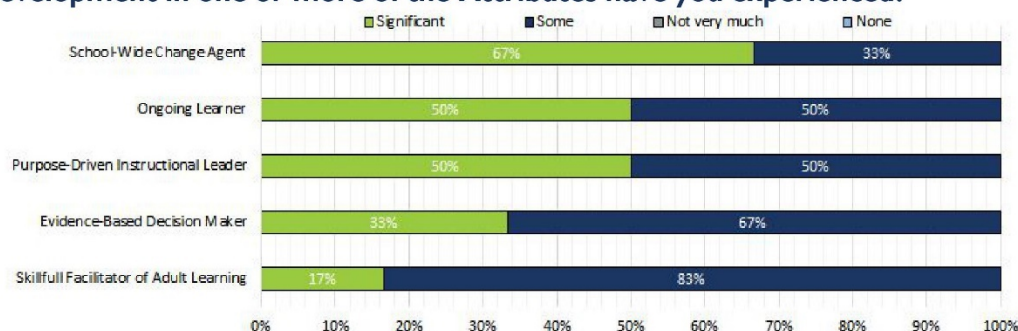
All Teacher Leaders (100%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they have positively impacted the instructional practice of teachers on their teams. While the responses to this item remain positive overall, only one TLs is unsure that *their team consistently uses data to inform our instructional decisions* (17% neutral) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Experience as a Teacher Leader



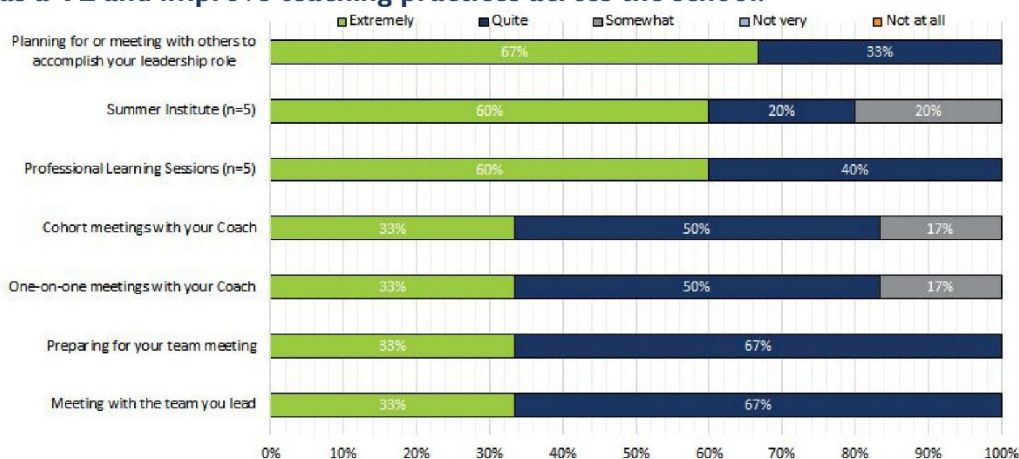
In terms of development, by the end of this year, all Teacher Leaders reported some or significant personal development in becoming a School-Wide Change Agent, an Ongoing Learner, a Purpose-Driven Instructional Leader, an Evidence-Based Decision Maker, and a Skillful Facilitator of Adult Learning(see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Given your learning at this point in the Program, how much development in one or more of the Attributes have you experienced?



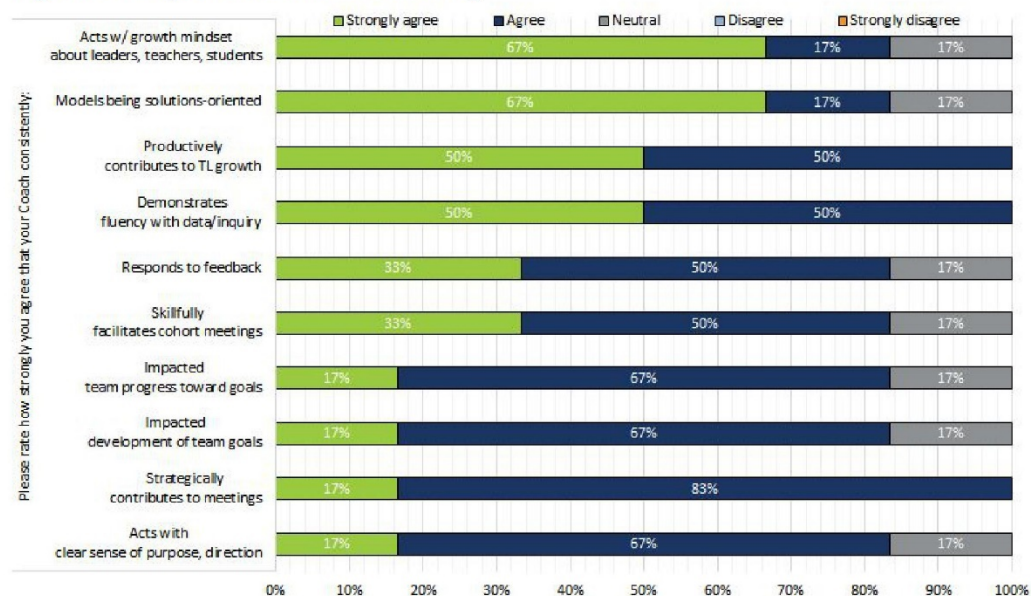
More specifically, Teacher Leaders in this program report every activity to be least somewhat effective in helping them grow as a Teacher Leader. One respondent did not experience Summer Institute and another did not experience Professional Learning Sessions (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: How effective have the following activities been in helping you grow as a TL and improve teaching practices across the school?



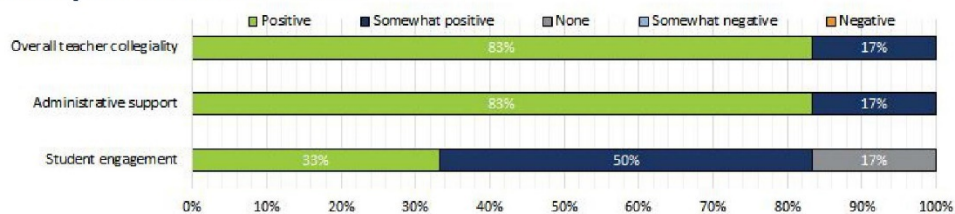
Coaching was rated particularly high, with no negative responses across any items (though there was a neutral mark for many). Coaching received the highest ratings for the following areas, where 100% of respondents agree or strongly agree: *productively contributes to TL growth*, *demonstrates fluency with data/inquiry*, and *strategically contributes to team meetings*. All but one respondent agreed or strongly agreed that their coach has both impacted the development of (83%) and progress towards team goals (83%) (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Experience with Coaching



Teacher Leaders agreed that this program has had a positive influence on the culture of their school: a majority report a 'positive' or 'somewhat positive' influence on overall **teacher collegiality** (100%), **administrative support** (100%), and **student engagement** (83%) (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: What kind of influence has this program had on the following aspects of your school's culture?





Administrators

Of the 12 administrators in the cohort schools, ten completed the End of Year Survey, (response rate of 83%) representing all of the six schools in the program

Administrators feel comfortable overall with creating the conditions for successful PLCs on their campus. 100% of surveyed administrators agree or strongly agree that Teacher-led PLCs are beneficial to changing teacher practice on campus, and that they are sufficiently supported by Teach Plus to implement these PLCs with their school's teacher leaders (see Figures 7 and 8).

Figure 7: How comfortable are you creating the conditions for successful PLCs on your campus in the following areas:

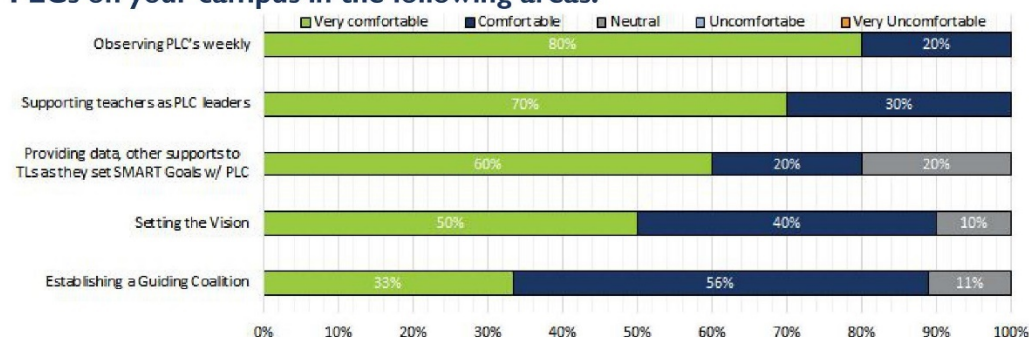
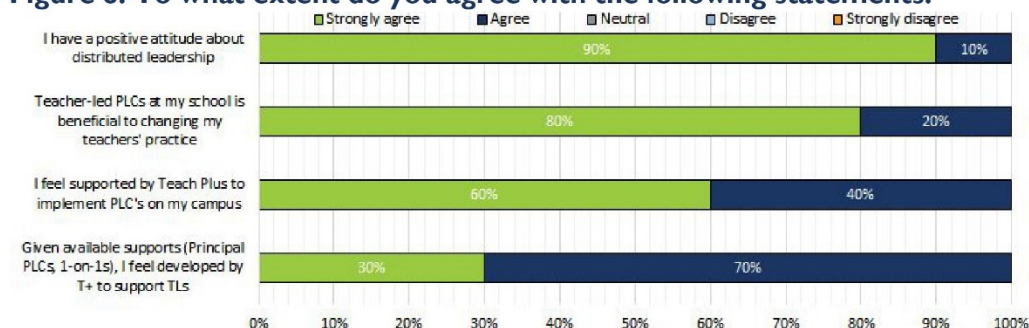


Figure 8: To what extent do you agree with the following statements:



Figures 9 through 11 summarize the administrators' evaluations of their own school's leadership capacity. A majority of respondents report that their school is making good progress, has the condition in each area well-established, or is refining their practice in that area. *Broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership* (mean 3.7 out of 5.0); *Inquiry-based use of information to inform decisions and practice* (mean 3.6); and *Shared vision results in program coherence* (mean 3.6) were rated highest by administrators, while *Reflective practice consistently leads to innovation* (mean 3.0); and *High or steadily improving student achievement and development* (mean 3.1) were less positively marked.

Figure 9: In our school, we:

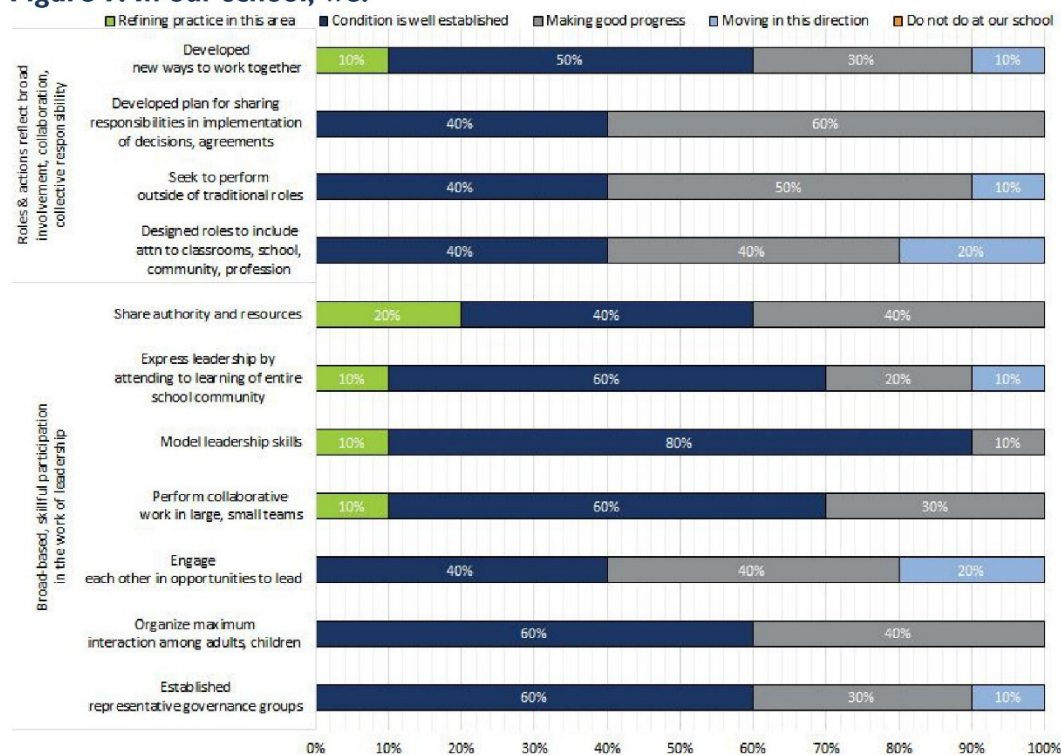


Figure 10: In our school, we:

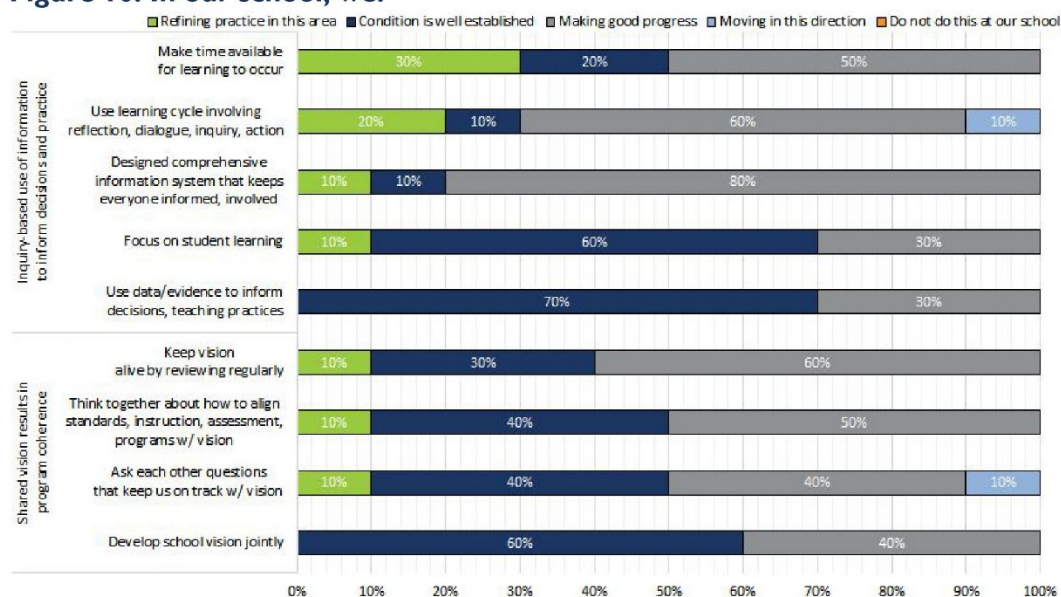
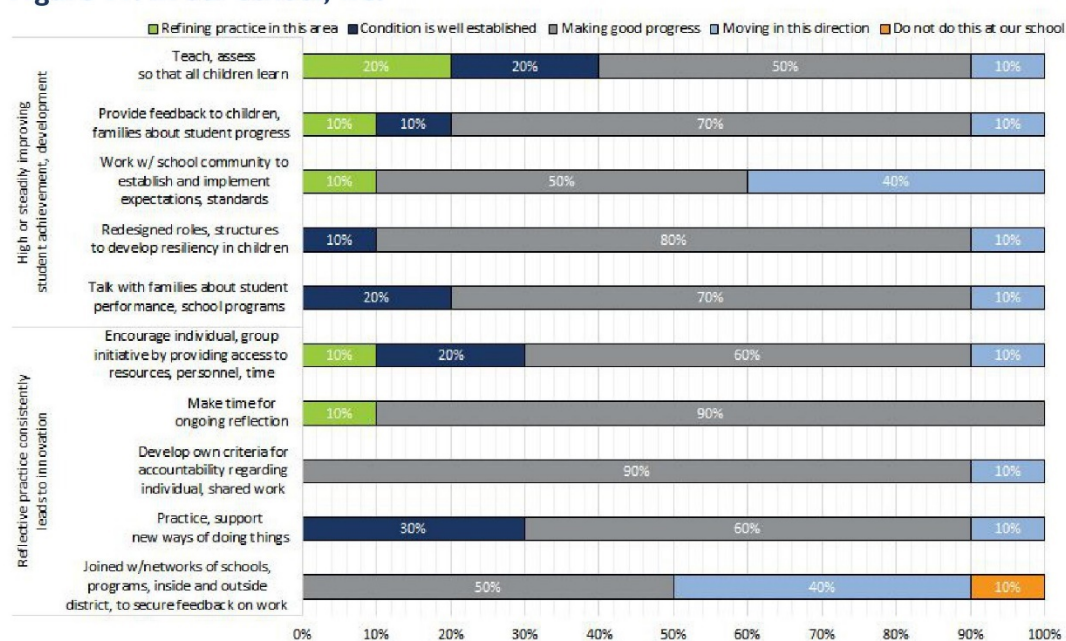


Figure 11: In our school, we:





Appendix A: Mean Responses

All means are based on a five-point scale unless indicated otherwise.

Teacher Leaders

SURVEY ITEM		2018-19 EOY MEAN	2019-20 EOY MEAN
How clearly has your TL role been defined for you at your school?		3.7	4.5
My experience as a TL has developed me to...	Make instructional decisions based on evidence	4.3	4.7
	Facilitate the learning of my colleagues	4.5	4.7
	Stay laser-focused on school-wide goals and priorities	4.2	4.3
	Further pursue knowledge, skills, and depth of understanding	4.4	4.7
	Initiate school-wide change and learn to grow as a leader	4.3	4.7
	Implement change in practice based on professional learning with peers	4.4	4.7
Given your learning at this point in the Program, how much development in the following attributes have you experienced?	Evidence-Based Decision Maker	4.3	3.3
	Skillful Facilitator of Adult Learning	4.3	3.2
	Purpose-Driven Instructional Leader	4.3	3.5
	Ongoing Learner	4.5	3.5
	School-Wide Change Agent	3.9	3.7
How strongly do you agree with the following statements?	Our team consistently uses data to inform our instructional decisions	4.0	4.2
	My participation in this program developed me as a TL so that I can impact student success	4.5	4.8
	I have had a positive impact on the instructional practice of the teachers I am supporting in my TL role	4.1	4.5
To what extent do you feel empowered as a TL to make decisions that affect what happens in your school?		3.6	4.0
How effective have the following activities been in helping you grow as a TL and improve teaching practices across the school?	Meeting with the team you lead	4.4	4.3
	Preparing for your team meeting	4.3	4.3
	Planning for or meeting with others to accomplish your leadership role	4.1	4.7
	One-on-one meetings with your Coach	4.0	4.2
	Cohort meetings with your Coach	3.8	4.2
	Professional Learning Sessions	3.9	4.6
	Summer Institute	3.9	4.4
In what ways has the support you have received as a TL influenced your growth as a leader in your school?		3.4	4.2
Please rate how consistently your Coach...	Acts with a clear sense of purpose and direction	4.2	4.0
	Demonstrates fluency with data/inquiry	4.2	4.5
	Skillfully facilitates cohort meetings	4.2	4.2
	Strategically contributes to meetings	4.1	4.2
	Responds to feedback	4.2	4.2
	Models being solutions-oriented	4.4	4.5
	Acts with a growth mindset about leaders, teachers, and students	4.6	4.5
To what extent has the relationship with your Coach productively contributed to your growth as a TL?		4.1	4.5
My Coach has had an impact on the development of my team or initiative goals.		4.1	4.0
My Coach has had an impact on my team or initiative's progress toward our goals.		4.2	4.0

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What kind of influence has this program had on the following aspects of your school's culture?	Administrative support	4.1	4.8
	Overall teacher collegiality	4.1	4.8
	Student engagement	4.1	4.2
As a TL, how confident are you that this program has improved shared leadership in your school building?		4.0	4.3
In your role as a TL, how confident are you that you have increased the quality of collaboration in your school?		4.2	4.7

Administrators

SURVEY ITEM		2018-19 EOY MEAN	2019-20 EOY MEAN
How comfortable are you creating the conditions for successful PLCs on your campus in the following areas:	Establishing a Guiding Coalition	3.7	4.2
	Setting the Vision	3.8	4.4
	Providing data and other supports to TLs as they set SMART goals within the PLC	4.3	4.4
	Observing PLCs weekly	3.5	4.8
	Supporting teachers as PLC leaders	4.2	4.7
To what extent do you agree with the following statements:	Teacher-led PLCs at my school is beneficial to changing my teachers' practice	4.8	4.8
	I feel supported by Teach Plus to implement PLC's on my campus	4.5	4.6
	Given all of the supports available to me (Principal PLCs, One-on-Ones), I feel developed by Teach Plus to support my teacher leaders as they lead school-based PLC's	3.7	4.3
	I have a positive attitude about distributed leadership	4.8	4.9
In our school, we: <i>Broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership</i>	Have established representative governance groups	3.8	3.5
	Perform collaborative work in large and small teams	3.7	3.8
	Model leadership skills	3.7	4
	Organize for maximum interaction among adults and children	3.7	3.6
	Share authority and resources	3.7	3.8
	Express our leadership by attending to the learning of the entire school community	3.7	3.7
	Engage each other in opportunities to lead	3.2	3.2
In our school, we: <i>Shared vision results in program coherence</i>	Develop school vision jointly	3.3	3.6
	Ask each other questions that keep us on track with our vision	3.0	3.5
	Think together about how to align our standards, instruction, assessment, and programs with our vision	2.8	3.6
	Keep our vision alive by reviewing it regularly	2.7	3.5
In our school, we: <i>Inquiry-based use of information to inform decisions and practice</i>	Use a learning cycle that involves reflection, dialogue, inquiry, and action	2.8	3.4
	Make time available for this learning to occur (e.g., faculty meetings, ad hoc groups, teams)	3.5	3.8
	Focus on student learning	3.5	3.8
	Use data/evidence to inform our decisions and teaching practices	3.3	3.7
	Have designed a comprehensive information system that keeps everyone	3.3	3.3

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	informed and involved		
In our school, we:	Have designed our roles to include attention to our classrooms, school, community, and profession	3.3	3.2
<i>Roles and actions reflect broad involvement, collaboration, and collective responsibility</i>	Seek to perform outside of traditional roles	3.3	3.3
	Have developed new ways to work together	3.2	3.6
	Have developed a plan for sharing responsibilities in the implementation of our decisions and agreements	3.3	3.4
In our school, we:	Make time for ongoing reflection (e.g., journaling, peer coaching, collaborative planning)	3.0	3.2
<i>Reflective practice consistently leads to innovation</i>	Encourage individual and group initiative by providing access to the resources, personnel, and time	3.3	3.3
	Have joined with networks of other schools and programs, both inside and outside the district, to secure feedback on our work	2.8	2.4
	Practice and support new ways of doing things	3.5	3.2
	Develop our own criteria for accountability regarding individual and shared work	2.8	2.9
In our school, we:	Work with members of the school community to establish and implement expectations and standards	3.3	2.8
<i>High or steadily improving student achievement and development</i>	Teach and assess so that all children learn	3.5	3.5
	Provide feedback to children and families about student progress	3.0	3.2
	Talk with families about student performance and school programs	3.2	3.1
	Have redesigned roles and structures to develop resiliency in children (e.g., teacher as coach/advisor/mentor, school-wide guidance programs, community service)	3.2	3.0