

CHANGING ROLES AND PERSPECTIVES: AN EXAMINATION OF THE  
EVOLVING ROLES OF PRINCIPALS DURING THE HISTORICAL  
REFORM OF CHILDREN FIRST

A Doctoral Research Project

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Audrey Marie Baker

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November 2016  
Date of Signature

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## Dedication

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## ABSTRACT

### **CHANGING ROLES AND PERSPECTIVES: AN EXAMINATION OF THE EVOLVING ROLES OF PRINCIPALS DURING THE HISTORICAL REFORM OF CHILDREN FIRST**

**Audrey Marie Baker**

The Sage College, Esteves School of Education, 2017

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Reforms and changes in the public school system across the United States have affected all aspects of public school learning, governance, and the leadership roles of principals. This investigative, qualitative case study explored the educational reforms under Children First, a wide scale reform that re-ordered and re-designed the New York City public school system from 2002 to 2014, and its effects on the leadership roles of principals. Furthermore, it examined the New York City Public School System under this innovative mayoral reform. This qualitative study used interviews, observations, and survey methods of inquiry to examine how three veteran New York City principals perceived their leadership roles and their skills; and how they maintained their leadership roles during Children First. Through Bolman and Deal's (1991) four frames model, this research explored the number of frames that the participants exhibited while conducting their executive daily practices. The findings of the study highlighted the theory of the four frames model, in the context of NYC principals' changing roles. The investigation examined the lens that veteran principals used to re-organize, re-adjust, and realign their approaches to educational leadership during Children First. One significant finding of this research was that principals were empowered as a result of Children First.

**Suggested Keywords: Children First, principals' leadership, mayoral control, education reform.**

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will establish a qualitative rationale for examining public education reform in New York City Public School System, and examine the effects the historical shift imposed on this public-school system as a result of Children First. It discusses and explains how principals' leadership roles have been impacted by the process of large-scale restructuring. And it also relies on theoretical framework concepts of Bolman and Deal (1991) to help understand how the rearrangement of shifting political, and districtwide partnership alignments have affected the empowerment of New York City principals to impact student success.

#### **Background of the Problem**

The prevalence of reforms and changes in the educational systems across the United States has profoundly affected all aspects of public school learning, administration, and leadership roles of principals. As public education in the United States continues to undergo a myriad of reforms, one of the system's primary struggles remains "achieving a balance between administrative performance and democratic participation" that seems to be emerging as a recurrent theme (Castillo, 2013, p. 1), and at the heart of this struggle is the issue of leadership. In recent years, educational leadership – and its effect on student achievement – has been a focal point for education scholarship and a significant concern for politicians, educators, students, the American population at large, and all stakeholders. The research of DuFour and Marzano (2011); Fullan (2007); Bolman and Deal (2006), and Senge (2000) suggest that leadership at all political, federal

and state, district, and school levels has a significant impact on student growth and success.

Of the many styles and modes of educational leadership that have been in vogue in recent years, perhaps the most prominent is mayoral control. Wong, Shen, and Anagnostopoulos (2007) define mayoral control as integrated governance, and argue that “within an integrated governance framework school district governance is no longer isolated from it but is incorporated into the governance of the local municipality” (p. 2). In this mode of leadership, city mayors supersede the school board and often appointing both chancellors, and in some cases, school board members.

While many municipalities have long and storied histories with mayoral control, or so-called integrated governance, this study is primarily concerned with the intersection of politics and education in the New York City Public School System in recent decades – namely, the myriad of reforms that occurred within New York City public schools under Children First mandated by the United States Government. Both system and instructional leadership within the New York City Public School System play a crucial role in creating and maintaining a climate and culture that will either foster or hinder students’ success. This study will explore the relationship between instructional leadership and system leadership as dictated by the evolving roles of New York City principals under Children First implemented in New York City Public Schools and using Bolman and Deal’s (1991) Four-Frame Model as a theoretical frame of reference. The study will not only examine the shifting power dynamics for principals working in New York City public schools, but will also demonstrate how Children First changed the role of leadership that impacted the educational culture of the entire school.

## Theoretical Considerations

Considering the shifts in education reform, Children First in New York City required an accounting of several influential patterns. Leadership formed a key component in the unfolding pattern of change. Bolman and Deal (1992), examined such patterns of change and applied leadership management skills to the educational relationship of school administrators in the United States and Singapore (p. 314).

Bolman and Deal (1992) asserted that the four frames of overseeing a macro-structural analysis could provide valuable insight into the areas of: (a) a structural rationality of efficiency, (b) the human resource component connecting the individual to the “organizational needs” (c) the political emphasis on leaders/advocates, and those who negotiate, and (d) the symbolic frame which typically dealt with attention to myths, “ceremony, stories, and other” forms of symbolism (Bolman & Deal, 1992, p. 314-315). In their research on education leadership, Bolman and Deal (1992) found that managerial success in making change was critical, and that leadership existed in a context of varied situations requiring “different patterns of thinking” (p. 315). Since operation of educational institutions involved a plethora of forms of interaction, *not* akin to managing a restaurant business, for example, the four frames model of research of Bolman and Deal (1991) assisted in providing a cogent basis in a rationale discourse.

## Principals’ Leadership Roles

Traditionally, the role of principals in New York City and across the nation have borne great leadership responsibility. The principal’s position has the potential, and with real outcomes, to have encouraged learner/instructor interactions. Hess’s (2008) analysis

and critique of how school board actions intersected with mayoral control of urban-area school systems provided a useful layer of insights into the situation (Hess, 2008).

Hess (2008) observed that school board appointments failed to result in selection of experienced professionals, and he offered several reasons. He provided five arguments against elected boards' school governance: (1) lack of accountability, with no community democratic leverage, (2) disproportionate influence of teachers' unions, for example, which skewed mobilized constituencies, (3) elected boards lack of coherence with a constant shift of membership; (4) school boards' ineffectiveness in governance tasks, and finally (5) boards' ability to function in isolation from City officials/Mayoral staff (Hess, 2008, p. 230-232). Additionally, it was argued that since school boards were in isolation from civic political powers, such as the mayor's office, they were not able to coordinate citywide coalitions (Hess, 2008). Contrarily, mayors were in a formidable political position and able to bridge gaps between urban community business stakeholders and able to rally interactive support of various civic groups (Hess, 2008). In the case of the New York City School System restructuring in Children First, it was easy (or not so easy) to see the reforms would challenge the quality of education for all students with a variety of socio-economic and racial backgrounds.

However, under the restructuring of Children First, principals' roles changed and revised in the pedagogical leadership organizational structure of the New York City Department of Education. In this sense, principals were granted greater autonomy over the management and operation of their schools with certain conditions (Herssezenhorn, (2007).

## **Large-Scale Structuring and Mayoral Control**

Segal (1997) saw the plan for decentralization of school systems as an insalubrious opportunity for the rife corruption in New York City to flourish and as a kind of political poison to undermine the general structure of education. He viewed decentralization programs were a backlash against rigid-regulatory control (Segal, 1997). Thus, given a minimization of a more controlled environment, as traditionally established, avoiding collisions with political agendas could “open the door to favoritism” (Segal, 1997, p. 143).

However, approximately one decade following the research findings of Segal (1997), an important case-study was developed by McGlynn in 2010 and published in the *Journal of School Choice*. McGlynn’s (2010) research was a specific New York City case study that examined how schools were controlled over the course of 33 years largely by “community school boards” (p. 293). His discourse explored how a mayoral takeover was viewed as a palliative for any of the ills which may have plagued the public-school system. McGlynn (2010) wanted to address the situation in New York City because it represented a context for the largest school district in the nation *and* because a thirty-year-old battle had persisted. McGlynn (2010) reported that the mayor ultimately took control over schools in New York City in 2002. Apparently, the window for change in New York City public schools was ripe when the political landscape shifted and the Mayor of New York City was give control over public schools in the city. The policy change reflected New York City’s desire for mayoral control of its public school system for much of the 1990’s (McGlynn, 2010).

## Considerations and Facts for Rationale

A 1983 federal government report on indicators of a decline in American education raised key concerns (U.S. Department of Education, 1983). These indicators included the following: College Board achievements were in decline, 23 million adult Americans were deemed functionally illiterate; 13% of 17-year-olds were functionally illiterate, and, finally, it was reported that college graduates, on average, tested lower in achievement-tests.

Myriad reforms in public school education in New York City have been instigated by a variety of political, financial, and policy-making efforts. In her book, '*The Death and Life of the Great American School System*', Diane Ravitch (2016) explained how privatization is sneaking into the educational foundation under the guise of better choices for academic improvement. Ravitch (2016) posited that the reform movement taking place under Children First, for example, has "strange bedfellows," and assessed that "some of its funders and promoters on the far right of the political spectrum are motivated by ideological contempt for the public sector" (Prologue, para. 2). Ravitch (2016) described the complex relationship between elected officials, the U.S. Department of Education, local municipalities, and the influence of well-funded think tanks backed by billionaires.

This formidable movement towards the establishment of education reform in New York City has sustained a critical gaze from education administration experts and theorists. As early as the late 1990s, Segal (1997) recognized the educational reform movement as a powerful, national devolution away from the typical centralized nature of the public school system. In the case of New York City, it was asserted that proposals

regarding the City's "public school would have better served, and addressed, the 'racial turmoil of the civil rights era' as well as unleashed the local autonomy for salubrious creativity" (Segal, 1997, p. 141). Yet, Segal (1997) suggested that the socio-historical context of New York City set up an atmosphere of corruption in the context of community control (p. 142). Thus, these initial factors demonstrate how educational reform could result in such a complex mix of influences and potential wildly variable academic outcomes for students.

### **Educational Leadership Affects Student Achievement**

Educational leadership, and the context of its political, administrative, and financial budget allocations, affects the quality of student achievement as derived from the supportive, empirical findings by Kythretis, Pashiardis, and Kyriakides (2010). Their work provided a model validating the direct and indirect effects of "principals' leadership on student academic achievement," and used an in-depth longitudinal design/methodology approach (Kythretis, et al. 2010). By incorporating the involvement of 22 school participants, 55 classes, and 1,224 primary-school students in the Cyprus/Greece region, the researchers utilized the subjects of Mathematics and Language as learning rubrics for assessment (Kythretis, et al. 2010). Furthermore, the findings provided knowledge to support the notion of principals as vital human resource guides. Concept: "four dimension of organizational culture".

### **Statement of the Problem**

The changes taking place in New York City's educational reform landscape affects many threads of practices, policies, and student outcomes. In large urban areas like New York City, public education has always been a matter of grave concern. As

cities face “rapidly changing demographics, more complex social problems, heightened calls from employers to properly prepare the future workforce, and increased scrutiny by state and federal governments to promote better outcomes for children,” (Edelstein, 2006, p. 4), public education and its governance have become battlefields for politicians, educators, and concerned citizens alike seeking to make useful (and sometimes, not-so-useful) changes.

Beginning in the early 2000s, the New York City Public School System has been under mayoral control. During this time, schools have undergone many significant organizational and structural reforms. Prior to the mayor having gained control of the schools by state legislative action, the “history of school organization and governance in NYC demonstrate that education was not successful in eliminating the achievement gap under all previous forms of school system organization” (Davidson, 2012, p. 6). The mayor ordered a restructuring of the public school system under Children First, which was developed to reshape the leadership and instructional designs of New York City’s schools.

Children First was the result of a six-month planning process headed by the newly-appointed Chancellor Joel Klein. In 2002, after his appointment, Klein and the mayor secured “funding from several foundations and consultant support from some of the nation’s leading organizational development firms” (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008, p. 1) in an effort to restructure the New York City Public School System. This restructuring, as it had been argued, was necessary to close the “race-based achievement gap” (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008, p. 2), and it would involve many of New York City’s “education policy experts, researchers, reformers, parent leaders and constituency representatives”

(p. 1-2). Undoubtedly, direct or deliberate mayoral involvement in directing school system educational processes may take many forms. Yet, under Children First, New York City public schools partnered with various businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and universities to connect students with educational and career opportunities. Children First was also directly responsible for: (1) the creation of more and smaller schools across New York City, (2) the re-evaluation of the tenure process for teachers and principals, and (3) the redesign of thousands of New York City classrooms to include new technologies and individualized learning aides.

There is a need to thoughtfully extend the current body of research on the impact of principals' function, and their roles, from the traditional learning- school-system environment towards coping with Children First. In a collaborative analysis-report by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals, it was acknowledged that schools' success was inevitably linked to the outstanding behaviors of outstanding principals (National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], 2013).

Furthermore, in quoting a report by Schmidt-Davis and Bottoms (2011), the analysis stated that "a principal can impact the lives of anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand students during a school year" (NAESP, 2013, p. 2). The past several decades of research on the imperative nature of principals' roles and involvement in the quality of student academic success provides a key foundation of data which can serve as a catalyst to begin continuing investigations on the impact of educational reforms in New York City.

To implement these changes, this new system of integrated governance dismantled pre-existing power structures within the public school system. Under Children First, the respective roles of the superintendent and principal were essentially reversed: for example, many of the administrative tasks that had been once the sole domain of the superintendent now became the responsibility of principals across New York City. Each of the principals were deemed to function in the capacity as Chief Executive Officer of their school site, and thus principals were given an unprecedented level of defined autonomy while vastly increasing both their power and responsibilities.

### **Statement of Purpose**

This study examined the empowerment of New York City principals under Children First to determine whether this evolution of the principal's role had a positive impact on student achievement and growth. Through observations and interviews, this qualitative study explored how New York City principals established and maintained their leadership roles, how they used these roles to create a specific culture and climate within their school site, and the benefits and challenges that accompanied their evolving leadership roles and empowerment under the shift to integrated.

### **Research Questions**

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Under the Children First, wide-scale power and leadership shifts occurred in the New York City school system. What are the lasting effects on principals' roles and their perceptions of their roles?
2. What effects do large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs have on a school's culture?

2 a. What challenges and successes did principals face under the changes in mayoral and chancellor control?

3. Bolman and Deal (1991) discuss four frames of organizational structure: the structural, the human resource, the symbolic, and the political frameworks. How do (or did) NYC principals utilize these frameworks in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases before, during, and after the Children First?

### **Significance of the Study**

The City School District of the City of New York falls under the oversight of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). As of 2016, this department is headed by Chancellor Carmen Fariña who has previously served in the capacity as a former superintendent, principal and teacher with over 40 years of experience in New York City public schools (New York City Department of Education, 2015c). In addition to the chancellor and her leadership team, governance at the NYCDOE includes 32 community and four city wide education councils, as well as a panel dedicated to educational policy (New York City Department of Education, 2015). This study will be beneficial to system and instructional leaders within the New York City Department of Education for the following reasons: (a) providing a general rubric of understanding how the shift operates as an organizational structure, (b) aiding educational leaders, principals, and instructional leaders to recognize the political mechanisms of engagement with the restructured agenda, (c) assisting an understanding how the greatest impact resulted when under-performing schools closed, and (d) a critical assessment will reframe comprehension of how billionaire-sponsored educational reforms has the potential to alter public education by dismantling and privatizing it. The charter schools are not under the

same accountability or governance requirements as the public schools and are not necessarily doing better than the public schools in some cases.

While many excellence leaders operate within the confines of the New York City Public School System, and continued to operate under mayoral control, this study aims to allow these individuals a more thorough understanding of the history and context of school governance in their municipality. By understanding the role politics play in education, hopefully, the system and instructional leaders will be better equipped to create policies and implement practices that foster student achievement and growth. Not only will this study demonstrate the significance of how shifting power dynamics can influence district culture and a myriad of school reforms, but it will also demonstrate the necessity of specific frames or modes of leadership for effective student growth.

### **Delimitation and Scope of the Study**

This study was specifically delimited in scope and focused on the experiences of three New York City public school principals. Each principal represents a different school level, i.e., elementary, middle, and high school. Not only did the study require its participants to be current principals in New York City public schools, but also that they served as principals (or Acting Principals) during Children First. This focus and approach has created a wealth of information for this study, especially since each participant has been an educational leader for at least the past decade, therefore allowing this study to examine how long-term leadership experiences played a role in the principals' power evolutions and leadership styles before and during the implementation of Children First.

Through a series of observations and interviews, this study collected qualitative data about the experiences and perceptions of empowered principals' roles and leadership

styles. The prevalence of principals' influence on the academic performance of students' system wide in the immediate confines of New York City coupled with a vital need to institute a re-evaluation of how many principals' roles evolved is the basis of the present study.

The ideas of Bolman and Deal (1991), in their Four-Frame Theoretical Model, are correlated to direct and in-direct impacts (whether pros or cons) on New York City public school principals' leadership roles. Policy, politics, and cooperative arrangements with community stakeholders – such as parents – have an undoubted integrative influence on the changing roles of principals and students' academic well-being and outcomes.

### **Limitations**

There are limitations with this study that have to be considered. One limitation is the small sample of principals. The second limitation was the reminiscence factor. Under mayoral control, three principals served in their same position, i.e., from 2002-2014, during the time frame of the Children First. The principals in this study had to remember their leadership role that they performed during this particular time period. Each principal was selected to represent a different level of school that included one elementary, one middle school, and an alternative education high school site.

### **Organization of the Study**

This study has been organized into five chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction, background, and general overview of the topic within its historical context. Chapter Two is a literature review, designed to address each topic and aspect of the research questions presented. Chapter Three includes the research design and methodology to respond to the research questions based on data collection, and analysis.

Chapter Four presents the findings and data analysis. Chapter Five concludes to summarize the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following are key operational terms that this study will refer to:

1. Alternative Schools: According to the National Center for Education Statistics, alternative schools/programs are designed to meet the needs of at-risk children identified as educationally vulnerable, in programs administered by the district. Such programs focus on addressing educational failure of students faced with the problems of truancy, poor grades, pregnancy, or similar challenges (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010).
2. Capacity Building: Involves developing the collective ability – Dispositions, Skills, Knowledge, Motivation, and Resources – act together to bring positive change (Fullan, 2005, p. 4).
3. Charter Schools: According to Carmen Fariña, Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, the organizations designated as charter schools are independent public schools, founded by non-profit “Boards of Trustees,” operating under a contractual basis, which may have “unique educational programs,” strategic learning themes, varying school-year lengths, and/or a range of missions (Fariña, 2016).
4. Children First: An initiative put in place by the New York City Mayor in 2002. This initiative featured a broad restructuring of the New York City Public School System that established defined accountability, empowerment, leadership, and autonomy for principals and resulted in more and smaller schools, revised procedures for teacher

and principal tenure; partnerships with various business, non-profits, and universities; and large-scale classroom and instructional reforms to better facilitate new technologies and individualized learning.

5. Coherent/Cohherence: Refers to aligned curriculum to prescribe an academic program purposefully-designed, in cross-sectional subject areas, and free of needless gaps to facilitate learning. *Thus*, a coherent curriculum fosters student achievement.
6. Empowered/Empowerment: Allowing New York City principals more freedom to make choices for their school sites and students – without permission or intervention from district officials. By giving these principals more control over the decision-making process, the New York City Public School System saw a shift in power dynamics and leadership styles exhibited by principals working under Children First.
7. Frame (Political): A leadership framework or orientation that centers on scarce resources, power, conflict and coalition building (Bolman & Deal, 1992).
8. Frame (Structural): A leadership framework or orientation that values defined rules, roles, and an organizational hierarchy (Bolman & Deal, 1992).
9. Frame (Symbolic): A leadership framework or orientation that relies on symbols, myths, stories, shared values and organizational culture (Bolman & Deal, 1992).
10. Frame (Human Resource): A leadership framework or orientation that relies on engagement of people skills, organizations serving human needs, and good fit-benefits between individuals and organizations (Bolman & Deal, 1992).
11. Networks: the network was “considered the targeted unit to build the capacity needed to improve instruction in schools,” and “More often, the network team” served as a “support to a set of individual schools” (O’Day, Bitter, & Gomez, 2011, p. 120).

12. Reform: planned changes in school function, pedagogical delivery, administrative processes, and/or policy sanctions which affect outcomes reflective of motivations of reformers shaping the forces of public education (O'Day et al., 2011).
13. System Leadership: describes the thoughtful, strategic managerial styles applied to all levels utilizing experience to guide/recommend important lessons; four areas of these school administrators give attention to: (1) instructional improvement, (2) provision of NYC teacher-teams with vital/tested models of inquiry, and data-sharing access, (3) attunement to challenge of balancing accountability/guidance, and (4) response to Department of Education (DOE) reallocation, reforms, and network leaders.
14. White Flight: the occurrence of when departure of people, who are designated as white, move out of a city/neighborhood or hinterland which become increasingly populated by other non-white races – such as Black, Latino, or others.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent decades, the public education system in the United States has undergone a myriad of reforms. Many of these reforms focus on changing the practices and behaviors that affect student achievement within a given school system. Of these reforms, those that emphasize and prioritize the importance of education leadership have proven extremely significant. A variety of education scholars (DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Fullan, 2007; Bolman & Deal, 2006; and Senge, 2000) have argued that education leadership reform is one of the most impactful types of reforms at present. Education reform plays such a crucial role in the structure and management of the public school system. As perceptions of education leadership evolve, and as different modes of leadership fall in and out of fashion, both system and instructional leadership within the New York City Public School System play a crucial role in creating and maintaining certain climates and cultures. The purpose of this study is to examine the shifting power dynamics for educational professionals working in New York City public schools under Children First. By determining how these shifts affected principals' leadership roles, this study will then provide useful and necessary insights into the world of educational leadership. To better explore how the relationship between instructional leadership and system leadership as dictated by the evolving roles of New York City principals under the historical reform of Children First can affect climate and culture, the preliminary research for this study drew on numerous educational and political discourses. These conversations, taking place in both the public and academic spheres, provide an abundance of information from the

literature regarding the myriad of political and educational reforms that have touched New York City public schools in recent history.

To examine the history of the New York City Public School System is to examine not only the structural evolution of the city's facilities but also the varying modes of governance these schools have undertaken over time. Like many large school districts, New York City public schools are a study in both educational and political transformation and reform. The literature which follows is presented in the following order: It begins with: 1) introduction to the New York City Public Schools, 2) provides a brief description of the mayoral control, and 3) describes the changes that occurred during that period. The following section discusses the changing role of principals and the four frames model in Bolman & Deal's (1991) research. The review of research culminates with a background of Children's First and school reform.

## **A Brief Introduction to the City School District of the City of New York**

As the largest public school system in the United States of America, the City School District of the City of New York is an “organizational structure and environmental context...making it a fruitful subject for various types of administrative research” (Castillo, 2013, p. 6). At present, it is estimated that the district educates over one million students in approximately 1,800 schools across the five boroughs of New York City, New York (New York City Department of Education, 2015b). Given the large geographic area that the district incorporates, it is little wonder that the City School District of the City of New York is one of the most diverse and well-funded school districts in the nation. According to the Department of Education Overview, “[f]or the school year 2015–16, the Department of Education’s total budget is \$27.6 billion” (New York City Department of Education, 2015a), while the operating budget - which is the total budget minus the pension and debt services cost - is \$21.8 billion.

Throughout its history, the New York City Public School System has “been faced with the difficult task of educating a highly diverse student population in terms of socioeconomic background and academic ability” (Castillo, 2013, p. 6). Like all other school districts, there are concerns. The New York City School District is subject to both federal and state governance to a certain extent. In addition to both levels of outside governance, the New York City Public School System has several administrative and governance approaches in its history and “at times emphasizing a centralized administrative strategy while at other times emphasizing the values of utilized decentralization and greater local control” (Castillo, 2013, p. 6). This study explores

some of the effects of that shift to a centralized form of education governance from a decentralizing form of governance.

### **The Age of Mayoral Control: Political and Educational Reform**

To fully understand the effects of the shifting power dynamics that occurred during Children First, one must examine the historic context of political and educational reform in New York City. In 1969, a law mandating the decentralization of New York City's Public Schools passed to form "one of the nation's most ambitious experiments in community government: a radical form of political decentralization that generally involves transferring decision-making authority from bureaucracies to locally elected lay boards" (Segal, 1997, p. 141).

This radical change in the New York City Public School System's means of governance was heralded as the solution to allegations of prejudice and inequality made by "African American and Hispanic community leaders... [who argued that white dominance of teaching and administrative positions meant] that their students were not excelling in New York City schools" (McGlynn, 2010, p. 295). These leaders argued that only locally controlled schools, staffed and governed by minorities, could adequately serve the needs of minority students. Given the political context of education during the 1960's and 1970's, and with the desegregation of schools just a decade earlier, many believed it was impossible for minority students, who had steadily become the majority of the student population in New York City, to be properly served by a school system and bureaucracy whose administrators and staff members were predominantly white (Segal, 1997, p. 141). Table 1 below indicates data reflective of statistical interpretations of New

York City Schools' demographic during the period of time between 1970 and 2005, as provided by the U.S. Bureau of the Census of 2007.

Table 1

New York City Schools' Demographic Data 1970-2005

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Percent Caucasian</b>	<b>Percent African-American</b>	<b>Percent Hispanic</b>	<b>Percent Asian/Pacific</b>
<b>1970</b>	1,132,000	38.5	34.4	25.6	1.6
<b>1980</b>	941,300	26.9	38.6	30.4	4.1
<b>1990</b>	932,000	19	38	34.95	8
<b>2000</b>	1,066,516	15.3	34.9	37.8	11.9
<b>2005</b>	1,014,058	13.95	31.5	38.1	13.2

*Note.* Sources: Tobier (2000), U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007), and National Center for Education Statistics (2005) (as cited in McGlynn, A Case Study in Policy Change: Mayoral Control in New York City's Schools. *Journal of School Choice*, 4(3), p. 295).

From 1969 up until 2002, New York City's Public School System remained under a decentralized governance model. This "fragmented locally based system of 32 community districts" (Kelleher, 2014, p.1) was under the domain of the New York City Board of Education. The primary complaints against the decentralization that characterized the New York City Board of Education governance model was the failure to "effectively implement curriculum, personnel, and governance reforms; thus, alienating educators, community members (including students and parents), state board of education employees, and city and state political figures (Davidson, 2012, p. 78).

From this model, issues of corruption and mismanagement cast a bold shadow over the city schools' governance. In response to countless allegations of poor management and fiscal abuses, many concerned citizens, educators, and politicians sought to reverse the decentralization act of 1969 (Segal, 1997; McGlynn, 2010).

According to the literature, although demands for change began as early as 1973, it would take until 2002 for the New York City political landscape to create an opportunity – or a policy window – that could usher in a significant change (McGlynn, 2010, p. 294). New York City’s experience with a decentralized mode of school system governance officially came to an end in 2002 when “New York State Governor George Pataki signed legislation granting control of the New York City school system to the city’s mayor” (Castillo, 2013, p. 6). With this historical shift, a transformation manifested towards a centralized mode of educational governance. The systematic change was described in the book *Education Reform in New York City – Ambitious Change in the Nation’s Most Complex School System*. It was asserted that in 2002 that “state leaders acceded to” the Mayor’s “request to dramatically change the governing structure of NYC public schools” (O’Day, Bitter, & Gomez, 2011, p. 36). Implementation of mayoral control began to take shape.

With the adoption of mayoral control, and the consensus that “the schools were not adequately serving the needs of students and families in New York” (Modeste, 2015, p. 2), the expectation was that widespread and meaningful changes would come to New York City’s Public Schools. To make these changes a reality, the mayoral administration instituted a policy change in the New York City Department of Education that would have lasting effects on the city’s public education system. The mayor created a shift that “relied on principals to lead that work in schools through a business-model approach to school leadership” (Modeste, 2015, p. 2).

It is important to note here that the adoption of mayoral control was neither a radical nor new approach to education governance in New York City. The literature

highlights the fact that mayors have had direct control over education from the beginning of public schools in the city until the 1930s (Edelstein, 2006) In current studies of mayoral control in the United States (Modeste, 2015; Hess, 2008; McGlynn, 2007; McGlynn, 2010; Castillo, 2013), mayoral control is touted as a reform procedure that improves district management of schools by “easing the decision-making process for new and continuing initiatives supporting overall alignment of the city’s budget across agencies that manage new school construction, transportation, and child and family services” (Modeste, 2015, p. 3).

In New York City, under mayor control and Children First, a milieu of system-wide changes meant to positively affect student achievement and growth began taking place almost as soon as the ink dried on the 2002 legislation. A strong agenda that promised “a clear break from the way things were done in the past toward a new era of school governance with concrete expectations for the performance of principals, teacher, and students” (Modeste, 2015, p.3) meant many new changes for management practices for principals, administrators, and signaled deeper change in the district educational culture.

### **General Historical Context of Emergent Shift**

Educational leaders, experts, politicians, and administrators are not all going to agree about what needs to be done in the face of impending and continued reform. As early as 1983, officials reported from the *United States Department of Education* that the country was at risk in terms of foreign nations surpassing the traditional American areas of accomplishments in every sector. The report acknowledged that the United States’ position at one time represented an “unchallenged pre-eminence in commerce, industry,

science, and technological innovation” having been overtaken by “competitors throughout the world” (U.S. Department of Education, 1983). While the report discussed a multi-layered complexity of the shift, much of what undergirded the problem of a diminishing American prosperity appended to the erosion of its educational foundation. The report explained that the reason for concern, and even alarm regarding the situation extended beyond the commercial success of Japanese auto manufacturers – for example – and ultimately connected to a society’s ability to provide high-levels of educational, intellectual, and moral strength (U.S. Department of Education, 1983). Beyond the macro-level, all-encompassing perspective, the general concept in education generally shifted from a focus on standards to an emphasis on testing (Ravitch, 2016).

Ravitch (2016) explained how President George Bush’s *No Child Left Behind* (*NCLB*) program rested upon the foundational triad of reformation, of test scores, accountability, and choice. However, when the dust settled, test scores became “the ultimate judge,” since it also measured the success or failure of schools – hence, becoming more “than a measure; they became the purpose of education” (Ravitch, 2016, p.17). The concept and drive to reinforce the validity of testing scores as a measurement of educational success was federalized. Federal law, in turn, solidified the notion of test scores alone as viable vehicles to judge “students, teachers, principals, and schools” (Ravitch, 2016, Hijacked Standards Movement, para. 1). Once the shift was appended to legal statutes, a different race had begun and appeared to set the tone for the entrance of a radical reform movement. Federal legal regulatory testing standards, under the NCLB movement generated a keen focus on basic skills test performance, yet remained devoid of generating any requirements in curriculum. Therefore, the importance of history,

literature, the arts, the scientific studies, and geography were cast aside and subsequently ignored.

### **New York City's Evolution**

The period spanning from the late 1960s until 2003, the decentralization in New York City's Public School System gained traction. The reorganization converged in what one scholar deemed "an awkward governance structure" which mainly affected the elementary and middle-school community districts (Nadelstern, 2012, p. 4). This arrangement created 32 districts for the lower-levels K-8 while the high schools largely remained centralized under the auspices and control of the Board of Education. By the time the mid-1990s, Walter Annenberg made an institutional \$500 million investment donation earmarked for the cause of improvement in United States' public education schools (Nadelstern, 2012). Out of that bundle of capital, New York City received 5% which totaled \$25 million, and the city applied it to four organizations as the lead partners in the effort.

According to Nadelstern (2012), a role of a supervisory superintendent was to assure a separation between the central office "and the regions as far away from Autonomy Zone schools as possible" (p. 10). The Autonomy Zone emerged with 29 schools. It deployed the task force to cure mismanagement and empower principals for improving decision-making skills that affected students and teachers' classroom effectiveness. The Zone principal signed a contract that was, in fact, a performance agreement which held the principals accountable "for a number of student outcomes including attendance, retention, course and exam pass rates, promotion and graduation" at high-school level in terms of college acceptance provisions (Nadelstern, 2012, p. 10).

After three years of the Zone arrangement, the name changed to the *Empowerment Schools*. The situation functioned as follows. “Each network leader hired a team of four, including members with expertise in instruction, assessment, special needs populations, and school management” (Nadelstern, 2012, p. 12). Network team-members met on a weekly basis with their schools. The outcome truly reflected an adequate representation that assured a genuine sense of helping principals and schools and communities in any way deemed useful.

### **Forty-Two Changes in New York City Education, Starting in 2002**

The renaissance-level changes which occurred in the New York City Public School System resonated throughout every aspect of the collective community. The achievement of mayoral control, shifts in high school graduation rates, and the creation of over 600 schools represented some of those changes per the *Progress.MikeBloomberg.com* website (“Progress: Education,” 2013). The following forty-two adaptations in the areas of mayoral control, student progress, promotion of teacher excellence, empowerment of principals, school accountability, and increased funding/capital investment *reportedly* occurred, and they are:

- Abolishment of the Board of Education (BOE) in 2002
- Graduation rates lifted by 42% from 2005 to 2012
- Top elementary and/or middle schools state-wide, 22 of 25 located in NYC by 2013
- Increased funding in educational spending of \$13.6 billion by Fiscal Year 2014
- Increased the number of students earning Regents or Advanced diplomas by 31.5%
- Black/Hispanic students’ graduating in four years peaked in 2012 to 57.5%
- Narrowing of achievement gap from 2005-2012 between White and non-White

- Lower dropout rate from 22.0% in 2005 to 11.4% in 2012
- Better college-preparatory rates
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) improvements from 2003-12
- Closure of social promotion in 2008 in Grades 3 -8
- 150 minutes added to school week
- Higher SAT participation
- Increase of Advanced Placement (AP) participation
- Opened 654 new public schools and 173 charter schools
- Addition of classroom seats of over 126,000 in New York City; with goal of 130,000
- Administration created 200 *small co-located high* schools increasing graduation rates
- GED passing rate increased for 71% of the test takers
- Accountability to help parents by hiring parent-coordinator
- Chronic absenteeism rates dropped by the creation of the Truancy Task Force
- Increase in teachers' salaries
- Establishment of system for teacher performance level
- Reformed tenure fell between 2011-2012 to 55%, down from 97% in 2006- 2007
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) expansion in 2013 with new hiring
- Launch of '*Big Apple*' teacher recognition awards
- Creation of Leadership Academy for training/recruitment of principals
- Evaluation system for principals, strengthening those deemed ineffective
- Children First networks implemented, bridging operational and instructional support
- Progress reports creation, and quality reviews in every school
- Annualized/Implementation of NYC School Survey, began in 2007 for Grades 6-12

- Increased accountability, autonomy and authority
- Replaced (closure) of failing schools
- Cuts in major crime waves by a reported 56% decrease in schools, including violence
- Increased funding
- Bureaucracy cuts moved millions of dollars into classroom
- Free/Discounted lunch during 2008-2009, utilizing families' access to Applications
- Healthier food in schools, for example the elimination of all soda drinks
- Universal free breakfast for all K-12 students
- Capital investment in school construction, September 2003 to 2011 at \$8.2 billion

These forty-two items marked the reported progress from the New York City mayor's office at the time. Responding to the deep changes in New York City's public school reforms, Kelleher (2014) asserted that there was "reason to be optimistic," yet admitted "the hardest work is still to come" (p. 51). Not all agree with the assessments. In Chapter 8, "Discharge and Graduation Rates" in *NYC Schools Under Bloomberg and Klein: What Parents, Teachers, and Policymakers Need to Know*, Jennings and Haimson claimed there had been no "comprehensive update on high school discharges in New York City" (Ravitch, 2009, p. 77).

Furthermore, it was ascertained that whatever system had been used to make claims for positive outcomes, provided "loosely regulated loophole(s)" which leveraged graduation rates by *pushing* "at-risk students out of school" (Ravitch, 2009, p. 77). Yet, the doubling of spending reflected an undeniable fact under mayoral control which earmarked efforts to strengthen learning foundations (Ravitch, 2009).

## New York City Reforms, Mayoral Control, and Charter Schools

As the formidable national testing ground for educational reform in New York City, Children First drew worldwide attention (Ravitch, 2016). Management was reorganized, teachers'/principals' merit pay were negotiated, and poorer performing schools were shut down. The verbiage of 'choice' arose on the scene. Furthermore, one of the early changes made in 2002 allowed the mayor to appoint a chancellor of the school system (Kelleher, 2014). The shifted replacement of elected school board members consolidated the installation of the official Panel for Educational Policy (also known as PEP) which were expressly chosen by the Mayor (Kelleher, 2014).

The previous decentralized system in New York City that responded to the 1960's call for increased accountability to all the city's needs had not failed due to its original design and intent (Kelleher, 2014). The research community had concluded that the decentralization plan had been "poorly implemented" with "conflicting powers," even though the effort "to decentralize encouraged the early growth of small schools and increased minority hiring" (Kelleher, 2014, p. 20).

Stanford University's *Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO)* became the subject of a study of charter schools' effectiveness across sixteen states (Kelleher, 2014). Excluding New York State, the study learned that less than 20% outperformed their mainstream, public school counterparts. The 2010 version of Stanford University's *CREDO* report included New York City in its study. Findings based upon its data, analyzed New York City's charter schools weighing heavier improvements comparable to the national average (Kelleher, 2014). The statistics provided a breakdown of 51% of New York City's charters above their peers (locally) in mathematics and 29%

hovering above in reading (Kelleher, 2014, p. 33). As similar reports developed, the 2013 *CREDO* report reflected a measurable downward spiral in New York City's charters. The characterization of 'mediocre' confirmed new knowledge that the numbers dictated that 46% "of New York City charter schools," showed low performance in reading achievement (Kelleher, 2014, p. 33). Perhaps Ravitch (2016) summed up one observation best that stated that "Charter schools are supposed to be innovative, but their most effective innovations to date consist of choosing their students carefully and excluding or removing students who might get low test scores, and enforcing boot-camp discipline on those who remain" (Prologue, para. 5). Furthermore, the emergence of the smaller charter schools and their heavy emphasis upon them paved the way to condemn larger high schools as too big and impersonal (Rogers, 2009, p. 54). The dual expectations of anticipated change revolved around a systemic overall facelift in developmental programs and a hopeful attraction of private funding. These factors ushered in growing concerns and conflicts.

### **Ensuing Political Conflicts, Concerns, and Controversy**

Guidry (2007) performed an analysis of how women's perceptions of their roles as deans in the leadership function as reflected in Bolman and Deal's (1991) four-frame model. Guidry (2007) assessed that "Within the realm of higher education, the human resource orientation is exemplified in the community of professionals that exists among the faculty who have shared governance in decision making" (p. 44). Perhaps the pathway of ascertaining the human resource element of Bolman and Deal's four-frame theory in evaluation of New York City's Children First, and like reforms, are not as clearly cut. In other words, the politics of higher education exercise qualitative

differences in contrast to the K-12 public school environment in New York City. Principals in the context of the New York City Public School system encountered different challenges under the reforms taking place with mayoral control in 2002. Modeste (2015) conducted a qualitative multi-case analysis designed to uncover two main research questions. Each respectively involved principals' unique role and experience within their mayoral-controlled districts and factors that were responsible for the principals' interpretations/perceptions as correlated to policy mandates. The eight interviews with five principals helped to develop the findings of Modeste (2015) regarding clarification of how their leadership had an impact in the process of new policy structures.

It was learned, with the integrated collection of quantitative data, that "veteran principals experienced a gradual loss of access to institutional knowledge at the central office, which impacted their leadership work in schools" (Modeste, 2015, p. i). The study and findings were designed to especially address the district-level policy and implementations involved with reform in New York City, and understanding the mayoral approach. Up until the reform, during the twentieth century, in reference to the previous research of Kafka in 2009, Modeste (2015) acknowledged that principals incurred expectations that their role had a large key function. That duty of expectation forecasted an understanding in which principals engaged with direct involvement, in terms of instructional leadership matters, in their educational organizations, i.e., their schools (Modeste, 2015). Furthermore, the idea remained consistent that the principals' role was steadfast, and immovable, regardless of the political winds of change. The solid

positioning, stance, and expectation of principals up through the 1990's showed a highly-earned status and prestige attached to the uniqueness of their roles.

Modeste (2015) further indicated that this stance of longevity and reliability among the status and roles of principals worked in four ways. First, the role held a formidable sense of independence as pivotal in the school district itself. Secondly, a fighting commitment to the authoritative oversight of the teaching/learning environment of their schools was a given. The third aspect entails principals' creation of professional organizations advancing their supervision as leaders of teachers. Fourth, direct teaching in the classroom as duties were diminished. Particularly in the urban public school setting, principals had been expected to fulfill help towards those who struggled (Modeste, 2015). The concept also allows for a comprehension that principals functions as buffers between stakeholders as referenced from in the previous research work of Honig and Hatch (2004 as cited in Modeste, 2015).

Other troubling political conflicts over emergent educational reform involved requirements under Children First in which teachers were in opposition (Ravitch, 2016). Ravitch (2016) argued that with its 2003 introduction, the reform of Children First was met with numerous teacher's complaints in the public schools. One mandated pedagogical requirement required that "elementary classrooms be equipped with a rug and a rocking chair, which were aspects of the Balanced Literacy approach" (Ravitch, 2016, Business Model in New York City, para. 16). Furthermore, frustration lingered due to frequent references to a municipal-wide code of a 'uniform curriculum' – yet, no such curriculum had existed. Additionally, teachers felt they were being micromanaged with supervisors looking over-their-shoulders to ensure rigid impositions of how to teach and

with minute scrutiny of what materials must be placed on classroom and hallways' bulletin boards. As it had turned out, the proposition underlying Children First was the same as those ideas attached to the NCLB federal program (Ravitch, 2016).

### **Changing Role of the Principal During Stages of Reform**

The theoretical work of Bolman and Deal (1997), in the area of principals' roles during periods of reformation and transformation, inform how these critical educational stakeholders negotiate new ways of learning to lead. Under Children First, New York City public school principals were tasked with a new kind of leadership role. In their expanded leadership role as both administrator and business manager, these principals were empowered in ways they had not experienced under previous school governance models. One of the most significant changes that accompanied Children First and mayoral control in New York City was the restructuring of power within the New York City Department of Education and its school sites.

### **Bolman and Deal Theory**

To better understand how the evolution of their roles and their newfound power affected New York City principals, this study will rely on the Four-Frame theory of leadership posited by Bolman and Deal (2013) in *Reframing Organizations*. In their work of educational leadership, Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that the four major schools of thought on organizational leadership could be wrangled into a unified and practical four-frame theory. This theory, they maintain, can serve to analyze and guide effective leadership practices in organizations undergoing significant reforms or changes such as in the New York City Public School System under Children First. The frames (Table 2) are as follows:

1. The Structural Frame – a frame that focuses on the structure or architecture of an organization,
2. The Human Resources Frame – a frame that focuses on understanding individuals and relationships,
3. The Political Frame – a frame that focuses on power, competition, and skill, and,
4. The Symbolic Frame – a frame that focuses on culture, meaning, faith, and ceremony.

The four frames can be thought of as “mental modes, maps, tools, mindsets, schema, and cognitive lenses” (Guidry, 2007 p. 40), and can be used to both evaluate and structure leadership practices. Given the vast array of power shifts and changing leadership practices that took place under Children First, Bolman & Deal’s (2013) four-frame theory provides a useful tool to determine the validity and effectiveness of these reforms in terms of leadership.

Unquestioningly, New York City Public School System principals participated in the new reforms by the utilization of structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames. Essentially corralled into the new district-wide policy changes of Children First, principals operated differently in how educational progress was measured by hiring, and by betraying symbolism which were essentially set in the macro-environment of the political reality. Blake (2015) indicated that when State (or city) policy changes, the Bolman and Deal theoretical framework recommends a consideration of gazing through the human lens when formulating changes (p.141). Blake (2015) conducted a study which used hip hop and other high-interest curricula to engage students which may foster increased teacher-student relationship improvements. The ideology drove the vision of

building a better sense of community in the public school setting with a goal of achievement improvement.

In Table 2 below, the four-frame theory characterized each aspect under the qualities of: Paradigm, Metaphor, Central Concept, Image of Leadership, and Basic Leadership Challenge. According to the chart below, a product of Bolman & Deal's (1997) research, each framework may be described in more detail. The more comprehensive and qualitative divisions reflected how principals might have demonstrated various approaches to his or her roles of leadership. Setting the principals' workflow featured inside a rubric coupled with Bolman & Deal's classical theory prescribes a roadmap for better understanding of the applications of the four frames theory in educational leadership. As an ample guide, each section provided ways to gain additional insight.

Table 2

Bolman and Deal (1997) Paradigm, Metaphor, Central Concept, and Leadership Chart

<b>Paradigm</b>	<b>Metaphor</b>	<b>Central Concept</b>	<b>Image of Leadership</b>	<b>Basic Leadership Challenge</b>
<b>Structural</b>	Factory/Machine	Efficiency	Social Architecture	Attune structure to task, technology, environment
<b>Human Resource</b>	Family	Needs, Skills, Relationships	Empowerment	Align organizational and human needs
<b>Political</b>	Jungle	Power, Competition	Advocacy	Develop agenda and power base
<b>Symbolic</b>	Carnival/Temple/Theater	Culture, Meaning	Inspiration	Create faith, beauty, meaning

The format of the four frames may be applied to the work and functions of principals operating in leadership positions in the New York City public schools' context. Perhaps the structural frame and the human resources frame were the most often ones that the principals applied to coping with outcomes of student achievement in their schools. Under the concept of the structural framework aspect, principals were certainly skilled and familiar with facilitating the organization, planning, and governing processes in the schools. The structure was intact, and principals knew what to expect. Under the concept of Bolman and Deal's human resources framework in *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, & Leadership*, principals may have operated in a manner which understood the basic psychological and spiritual needs of the children. The reason is that most principals were teachers at one time. The human resources framework centered on "how characteristics of organizations and people shape what they do for one another" (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 111). In the human resource frame, the authors explained that most people understand how organizational environments can be "alienating, dehumanizing, and frustrating," and that this kind of ambience can enable the short-changing of talent and operating in ways which distort lives and motivations (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 114). Under the aspect of the human resources framework, the authors argued that sacrificing people for the sake of monetary profits merely reflects the heartlessness of organizations. The researcher is not suggesting that this perspective is held by principals and is certainly not a position held by the principals in this study.

The political frame summarized by the theorists Bolman & Deal (2013) encapsulated a collective core of political assumptions, powerful coalitions, and decision-making which often fostered conflicts. Additionally, morality was often involved as a

point of contention. Under this mode of the political framework, managers as in the case of public school principals, could operate as agents propagating agendas of interests and scenarios seeking widespread systemic change. With this in mind, Bolman and Deal illustrated and informed various situations reflective of politicized decision-making. These exemplified circumstances which examined the spacecraft Challenger disaster and President Reagan's weakness as an effective managerial strategist, and the difference between embracing a larger vision and the efficient packaging of getting a job done.

The symbolic frame, depicted by the theoretical work of the authors, urged thoughtful audiences to consider the associations coming to mind when certain symbols/images were linked to emotional responses. Examples given included: (a) American flag, (b) Nazi, (c) Declaration of Independence, (d) McDonald's, (e) Paris, and so forth (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 239). It was surmised and outlined that the symbolic images framework focused on encapsulating meanings, beliefs, and how such images of symbolism function to engage as "the basic building blocks of the meaning systems, or cultures, that we inhabit" (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 240). Principals have traditionally been in leadership positions which had engaged the creative use of symbols to inspire and motivate students to learn despite diversity or to create patterns of symbolism.

The theorists astutely reflected on the importance of the human resources aspect of the four frames, by stating the following: the imperative nature of the human resource aspect served as a demonstration of "the human input of an organization" (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 161). The example of a school setting was provided stressing that training students to focused upon punctuality, assignment completion, and the obedience of rules which did not always result in successful educational institutions.

Children First altered the direction that New York City public school principals were tasked with. Consequently, a reshaping of a new kind of leadership role was required. Given that their expanded leadership roles entailed administrative and business management aspects, these principals experienced empowerment in ways that they had not experienced under the former school governance models. The four-framed factors of Bolman and Deal of structural, human resources, political, and symbolic helped to stylize principals' managerial behaviors as a theoretical tool to rank – for example – his or her analytical leanings versus coaching talents of shaping individuals' motivation ("Four Frames of Leadership," 1997). The evolved theory of reform under Chancellor Klein, 2002 through 2009 relegated a concept mainly based on the premise that "if given autonomy for decisions about resources and instruction, school principals would improve the performance of their students more effectively than if those decisions were made for them at the central office" (O'Day et al. 2011, p. 88). In New York City, the reconstructive team under Klein's auspices sought consolidation of the reform process by splitting the approximate 1,300 separately governed districts into ten core K-12 regions. The Children First term was dubbed at this juncture to focused more so on the K-8 educational sector.

### **Partnership in Leadership: How Principals Can Exercise and Broaden Their Scope**

Partnerships between public schools and community have always influenced the success or failure of student academic achievement in the classrooms as well as the entire educational public-school districts. In *Helping Principals Build Partnerships*, Dr. Bernard Gassaway (2016) explained how principals might engage partnerships with the community in order to develop this aspect of their management role. In quoting the

Wallace Foundation, Gassaway (2016) acknowledged how the NCLB program emphasized the role of instructional leadership; yet, simultaneously, the program invigorated certain aspects which fostered the need to garner closer interactions with community stakeholders (p. 50). Focusing on the need to boost principal leadership ties to community members, Gassaway (2016) argued the necessity of comprehending the “dynamics among internal and external stakeholders and yourself” (p. 50). The expected collaborations served as bridges to relationships. In this manner, Gassaway (2016) directed recommendations and selected better pathways to the positive utilization of social capital, increased resourcefulness, and effective extension of principals’ leadership roles.

### **Children First in New York City**

School reform in New York City entered the scene under a mayoral direction of change which came to be known as Children First. For slightly over a decade, New York City urban centers have sought educational improvements for student achievement in the form of “bold and rapid system change” (Kelleher, 2014, p. 1). In a report of the evolution of Children First, Kelleher (2014) reviewed several critical aspects of the New York City built developmental plan to transform public education. Kelleher (2014) reported on several elements about reform that were deemed important. Centralized governance replacing a fragmented decentralized one was a concern. Relegating an expanded authority to principals in terms of making budgetary, staffing, and operational decisions in their school functions was another concern. Another element of reform was the creation of myriad pockets of smaller schools to replace the larger high schools. Charter schools would be introduced into the system requiring accountability for student

academic performance with the caveat of usage of shared space “within existing public schools” upon availability (p. 2). Boosting equitable funding opportunities district-wide would utilize a per-pupil weighted standard. This dramatically significant departure from the traditional mode of budgets allocated to teacher salary protocols gave “more resources to schools with highly educated veteran teachers *regardless* of the student populations they serve” (p. 2). Alterations in teachers’ recruitment, pay, and strategies allowed New York City to address issues of stronger preparation for building a more competitive basis.

Additionally, a proactive stance concerning Common Core State Standards arose. Policy recommendations were simultaneously broad and drastically innovative. However, Kelleher (2014) generally reported data findings, statistics, and generalized information including school choice under mayoral reform; school closures and charters; district reformation, school autonomy, and accountability; budget transformations/equity, and reshaping the workforce.

Children First had been contrived to tackle a mayoral effort which had originally been launched in 2003. Its system arose in the form of a multi-year development targeted at gaining improvement in the New York City public schools (Davidson, 2012, p. 104). The overall agenda seemed to be a political mind set determined to launch a system of innovative smaller schools. Problems in the past, such as falling measurable academic performances and inadequate college readiness concerned the framers of Children First. Outcomes from a March 2013 brief, demonstrated high school academic performance improvements documenting an increase “to 69 percent graduating for the class of 2011”

(Kelleher, 2014, p. 5). However, other educational experts have dispensed less-than-stellar accolades for Children First.

Ravitch (2016) likened the reform, in her book criticizing Children First and other programs like it, as opportunities for privatization to step into the business of education. The criticism Ravitch (2016) honored held that the so-called reformers disregarded any altruistic intent for the improvement of students' academic performance but was only harboring a more nefarious purpose of self-gain. The idea centered around the concept of privatizers desiring to transform the New York City Public School system into something akin to a business entity beholden to the will of free markets. Ravitch (2016) passionately proclaimed that these reforming engineers of public education believed "teachers should serve as at-will employees, constantly fearful of losing their jobs" under the guise of competitiveness as a motivating force (p. xix). As a personalized account of experiences with comprehension of policy making, interaction with business leaders, and her own professional expertise in public educational matters, Ravitch (2016) made a formidable impression that discussed the new changes making schools worse off which was based upon a personalized account of experiences with comprehension of policymaking interaction with business leaders and her own professional expertise in public educational matters.

### **The Entrance of Mayoral Control**

Perhaps not calculated, although anticipated when the mayor was elected in 2001, he "inherited a decentralized school system almost universally delegitimized by poor academic performance of many of its component school districts" (Fruchter, & McAlister, 2008, p. 1). The following year, the new mayor urged a shift to centralization

of the New York City Public School System whereby decentralization was officially abolished (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008, p. 1). Haimson et al. (2009) suggested that “The proponents of mayoral control have been very successful in bringing their views to the public” (p. 1). The overarching idea formulated a reality in which New York City was handed a public school structure in which the mayor channeled authority to appoint the chancellor, dictate the educational budget system, and set widespread educational policy throughout the city (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008). The article by Fruchter and McAlister (2008) reviewed and reported the process noting the early appointment of Joel Klein as chancellor to implement the structural changes in public school policy. With the ushering in of this movement, the participation of “locally elected school boards” and Board of Education were wiped out (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008, p. 2). Essentially, as a result, this new policy had effectively dismantled the previous structure which only allowed a modicum of limited parental roles.

Thus, the changes called for the re-training of principals in new leadership roles, and this process had been funded by private sources (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008). What evolved to be known as Children First was primarily earmarked toward New York City’s poorest educationally performance sector by launching a 70-small-high-schools pod of creation (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008, p. 7). The concept catalogued an assumption wherein many of New York City’s urban public high schools were often overcrowded with poor access to resources. Fruchter and McAlister (2008) recorded that one high school in the Bronx had experienced a “graduation rate of 18% for the class of 2006” (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008, p. 7). Children First, initiated by corporate movers-and-shakers, imposed a business management model for managing New York City schools.

The mayor's words told the story when he stated regarding the city's new school management that "Companies in the end need direction, not discussion", and Klein had chimed in with, "You can't do reform by plebiscite; it leads to the paralysis of politics" (Fruchter & McAlister, 2008, p. 9).

The Mayor secured favor and support for the sweeping changes because most of the community school districts in New York City were deemed a dying breed. O'Day (2011) indicated that the districts "and the elected school boards that had governed them for over thirty years had been stripped of much of their influence" (p. 36). Mayoral control garnered support to dismantle this arrangement by emphasizing the corruption and poor student academic performance to engage decision making, and build support for recentralization. The new system functioned as an appointee from each borough with mayoral choice for the additional eight members under his auspices (O'Day, 2011, p. 36). Given a narrower and more administratively constrained centrality, the pace set a new bold standard. The idea of the shift encouraged a quick change of affairs. Perhaps the reason centered on avoiding community or public engagement in terms of feedback. O'Day (2011) conceived that "Also at stake were competing visions of the most appropriate forms of parental and public engagement and differing beliefs about how to reconcile the need to build coalitions to ensure that reforms are sustained" (p. 36). The following figure (Figure1) helps to illustrate the before and after differences which developed between the key factions; namely the "New York City Department of Education (DOE) and its critics" (O'Day, 2011, p. 37). As Figure 1 shows, student or family and school or district may be examined with regard to implementation and policy formation.

<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Policy Formation</b>
Implementation Policy formation Individualistic (student and family)	A. Information and choice	B. Child-centered collaboration
Collective (school or district)	C. Supportive partnerships	D. Advocacy, strong democracy <i>versus</i> E. Accountability through mayoral election

(O'Day, Bitter & Gomez, 2011, p. 37). *Figure 1.* Types of Parent and Community

In the context of O'Day (2011), the cell represented in 'A', under *Information and Choice*, showed an emphasis on parents receiving better information about the offerings of their child's school. Should policies conflict between the needs of their children in terms of classroom or school concerns, such mismatch could be detrimental (p. 37). In cell 'B', under the *Child-centered Collaboration* section, O'Day (2011) described a conceptual engagement of proactive encouragement on children's educational experience (p. 37). Cell 'C' was depicted as demonstrating an alignment of district pursued policies which drove examples such as community-based school fundraisers, local business involvement, and PTAs that reach out. Finally, cells 'D' and 'E' demonstrate the dichotomy between the polarization of strong democracy versus mayoral control. Additionally, Portz (2000) recognized that the dual paths of mayoral and corporate education reform demonstrated different approaches to support building. Furthermore, McGlynn (2010) argued that "districts in states with Republican legislatures and large impoverished populations are most likely to adopt mayoral control" (p. 661).

### **Partnerships, Principals' Leadership, and No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

With the federal passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation in 2001 and signed on January 8, 2002, school system accountability had changed (O'Day et al.,

2011). The change of NCLB policy in New York City appeared to render the presence of just another reform “with new pressures, policies, and programs” in the concocted container of more ambitious goals (O’Day et al., 2011, p. 183). Having coincided with new governance, under mayoral control in New York City, the leadership role of principals took on the form of “CEO of the school”, according to Rogers (2009, p. 44). Oddly enough, Rogers (2009) pointed out that principals were “hemmed in” by myriad constraints such as wielding less authority in the arenas of “the literacy and math coaches” (p. 44). Additionally, the lack of partnerships in the realm of curriculum design, mandated a policy under Children First wherein test scores were gathered *during* the academic school year rather than assessing at the end of the school year (Rogers, 2009). Tienken and Orlich (2013) asserted that NCLB’s underlying accountability assumptions appeared invalid because no socioeconomic considerations sought to address poverty issues among students (p. 69). This factor pointed to a potential underservice of 100% of American students as stated by Tienken and Orlich (2013). A re-evaluation of the significance of public educational institutions in the first place might have motivated critics as principals fought to find their place in new leadership roles.

### **Public Education: Original and Future Intent as an Institution**

Not unlike Diane Ravitch, other critics raised voices of concern regarding Children First in New York City. While Ravitch (2016) weighed the original intent of public education as the rubric for children’s preparation essentially for lifetime duties in the rubric of citizenship. However, often educators displayed concerns for accountability, socio-economic inequities, and abuse of corporate controlled funding. Having recognized the mayoral control element of Children First, Davidson (2012)

discussed the imperative mechanism of accountability as intertwined with the corporate-business model being applied to urban public school districts. For example, in reference to such status, Davidson (2012) emphasized that “It is worth noting that the model of governance used by school districts under mayoral control borrows in both form and substance from the corporate model” (p. 188). Under this type of model, as reflected from a nine-city study generated by the Institute of Education, Law, and Policy (IELP) report of 2010, the superintendent effectively becomes obsolete and replaced by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This pattern persisted in the urban school districts of Chicago and Cleveland wherein school districts contracted CEO-like titles in lieu of traditional superintendents’ titles such as Chief Education Officer (Davidson, 2012, p. 188). Such designations dramatized the shift in the reformers intent regarding New York City’s public educational reformatting.

As mayoral influences increased in New York City, particularly in 2007, the reorganizers announced that the next phase of decentralization reforms would disseminate wholesale power to every school principal (Davidson, 2012, p. 106). Davidson (2012) rendered a discourse which posited how the newly organized model gained traction via an empowerment network designed to connect principals into a partnership arrangement with non-profits and others. Davidson’s critical work echoed the historical context of the New York City Public School System’s governance. The analysis explained how NYC public schools functioned under a centralization style of school governance. Meanwhile, future gazes considered the input of unlikely philanthropists as George Lucas, of Star Wars fame. Pondiscio (2010) delved into the concept of *Edutopia*, which is George Lucas’ Educational Foundation in terms of

applying project-based learning to public education. Still other scholarly observers argued that socio-economic disparities, and racial inequities in educational quality will fail to achieve the lofty goals for all students in New York City under Children First. The work of Reback (2014) suggested that the *New York City's Children First Lessons in School Reform* report exaggerated the successes of myriad high schools, and declared that a more balanced rendition would have resulted in neutral outcomes in academic performance. Once again, management, accountability, and policy earned key barometers of judgment in terms of how the reforms have been implemented and will continue under mayoral control.

### **School Reform: New Socioeconomic Realities, Inequalities, and Racial Coding**

Investigations of historical realities in the United States of racial and ethnic inequities in public education creates a laundry list of concerns for educators in such a highly diverse political and educational environment of New York City. A centerpiece for educational reform under Children First in New York City explores how mayoral control involved billionaire executive influences. Herrera and Noguera (2013) related an important story regarding the New York City Department of Education and its corresponding Charter School Centers. It was learned that under the auspices of mayoral control of Children First, the Parthenon Study would investigate how well Latino students had academically fared. The watchdog organization taking on the oversight of the New York City school system, namely, the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP), established its position under the authority of the mayor (Herrera & Noguera, 2013). This historical development instilled the notion of furthering the goal for the Department of Education, in New York City, to decentralize its vast system, and thus, removing the

sustenance of a central core upon which local districts could depend on. Herrera and Noguera (2013) focused the impetus of their article explaining that the forms under Children First dismantled the previous structure. Furthermore, under Children First, the formation of myriad charter schools was a re-calibration of test scores which identified a far worsening scenario. The re-calibration of statistical findings showed that:

For Latino students, the re-calibration of test scores proved to be devastating.

Whereas 5% of the city's students achieved the highest level of mastery, Level 4, on the Grade 8 English Language Arts assessment, when outcomes are sorted by racial/ethnic groups, 11% of Asian students are at Level 4, as are 10% of White, non-Hispanic students but just 2% of Black and 2% of Hispanic students (Schott Foundation for Public Education as cited in Herrera & Noguera, 2013, p. 9).

Graduation rates ebbed and flowed across annual patterns. The statistical-based figure seemingly conflicted with the more flattering stellar progress reported by the forty-two positive points-of-growth from the aforementioned mayoral source. The Latino students had not fared quite as well as led to believe.

Thus, it appeared that the Latino students suffered an outcome of benign neglect. The bilingual and English Language Learner (ELLs) students' lack of progressive academic achievement could be measured. If what happened in the New York City Public School System serves as an indication of national trends, a similar concern was detected in California. Under the guise of so-called *reform*, the public school system in the State of California came under scrutiny. Pierce (2016) informed an audience of readers that people were being allowed to operate charters schools as businesses under the guise of

charter school public education by reformers and bankers who received massive profits seemingly constant charter school scandals (Pierce, 2016).

The study on the full-service community model, by Luna (2011), searched for ways students might utilize family engagement to overcome learning setbacks. The qualitative data findings suggested that the full-service community model proved valuable in exposing key interaction between students with consistent adult one-on-one support (Luna, 2011). The rubric of socioeconomic, ethnic, and/or racial-based differentiation outcomes in student achievement under Children First demonstrates a need for further research. Whitehurst and Whitfield (2013) admitted that the managerial funding processes, which lean towards favoring the most popular schools, benefited more popular schools at the “expense of unpopular schools in myriad ways” (p. 18). One manner shown in the article blamed the student-based weights for funding at all levels of local, state and federal governments *and* how subsidies might be divvied up among the choices for poor families (Whitehurst & Whitfield, 2013).

How principals’ leadership roles have responded, and will continue to respond, to the shifting realities of Children First and the socioeconomic authenticity of their students remains to be seen.

While it is true that the NYC urban public school system vacillated, periodically, from centralized to decentralized to centralized structures in the educational system, by the 1970’s the arrangement had evolved into a geographic form (Davidson, 2012, p. 79). Eminent American Professor of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Gary Orfield, explained in a scholarly discourse why paying attention to how racism and poverty inequalities impact outcomes in education are important. Orfield and Lee (2005)

counseled that despite promises of the *No Child Left Behind* program under President Bush, a “disproportionate number of schools being officially labeled as persistent failures and facing sanctions” under that particular program were “segregated minority schools” (p. 4). Furthermore, Orfield and Lee (2005) highlighted findings which suggested that a relationship has existed between high-poverty schools and less stabilized and qualified teaching staff participation. Considering the factor that the successful schools experiencing academic improvement among their students would attain rewards in the form of ‘bonuses’ for principals, but on the other hand, questioned how lesser-performing schools’ principals would fare.

### **The Impact of Principals’ Roles: Tradition, Wide Scale Change, and Children First**

School principals in the climate of gradual, yet drastic public school education reforms in New York City under Children First, have needed to plot new pathways to navigate changes in policy, instructional protocols, and budgetary decision-making responsibility. Goens (2016) described the new face of public educational reforms as a “fog” which has created an atmosphere in which issues are obscured, and the trend leans towards “deflecting our focus from the real mission of schools” (p. xvi). Hinting that the evolved system of public education reform is madness, Goens (2016) explained that data-mining as a test-driven “tool” must be accurate to be meaningful and that educators have employed strategic logistics pushed by profit motives of the private sector (p. xvi). Principals within the New York City Public School System, as professional educational leaders and management, have endured pressures from district administrators to improve their students’ academic outcomes. Ravitch (2016) characterized the pressure of school principals as their bearing the brunt of officials’ and legislators’ language of

accountability translated as codes for getting tough with principals and teachers. For example, Ravitch (2016) asserted how low test scores may impact a principal's personal career by endangering his or her job by closing their school and firing all staff members as a very real result. Such policy is deemed insalubrious to Principals, teachers, and students who may collectively become wholeheartedly discouraged amidst such a draconian policy.

Traditional principal leadership in the urban school setting consisted of generally managing the educational direction of their individual institutions and normally being under the supervision of the district superintendent. Oversight of the Board of Education also played a role. A plethora of research organizations, such as *The Wallace Foundation*, re-examined the current leadership role of principals. The wide scale changes, such as under Children First, have altered principals' leadership approach. Principals, as well as teachers under Children First, and reforms like it, must operate within an environment Ravitch (2016) described as rife with economists' and entrepreneurs' interests replacing the traditional core concern of child-centered humanistic community approach. Also, it is important not to neglect the factor that principals were once teachers themselves, and therefore thoroughly understood what the frontlines of teaching *actually* look like or should reflect.

In his summary review of New York City's Children First, Reback (2014) argued that the entire public school educational system dramatically changed in both policy and effectiveness. The budget, the schools, the district, and the workforce were collectively all re-made under Children First. Reback (2014) announced that the exemplary changes outlined in the report, *New York City's Children First: Lessons in School Reform*, was

flawed in myriad ways. While it is true that funding protocols particularly affected the leadership role of principals, the overall foundation of the report fostered an interpretive imbalance, and was devoid of a neutral tone to explain the changes under a mayoral regime. Reback (2014) explained that the district shifts, under Children First, required that principals operate with increased autonomy in terms of “their budgeting and hiring decisions” (p. 2). Thus, as a result, public school principals incurred the weight of accountability pressures holding them *directly* responsible for children’s academic performance. This trend in the New York City Public School System, perhaps, placed principals in the most critical role to judge the de facto outcome of Children First. For example, in his critique of the aforementioned report, Reback (2014) asserted, “Since principals and teachers ultimately implement most school policies, their attitudes towards them may be critical to the policies’ success and longevity” (p. 7). Additionally, not all principals embrace a sense that education must be delivered equitably for all students regardless of race, color, socioeconomic status, or creed. Orfield and Kucsera (2014) stated as such, and proclaimed, that “Some of the principals quoted in a recent New York Times article appear to be very open about the difficulty or their lack of interest in achieving diversity” (p.131).

Aside from the varied principals’ positions of commitment to all students’ academic achievement in New York State overall, principals under Children First garnered a huge change in fiduciary leadership roles. Under the auspices of Chancellor Carmen Fariña of the New York City Department of Education an extensive 9 chapter Resource Guide for school budgets was compiled. In outlining the now authorized fiscal responsibilities of New York City Public School principals included a key indicator of

the sweeping wide scale change. In essence, principals became officially authorized and delegated oversight empowerment “for all budget, payroll, and purchasing transactions for the school” (Fariña, 2015, p. 3). Although principals, as primary academicians in the professional field of education had not been explicitly trained as financial experts, the new policy provided the new stipulation. The role of financial expertise was placed upon principals under the policy reforms of Children First according to guidelines of the *Fair Student Funding & School Budget Resource Guide* issued by the NYC Department of Education and are indicated as follows:

- Requirements to ensure all expenditures in alignment (Fariña, 2015).
- Resolving of over-expenditures, and disallowances in allocated funding levels.
- Principals must adhere to regulations, program guidelines, with “strong internal controls in place” and further ensure the trustworthiness of staff (Fariña, 2015, p.3).
- Bound to refer to the website to clarify additional guidance, and/or training.
- Implement impeccable student data updates, as appends to *all* data systems with regard to budgetary/accountability and report purposes.
- Formation of school budget in consultation with ‘School Leadership Team’ (Fariña, 2015).

These stipulations of change that principals experience are listed as caveats of leadership role changes under Children First and seems to have assembled a plethora of modifications.

## Summary

The chapter included an overview of research literature concerning the importance of principals' leadership roles, in New York City, since Children First. It also described prior research that examined the theoretical framework concepts of Bolman and Deal. Mayoral control, wide-scale changes in the public school context, and districtwide partnerships in terms of system leadership were discussed. Finally, it discussed the literature involving policy changes under the reforms, in terms of the structural, political, human resources, and symbolic context. This literature review helped shape the study by highlighting emergent themes that New York City principals have been confronted with, during Children First. The gaps in the literature, which this study addressed, combined issues of how New York City school principals dealt with Children First and mayoral control, with the distribution of questionnaires based on Bolman and Deal's four-frames model.

The following Chapter Three presents an overview of the methodology utilized in this present investigation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter outlines the methods used to collect and analyze data concerning the evolving perceptions of the system and instructional leadership within the New York City Public School System. It has been correlated to how educational reforms, particularly Children First, have had an impact on the evolving roles of principals. Education and educational reforms have continued to be important political and social topics. It is imperative that the public currently understands the effect of various leadership styles and philosophies that can have and have had on children's educational development. This study, examined the shifting power dynamics for educational professionals working in New York City public schools under Children First. Furthermore, it examines those shifts that affected principals' leadership roles that have provided insights into the world of educational leadership.

Changes in leadership were explored at the school level that affected the education culture of an entire district. The study also created a more comprehensive look at how high-level leadership decisions can affect students learning. Specifically, through qualitative research practices, this study will explore how three New York City principals established and maintained their leadership roles under Children First by using Bolman and Deal's four-frame theory to evaluate their leadership practices. These principals used their roles to create a specific culture and climate within their school site and to note the benefits and challenges that accompanied their evolving leadership roles and empowerment under mayoral control.

## **Research Questions**

The study is based on the following research questions:

1. Under Children First, wide-scale power and leadership shifts occurred in the New York City school system. What are the lasting effects on principals' roles and their perceptions of their roles?
2. What effects did large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs have on a school's culture?
  - 2(a). What challenges and successes have principals faced under the recent changes in mayoral and chancellor control?
3. In Bolman and Deal's (1991) organizational leadership structure research, they discussed four frames of organizational structure leadership, and they are: 1) structural, 2) human resource, 3) symbolic, and 4) political. How did these NYC principals utilize these frameworks in creation of and maintenance of leadership behaviors and power bases before, during and after the Children First?

## **Research Design**

The research design for this study included several qualitative research elements, resulting in an explanatory case study. There was a need to extend the qualitative research on the principals' perspectives on their roles in the new unfolding New York City public school environment. This type of study involved the qualitative procedure of interviews with participants. One of the goals of this case study was to allow participants to verbalize their stories and demonstrate their knowledge and expertise of how leadership changes can affect education culture and students' achievement and educational development.

First, participants were observed in the process of their duties as a principal separate from the interview process. These observations served as a first-hand account of the roles these principals play: i.e., the participants' leadership behaviors and styles, the way the participants perceive their leadership abilities and potentialities, and ascertaining participants' leadership styles.

In addition to observations, each participant took part in an hour-long interview with the researcher. Participants also completed Bolman and Deal's four-frame model of the leadership self-assessment survey to reveal their leadership behaviors and style.

The purpose of the data collection was to elicit the participants' perspectives of their revolving roles using the theoretical foundation of Deal and Bolman's four frame model. The interview protocol provided the researcher with information how Children First affected the principals' leadership styles, practices and students' overall achievement at their school sites.

### **Population and Sample**

By understanding how power shifts affect leadership styles, and district culture, educational leaders from all grade levels would be able to create policies and practices to the advantage to increased students' achievement. The population of the study was New York City public school principals who served under Children First and continue to serve at the present time. The researcher purposefully recruited participants who had a wealth of leadership experience during Children First and, subsequently, after Children First.

To better discern how educational and leadership power shifts can affect whole systems, this study examined three New York City public school principals, who served in schools on the elementary, middle, and high school level. These individuals were

chosen based on their experiences as they relate to leadership in the New York City Department of Education and their experiences with Children First.

### **Sampling Method**

For this study, a stratified method was used. According to Creswell (2014), stratification requires “that specific characteristics of the individuals...are represented in the sample and the sample reflects the true proportion in the population of individuals with certain characteristics” (p. 158). These characteristics included school personnel that were currently employed as a principal by the school district and directly experienced the organizational changes mandated by Children First. The characteristics of the principals desired for the study included traits of behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, social structures, and relationships.

This decision was made to accommodate the exploration of additional variables that could potentially affect the examination of the power shifts principals experienced under mayoral control. A stratified sampling simply means that specific types of individuals will be chosen from the population based on their membership to certain target groups. The participants were not all chosen on the basis of accepting the invitation. They were chosen based upon certain criteria that was established. An unbiased set of participants across a diverse set of demographics was chosen, and they were the first three responders. Since they were the first responders, the researcher decided to include those three who represented three different school grade level configurations. The grade levels represented were (a) primary (Grades P-5), (b) middle (Grades 6-8), and (c) high school (Grades 9-12). This study included an African-American principal, a Hispanic principal, and a Caucasian principal.

## **Data Collection Instrument**

The primary data collection instrument for this study was an audio- recorded interview. The researcher engaged the participants in a 20 question interview process that allowed for open-ended answers that provided a cogent narrative about their roles as New York City principals under the reforms of Children First. The questions were developed according to Creswell's (2009) theory of qualitative research inquiry. Interview questions were drawn from a review of the literature and created to answer the study's research questions. Interview questions were aligned to research questions. The researcher engaged subject matter experts in the educational leadership field. An expert panel of four educators, who have doctoral degrees and work with doctoral students in educational leadership, reviewed the questions created for the interview process and collectively aligned the questions to the research questions. This process established reliability and validity of the interview questions.

## **Data Collection**

Once IRB approval was received, participants were contacted by mail. Permission was granted to audiotape the interviews as per the IRB protocol. Confidentiality was ensured by assigning the participants pseudonyms. By engaging in both qualitative observations and qualitative interviews (Creswell, 2014, p. 190) as the primary means of data collection, the researcher was able to: (1) have a first-hand experience with the participants, (2) record information as it occurred, (3) explore topics that might have been uncomfortable for the participants to discuss, (4) gave the participants the opportunity to share historical information, and (5) controlled the line of questioning (Creswell, 2014, p.

191). Additionally, the researcher ensured the confidentiality of the participants' responses by eliminating personal or identifiable information in the study.

For observations, the procedure included one hour of shadowing the participants interacting with students, parents, community stakeholders, and other educators. During that hour, Bolman and Deal's (1991) four frame model was used to guide the observations. The researcher indirectly interacted with the participant and took notes on their interactions and procedures. The researcher scheduled a full hour of the participants' time. Bolman and Deal's (1991) four frame model was used when conducting the observations.

### **Data Analysis**

After the data from the observations and interviews were transcribed, the researcher began to compile a qualitative case study for each participant. The data was analyzed using coding and using a thematic analysis. The transcripts sent were returned to the participants for member checking. The interviews and observations were transcribed. Other documentation used in addition to the interviews were the New York State School Report Card Accountability and Overview Report, the Middle Schools Quality Snapshot, and the Accountability Status Report in the subject areas. The researcher presented each participant's information as a case study on the phenomenon of power shifts and how they affect educational settings and cultures. When all three case studies were completed, the researcher had the opportunity to fully examine the similarities and differences among the participants' responses and their experiences of working under Children First. The researcher utilized a compare and contrast frame of reference using Bolman and Deal's (1991) leadership self-assessment survey after the

completion of the case studies. The study highlighted the nuances associated with the shifting power dynamics were taking, and that will continue to take place, within the New York City Department of Education (Castillo, 2013, p. 4).

### **Researcher Bias**

For this study, one of the most important concerns was researcher bias. The researcher, as a former New York City Department of Education school principal with similar experiences to the participants in this study, is providing transparency at all levels to ensure the reliability and validity of this study. It was the intent of the researcher to foster transparency to help reduce misinterpretation. Each of the participants were engaged in the same manner asked the same questions, and subjected to the same method of analysis for their interview responses. This ensured that similar themes were explored in each case study, and therefore, forming the basis for a more equitable comparison.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations for the research herein, and as it pertains to the researcher, must be established as equally important as the other components of the qualitative investigative process. Striving to maintain an academic and ethical balance as devoid of personal bias as much as possible is imperative Creswell (2014) to expressly indicated that the researcher's role forms an obligatory one positing a duty to "respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of the informant(s)."

### **Reliability and Validity**

Validity in the qualitative research process consigns an awareness of maintenance of consistency in terms of credible balance and reliability (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, in the context of qualitative validity, it is signified that the researcher is obligated to ensure

accuracy of data findings by “employing certain procedures” (Creswell, 2014, p. 190).

Using a qualitative reliability approach in research ensures consistency in the documentation of transcripts, interviews, case studies, and procedural steps. Thus, checking transcripts to avoid mistaken documentation and ensuring no veering from the definition of codes happens (Creswell, 2014). Taking copious notes during the compilation process of data comparison shall inform the proper accomplishment of best practices in outcomes. Other suggestions to this end by Creswell (2014) included a cross-coherent basis of justification, and using richly *thick* detailed descriptions which can result in solidifying validity.

For this study, validity and reliability were achieved by ensuring consistency in data collection by content validating interview question via subject matter experts. In addition, the observation and interview process was standardized by using the same procedure for each participant. Moreover, member checking was employed to verify that transcriptions were accurate and reflected participants’ true feelings. Interview questions were drawn from a review of the literature and created to answer the study’s research questions. Interview questions were aligned to research questions by engaging subject matter experts in the field. An expert panel of four educators, who reviewed the questions created for this interview process. This process established reliability and validity of the interview questions.

## **Summary**

A qualitative methodology was used to explore the changing roles of New York City principals during the historical reform of Children First. A purposive sampling strategy was used to collect information from three New York City principals via

observation and one-on-one interviews. To ascertain how educational and leadership power shifts affect the School system, this study examined three New York City public school principals who served in schools on the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Participants were observed for one hour each and then were independently interviewed using interview questions informed by research and validated by subject matter experts. The principals' perceptions of their leadership behaviors were subjected to observational analysis using Bolman and Deal's (2013) four-frame theory – including the structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames of references to determine their effects on school district culture and students' achievement at each school site. Observations and interviews were transcribed and used to develop a narrative by way of coding and thematic analysis. Chapter Four will present the results of data collection and analysis.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

This research focused on the power shifts that occurred during Children First, which were initiated during the entire mayoral terms from 2002 to 2014. This policy shift changed the educational leadership roles of school principals across various districts in New York City. Any new reform brings challenges to the educational leaders whether the mandates for change are bottom-up or top-down. In New York City, each new mayor brings in and appoints a chancellor or educational leader at the top of the public school education system who will carry the responsibility of transforming the mayor's vision into a reality for public schools. It is expected that each new mayor will bring a change in the system leadership. Depending on the tenure of the mayor and State legislative actions, superintendents and principals can expect a shift every four years.

This case study examines the impact Children First had on the roles and perspectives of elementary, middle, and high school principals. Three principals were selected for this case study representing elementary, middle, and high schools.

The three principals in the study were veterans of the New York City Public School System from and through prior administrations. During the interviews, the principals indicated that under Children First, all principals operated on a competitive basis as opposed to a collaborative one. During this reform, they were not exposed to, nor collaborated with, peers from other schools as they had in prior administrations. Principals were expected to manage more responsibilities than what they had in previous administrations. The role of the principal is very intense. Principals serve in many roles, according to the National Education Association, and such roles spanned a wide gamut of

multidimensional responsibilities and more (“Changing Role of School Leadership,” 2008, p. 1). In addition, and furthermore, the NEA asserts that:

Principals are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional and Curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations/communications experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, as well as guardians of various legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives. (“Changing Role of School Leadership,” 2008, p.1)

The purpose of this study was to examine the shifting power dynamics for principals working in New York City public schools under Children First. By determining how these shifts effected principals’ leadership roles, this study may provide useful and necessary insights and guides into the world of educational leadership.

### **Research Questions**

Three primary research questions were asked, along with a single sub- question to Research Question Two. A series of interview questions were developed to generate themes and patterns used to ultimately answer the research questions. Table 3 displays the research questions along with the corresponding interview questions and Table 4 displays the demographics of participants. The primary research questions and sub-question include:

**Research Question 1:** Under Children First, wide-scale power and leadership shifts occurred in the New York City school system. What are the lasting effects on principals’ roles and their perceptions of their roles?

**Research Question 2:** What effects do large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs have on a school culture?

**Research Question 2a:** What challenges and successes did principals face under the changes in mayoral and chancellor control?

**Research Question 3:** Deal and Bolman discuss four frames of organizational structure, and they are: 1) the structural, 2) the human resources, 3) the symbolic, and 4) the political frameworks. How do (or did) NYC principals utilize these frameworks in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases before, during, and after Children First?

Table 3

Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions

Interview	Interview Question details	Corresponding Research
Question	Question	
1	Can you describe any noticeable shifts in power that took place during Children First, for example, superintendents and principals, how did their roles change?	RQ1
2	How did this shift in power impact the school district culture?	RQ2
3	Have you created a culture and climate of support and success in your school?	RQ2
4	What effects do large scale restructuring of instructional leadership designs have on a school culture? What challenges and successes did you have, or did you face during the reform?	RQ2
5	Were there noticeable differences in student outcomes and achievement as a result of these power shifts?	RQ2a
6	Did you experience any other changes under Children First?	RQ2a
7	Many schools were closed during this reform. How did a school closing in your district affect your own school?	RQ2a
8	What effect did this have on your own leadership behaviors?	RQ2a
9	How did New York city principals utilize these frameworks in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases during Children First?	RQ3
10	Do you utilize any of these frames in your own leadership style? If so, which ones?	RQ3

By engaging in both qualitative observations and qualitative interviews (Creswell, 2014, p. 190) as the primary means of data collection, the researcher was able to (a) have a first-hand experience with the participant, (b) record information as it occurs, including anomalies, (c) explore topics that may be uncomfortable for the participants to discuss, (d) give the participants the opportunity to share historical information, and (e) control the line of questioning (Creswell, 2014, p. 191). Additionally, the researcher ensured the confidentiality of the participants' responses by eliminating personal or identifiable information in the case studies. The study focused on commonalities and differences revealed by the participants regarding their experiences with the power shifts under Children First.

For the interviews, the researcher scheduled a minimum of 1 hour of the participants' time. The interview questions were asked in the same order to each participant, and the entire interview session was audio-recorded and, subsequently, transcribed.

Table 4

Displays the demographic characteristics of each individual participant.

<b>Table</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Interview</b>	<b>Certifications/trainings</b>
Mr. Albert	67	Caucasian	May 27, 2016	Professional certificate and certified SDA
Mr. Robert	52	African American	June 3, 2016	SDA + New York Leadership Academy
Mr. Mark	45	Hispanic and African American	June 15, 2016	SDA + New York Leadership Academy

## **Data Analysis and Findings**

After data from observations, interviews and questionnaires were transcribed, the researcher compiled a case study for each participant. Using case description to present

and then analyze the data collected, the researcher was able to present each participant's case as a unique and informative report on the phenomenon of power shifts and how they affect educational settings and cultures. When all three case studies were completed, the researcher fully examined the similarities and differences among the participants' responses and their experiences of working under Children First. By utilizing a compare-and-contrast frame after the completion of the case studies, the data highlighted the nuances associated with shifting power dynamics that have taken, and those that will continue to take place within the New York City Department of Education (Castillo, 2013). In the three exemplary programs, the researcher found that the veteran principals had certain elements in common. All three had a clear focus and values about their evolving roles in leadership which emphasized instructional leadership, organizational development, and wide-scale restructuring. Moreover, they all had cohort groups with whom they collaborated and created opportunities to work in teams. They were all involved in strong partnerships with their schools. On the high school level, the principal had created field-based internships with skilled teachers for students to participate in a work-study program. What follows is a description of the three principals whose schools, upon entering them, focus in instruction as well as the culture and climate within the school buildings. Beyond the programs and rigorous instruction, schools create a welcoming environment of respect and support that is evidenced by the way the administration and staff address students, parents, and the community-at-large and beyond.

The data analysis and findings begins with Mr. Mark. On June 6, 2016, the researcher visited the principal at the elementary school for a scheduled interview. The

meeting was cancelled because his school was designated to host an educational school tour. Approximately 20 out-of-state administrators and school leaders visited this full-service community school. The researcher was invited to stay to observe this meeting. Mr. Mark provided historical information about his school, the demographics, and the linked collaborative services that his students, the teachers, parents and community have access to. Mr. Mark has adequate resources and technologies in his classroom. Also, he has appropriate technologies for his medical and mental health clinic. Mr. Mark is a spokesperson for his school, and shares the story about his need of resources to politicians, community organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders. Given Mr. Mark's adept use of the political frame he has been able to garner community services, and resources from political and business affiliations. The school-based services include: medical and mental health, social services, optical, dental, and other human services that meet the needs of those at the school site. He took the school leaders for a personal tour through the well-kept, but extremely antiquated, and large building to demonstrate the impact of community, family and student resources at the elementary age, which provide academic and non-academic support. This building, although there were many entrances, the researcher did not see a handicapped-accessible entrance.

Mr. Mark provided an enlightening school experience for the educators, me, and some who were not aware of a community school environment. The researcher had an opportunity to review the accountability status report for the 2005-06 school year. Although his population of almost 700 students did not achieve the adequate yearly progress (AYP) in English Arts that year, he did achieve satisfactory progress in the other subjects in his school, toward the goal of proficiency for all students.

On June 15, 2016, the researcher returned to Mr. Mark's school for a one on one interview and then had meeting with a parent, and a community stakeholder. He brought all of us together, introduced us, and co-mingled the parents' and stakeholders' meeting. He indicated that the parent would be a part of the planned activity. After those meetings were completed, Mr. Mark made time for the two us to complete our interview. From the interactions with Mr. Mark, it was clear that he was engaged with the community and parents, comfortably using the human resource lens that highlights his concept of community organization relationships. He was also able to resolve uncertain aspects of the upcoming events, and provided direction to make community activities a reality. He also used the political and the symbolic lenses to demonstrate a positive and productive end with the parent and stakeholders. He creates a culture that bonded the school with the community to accomplish their goals.

The researcher visited Mr. Robert's middle school on June 3, 2016. He is in a Post-World War II building that is accessible by persons with disabilities. Upon entering the building one is able to see the many displays, such as trophies, awards, and photographs of indelible moments within, and outside of the building. Mr. Robert's secretary notified him of the researcher's arrival, and came out and led her to his office for the scheduled interview. Mr. Robert has had a successful leadership role in his school with his students. One of the 257 middle schools citywide, this school has persistently demonstrated yearly progress in each subject area under his leadership, as indicated by one NYS accountability document in 2005 to the present. He has Grades 6-8, close to 1,000 students, and has various academic programs to fit the specialized needs of all his students. Many of his students are accepted into specialized high schools. He has a

partnership with universities. His academic and sports program keeps parents involved internally with the academic programs, and keeps morale high, and informs them of each student's progress in each class. For this principal parent involvement is a priority. They are informed and encouraged to attend all well-publicized events that are happening in the school. After the interview, Mr. Robert and the researcher joined the Earth Day celebration which included teachers, students and their special projects, parents, and other community stakeholders.

### **Mr. Albert**

On May 27, 2016, the researcher had a scheduled morning interview with Mr. Albert, the alternative high school principal. His school is located in an immaculate building that has two entrances, one with stairs, and one that is accessible by persons with disabilities, and an elevator. The secretary cheerfully greets students, and visitors alike, engaging everyone in a warm, welcoming manner. Mr. Albert welcomed the researcher, and led her into his office. The researcher had noted in a few minutes that Mr. Albert had an effective program. In the corridor, his perceptive teachers genuinely wanted to assist the returning – or late arriving students – to class.

On July 11, 2016, the researcher attended the alternative high school meeting. The researcher observed that Mr. Albert, the longest serving veteran principal in the sample, had mapped out an agenda demonstrating his structural skills. He outlined targets for the upcoming school year and supported the other participants to include their ideas. He discussed his plan to meet those targets, how they would be implemented, and how they would continue to monitor progress of attendance, instruction, and test scores by creating or replicating interventions for their students to drop-in, and not dropout. He has a

population of over 250 students, who are aged 16-21, overaged, and under-credited.

According to Mr. Albert, his student population consists of those who have dropped out of the education system because of multiple suspensions, disruptive behavior, multiple failures in academic skills, incarceration, pregnancy, and other similar challenges.

This principal has consistently established and maintained community organization relationships and internship sites that are incorporated into the curriculum. Students are afforded a work and study program that has been very successful. When the students graduate from this program, they are career-ready and college-ready. Although the researcher reviewed the 2005-06 accountability status, his school was in good standing for 4 consecutive years from 2006. The students' regent's grades exceeded rates of NYC in the five subject areas. Mr. Albert has been part of the reform, but he has the job of "re-culturing" the students back into a high school environment who have had poor academic experiences. The re-culturing is their return to school, to reach and complete their educational goals and career choices.

Each principal was asked all the same questions in the interview protocol that appears in the appendix. The questions were designed to examine the effectiveness of Children First at each school and to determine if the principals felt that their roles as school leaders were affected by the mandates. Further, the researcher was interested in understanding if, and how, their leadership role shift affected school culture.

### **Qualitative Findings**

Three primary research questions were asked, along with a single sub-question to Research Question 2. A series of interview questions were specifically created to generate themes, and patterns used to ultimately answer the research questions.

## **Research Question 1**

Research Question 1 asked: Under Children First, wide-scale power and leadership shifts occurred in the New York City school system, what are the lasting effects on principals' roles and their perceptions of their roles? Interview Question 1 was constructed to answer Research Question 1.

### **Interview Question 1**

Interview Question 1 asked: Can you describe any noticeable shifts in power that took place during Children First, for example, superintendents and principals, how did their roles change? Based on findings, the dominant theme that emerged from all responses was principals gained power ( $n=3$ ). In addition, a sub theme was extracted: superintendents became less powerful ( $n=3$ ). Some of the specific quoted responses included:

Mr. Albert stated:

"I think what happened is, principals were given more power and superintendents had less overall; that was the biggest shift. I think that is the most noticeable shift that a lot of what the superintendents would do was really entrusted to the principals."

Mr. Robert reported:

"I think this is one of the greatest things they did during that Bloomberg era, was they did take power away from superintendents and they pushed it back to principals, which made principals more accountable. Now again, principals who had the background, the knowledge, the work ethic to make it work, strived and did extremely well, as I did. Principals who did not have a clue crashed and burned, because they did not have the structure to help them achieve."

Mr. Mark stated:

“The shifts in power dynamics in NYC principals’ ability to carry out their roles as school leaders had very little impact on the way we do our jobs. Even though we were given ‘empowerment,’ our hands were still relatively tied.”

Table 5 displays findings from Interview Question 1, along with the frequency of responses by emerged theme, and developed theme. That is, 3 of 3 respondents reported that principals gained power while superintendents lost power.

Table 5

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 1*

<b>Interview Question 1</b>	<b>Theme(s)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Can you describe any noticeable shifts in power that took place during Children First, for example, superintendents and principals, how did their roles change?	Principals gained power <u>Subtheme:</u> Superintendents became less powerful	3 3

**Summary of Research Question 1**

Based on the responses gleaned from interview question 1, principals felt that there was a noticeable shift in power that took place during Children First as Table 5 illustrates. Principals reported that principals gained substantial power while superintendents lost power. However, the shift in power may not have necessarily changed the job constraints that principals experienced while trying to make substantive changes to their school.

## **Research Question 2**

Research Question 2 asked: What effects do large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs have on a school culture? Interview Questions 2-4 were constructed to answer Research Question 2.

### **Interview Question 2**

Interview Question 2 asked: How did this shift in power impact the school district culture? Based on the findings to Interview Question 2, the majority theme extracted was the shift in power did not have an impact, or had very little on the school district culture ( $n=3$ ). Some of the specific quoted responses included:

Mr. Albert reported, “It did not really... it did not change our culture too much.”

Mr. Mark reported, “The shifts in power dynamics in NYC principals’ ability to carry out their roles as school leaders had very little impact on the way we do our jobs.”

Mr. Robert reported, “Children First brought about new district management. As an experienced principal, I was able to successfully navigate the personelle and mantra changes without too much negative impact on my school community.” It should be noted that this question dealt with school district culture, and not with school culture.

Table 6 displays Interview Question 2, along with the frequency of responses by extracted themes. All three principals reported that they did not have a significant impact.

Table 6

#### *Thematic Response to Interview Question 2*

<b>Interview Question 2</b>	<b>Theme(s)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
How did this shift in power impact the school district culture?	Did not have an impact; minimal impact	3

### Interview Question 3

Interview Question 3 asked: Have you created a culture and climate of support and success in your school? Based on the findings to Interview Question 3, the majority theme extracted was yes, they had created a culture and climate of support and success in the school (n=3). In addition to the majority theme, three sub-themes were extracted to include (a) culture where rules were strictly enforced (n=1), (b) culture of collaboration and support (n=1), and (c) culture that nurtures the student and entire community (n=1).

Some of the specific quoted responses included:

Mr. Albert stated:

If we do not establish a culture where there is control and discipline, along with rules that are enforced and strictly followed, no culture is going to take place, and until you have the culture, learning is not going to take place. I have seen the best programs and the best ideas in education fall flat because there is no control in the classroom, and in the bigger picture, no control in the school. Therefore, even if you go right down to the classroom, if the teacher cannot manage the class, there is no learning going on.

Mr. Robert added:

“We support our teachers because we believe in a grassroots level. I listen to my teachers, I am big into teams, so we have been doing teams for years. We created that system here to support people and really help change the culture.”

Lastly, Mr. Mark said:

“Absolutely. What we are doing is developing an environment where not only does it help nurture the students but it helps to nurture and support the entire community.”

Table 7 displays Interview Question 3 along with the frequency of responses by emerged themes. Three of three principals reported that they have created a culture and climate of support and success in school.

Table 7

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 3*

Interview Question 3	Theme(s)	Frequency
Have you created a culture and climate of support and success in your school?	Theme: Yes	3
	Culture where rules were strictly enforced	1
	Culture of collaboration and support	1
	Culture that nurtures the student and entire community	1

#### **Interview Question 4**

What effects do large scale restructuring of instructional leadership designs have on a school culture? What challenges and successes did you have, or did you face during the reform? Based on the findings to Interview Question 4, the themes reported included (a) understanding who we are as a culture (n=1), (b) realignment of power empowered principals (n=1), and (c) caused inconsistencies (n=1). Some of the specific responses include:

Mr. Albert asserted:

I think our challenge has always been to understand who we are and the type of population that we serve, and how we cannot fit into normal accountability standards that they [NY State] may have. Our battle has always been that.

Mr. Robert mentioned:

Power is everything. Perceived power is even more than real power, right? So, people want to know who the boss is. They want to know where the buck stops, they want to know who is going to make the final decision. So, I believe in cooperative power.

Lastly, Mr. Mark stated, "It causes the staff and the people to get frustrated because they will learn new programs, and then the next year, they will not even be used again, and they have to start all over."

Table 8 displays interview question 4 along with the frequency of responses by the emerged themes. Three independent themes emerged from the three principals that responded to the question.

Table 8

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 4*

<b>Interview Question 4</b>	<b>Theme(s)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
What effects do large scale restructuring of instructional leadership designs have on a school culture? What challenges and successes did you have, or did you face during the reform?	Understand who we are as a culture	1
	Realignment of power empowered principals	1
	Cause inconsistencies	1

### **Summary of Research Question 2**

Generally, responses confirmed that large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs did not, substantively, have an impact on the culture of the school. Although all three principals reported that they created a climate of success at their respective school, the impetus to create a successful culture may not be due to the large-scale restructuring efforts. One principal felt that the restructuring efforts may have

created some inconsistencies, but this may have simply disrupted the culture rather than changed the culture.

### **Research Question 2a**

Research Question 2a asked: What challenges and successes did principals face under the changes in mayoral and chancellor control? Interview Questions 5-8 were constructed to answer Research Question 2a.

### **Interview Question 5**

Interview Question 5 asked: Were there noticeable differences in student achievement outcomes as a result of these power shifts? Based on findings from Interview Question 5, the majority theme extracted was yes, there were noticeable differences in student outcomes and achievement as a result of the power shifts ( $n=2$ ) as shown in Table 9. Both participants who answered ‘yes’, reported an improvement in student achievement. The researcher referred to the accountability reports for all three principals; 2005 to 2006 and 2006 to 2007. Lastly, a single participant reported there were no noticeable differences ( $n=1$ ). Some of the specific quoted responses included:

Mr. Albert reported:

I think there was noticeable achievement in one respect; I think there was noticeable achievement in the charter movement because [many] charter schools had a very great success rate. So, I think it gave more students a chance to be in a position to achieve because there were more opportunities to get a better education.

Mr. Robert mentioned, “There [are] noticeable differences, yes. We went from being in the bottom percentile, to the best in the district.”

Lastly, Mr. Mark stated:

I really did not see it. Because for me, unless you are going to change the community around the school, it does not matter what shifts you make. It does not matter what programs you put in the school. Unless you are going to make the whole community investment, and whole community change, it continues to be a cycle of failure that exists in the community where I served [during Children First].

Table 9 displays emerged themes related to Interview Question 5, along with the achievement, while one principal reported no noticeable difference.

Table 9

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 5*

<b>Interview Question 5</b>	<b>Theme(s)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Were there noticeable differences in student achievement outcomes as a result of these power shifts?	Theme: Yes	2
	Improvement	2
	No noticeable difference	1

### **Interview Question 6**

Interview Question 6 asked: Did you experience any other changes under Children First?

Based on the findings from Interview Question 6, the themes extracted included: (a) yes, networking (n=1), (b) no, very little change (n=1), and (c) did not answer, (b) (n=1). Some of the specific quoted responses were:

Mr. Albert reported:

I never saw changes more than during Children First. There was always that opportunity, but I think it was more widespread during Children First, and I will tell you

what, because there were networks. In your network, you were encouraged to visit other schools in your network, and you were in a network for a reason. Under Children First and under the networks, we had much more collaboration."

Mr. Mark reported:

There was very little change before, during, and after the children first reform. Even though we were empowered, the unions still overpowered the Department of Education and it is difficult to make change when the power is given to the people you need to make change with. Hiring restrictions, union seniority, and budgetary constraints, do not allow for principals to make the best decisions for their schools.

Mr. Robert reported:

I got my position as a principal as a direct result of Children First. I became a principal earlier than my former superintendent would have liked me to have been a principal.

Table 10 displays responses from Interview Question 6, along with the frequency of responses by emerged theme.

Table 10

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 6*

<b>Interview Question 6</b>	<b>Theme(s)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Did you experience any other changes under Children First?	Yes, Networking	1
	No, very little change	1
	Promotion	1

## Interview Question 7

Interview Question 7 asked: Many schools were closed during this reform. How did a school closing in your district affect your own school? Based on the findings to Interview Question 7, the themes extracted included (a) increased applications from students (n=1), (b) motivated staff to mitigate chance of being shut down (n=1), and (c) student and staff morale decreased (n=1). Some of the specific quoted responses included.

Mr. Albert reported:

The only way it affected our school was that we received many applications from students who attended those closing schools. Those were failing schools and students needed an out; therefore, we did get many students. Many students applied as they heard the school was closing. Counselors and parents were looking for alternatives.

Mr. Robert mentioned:

It turned their negative into my positive... From the very beginning when they first started closing schools, I told my teachers, we are the worst school in this district. In order to show equity [in] this city, they may close a school in this district just to prove that it can happen. Do you want it to be this school?

Lastly, Mr. Mark stated:

It creates an environment where people say okay, maybe we are next. The morale goes down. It sends the message that the schools that are closing are failed schools, when the reality is the schools that are closing there are schools serving the most challenging children, who are in the most challenging communities.

Table 11 displays thematic responses to Interview Question 7, along with frequency of responses by extracted themes.

Table 11

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 7*

Interview Question 7	Theme(s)	Frequency
Many schools were closed during this reform. How did a school closing in your district affect your own school?	Increased applications from students	1
	Motivate staff to mitigate chance of being shut down	1
	Student and staff morale decreased	1

**Interview Question 8**

Interview Question 8 asked: What effect did this have on your own leadership behaviors? Based on findings from Interview Question 8, the themes extracted included (a) created mindfulness of the problem; not do the same thing (n=1), (b) negative impact on staff and students (n=1), and (c) no impact (n=1). Some of the specific quoted responses included:

Mr. Albert reported:

Well, I think you cannot be blind to what caused the schools to close, so you want to make sure that you were not doing things, or things were not happening that would put you in that position. In the charter world, many of the closings were due to financial mismanagement and there were other things that happened. So, you had to be very mindful that you are not doing things that would get you in a bad position.

Mr. Robert quoted:

So, it affected me negatively and it is affecting everyone in that neighborhood negatively. Those kids are being pushed into other schools, and there will be a couple of new schools that come in. Whether it is a charter school or not, you are talking about a school that has been open for over a hundred years, believe in always trying to become better. I believe in improvement, improvement, improvement. Because if you do not, this can happen, and if this happens, how will you be remembered?

Lastly, Mr. Mark reported “It did not have much of an impact because I do not focus on those things. I am so targeted on leading these children and my community as a whole.”

Table 12 displays thematic responses associated with interview question 8, along with frequency of responses by extracted themes.

Table 12

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 8*

<b>Interview Question 8 Theme(s)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
What effect did this have on your own leadership behaviors?	Created mindfulness of problem; not to do the same thing
	Negative impact on staff and students
	No impact

### **Summary of Research Question 2a**

What challenges and successes did principals face under the changes in mayoral and chancellor control? Based on findings, there were noticeable differences in student outcomes and achievement as a result of the power shifts. Two of three principals reported that students’ academic skills did improve while one principal reported that no impact on student outcomes, meaning that academic success remained the same. After the

power shift, principals had more opportunities to network with other colleagues that may have facilitated knowledge transfer. However, the change in chancellor control led to reflection and mindfulness about improving academic progress so that their respective school would not be closed due to poor performance. One principal felt that the change in power structure may have led to staff and students feeling concern and experiencing anxiety since some had to change schools due to school closures.

### **Research Question 3**

Bolman and Deal developed four frames of organizational structure: (a) Structural, (b) Human Resources, (c) Symbolic, and (d) Political Frameworks. It is useful to approach leadership from the point of view of these four different frameworks. Circumstances determine which approach is appropriate. Effective leaders use a number of these approaches at the same time.

1. Structural. At a given moment, an organization's structure represents its best effort to align internal workings with outside concerns. Organizations divide work by creating a variety of specialized roles, functions, and units (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Structural leaders try to design and implement a process appropriate to the problem and the circumstances. The leader clarifies organizational goals, manage the external environment, develop a clear structure appropriate to task, clarify lines of authority, and focus on the task, facts, and logic. To lash the many elements together, the structure depends on prevailing circumstances and considers an organization's goals, strategies, technology, people, and the environment. Organizations exist to achieve established goals and objectives,

increase efficiency and enhance performance through specialization and appropriate division of labor (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

2. Human resource. The human resource manager views people as the heart of any organization and attempts to be responsive to the needs and goals to gain commitment and loyalty. The emphasis is on support and empowerment. The human resource manager listens well and communicates personal openness. The leader empowers people through participation and attempts to gain the resources people need to do a job well. This approach is appropriate when employee morale is low or declining (Bolman & Deal, 2003).
3. Political. The political leader understands the political reality of organizations and can deal with it. The political leader understands how important interest groups are, each with a separate agenda. This leader understands conflict and limited resources. This leader recognizes major constituencies and develops ties to their leadership. Conflict is managed as this leader builds power bases and uses power carefully. The leader creates arenas for negotiating differences and coming up with reasonable compromises. This approach is appropriate when resources are scarce or declining, where there is goal and value conflict (Bolman & Deal, 2013, & Bolman & Deal, 2003).
4. Symbolic. The leader who makes change using a symbolic approach, views vision and inspiration as critical; people need something to believe in. People will give loyalty to an organization that has a unique identity and makes them feel that what they do is really important. Symbolism is important as is ceremony and ritual to communicate a sense of organizational mission. These leaders tend to be very

visible and energetic and manage by walking around. These leaders rely heavily on organizational traditions and values as a base for building a common vision and culture that provides cohesiveness and meaning. This approach seems to work best when goals and information are unclear and ambiguous, where cause-effect relations are poorly understood and where there is high cultural diversity (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Based on these four frames, the following Research Question was posed: How do (or did) NYC principals utilize Bolman and Deal's frameworks in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases before, during, and after Children First? Participants' responses to Interview Questions 9 and 10 were constructed to answer Research Question 3.

### **Interview Question 9**

Interview Question 9 asked: How did New York City principals utilize these frameworks in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases during Children First? Based on findings from Interview Question 9, the themes extracted included (a) politics improves the likelihood of funding for the school (n=1), (b) politics caused empowerment(n=1), and (c) used all frames(n=1). Some of the specific quoted responses included:

Mr. Albert reported:

I think they probably utilized more of these during Children First, more power. And I think it forced them maybe enabled them, or caused them to use more of the frameworks than they probably might have used prior. So, I think you become more involved in the political game.

Mr. Mark reported:

I think a lot of this work; the politics was the one that overpowered everything else. More and more, principals are being asked to be political leaders. During the reform, we were empowered to be viewed as community leaders. As we were given “empowerment” the perception of society was that we had complete power even though the reality was not.

Mr. Robert reported:

I teach Bolman and Deal in my graduate school course. I am familiar with and I utilize all four lenses in my leadership style. Good principals are going to be eclectic in nature and therefore they will utilize all four of the frameworks in order to make their school improve.

Table 13 displays thematic responses associated with Interview Question 9, along with frequency of responses by extracted themes.

Table 13

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 9*

<b>Interview Question 9 Theme(s)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
How did New York city principals utilize these frameworks in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases during Children First?	Politics improves likelihood of funding for the
	Politics caused empowerment
	Utilizes all frames and leadership styles

**Interview Question 10**

Interview Question 10 asked: Do you utilize any of these frames in your own leadership style? If so, which ones? For Interview Question 10, it is important to know

that all three of the participants reported on multiple themes. Based on findings from Interview Question 10, the dominant theme that emerged was yes, they did utilize the frames in their own leadership style ( $n=3$ ). The subthemes that were extracted included (a) structure ( $n=3$ ), human resources ( $n=2$ ), political ( $n=2$ ), and symbolism ( $n=1$ ). Some of the specific quoted responses included:

Mr. Albert reported:

I think we are constantly evolving, so certainly structure. One of the things I did was, as I said, I empowered the APs (human resources) to take more of a leadership role in driving education, so structurally I think that was one of the things we did during that time. We had access to more resources and we were able to utilize more resources, because as I said before, we were in the network (political frameworks). I think people are inspired by knowing you have their back, and they know that you are not just here, just day to day to run a school.

Mr. Robert also reported:

I create a structure. I believe in people; people make it happen. And the symbolic framework is then utilized because it is inspirational to them. So, when people come here now, my kids know, if you look, when you come here to my building, what do you see? 2015, top 1%, New York City.

Lastly, Mr. Mark stated, “I use a little bit of everything. You have to be knowledgeable about structures, politics, and human resources issues.”

Table 14 displays Interview Question 10, along with the frequency of responses by emerged themes.

Table 14:

*Thematic Response to Interview Question 10*

<b>Interview Question 10</b>	<b>Theme(s)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Do you utilize any of these frames in your own leadership style? If so, which ones?	Theme: Yes	3
	Structure	3
	Human Resources	2
	Political	2
	Symbolism	1

*Note.* Mr. Albert, Mr. Robert, and Mr. Mark each reported multiple themes.

**Summary of Research Question 3**

Two of three principals utilized the Political framework in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases during Children First. For example, they used their new found political prowess to improve likelihood of obtaining additional funding for their school. Further, all principals they used Structure to guide them in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors. Human Resources were also mentioned as a means to inspire leadership performance; for example, one principal reported that he used a human resources framework to encourage assistant principals to take more of a leadership role in driving education. Symbolism was mentioned by just one principal and reflected that principals used it as the least likely method to be used in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases during Children First.

**Observations**

This researcher had an opportunity to observe the principals' interactions with students, families, educators, and community stakeholders. As a participant observer, the researcher participated in the situations, or events, while recording what was being observed and at the same time taking copious notes. The researcher also obtained insight

on the leadership behaviors of the three principals. The researcher gained firsthand inside-insight by having access to the principals' interactions of everyday experiences with different groups. Attendance at the meetings allowed the researcher to observe the principals in different situations. Moreover, it provided acceptable evidence of reliability and validity of the principals' use of the Bolman and Deal (1991) four-frame model.

### **Mr. Mark's Observation**

In one observation, Mr. Mark conducted a meeting about providing access to school assets like the gym, basketball courts, and soccer fields by community organizers. The aim of the organizers was to generate interest in school activities by inviting community children to participate in a one day event. The conversation was light and interactive, and the causal communications between the parties were present, and, in addition, the informal conversations facilitated a non-threatening environment. Mr. Mark's ability to create an informal relationship between the meeting participants demonstrated the political framework elucidated in Bolman and Deal (1991). The conversation trended toward a realization that the basketball court inside the gym was not big enough for 300 children that might attend the event. The principal interpreted the conference on an interpersonal dynamic level because he understood that the gym would not be large enough. In his efforts to retain a personal relationship with the community, Mr. Mark suggested that the organizers see a school staff member that could help them with finding an indoor court close by. He said "...see Mr. Jones for [finding a feasible access court]. I'll give you his contact information." The interaction highlighted Mr. Mark's ability to use the framework of Human Resources to find a solution to a difficult task. The Symbolic aspect characterizes this frame to define Mr. Mark, and that

stakeholder, by how things are done in Mr. Mark's organization. Naturally, Mr. Mark did not want the children to not have the means to play basketball on a real basketball court. Accordingly, Mr. Mark realized the importance of the event and found a way to ensure appropriate resources were found and secured.

The researcher visited the principal, Mr. Mark, for a second time. The researcher stayed for almost two hours because she observed a meeting with a parent and a community stakeholder. The second hour was used for the interview questions. During the meeting, Mr. Mark said to the community stakeholder, and parents, "You get me the flyer, the permit, and everything else will be here. I will take care of everything." It was clear this time, as it was during the first visit with the educators, that Mr. Mark was again engaged with his community stakeholders and parents. The frame that Mr. Mark emphasized was the Bolman and Deal (1991) human resource lens that highlighted his concept of what his organization needed – relationships between his community, parents, and other individuals that would have contact with his school and learning community. Moreover, when he used the symbolic orientation, Mr. Mark was able to resolve any uncertain aspects of the upcoming event, provided direction, and helped to fulfill the hope of community activities becoming a reality.

### **Mr. Robert's Observation**

The researcher visited Mr. Robert's school in Spring 2016 for a scheduled interview conference. On that same day, the students were acknowledging Earth Day. The researcher observed Mr. Robert interacting with his students at his school during the festivities. His school is one of the highest-ranking schools in the city. Students had their Earth Day projects displayed in the large school yard. The students were exhibiting their

different school projects that demonstrated support for environmental protection and their inspired awareness of climate change, pollution, and the importance of protecting our planet. Parents, politicians, and many community members attended.

The principal spent less time with the adults because he spent the majority of his time concentrating more on his students and their projects. He focused on the middle school students (6th - 8th graders), and he praised them for their projects. He asked them to explain their project or concept. For example, he said “very interesting” and “good job” directly to the students. Every time he did this a big smile appeared on the child’s face. This leadership behavior reflected the use of the Symbolic frame during his interactions with students. Bolman and Deal (2003) assert that based on our beliefs, values, and faith, that a special project had multiple meanings because individuals interpret experiences differently.

Mr. Robert did take time to reprimand any students who were not displaying appropriate behavior at the event. For example, the principal walked up to a student who was playing very loud music. The music was annoying at least and offensive at best. The principal said, “turn it off and put it away before I take it.” Also, as we were visiting each student’s project station, a student was talking on his cellphone. Mr. Robert quickly spoke with the student, and asked, “Do I need to take it, or what?” The student said, “No,” and apologized. The principal’s actions clearly demonstrated the framework of structure to ensure that the rules of the school were upheld. Bolman and Deal (2003) discuss that structure must fit the work and culture of an organization. This principal has a specific blueprint for his interactions within his organization that has produced positive results for his organization.

Mr. Robert said that he was very familiar with the Bolman and Deal (1991) framework. He indicated to the researcher that he was “closer” to the structural framework. He also asserted that, “...Any good principal is going to be very eclectic in nature, and therefore utilize all four frames in his leadership style.” This is the perspective in which the principal highly emphasized to the researcher, and within his organization. However, this principal is popular and is adept at highlighting the human resource perspective as illustrated in Bolman and Deal (1991), and he is also a politically savvy leader. That is, he is known in his school organization to receive many grants and resources from his political affiliations.

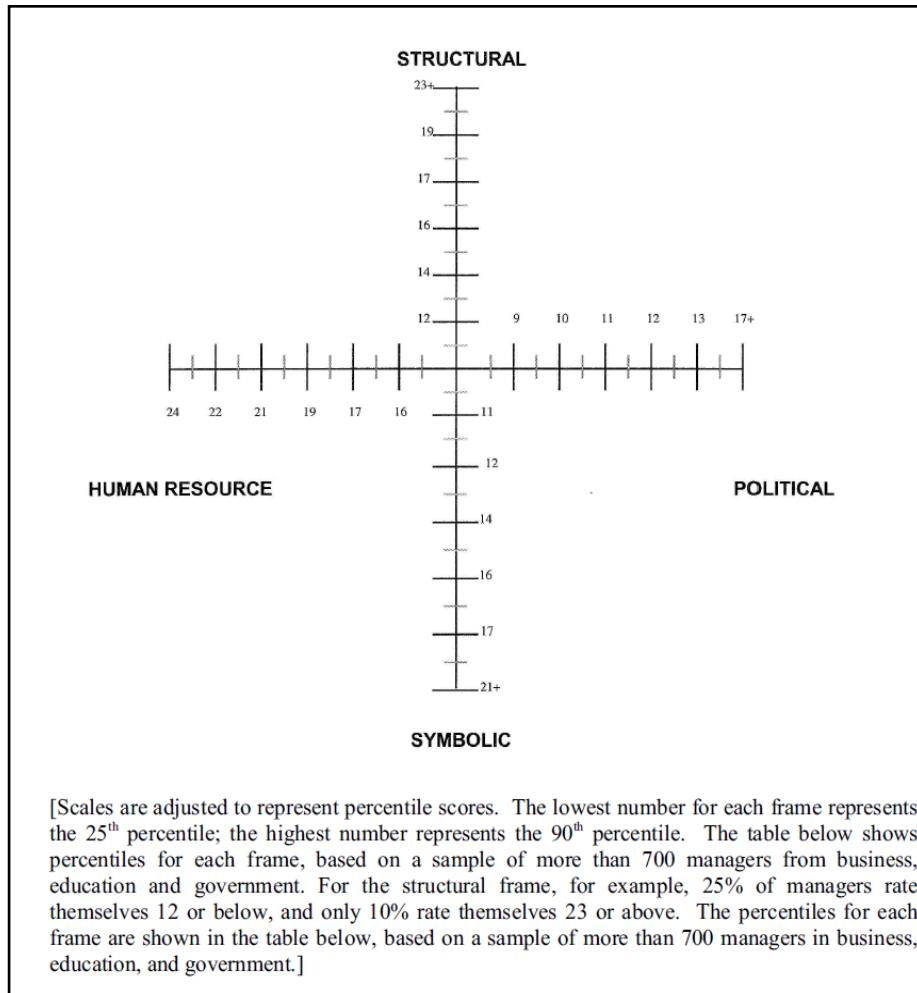
### **Mr. Albert’s Observation**

Mr. Albert held a meeting with his school directors. They discussed highlights and challenges for the 2015-16 school year. They also discussed all aspects of preparation for the September 2016 school year that included their mission, strategies, and what they were trying to accomplish as a team. They talked about student achievement, Regent, other test scores, new teachers hiring, partnerships in the community, student internships, and parent involvement. This was a typical end of the year and planning session for the upcoming term. Mr. Albert was eloquent in his speech and non-verbal characteristics. He easily discussed complex problems and generally brought out the best in others. This leadership behavior represented the tenets of the Political Framework. The principal demonstrated one of Bolman and Deal’s (1991) assumptions which states: in the Political frame, there is an emergence of coalitions. The principal is clearly aware that the participating members have common goals and can accomplish more collectively than cellularly.

Mr. Albert was also adamant about maintaining structure in the school when they discussed student relationships with staff. The meeting was a general meeting that was not intended to solve specific problems or reach critical conclusions. Rather, it was a discussion to bring stakeholders together at the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year. There were times that the principal could have challenged the group, but he always adeptly interacted using the human resource frame of Deal and Bolman (2003), which focused on the value of people.

The researcher examined the behavior patterns of the principals as they interacted with students, parents, community stakeholders, and other individuals who entered their building. Thus, the researcher saw that the leadership style had an impact on the culture and the climate of the school.

From the perspective of the researcher, the orientation that Mr. Albert demonstrated was to focus on a good relationship between the parent, the student, and the school. The principal was enthusiastic in welcoming the students back to school. From a symbolic orientation, the principal provided the students with hope and faith in returning to school with his helping them to achieve their desired educational outcome. The principal emphasized the human resources and symbolic orientations. In the final analysis, the researcher saw that the three principals used two lenses “as clustering together” (Deal & Bolman, 1992, p. 321, 322). Figure 2 shows the Leadership Orientations Scoring tool as a key instrument appending to four organizational concepts of task leadership (Bolman & Deal, 1988).



*Figure 2. Leadership Orientations Scoring (Deal & Bolman, 1988.)*

### **Summary of Observations**

Three veteran principals were observed during their daily work schedule to understand how principals used the Deal and Bolman (1988) framework in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors. All three principals were well aware of the framework and used them regularly during business activities.

It was observed that the three principals were politically savvy and knew how to work officials. This means that they listened acutely to others and conveyed their recognition and understanding, both verbally and non-verbally, about the particular

situation that they were addressing. They understood servant leadership principles, which allowed them to handle the most belligerent parent or another academic stakeholder on issues dealing with the community and parents. These three veterans provided institutional *reminiscence* to maintain, correctly implement, and to be aware of structures concerning guidelines, rules for school, district, and state/federal mandates. The principals were observed using the Structural viewpoint when issues about organizational change surfaced. For example, Mr. Robert discussed rules and orderly conduct when a parent wanted to know about how the Children First program was going to affect academic instruction. Bolman and Deal's (1991) Symbolic framework was directly observed to occur during the observation process. That is, one could argue that the use of the Symbolic lens occurred as all three principals attempted to inspire others (students) via their vision of their school and performance on extracurricular projects.

### **Leadership Orientation Survey/Questionnaire**

Three principals (Mr. Robert, Mr. Mark, and Mr. Albert) completed the Leadership Orientation Survey/Questionnaire presented in Appendix H developed by Deal and Bolman (1988). Four leadership constructs were measured by the survey: Structural, Human Resource, Political, and Symbolic. For each participant, a leader's construct was scored and was calculated. Participants were directed to give themselves a score ranging from 1 to 4 for each item on the survey; there were 24 items on the survey. Higher scores on a dimension reflect a propensity to be more adept at that leadership style.

In Table 15, a score is listed for each participant in the four leadership constructs as resulted of each participant's Leadership Orientation Survey. In Table 15, beginning

with Mr. Robert, his scores are listed as: Structural =18, Human Resources =14, Political = 10, and Symbolic = 18. Mr. Mark scores are: Structural = 7, Human Resources = 17, Political = 14, Symbolic = 22. And, Mr. Albert scores are: Structural = 15, Human Resources = 20, Political = 10, and Symbolic =15.

After a review of each participants' final tabulations of each construct, Mr. Robert's top three leadership qualities identified were Structural, Symbolic and Human Resources, respectively as illustrated in the Leadership Orientation Scoring diagram in Figure 2. However, Symbolic, Human Resources, and Political were found to be Mr. Mark's strongest qualities. Finally, Mr. Albert's strongest qualities were found to be Human Resources, Structural, and Symbolic. For Mr. Robert and Mr. Albert, the political frame was found to be their weakest reported quality, while on the other hand, Mr. Mark's weakest reported quality was aligned to the structural frame. The researcher observed from the assessment survey that although the principals may have scored lower in the different lens, their experience and expertise always provided professional insight, intuition, and skills as tools to resolve any critical incidents, or organizational issues.

**Table 15**

*Leadership Dimension Score by Participant*

<b>Leadership Dimension</b>	<b>Participant</b>		
	<b>Robert</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Albert</b>
Structural	18	7	15
Human Resources	14	17	20
Political	10	14	10
Symbolic	18	22	15

## **Summary of Interviews**

Interviewees pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of Children First, highlighting the challenges they had to face at their individual institutions.

Overall, it was felt that the reform was:

- Positive because it created a power shift that gave principals more autonomy (Viewpoint of Mr. Mark, Mr. Robert, and Mr. Albert).
- Effective because it provided continuity since it had time to grow and expand during three mayoral terms; (Viewpoint of Mr. Albert and Mr. Robert).
- Empowering because it offered opportunities for coaching and leadership development through the leadership academy; (Viewpoint of Mr. Mark and Mr. Robert).
- Instrumental in providing principals with systems of accountability that gave them alternative ways of assessing success and addressing challenges; (Viewpoint of all three principals).
- Important to granting school principals the space to impact school culture by being instructional leaders; (Viewpoint of Mr. Mark and Mr. Robert).

Many of the concerns addressed by the principal participants revolved around stagnant policies and procedures that have not changed over time. For example, there is the perception that elected school boards actually run the districts. This power and authority gives them a strong voice in who will be superintendent and what policies will receive priority and funding.

Though all the principal participants preferred leading in a “structured” environment, there were many concerns about the role of politics in decision-making.

They applauded efforts to engage in roundtable discussions with members of the chancellor's staff and felt that their voices were heard as evidence of changes that occurred as a result of their input. This shared role in leadership seemingly created a strong pathway from the chancellor's office to the districts.

There were many legitimate complaints and concerns about Children First, and some of the complaints are:

- Though "symbolic power" was granted, principals were still unable to take control of hiring and firing policies,
- Union power and control inhibited many principals from making the changes they desired,
- Education was not the primary concern. People had health and safety issue food and finance challenges that needed to be addressed,
- There are not fair and comprehensive forms of assessing success,
- The shifts in priorities places a heavy burden on the principals and the ratings they receive for the work they do.

## **Summary**

From the data collected, it was found that the three principals had more commonalities than differences. They had a deep sense of knowledge, of understanding, and commitment to the students that they serve. They all have served as school leaders for over a decade in their same buildings dealing with the same demographic of students, their families, and with many of the same community stakeholders. For these principals, building relationships and trust are paramount to sustain the structural, human resources, political, and symbolic lenses of their leadership behaviors. One of the participants stated

that during Children First, they had an opportunity to use the Bolman and Deal (1991) frames as a lens to observe and self- reflect on their daily practices and roles as change agents.

All three principals at each school level provided internal and external special school projects that encompassed real-life skills for all their students. In these special projects, academics, and work-study activities, students as young as first grade could participate in exploratory career skills learning. The principals provided instructional support for teacher involvement through professional learning communities or coaching so that teachers could participate in special career events and projects with their students. These events and projects included hydroponic programs, culinary arts, corporate and cultural partnerships, and serving as interns in nursing homes, politicians' offices, or community agencies. Based on the length of service of these senior principals, and the success and challenges that they have endured, there is a need for all new inexperienced and underdeveloped principals to continuously collaborate with senior and established principals. The collaborative effort would drive professional growth, development, and shared strategies. Collectively, it would allow opportunities for the principals to tackle the daily power, responsibilities, expectations, and practice of leadership to sustain and improve each educational site.

The information included in this chapter are the findings gleaned from coding and thematic analysis. Three principals were interviewed in an effort to examine the shifting power dynamics of educational professionals working in New York City public schools under Children First. Findings suggested that a power shift did occur from the superintendent to the principal, but basic operational constraints remained. In addition,

participant responses affirmed that large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs did not substantively have an impact on the culture of the school. However, two of three principals reported that there were noticeable differences in student outcomes and achievement as a result of the power shifts.

During the observations, principals were observed using the Bolman and Deal (1992) Framework by the researcher to guide them in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors for their staff and students. Chapter Five will provide a review of findings and discussions of conclusions, recommendations for practice and recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the shifting power dynamics for educational professionals working in New York City public schools under Children First and implementation of the reform. By determining how these shifts affected principals' leadership roles, this study may provide useful and necessary insights into the world of educational leadership. To better explore how the relationship between instructional leadership and system leadership as dictated by the evolving roles of New York City principals under the historical reform of Children First can affect climate and culture of school organizations, the preliminary research for this study drew on numerous educational and political discourses. These conversations, taking place in both the public and academic spheres, provided an abundance of information regarding the myriad of political and educational reforms that have impacted New York City public schools in recent history. To examine the history of the New York City Public School System is to examine not only the structural evolution of the city's facilities, but also the varying modes of governance these schools have undertaken over time. Like many large school districts, New York City public schools are a study in both educational and political transformation and reform.

Chapter Five will include a summary of findings, recommendations for practice, and recommendations for future research. Findings will be presented by answering the research questions. Three primary research questions were asked, along with a single sub-question added to Research Question 2. A series of interview questions were developed

to generate themes and patterns that were used to ultimately answer the research questions.

### **Summary of Findings**

#### **Research Question 1: Findings**

**Research Question 1:** Under Children First, wide-scale power and leadership shifts occurred in the New York City school system. What are the lasting effects on principals' roles and their perceptions of their roles?

##### **Finding One: Shift in Power**

Based on the responses obtained from participants, these principals believed that there was a noticeable shift in power that took place during Children First. Principals reported that principals gained substantial power while superintendents power were diluted. However, the shift in power may not have necessarily changed the job constraints that principals experienced while trying to make substantive changes to their schools. Principals realized that their job responsibilities were not the same as they were before Children First. During the reform the principals realized that failing schools were being shuttered, and that many children were transferred to the schools that were doing well.

##### **Research Question 2: Finding**

**Research Question Two:** What effects do large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs have on a school culture?

##### **Finding: Did Not Have an Impact on the Culture**

Generally, responses confirmed that large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs did not substantively have an impact on the culture of the school. Although all three principals reported that they created a climate of success at their respective school, the impetus to create a successful culture may not be due to the large-

scale restructuring efforts. One principal felt that the restructuring efforts may have created some inconsistencies, but this may have simply disrupted the culture rather than changed the culture.

### **Research Question 2a: Findings**

**Research Question 2a:** What challenges and successes did principals face under the changes in mayoral and chancellor control.

#### **Finding One: Noticeable Changes in Student Achievement**

Based on this finding, there were noticeable differences in student outcomes and achievement as a result of the power shifts. Two of three principals reported that students' academic skills did improve while one principal reported that there was an impact on student outcomes, meaning that academic success remained the same. In order to confirm these findings, the researcher reviewed archived reports of each of the schools. These reports included information on these schools from 2003 to 2014, and they are: Accountability Report from 2003 to 2005, Accountability and Overview Report from 2005 to 2011; the Comprehensive Information Report from 2005 to 2011, the Accountability Report and Report Card from 2011 to 2014 and the School Quality Review. These documents are from the New York State Department of Education.

#### **Finding Two: Increased Networking Opportunities**

After the power shift, principals had more opportunities to network with other colleagues, network partners, and outside partner organizations that provided support to the leaders.

### **Finding Three: Reflection and Mindfulness**

The change in chancellor control led to reflection and mindfulness about improving academic progress so that their respective school would not be closed due to poor performance. Under Children First, the paid position of the parent coordinator was created to be involved with the parents and community. Hiring the parent coordinator allowed the principal, assistant principal, and the parent coordinator to create small and large conferences to meet with the parents and community stakeholders to mitigate concerns. The principal had many programs that welcomed the parents into the school on a daily basis. Parents have access to medical, mental health, and social services, and bilingual services. In addition, principals and parent coordinators invited parents to visit the schools to meet organizational partners, to attend adult education classes and parent leadership institutes.

### **Research Question 3: Findings**

**Research Question Three:** Bolman and Deal discuss four frames of organizational structure, and they are: structural, human resources, symbolic, and the political frameworks. How do (or did) NYC principals utilize these frameworks in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases before, during, and after Children First?

### **Finding One: Structure**

All principals reported they used the Structural lens to guide them in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors (Bolman & Deal, 1992). Principals used this lens to help organize their school, instill rule of law, and maintain judicious equality through equitable treatment. It is mandated that each school develop a comprehensive plan to

address emergency and crisis intervention which includes developing disciplinary codes for each school. Principals must establish safety procedures for visitors, for student evacuation, and mental health issues to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment.

### **Finding Two: Political Framework**

Two of three Principals utilized the Political lens while creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases during Children First (Bolman & Deal, 1992). For example, they used their new found political prowess to improve the likelihood of obtaining additional funding for their schools.

### **Observation and Survey Findings**

The researcher found that during Children First, the principals were empowered autonomously and given more authority. Principals used two or more of the four frames of Bolman and Deal (2013) to describe their perceptions and actions related to large-scale reform. The principals were given the leadership self-assessment survey. From the survey (a) three principles were identified as human resource leaders; (b) two principals identified as structural leaders, (c) two principals identified as political leaders; and (d) one of the three principals identified as a symbolic leader.

From the survey, three principles rated the human resource frame as critical in their daily work. They expressed that building relationships and empowering their teachers were key ingredients in supporting and sustaining professional learning communities. The principals noted that having open and honest conversations helped foster relationships and build trust with their teachers. When principals had ongoing conversations, meetings with teachers, visits to their classrooms, and presented as being

accessible and visible, they promoted trust and created an environment of collaboration, respect, and support.

All three Principals reported that they supported and encouraged teachers to try out new strategies and take risks. Principals empowered teachers by involving them in decisions concerning curriculum, allocations of resources, and schedules.

Additionally, all principals focused on the implementation of structures and systems and ensured that clear goals, visions, and missions were articulated to staff. These principals expressed that they structured their schools to allow teachers to collaborate.

They all stated that they scheduled time during the day and after school for teachers to meet and share teaching strategies and lesson plans, discuss curricula; school goals, and analyze student work and data.

Principals recognized that community stakeholders and politicians had differences in their values, interests, information, and perceptions. They agreed that they should spend time negotiating, compromising, and persuading those various stakeholders to support professional learning communities. They all ensured that teachers had the necessary resources to be effective in the classroom by providing books and supplies promptly and by allocating funds to support various projects deemed important by the teachers. These principals recognized that power is essential and that influence begins with understanding their teachers' concerns and interests (Bolman & Deal, 2013). The principals discussed their awareness of the various groups in the school, the key players, their interests, and their power in the schools.

Ultimately, the structural and human resource models were used most often by the middle school principal. These findings underscored the importance of structure as a component of an effective learning environment and as a means of fostering a collaborative and creative spirit among teachers. As structural leaders, all the principals contended that structure allowed the collegial framework and tools for them and their teachers to grow as a team and ultimately for teachers to improve as educators. The principals voiced the importance of the human resources lens as overtly teacher-centric and claimed that this allowed for open and honest conversations to take place among the teachers and the leaders. Once the teachers understood the focus was on improving student performance, they listened to suggestions about their practices and behaviors.

## **Conclusions**

### **Research Question 1**

Shifts in power did occur during Children First, which reportedly affected leadership initiatives, and this shift in power simply meant that principals had gained greater authority and latitude to lead others under Children First. However, principals' ability to make profound changes to school structure and organizational paradigms may not have been affected at all. This suggests that principals' efforts to improve academic conditions were still limited by the structural limitations that existed prior to Children First.

### **Research Question 2**

Principals asserted that the school culture did not change because of the power shift. That is, large-scale restructuring of instructional strategies and leadership designs did not have an impact on the culture of the school.

Academic success was largely achieved (as perceived by the respondents) by working within the existing culture.

### **Research Question 2A**

Noticeable differences in student achievement were viewed as a consequence of the power shifts that occurred. Student academic skills improved after principal's instituted stronger controls over student and teacher activity. The power shift facilitated greater network opportunities with other pedagogical leaders. This growth in communication bandwidth may have allowed principals to model or glean information that otherwise may not have been available prior to the power shift.

Interestingly, though, despite the growth in student achievement and greater flow of information between stakeholders, students and teachers may have experienced greater stress due to the threat of school closures. Stressful environments may certainly affect the stakeholders negatively which should give pause to those bent on swiftly changing a system that has germinated over more than 50 years.

The researcher found evidence of school improvement scores on the New York City Results of the New York State English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Exam (Grades 3-8), 2013-2016. Starting in 2013, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) changed the exams to be Common Core aligned. In Figures 3 and 4 below, are the results of the achievement gains of the schools over a 4-year period.

Year	Stud	Lev1	%	Lev2	%	Lev3	%	Lev4	%
<b>2013</b>	273	212	71.1	77	25.8	8	2.7	9	3.0
<b>2014</b>	271	216	66.7	86	26.5	1	0.3	22	6.8
<b>2015</b>	273	212	61.8	106	30.9	3	0.9	25	7.3
<b>2016</b>	279	182	55.8	105	32.2	3	0.9	39	12.0

*Figure 3. Mr. Mark – Elementary School Summary Results for All Students*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Stud</b>	<b>Lev1</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Lev2</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Lev3</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Lev4</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>2013</b>	1266	158	12.5	473	37.4	361	28.5	274	21.6
<b>2014</b>	1299	122	9.4	468	36.0	420	32.3	289	22.2
<b>2015</b>	1300	122	9.4	425	32.7	442	34.0	311	23.9
<b>2016</b>	1327	93	7.0	352	26.5	489	36.9	393	29.6

*Figure 4. Mr. Robert – Middle School Summary Results for All Students*

Figures 3 and 4 shows that there was, indeed, an impact on student achievement over a 4-year period.

According to the New York City DOE Progress Report Overview 2012 - 2013 the Alternative High School (Mr. Albert's School) received an A rating in 2012 - 2013 in student progress. This rating measures the annual progress toward meeting the New York State graduation requirement by earning course credits and passing Regents Exams. The graduation rate was lower than the peer school average of 15. The school received a B for the overall progress report grade.

### **Research Question 3**

The organizational structure of the political frame was found to be useful to principals when funding school activities (Bolman & Deal, 1992). Similarly, the Structural Framework was observed being used by principals to manage leadership activities and behaviors. Both the Political and Structural Frames were the organizational structures that allowed principals the freedom to create micro-systems within their school. These micro systems were integrated within the legacy culture by principals and may have impacting student skills and academic success to bloom.

### **Recommendations**

With regard to Research Question 1, it is recommended that practitioners should realize that systemic changes might lead to both positive and negative outcomes. For example, principals were given more freedom to inspire others via political and structural

activity, therefore, it recommended that practitioners realize that micro-changes may clearly all benefited stakeholders and as leaders they are the architects of the changes that guides their community to create new structures and systems to deal with these reforms successfully ( Bolman & Deal, 2013).

With regard to Research Question 2 A, it is recommended that school districts develop ongoing district-wide programs for capacity building of leaders on different levels. In order for the principals to change their leadership actions and behaviors, they need to have access to training. Districts should provide service training to leaders focused on instructional best practices, analysis of data, and school structure and politics to realize school improvement. Districts may consider also providing high-quality, mentoring tailored to individual and district needs.

With regard to Research Question 3, it is recommended that graduate schools of educational leadership provide programs that provide multiple lenses of leadership orientation to produce more effective leadership styles similar to those articulated by Bolman and Deal (1992). These courses of study may take into consideration that principals' views of leadership, their orientation, and their values must be aligned to the regulatory mandates of the district, the state, and federal levels. These programs of study may include opportunities for experiences, readings, assignments and collaborative problem solving that will prepare these leaders to become more aware about their personal impact and their professional, instructional prowess that will positively impact their communities.

## **Recommendations for Policy**

There is one recommendations for policy based on the conclusions of the study:

- 1) Provide state funding for resources for rigorous levels of professional leadership development and training.**

Many of the principals relied on specific leadership frames while ignoring or having no knowledge of other leadership frames. In this regard, professional development should be focused on leadership development as a way of changing and improving the actions and behaviors of school leaders. Leaders need to understand how specific leadership actions and behaviors based on the full range of leadership orientations can positively or negatively affect the Professional Learning Community (PLC). In addition, leaders should be provided with knowledge of content and instructional techniques, with innovative instruction regard to preparation for college and career readiness, and with funding for training in cultural proficiency to meet the challenges of a diverse community, disadvantaged students, English Language Learners, and special needs students.

## **Recommendation for Future Research**

Researchers may focus on student outcomes via a quantitative methodology to understand the value of the power shift that took effect under Children First. For example, a cross-sectional survey could be distributed that directs teachers to rate the change in leadership practice of principals. The predictor variable could be student achievement, while the dependent variable could be principals' leadership practice (as measured from teachers' perspective). A positive correlation would be expected, meaning that, as leadership practice increases, students' academic success increases.

Another recommendation is that researchers could examine the components of a school culture vis-a-vis climates within the new school paradigm by conducting a qualitative case study. The study's purpose could find the answer: How has the school culture changed since institutionalizing Children First and how has the change affected the school climate?

Another question that arose in the study was about increased collaboration via networking. Therefore, a third recommendation may focus on investigating the relationship between the proliferation of networking (as perceived by the principals) and student success via a quantitative study. The design of the study would be correlational. Collaboration could be measured using a validated Likert-type scale. The scale could the intensity of collaboration where higher scores on the scale meant more collaboration and low scores reflect lower collaboration. A positive correlation between the aforementioned variables would support inferences made by principals.

A fourth recommendation would be a longitudinal study that could be conducted to investigate student performance as a function of principals' political acumen. For example, student performance could be measured across time and tested to see if political acumen had any effect on the dependent variable (student performance). That is, a profile analysis could be conducted to answer the question: What is the difference in student performance across time between principals who exhibit high levels of political acumen compared to principals who do not. Findings that reveal greater student performance may yield insight into identification of principals' attitudes that impact academic success

Furthermore, it is recommended that a future study should be conducted with female principals to see if there were any significant differences in their leadership

positions. As a result of this reform, researchers might consider examining the female New York City superintendents who lost their executive power during the reform of Children First and how this reform affected them. The study may examine their evolving roles and perspectives, during the reforms of Children First.

Future research should be conducted with the goal of examining the opinions and investigating the experiences of a wider range of school leaders. In this way, it would be possible to better understand different perspectives and ideas about school leadership and district leadership. The information gathered for this study drew heavily on the opinions and experience of educators who were predominantly principals. As revealing as this information proved, it may well be that other groups could provide important data and a fresh perspective on innovation in organizational leadership. Specifically, state officials, school superintendents, school board members, and politicians are in a position to address the issue of change and their role in supporting teachers and principals' leadership abilities in effecting the implementation of large-scale reform.

## **Summary**

A qualitative case study was conducted to investigate principals' perceptions of the shifting power dynamics associated with educational professionals working in New York City public schools under Children First. Findings revealed that a substantial power shift did occur from the superintendent to the principal, but basic operational constraints remained. These constraints included hiring restrictions, union seniority conditions, and budgetary limitations. Participant responses affirmed that large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs did not, substantively, have an impact on the culture

of the school. However, noticeable differences in student outcomes and achievement as a result of the power shifts were reported in two schools.

The principals interviewed were individuals of experience and position with sufficient background to understand the importance and challenge of bringing about positive change.

During times of change, wise leaders understand their strengths, work to expand them, and build diverse teams that can offer an organization leadership in all four modes (Bolman & Deal, 1992). The principals in this study relied primarily on human resources and structural as defined by Bolman & Deal (2013). The principals made structural changes that included programs, procedures, and policies. They also focused on building relationships. The principals conveyed that developing structures, which allowed time for teachers to meet and engage in open and honest dialogue, fostered shared knowledge and best practices that was revealed by the teachers' meetings minutes, agendas, and visits to one another's classrooms.

The principals also operated in the political frame. Principals relied on political leadership as a means to engage in negotiation and to address conflict among teachers to overcome opposition related to the implementation of the professional learning communities. The principals indicated that they did operate within the political frame. On a broader scale, the use of political leadership also means that the principals fully used their power regarding different groups and key players among the teachers to achieve the larger goals and objectives related to professional learning communities. The principals reported that using all four modes of the leadership framework expanded their capacity to respond to challenges. The use of multiple frames permitted them to see and understand

their organizations. These leaders noted that since they thought flexibly and saw their organizations from different angles, they were better able to deal with the full range of issues that they encountered. This study may serve as a precursor to investigate larger issues of school and district leadership, and the experiences and perceptions of principals and district leaders regarding their actions and behaviors.

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**APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### The Sage Colleges IRB Approval Letter

## School of Health Sciences

Deans Office  
65 1st Street  
Troy, New York 12180  
518.244.2264  
Fax: 518.244.4571  
[sage.edu/academics/healthsciences](http://sage.edu/academics/healthsciences)

January 12, 2016

Audrey Baker



**IRB PROPOSAL #363-2015-2016**  
Reviewer: Francesca Durand, Chair

Dear Audrey:

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application and has approved your project entitled "Changing Roles and Perspectives: An Examination of the Evolving Roles of Principals during the Historical Reform of Children First." Good luck with your research.

Please refer to your IRB Proposal number whenever corresponding with us whether by mail or in person.

When you have completed collecting your data you will need to submit to the IRB Committee a final report indicating any problems you may have encountered regarding the treatment of human subjects, if the project goes on for more than one year.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

THE SAGE COLLEGES	Francesca Durand, PhD
RUSSELL SAGE COLLEGE	Chair, IRB
SAGE COLLEGE OF ALBANY	FD/nan
ESTEVES SCHOOL OF EDUCATION	
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES	CC: Dr. Marlene Zakierski
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT	
SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL & CONTINUING EDUCATION	
RUSSELL SAGE ONLINE	

## APPENDIX B

<b>NYC</b>
<b>Department of Education</b>
<i>Carmen Farina, Chancellor</i>
Research and Policy Support    April 12, 2016
Group [REDACTED]
52 Chambers Street Room 310 New York, NY 10007
Mrs. Audrey Baker [REDACTED]
Dear Mrs. Baker:
I am happy to inform you that the New York City Department of Education Institutional Review Board (NYCDOE IRB) has approved your research proposal, "Changing Roles and Perspectives: An Examination of the Evolving Roles of Principals During the Historical Reform of Children First." The NYCDOE IRB has assigned your study the file number of 1205. Please make certain that all correspondence regarding this project references this number. The IRB has determined that the study poses minimal risk to participants. The approval is for a period of one year:
Approval Date:                  April 12, 2016
Expiration Date:                 April 11, 2017
<b>Responsibilities of Principal Investigators:</b> Please find below a list of responsibilities of Principal Investigators who have DOE IRB approval to conduct research in New York City public schools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approval by this office does not guarantee access to any particular school, individual or data. You are responsible for making appropriate contacts and getting the required permissions and consents before initiating the study.</li><li>• When requesting permission to conduct research, submit a letter to the school principal summarizing your research design and methodology along with this IRB Approval letter. Each principal agreeing to participate must sign the enclosed Approval to Conduct Research in Schools/Districts form. <i>A completed and signed form for every school included in your research must be emailed to <a href="mailto:IRB@schools.nyc.gov">IRB@schools.nyc.gov</a>.</i> Principals may also ask you to show them the receipt issued by the NYC Department of Education at the time of your fingerprinting.</li><li>• You are responsible for ensuring that all researchers on your team conducting research in NYC public schools are fingerprinted by the NYC Department of Education. Please note: This rule applies to all research in schools conducted with students and/or staff. See the attached fingerprinting materials. For additional information <a href="#">click here</a>. Fingerprinting staff will ask you for your identification and social security number and for your DOE IRB approval letter. You must be fingerprinted during the school year in which the letter is issued. Researchers who join the study team after the inception of the research must also be fingerprinted. Please provide a list of their names and social security numbers to the NYC Department of Education Research and Policy Support Group for tracking their eligibility and security clearance. The cost of fingerprinting is \$130. <i>A copy of the fingerprinting receipt must be emailed to <a href="mailto:IRB@schools.nyc.gov">IRB@schools.nyc.gov</a>.</i></li></ul>

## New York City Department of Education Institutional Review Letter of Approval

Mrs. Audrey Baker

Page 2

April 12, 2016

- You are responsible for ensuring that the research is conducted in accordance with your research proposal as approved by the DOE IRB and for the actions of all co-investigators and research staff involved with the research.
- You are responsible for informing all participants (e.g., administrators, teachers, parents, and students) that their participation is strictly voluntary and that there are no consequences for non-participation or withdrawal at any time during the study.
- Researchers must: use the consent forms approved by the DOE IRB; provide all research subjects with copies of their signed forms; maintain signed forms in a secure place for a period of at least three years after study completion; and destroy the forms in accordance with the data disposal plan approved by the IRB.

**Mandatory Reporting to the IRB:** The principal investigator must report to the Research and Policy Support Group, within five business days, any serious problem, adverse effect, or outcome that occurs with frequency or degree of severity greater than that anticipated. In addition, the principal investigator must report any event or series of events that prompt the temporary or permanent suspension of a research project involving human subjects or any deviations from the approved protocol.

**Amendments/Modifications:** All amendments/modification of protocols involving human subjects must have prior IRB approval, except those involving the prevention of immediate harm to a subject, which must be reported within 24 hours to the NYC Department of Education IRB.

**Continuation of your research:** It is your responsibility to insure that an application for continuing review approval is submitted six weeks before the expiration date noted above. If you do not receive approval before the expiration date, all study activities must stop until you receive a new approval letter.

**Research findings:** We require a copy of the report of findings from the research. Interim reports may also be requested for multi-year studies. Your report should not include identification of the superintendency, district, any school, student, or staff member. Please send an electronic copy of the final report to: [irb@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:irb@schools.nyc.gov).

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Mary Mattis at 212.374.3913.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Mary C. Mattis, PhD  
Director, Institutional Review Board

cc: Barbara Dworkowitz

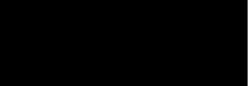
## APPENDIX C

### Recruitment Letter/Participant Letter

NYC DOE IRB Form: IRB #363-2015-2016

#### Appendix C

#### Recruitment Letter/Participation Letter

Principal investigator(s)  
Audrey Baker  


SAGE IRB  
sageirb@sage.edu  
The Sage Colleges  
Troy, NY 12180

**Description of Study:** Audrey Baker is a doctoral student at Sage College in the School of Education engaged in research for the purpose of satisfying a requirement for a Doctor of Education Degree. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between instructional leadership and system leadership as dictated by the evolving roles of New York City principals during the historical reform of Children First, with the aim of demonstrating how changes in leadership at the school level can affect the educational culture of an entire district, and create a more comprehensive look at how high-level leadership decisions can affect student learning.

This study is designed to provide new knowledge that will add to the field of educational leadership. Currently, there is a dearth of research concerning how varying perceptions of power effect leadership training and leadership behaviors in school leaders such as principals.

You are invited to take part in the study because of your experience as a New York City principal who has served during Children First.

If you agree to take part in the study, you will be asked to participate in a scheduled observation as well as an hour-long interview session. The data from the observation and the interview will be used to assess your perceptions of your leadership during Children First. The study will also determine how the evolution of leadership styles and the empowerment of New York City principals affect the culture and climate of their school environment. During the interview process some of the questions will relate to Bolman and Deal's four-framework model of organizational structure. In order that you may become familiar with this model, the researcher will provide you with these four lenses prior to the interview session.

The possible benefits of this research study will offer future school leaders useful insights about the challenges and successes principals face as they adapt varying leadership styles to achieve their goals. Both the observation and the interview shall not exceed a total of two hours, and may be conducted at different times at your request.

There may be minimal risk involved in participating in this study. There are no direct benefits to for agreeing to be in this study. Please understand that although you may not benefit directly from participation in this study, you have the opportunity to ascertain how varying perceptions of power can affect leadership styles, and in turn, affect student outcomes. If you have any concerns about the risks/benefits of participating in this study, you can contact the investigators and/or the university's human research oversight board (the Institutional Review Board or IRB) at the email listed above.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You will be given a \$25 Barnes and Noble gift certificate as

NYC DOE IRB Form: IRB #363-2015-2016

a token of appreciation for your time in participating in this study by the researcher.

Information obtained in this study is strictly confidential. All data will be secured in a locked filing cabinet. Your name will not be used in the reporting of information in publications or conference presentations.

You have the right to refuse to participate in this study and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

**I have read this letter and I fully understand the contents of this document and voluntarily consent to participate. All of my questions concerning this research have been answered. If I have any question in the future about this study they will be answered by the investigator listed above.**

**Participant name (print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out the Informed Consent Form that follows.

Thank you for your participation and time.

Sincerely,  
Audrey Baker

## APPENDIX D

### Interview Protocol and School Leader Questions

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of communication: In person \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ WebEx \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

At this point researcher, I will begin the audio recordings. Researcher will state the following codes for the audio recording:

- District code \_\_\_\_\_
- Participant code \_\_\_\_\_

Hello, my name is Audrey Baker and I would like to thank you for allowing me to observe you and for your participation in this interview. As a researcher, I am conducting this interview so that I can gather data for a research study. This study will explore the relationship between instructional leadership and system leadership as dictated by the evolving roles of New York City principals under the historical reform of Children First, with the aim of demonstrating how changes in leadership at the school level can affect the education culture of an entire district, and creating a more comprehensive look at how high-level leadership decisions can affect student learning.

Before we begin I would like to ask you if you have any questions or concerns about the scope of this study. (Allow the participant to ask any questions they need to: each of their questions/concerns will be addressed until the participant is comfortable and indicates that they are ready to begin the interview.)

I would now like to begin and will ask you a few questions about your background.

Please provide the following demographic information:

1. Age:
2. Sex:
3. Race/Ethnicity:
4. Current Employer:
5. Current Position:
6. School District:

Please answer the following questions:

**Under Children First, wide-scale power and leadership shifts occurred in the New York City school system. What are the lasting effects on principal's roles and their perceptions of their roles?**

How do these shifting power dynamics impact the New York City principals' ability to carry out their roles as school leaders?

1. How would you define your role/position?
2. When you think of yourself as a leader what comes to mind?
3. What certifications (or trainings) did you undergo to be considered fit for your position?
  - a. If any, explain in detail?
  - b. If none, was foregoing the training an exception?
  - c. Did you complete some alternative form of preparation? If so, please explain.
4. How can a principal become a spokesperson for professional learning, which affects instructional leadership and student achievement?
  - a. And how does a principal become a spokesperson and who has been the spokesperson under past leadership
5. If you were to make the argument that politics plays a significant role in school or education leadership, what would your argument be?
6. What are your perceptions of mayoral control?
  - a. Do you believe mayoral control was a positive or negative experience for NYC?

- i. Why or why not?
- 7. What was your experience under Children First?
- 8. How did your experience during Children First differ from your experiences before or after that period?
- 9. Can you describe any perceptible shifts in power that took place under Children First, for example Superintendents versus Principals (how did those roles change)?
  - a. What caused those shifts?
  - b. Can you recall the general reaction to those shifts?
  - c. Did they make for more effective school leadership?
  - d. How did they impact the school/district culture?
  - e. Were there noticeable differences in student outcomes or achievement as a result of those power shifts?
- 10. Have you created a culture and climate of support and success in your school?
  - a. What is your evidence?
  - b. How do you perceive that you are successful?
- 11. Is power shared by the principals reflective of power gained? (Examining the change process in an educational setting?)

**What effects do large-scale restructuring of instructional and leadership designs have on a school's culture? What challenges and successes do principals face under the recent changes in mayoral and chancellor control?**

- 1. What role does power play in school leadership?
  - a. How would you define or describe that kind of power?
  - b. How do you think power is expressed in school leadership?
  - c. How is power expressed as an instructional leader? System leader?
- 2. What (and/or how) can principals do to examine and improve instructional practices?
  - a. How can they begin school improvement planning?
  - 3. How do principals define and objectively measure quality teaching?
  - 4. What professional development do principals need?
  - 5. Do decisions by consensus (collaboration) produce good results?
    - a. What decisions yield the best results? Consensus? Collaboration? Dictatorial leadership with no input? Others?
  - 6. Think back on the past few years, how has your leadership practice changed?
  - 7. Did you know of any principals whose schools were closing during the reform?
    - a. Were you ever concerned about how this could impact your own school? And, if so, what effect did this have on your own leadership behaviors?

**Bolman and Deal discuss four frames of organizational structure: the structural, the human resource, the symbolic, and the political frameworks. How do (or did) NYC principals utilize these frameworks in creating and maintaining leadership behaviors and power bases before, during, and after Children First?**

1. Bolman and Deal propose four frames as the basis for effective organizational leadership. How familiar are you with these concepts (even if you're not familiar with Bolman and Deal's work per se)?
  - a. Do you utilize any of these frames in your own leadership style? If so, which do you use and how?
2. After the empowerment initiated under Children First, did you use any of these four frames to restructure your organization?
  - a. If so, which frames did you utilize, and how?
3. Using Bolman and Deal's four lenses as a conceptual framework, describe how you might go about solving a crisis within your school?
4. To what extent did you feel supported to solve problems under Children First?
  - a. Can you describe an incident from that time that required you to reframe your leadership style/behaviors?
  - b. Did this incident and subsequent change in your leadership style/behaviors affect your interactions with your supervisors and/or your staff?

Thank you for your participation. Is there anything else you would like to add, or anything else that comes to mind about this topic that you would like to share?

## APPENDIX E

### Consent Form

NYC DOE IRB Form: IRB #363-2015-2016

#### Appendix E – Informed Consent

#### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

in conjunction with the requirements of Sage College's IRB

To: \_\_\_\_\_

You are being asked to participate in a research project entitled: Changing roles and perspectives: An examination of the evolving roles of principals during the historical reform of Children First

This research is being conducted by Audrey Baker.

The purpose of this research is to investigate and explore the relationship between instructional leadership and system leadership as dictated by the evolving roles of New York City principals during the historical reform of Children First, with the aim of demonstrating how changes in leadership at the school level can affect the education culture of an entire district. The results of this research would inform educational leadership as it relates to the NYC school system.

This project is being conducted in the period from December 2015 to November 2016.

The procedures to be followed:

This interview will be audio-taped with your permission. All interview information will be kept confidential by the researcher in locked files and/or password protected computer files that are solely accessible to the researcher. The identities of interviewees and their districts will be held confidential in notes, written reports, and oral reports through the use of pseudonyms. You will have an opportunity to review and/or revise the transcript of your interview.

Minimal Risk: Related to Personal Information and Confidentiality

Participation is voluntary, I understand that I may withdraw at any time during the course of this study or revoke my consent and withdraw from the study without any penalty.

I have been given an opportunity to read and keep a copy of this Agreement and to ask questions concerning the study. Any such questions have been answered to my full and complete satisfaction.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, having full capacity to consent, do hereby volunteer to participate in this research study.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_, Research Participant

This research has received the approval of The Sage Colleges Institutional Review Board, which functions to insure the protection of the rights of human participants. If you, as a participant, have any complaints about this study, please contact:

Dr. Lori Quigley, Dean  
Esteves School of Education  
The Sage Colleges  
37 First Street  
Troy, New York 12180  
518-244-2326  
[l.quigley@sage.edu](mailto:l.quigley@sage.edu)

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Certificate of Completion**

#### **Certificate of Completion**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Audrey Baker** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 09/14/2014

Certification Number: 1521640

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Share with Participants Prior to Interview**

NYC DOE IRB Form: IRB #363-2015-2016

Bolman and Deal's Four-Framework Model consists of:

- Structural Framework – Social architect whose leadership style is analysis and design – focus on structure, strategy, environment, implementation, experimentation, and adaption.
- Human Resource Framework – Catalyst and servant whose leadership style is support, advocate, and empowerment – visible and accessible; they empower, increase participation, support, share information, and move decision-making down into the organization.
- Political Framework – Advocate, whose leadership style is coalition and building – clarify what they want and what they can get; they assess the distribution of power and interests; they build linkages to other stakeholders; use persuasion first, then use negotiation and coercion only if necessary.
- Symbolic Framework – Prophet, whose leadership style is inspiration, view organizations as a stage or theater to play certain roles and give impressions; these leaders use symbols to capture attention; they try to frame experience by providing plausible interpretations of experiences; they discover and communicate a vision.

<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/framework.html>

## APPENDIX H

### Leadership Orientations

# LEADERSHIP ORIENTATIONS

This questionnaire asks you to describe yourself as a manager and leader. For each item, give the number "4" to the phrase that best describes you, "3" to the item that is next best, and on down to "1" for the item that is least like you.

1. My strongest skills are:

- a. analytic skills
- b. interpersonal skills
- c. political skills
- d. flair for drama

2. The best way to describe me is:

- a. technical expert
- b. good listener
- c. skilled negotiator
- d. inspirational leader

3. What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to:

- a. make good decisions
- b. coach and develop people
- c. build strong alliances and a power base
- d. inspire and excite others

4. What people are most likely to notice about me is my:

- a. attention to detail
- b. concern for people
- c. ability to succeed, in the face of conflict and opposition
- d. charisma

5. My most important leadership trait is:

- a. clear, logical thinking
- b. caring and support for others
- c. toughness and aggressiveness
- d. imagination and creativity

6. I am best described as:

- a. an analyst
- b. a humanist
- c. a politician
- d. a visionary

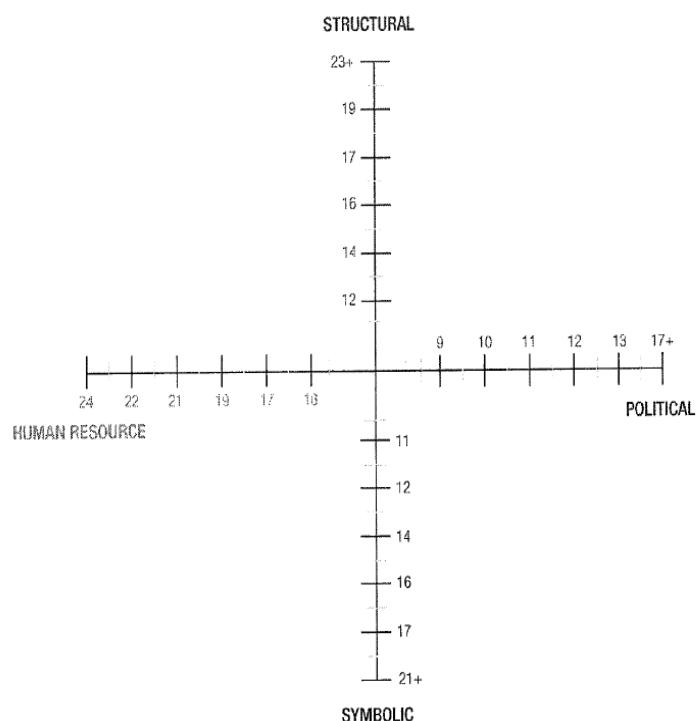
ST
HR
PL
SY
Total

© 1988, Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal. All rights reserved. This survey is based on ideas in Bolman and Deal's *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991, 1997, 2003).

# LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION SCORING

The Leadership Orientations instrument is keyed to four different conceptions of organizations and of the task of organizational leadership.

Plot each of your resources on the appropriate axis of the chart below: ST for Structural, HR for Human Resource, PL for Political, and SY for Symbolic. Then read the brief description of each of these orientations toward leadership and organization.



## Compute your scores as follows:

$$ST = 1a + 2a + 3a + 4a + 5a + 6a$$

$$HR = 1b + 2b + 3b + 4b + 5b + 6b$$

$$PL = 1c + 2c + 3c + 4c + 5c + 6c$$

$$SY = 1d + 2d + 3d + 4d + 5d + 6d$$

[Scales are adjusted to represent percentile scores. The lowest number for each frame represents the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile; the highest number represents the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. The table below shows percentiles for each frame, based on a sample of more than 700 managers from business, education, and government. For the structural frame, for example, 25% of managers rate themselves 12 or below, and only 10% rate themselves 23 or above. The percentiles for each frame are shown in the table below, based on a sample of more than 700 managers in business, education, and government.]

## APPENDIX I

### Letter Requesting Permission from Dr. Bolman

**From:** Audrey M. Baker [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 31, 2016 11:25 AM  
**To:** Bolman, Lee G. <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Permission to use the Leadership Orientation Instrument

Dear Dr. Bolman,

I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership Program at The Sage Colleges in Albany, New York. I am using the Bolman and Deal Four-Frame Model (1991) in my dissertation, as I examine the changing roles and perspectives of New York City principals from 2002- 2014 during the historical reform of Children First.

I am respectfully requesting permission to include the Bolman & Deal Leadership Orientation Instrument in my research study. I understand that after I obtain my results and complete the dissertation that I am to submit a copy of both to you. If necessary, Dr. Marlene Zakierski, my Dissertation Chair, will address any concerns regarding my request.

I thank you for your assistance and consideration in my academic effort. I await your reply.

Educationally yours,  
Audrey Marie Baker

## **APPENDIX J**

### **Permission from Dr. Bolman**

Original Message.....

From: Bolman, Lee G. <[leebolman@umkc.edu](mailto:leebolman@umkc.edu)>  
To: Audrey M. Baker <[bakeraudr@aol.com](mailto:bakeraudr@aol.com)>  
Sent: Tue, Nov 1, 2016 8:34 pm  
Subject: RE: Permission to use the Leadership Orientation Instrument

Dear Ms. Baker,

I am pleased to give you permission to use the Leadership Orientations survey in your dissertation.

Best wishes for a successful study. I look forward to learning about your results.

Lee G. Bolman, Ph.D.  
Professor and Marion Bloch/Missouri Chair in Leadership  
Bloch School of Management  
University of Missouri-Kansas City  
5100 Rockhill Road  
Kansas City, MO 64110

Tel: (816) 235-5407

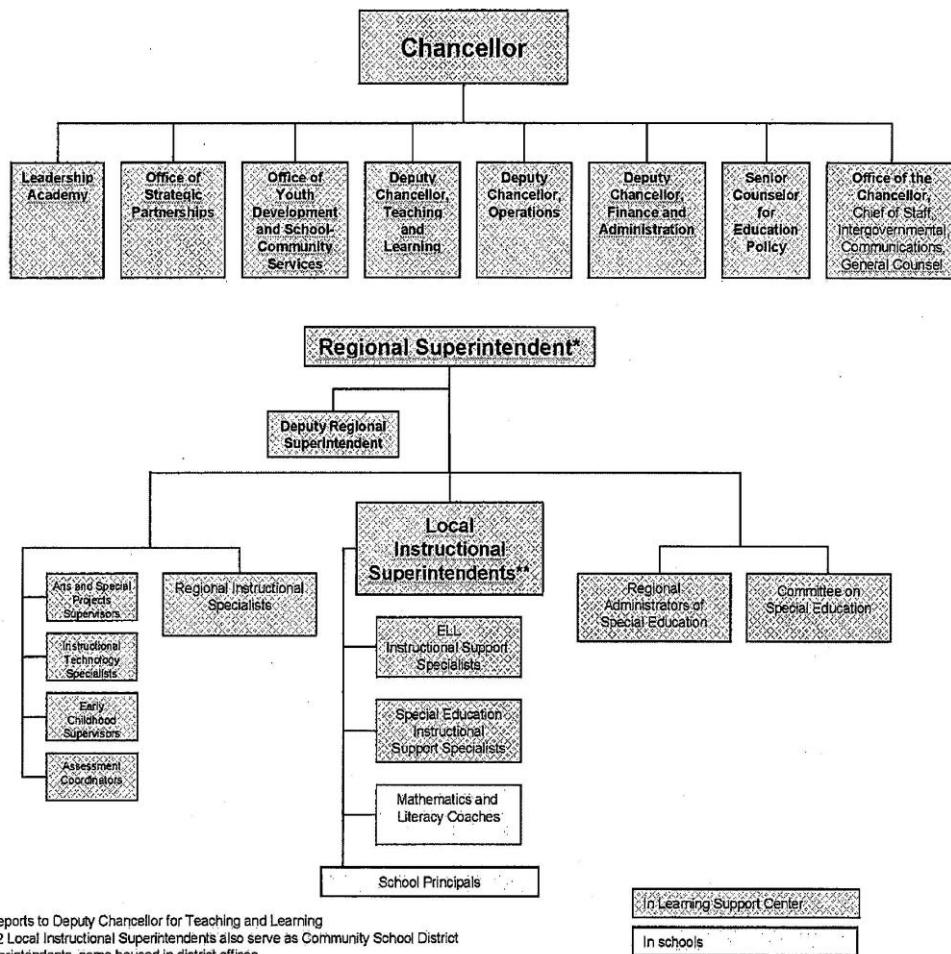
Web: [www.leebolman.com](http://www.leebolman.com)

## APPENDIX K

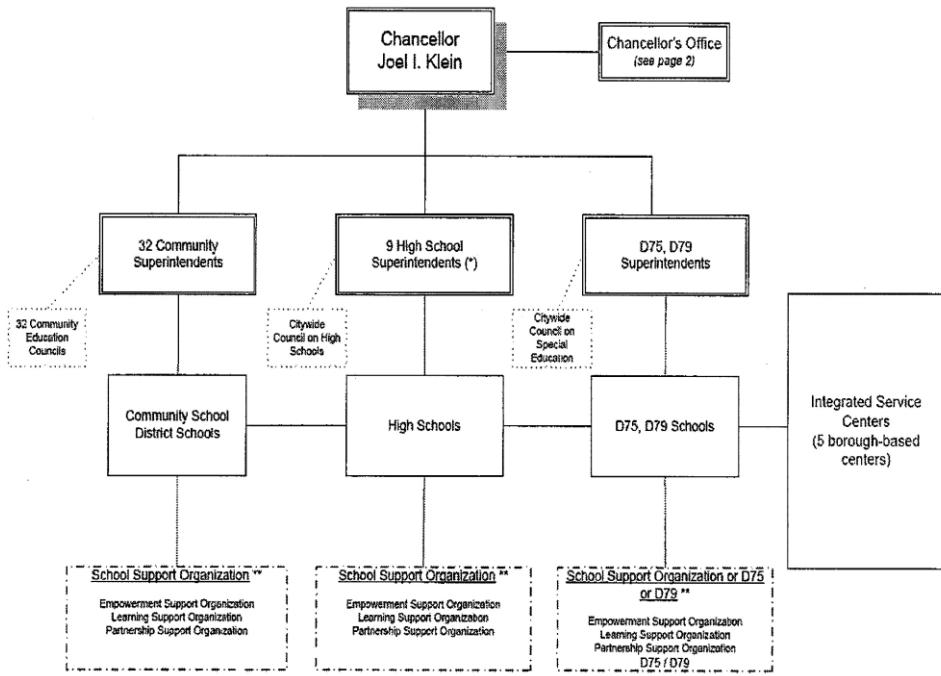
### New York City Dept. of Education Pre-and-Post Children First Pedagogical Leadership Structures

Exhibit 5 NYC Schools Old and New Organizational Structures

Disbanded NYC Department of Education and Regional Organizational Structure



## NYC Department of Education Organizational Chart (2007-2008)



**Exhibit 3 Summary of Children First Reforms**

**Children First Reform Highlights 2002–2005**

- DOE management structure reorganized with the creation of regional offices
- A uniform literacy and math curriculum instituted for grades K-8
- Select failing secondary schools closed; 150 new small secondary schools opened
- New parent support system established with a parent coordinator in every school
- Leadership Academy created to train new school leaders
- Autonomy Zone piloted

**Three Pillars of Children First**

- Leadership—Principals as the locus of control
- Empowerment—Value exchange between autonomy and accountability
- Accountability—Use quantitative and qualitative measures to hold principals accountable for the demonstrated progress of every student

Source: New York City Department of Education

## Exhibit 4 Autonomy Zone Value Exchange Summary

**Value Exchange: Summary Autonomy for Accountability**

PRINCIPALS ACCEPT: 5-year Performance Agreements	PRINCIPALS RECEIVE: Control and Support				
<b>STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT</b>	<b>AUTONOMY</b> (within legal and contractual requirements)				
<p>5-year standards with a minimum annual gap-closure target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Average daily attendance: 90% HS; 92% MS/ES</li> <li>- 80% Regents cohort pass rate for ELA and Math Regents Exams</li> <li>- 4-year cohort graduation rate: 70% OR 55% 4-year and 75% 5-year</li> <li>- 2 or 4-year college acceptance: 90% of graduating students</li> <li>- Annual drop-out rate: No more than 4% of HS students enrolled</li> <li>- Annual course pass rate: 75% HS</li> <li>- Meet AYP targets for ELA, Math &amp; Science in all subgroups for grades 3 through 8</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choice of curriculum, instructional models and interim assessments</li> <li>- Membership in school-led networks organized around shared educational philosophies</li> <li>- Choice of professional development</li> <li>- Flexibility in scheduling of school day</li> <li>- Maximum flexibility in staffing decisions within contract</li> <li>- Greater flexibility in school budget</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop new approaches to educate special populations</li> </ul>				
<b>EDUCATIONAL EQUITY</b>	<b>CROSS-FUNCTIONAL SUPPORT</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All student groups (ELL, SPED and Level 1) make educational gains on test scores and graduation rates</li> <li>- For choice enrollment schools, attract an equitable entering class mix that is close to citywide HS average for ELL, SPED, level 1 (no less than 10% ELL; 10% SPED, no less than 25% Level 1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dedicated team from ROC/Admin, Human Resources, Youth Development, Special Education/ELL</li> <li>- Voice in selecting LIS and setting coaching/support priorities</li> <li>- Reduction in administrative/paperwork burden on principals</li> <li>- Timely, useful data about all aspects of school performance, accountability metrics and other management information</li> <li>- Optional attendance in any professional development or other DOE forum</li> </ul>				
<b>SHARED LEARNING</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Document, share best practices, accept visits</li> </ul>					
<b>FISCAL INTEGRITY</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expend resources consistent with education plans and within approved budget levels. In addition, spending must comply with contracting and purchasing procedures</li> </ul>					
<b>INCENTIVES &amp; CONSEQUENCES</b>					
<table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Consequences:</b></td> <td><b>Incentives:</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renewal/non-renewal with or without conditions</li> <li>- School closure</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visibility of results to peers, public</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<b>Consequences:</b>	<b>Incentives:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renewal/non-renewal with or without conditions</li> <li>- School closure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visibility of results to peers, public</li> </ul>	
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Source: New York City Department of Education.

## APPENDIX L

DOE IRB Form: IRB [REDACTED]

### TRANSCRIBER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

#### Changing Roles and Perspectives: An Examination of the Evolving Roles of Principals During the Historical Reform of Children First

IRB Log# [REDACTED]

I, Wanda Gwyn, agree to transcribe data for this study. I agree that I will:

1. Keep all research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than Audrey Baker, the researcher/s on this study;
2. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession. This includes:
  - using closed headphones when transcribing audio-taped interviews;
  - keeping all transcript documents and digitized interviews in computer password-protected files;
  - closing any transcription programs and documents when temporarily away from the computer;
  - keeping any printed transcripts in a secure location such as a locked file cabinet; and
  - permanently deleting any e-mail communication containing the data;
3. Give all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the primary investigator when I have completed the research tasks;
4. Erase or destroy all research information in any form or format that is not returnable to the primary investigator (e.g., information stored on my computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

Signature of transcriber

12/5/2015

Date

Signature of principal investigator

12/5/15

Date