

**A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY EXPLORING HOW PRINCIPALS MANAGE
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THEIR SCHOOLS.**

A Doctoral Research Project

Presented to

Associate Professor Robert J. Reidy Jr., Ph.D.

Doctoral Committee Chair

Esteves School of Education

The Sage Colleges

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Education

In Educational Leadership

William E. Cooper

December 4th , 2017

© 2017 William E. Cooper

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will guide your path.” Proverbs 3:5-6

I want to begin by thanking the Creator of this universe for His unmerited favor over my life and His hedge of protection over the course of this fascinating life that I have been blessed with.

I want to thank and dedicate this work to my ancestors who endured bondage, slavery, the Civil War, emancipation, segregation, and Jim Crow before settling in the rural countryside of Bertie County, North Carolina, or migrating to America from St. Kitts, W.I. and making Brooklyn, NY, their home. Their sacrifices made it possible for me to take advantage of an opportunity none of them ever had. For this I am eternally grateful.

To my wife, Patricia, I love you and thank you for providing me with the encouragement, feedback, and time to complete this awesome milestone. To my daughter Cariss and my son William, I pray this work will inspire you to set high aspirations for yourself in whatever vocation you so desire. To the first educators in my life my father Willie, and my mother, Lynda, thank you for instilling a value for education in my heart and mind. To my sister Rachael, and my brother, Jason, thank you for your encouragement and support. To my grandparents, who are smiling down from Heaven, Ulyesses, Augustine, Hubert, & Lucille, I thank you and I hope I have made you proud.

To Dr. Baptiste for giving me my first teaching opportunity. To Dr. Lyles, and Mr. Spradley, for believing in my potential to be a system leader and giving me the opportunity to walk into my destiny. To Mr. Buckman for “teaching me to fish as opposed to giving a me a few fish now and then”. To Sage alumni, Dr. Collier-Wade for encouraging me to apply to the Sage program. To Sage alumni, Dr. Haley, Dr. Nurik, and Dr. Goldstein for being the big sisters that I could depend on for wisdom, resources, and encouragement. To Dr. Landeau and Dr. Kennedy for inspiring me to pursue my doctorate and to never stop pursuing greatness. To Marcos Lindley for asking me to “look at what I had in my hand.” To the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated for your financial support.

To my dissertation committee Chair, Dr. Robert J. Reidy for being a true role model and a Sage. Thank you for your wealth of knowledge, the tireless hours we spent on the phone, the

miles you traveled and the accommodations you made to meet with me, the hours you spent with me after class, and the patience you exerted; all the while helping me to produce a product of which I am truly proud. To Dr. Steele, thank you for the hours we spent on the phone fine tuning my work. Your feedback was truly helpful. To Dr. Peter Ianniello, thank you for your feedback and thought provoking questions. To Dr. Zakerski, thank for a library of thought provoking and inspiring books. Thank you for introducing me to this quote: “The presence of the star does not excuse us from the difficult territory through which it is guiding us.” To Dr. Joyner-Wells thank you for introducing me to the work of Dr. Edgar H. Schein.

To Mauriciere, Alexandra, Yasmin, Ozella, Hector, Andrew, Joel, Yessenia, Melody, Lori, Minerva, & Stephen I am grateful that our paths crossed. We began this marathon together, encouraged one another, worked harder than we ever thought, cried, drank, ate, laughed, fought, made amends, hugged, and have finally crossed the finish line. Thank you for inspiring me not to give up. I am proud to be a member of Sage Cohort 3. May God bless each of you in your future endeavors.

ABSTRACT

A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY EXPLORING HOW PRINCIPALS MANAGE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THEIR SCHOOLS.

William E. Cooper,

The Sage Colleges, Esteves School of Education, 2017

Dissertation Chair: Robert J. Reidy Jr., Ph.D.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact and response to the findings of the Quality Review, in twelve selected schools in NYC, as it related to Quality Indicator 3.4. It focused on the challenges these principals had to contend with to move from an Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient rating to a Well Developed rating in Quality Indicator 3.4. It focused on the strategies these principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review. Finally, it will attempt to determine if elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein, were prevalent in the strategies principals used to change the culture of their organizations and therefore make improvements in their quality review proficiency ratings.

The participants in this study included twelve principals which encompassed elementary, junior high, and high school. Individuals selected to be part of a target population of principals were able to acquire a Well Developed rating in Quality Indicator 3.4 after receiving an Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient on the preceding QR between the years of 2011-2016. Data was collected using the interview questions developed by the researcher, and triangulated with data from the School Quality Review (SQR), and the NYC Quality Review reports for each of the participating schools. The findings in this study revealed that external

evaluation tools liken to the NYC QR have an impact on school climate and can be used as a lever for change in the organizational culture of a school community. It also revealed that Schein's primary embedding mechanisms are applicable in the school setting.

Key Words: Culture, Quality Review, Quality Indicator 3.4, Schein's Primary Embedding Mechanisms

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Statement of the Problem:	4
Research Questions	5
Conceptual Framework/Assumptions	6
Significance of the Study.....	6
Definition of Terms	7
Delimitations.....	9
Limitations	9
Summary	10
CHAPTER TWO	11
LITERATURE REVIEW	11
Introduction	11
The NYC Quality Review.....	14
Defining school culture	38
Defining a culture for learning.....	45
Changing the organizational culture of a school	48
Schein’s Primary Embedding Mechanisms	51
Challenges to changing the organizational culture of a school	57
Summary	60
CHAPTER THREE	62
METHODOLOGY	62
Introduction	62
Purpose Statement	62
Research Questions	62
Research Design.....	63
Population, Sample and Sampling Procedures.....	64
Sample	65
Sampling method.....	65
Instrumentation	65
Data Collection.....	66

Data Analysis.....	67
Researcher bias.....	68
Validity	69
Reliability	69
Summary	70
CHAPTER FOUR.....	71
FINDINGS	71
Research Question 1	74
Research Question 2	81
Research Question 3	91
Research Question 4.....	95
Summary	113
CHAPTER FIVE	115
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	115
Introduction	115
Summary of Findings	116
Conclusions	123
Recommendation for Practice and Policy	127
Recommendations for Further Study:	129
Summary	130
REFERENCES	131
APPENDICES	137
APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER	138
APPENDIX B: PHONE CALL RECRUITMENT SCRIPT	139
APPENDIX C: EMAIL RECRUITMENT	140
APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT FORM	141
APPENDIX E: CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT	145
APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	146
APPENDIX G: NIH CERTIFICATE FOR STUDENT INVESTIGATOR	149
APPENDIX G: NIH CERTIFICATE FOR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	150
APPENDIX I: SIGNATURE PAGE	151
APPENDIX J: SAGE IRB APPROVAL LETTER	152
APPENDIX K: NYC DOE IRB APPROVAL LETTER	153

APPENDIX L: SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE NYC QR 2010-2016	154
---	-----

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Number of Schools that received Quality Review between 2011 - 2016

Table 2: Schools identified in the target population, by borough, who moved from a rating of Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient to a Well Developed rating in QR Indicator 3.4 from 2011-2016

Table 3: Individual Characteristics of Participants

Table 4: Demographics of Schools

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

Every year, a portion of New York City principals receive an evaluation from the NYC Chancellor's Office entitled the NYC Quality Review (QR). This tool examines, "how the work in a school community impacts the quality of the instructional core across classrooms to prepare students for the next level; it aligns with the Department of Education's articulated focus on preparing students at each level for college and career readiness" (NYC DOE, 2015, p.3).

The purpose of the QR, as stated by the NYCDOE, is as follows:

- (1) Deepens the work of improving the instructional core across classrooms; (2) incorporates language and expectations connected to the integration of Common Core- aligned curricula and the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching for frequent cycles of teacher feedback; (3) Continues to focus on the quality of teacher team work around collaborative inquiry and how the analysis of student work is used to inform the design of tasks and pedagogy; and (4) Formally assesses five of the ten Quality Indicators across three Quality Categories (1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.4, 4.2)" (NYC DOE, 2015, p.4).

The three Quality Categories are the Instructional Core, School Culture and Systems for Improvement. The five indicators serve as subcategories under the Quality Categories. For Instructional Core, the indicators assessed are 1.1 Curriculum, 1.2 Pedagogy and 2.2 Assessment. For School Culture, the indicator assessed is 3.4 High Expectations; and for Systems for Improvement, the indicator assessed is 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development.

Following the QR evaluation, principals receive one of four ratings, Underdeveloped, Developing, Proficient, or Well Developed for each of these five Quality Indicators. Well Developed is the highest possible score a principal can receive in one category. Naturally, an underdeveloped is the lowest possible score a principal could receive.

Of particular interest to this research study is a principal performance rating in Quality Indicator 3.4. This indicator is compelling because it evaluates how school leaders establish a culture for learning. The cultural components assessed include communicating high expectations to staff, students, and families, and providing supports to achieve those expectations (NYC DOE, 2015, p.4). The study of culture and its impact on education is not a new concept.

Zulu et al. (2004), stated:

the term culture of teaching and learning refers to the attitude of educators and learners towards teaching and learning and the spirit of dedication and commitment in a school which arises through the joint effort of school management, the input of educators, the personal characteristics of learners, factors in the family life of students, school-related factors as well as social factors (p.170).

This indicator is important because a school's performance in Quality Indicator 3.4 of the NYC QR is used as a data source in calculating a school's rating in the Supportive Environment section of the NYC DOE School Quality Report (SQR). It is also a factor in calculating a principal's job performance rating in the Measures of Leadership Practice (MOLP) section of the NYC DOE Principal's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR).

According to a NYC DOE report entitled, *All Quality Review Ratings from 2005-2016*, from 2011 through 2016, one thousand one hundred and ninety-one out of three thousand sixty-one, encompassing all five boroughs of NYC, received at least one NYC Quality Review and obtained a Well Developed in Quality Statement 3.4. Well Developed is the highest possible score a principal can receive in one category. Of those one thousand one hundred and ninety-one schools, only three hundred thirty-nine received a Well Developed on Quality Indicator 3.4 after receiving an underdeveloped, developing, or proficient the prior year.

It could be inferred from this data that the remaining sixty percent of schools in the NYC DOE, that also received a Quality Review, were not meeting the DOE standard in creating an exceptional culture for learning in their school buildings. Investigating how the highest rated principals accomplished their Well Developed rating may yield groundbreaking insight into how to improve the culture for learning in schools that failed to achieve a rating of Well Developed, as well as, improve school principal ratings in the Supportive Environment section of the NYC DOE School Quality Report (SQR). It may also impact their job performance rating in the Measures of Leadership Practice (MOLP) section of the NYCDOE Principal's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR).

According to the 2015 Principals Guide of the QR, a Well Developed culture for learning includes, but is not limited to, the following components: (1) a school handbook and/or school website that communicates high expectations for all stakeholders; (2) teacher orientations; (3) a professional development plan aligned with various components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching complimented by a calendar of professional learning opportunities (PLO); (4) study groups; (5) Collaborative Teacher Teams; (6) Curriculum maps and units of study that are constructed to prepare students to be college and career ready; (7) Opportunities for parents to

receive PLOs to assist in the process of assisting their children in being college and career ready; (8) systems and structures developed to provide parents with consistent updates on their children's progress; (9) advisories; (10) systems and structures in place to provide students with consistent updates on their progress towards reaching learning goals.

Similarly, Weeks (2012) identified the following characteristics as typical of an ideal culture of learning:

(1) A multilevel learning environment, in which learning opportunities are part of all activities; (2) A learning community, engendering shared responsibility and purposeful behavior to achieve school organizational outcomes; (3) A different mindset found among teachers, they are caring, prepared and determined to perform their duties, thus creating conditions conducive for student learning. They navigate their own and their student's 'inner landscape' by literally learning to mentally and spiritually 'dance together' with their students; (4) Networks of collaboration are established, among all stakeholders, in order to facilitate learning; (5) A context is crafted where students attend school, are punctual, accept authority and feel safe; (6) The availability of physical resources, geared for creating a stimulating learning environment; (7) Clarity exists as to the school mission and values, which are supported by all; (8) Principals who as leaders engender a context of trust, mutual respect and understanding; and (9) Parents establishing a partnership with teachers (p. 334).

Statement of the Problem:

As noted above, the *All Quality Review Ratings from 2005-2016* revealed that only twenty-eight percent or three hundred thirty-nine of the one thousand one hundred ninety-one schools received a Well Developed rating on Quality Indicator 3.4 after receiving an

Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient rating the prior year. This suggests that successful school leaders place emphasis on developing a school culture that focuses on emphasizing high expectations for students, teachers, and parents.

Schein (2010) concludes that there “are major tools that leaders have available to them to teach their organizations how to perceive, think, feel, and behave based on their own conscious and unconscious convictions” (p.236). These tools are referred to as primary embedding mechanisms and include: (1) what a leader pays attention to, measures, and controls; (2) how leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises; (3) how leaders allocate resources; (4) how leaders deliberately role model, teach, and coach; (5) how leaders allocate rewards and status; and (6) how leaders recruit, select, promote, and excommunicate (Schein, 2010).

Although previous research concludes that Schein's primary embedding mechanisms can assist leaders teaching their organizations how to perceive, think, feel, and behave based on their own conscious and unconscious convictions, further research is needed in the context of the NYCDOE Quality Review Process. This study addressed that gap in the existing literature.

This study explored how the NYC QR influenced the participating school leaders and if the application of Schein's research was in evidence in the schools studied. Specifically, did the principals who initially received a low score in Quality Indicator 3.4 of the NYC Quality Review, intentionally or intuitively apply Schein’s primary embedding mechanisms to improve their rating to obtain a Well Developed rating in Quality Indicator 3.4 of the NYC Quality Review in the subsequent year?

Research Questions

The four research questions used to guide this research are:

1. Did the findings from the first Quality Review, have an effect on the climate of the school?
2. Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect the strategies principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?
3. Did the findings from the first Quality Review have an effect on the leadership style the principal used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?
4. Were elements of the primary embedding mechanisms, identified by Edgar H. Schein, prevalent in the strategies principals used to make improvements in their Quality Review ratings?

Conceptual Framework/Assumptions

The conceptual framework for this study is constructed through Schein's primary embedding mechanisms.

Significance of the Study

Burton Clark (1972) argued that, novel cultural forms emerge from one of three conditions: (1) when a new organization is launched; (2) when an existing organization is open to cultural evolution; or (3) when a crisis forces an organization to reexamine its traditional ways. Here, each of the participants in this study assumed their leadership role under one of the aforementioned conditions. The lessons learned from their success in establishing a culture of learning with high expectations and supports to achieve those expectations will be a valuable resource for practitioners.

This study is important because it may result in identifying strategies that will assist school leaders in improving their school culture, improving their QR rating and thereby improving their rating on other metrics factored into their APPR rating. On a local, national, and international level this research may assist system leaders with the means to create or complement the establishment of a culture of learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations.

It is important to address this gap in literature because we need new and innovative ways to continue to support principals in an ever-changing school system. This research is important to new and current principals because it will provide them with the opportunity to reflect on their own practices and provide them with alternative strategies to lead change efforts in their schools. Finally, it is important because every child, teacher, and parent deserves to be a part of a school community where there is culture of learning with high expectations consisting of the Well Developed features outlined by the NYC DOE QR rubric.

Definition of Terms

Culture: A pattern of shared beliefs and assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

Ladder of Inference: a term used to provide both an image and a language for discussing what it means to focus on evidence of what is observed as opposed to making inferences about what is observed during instructional rounds.

Look Fors: A clear statement that describes an observable teaching or learning behavior, strategy and outcome, product, or procedure.

Measures of Leadership Practice (MOLP): the portion of the Principal Performance Review that accounts for 60% of a principal's final rating.

NYCDOE Principal's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR): The Principal Performance Review (PPR) is consistent with Education Law 3012-c and agreements between the NYC Department of Education (DOE) and the Council for School Supervisors and Administrators; the framework of the PPR is being used across the State. The Principal Performance Review has been designed to support a common vision: An effective principal in every school for every student.

NYC DOE School Quality Report: a report generated to evaluate a school and its leadership. This report is used to set expectations for schools and promote school improvement and is designed to assist educators to accelerate academic achievement toward the goal of career and college readiness for all students. The report includes multiple years of data and sheds light on trends over time. It also provides comparisons to the performance of similar schools and all schools citywide. The report includes school-specific targets for each quantitative metric set based on the historical performance of similar schools and all schools citywide.

Per-Diem Service: substitute teachers serving on a day to day basis in a school and/or any of its programs.

Per-Session: Per-session employment is any work activity, before or after regular working hours, for which principals, assistant principals and teachers are paid at an hourly rate established by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Primary Embedding Mechanisms: major tools leaders have available to them to teach their organizations how to perceive, think, feel, and behave on their own conscious and unconscious convictions.

Quality Review: A process that evaluates how well schools are organized to support student learning and teacher practice.

Quality Review Indicator: One of ten benchmarks used to determine a school's proficiency in supporting student learning and teacher practice.

Instructional core: The relationship between the student, teacher and content (e.g., academic tasks).

Quality Statement 3.4: One of the quality indicators on the NYC Quality Review which measure how school leaders establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations.

Skedula: A school management system used to empower teachers and instantly provide snapshots of student behavior and academic progress to parents and students to better drive instruction and learning.

Student agency: The level of control, autonomy, and power that a student experiences in an educational situation.

Delimitations

This study will be limited to principals that received a Well Developed rating on Quality Indicator 3.4 after subsequently receiving an Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient, in the same Quality Indicator on their last NYC DOE Quality Review. The rationale for focusing on school principals that accomplished this feat is the fact that only twenty-eight percent of principals made this type of improvement.

Limitations

Time constraints inhibited the researcher from interviewing more participants. Yet he was able to reach his goal of interviewing twelve participants. At least fifteen of the participants in

the sample population of three hundred thirty-nine principals were no longer principals, at the school they were able to move from Under Developed, Developing, or Proficient to a Well Developed in QR Indicator 3.4, when the researcher contacted them. This limitation did not impact his research because there were still enough participants left to interview. During this study, some participants declined to be interviewed. One respondent agreed and then cancelled prior to the interview date. This did not impact his research because he was able to successfully randomly select another principal to interview.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact and response to the findings of the Quality Review, in twelve selected schools in NYC, as it related to Quality Indicator 3.4. It focused on the challenges these principals had to contend with to move from an Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient rating to Well Developed rating Quality Indicator 3.4. It focused on the strategies these principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review. Finally, it attempted to determine if elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein, were prevalent in the strategies principals used to make change the culture of their organizational culture and therefore make improvements in their quality review proficiency ratings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

From its inception in 2007, the NYC DOE Quality Review (QR) has examined the impact that a school community had on the capacity of the instructional core to prepare students for their next steps following secondary education (NYC DOE, 2015). Evidence gathered during the NYC DOE QR assessment process is based upon criteria outlined in the NYC DOE QR Rubric. The QR assessment has a rubric comprising of ten indicators within the following three quality categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems of Improvement.

There are two quality indicators relating specifically to school culture. First, Quality Indicator 1.4, Positive Learning Environment, which focuses on how school leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes to support the academic and personal growth of students and adults. The second is Quality Indicator 3.4, High Expectations, which focuses on evaluating school leaders' ability to establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations (NYCDOE, 2015).

Table 1

Number of Schools that received Quality Review between 2011 - 2015

Year	Total # of schools that received a QR	Total # of schools that received a Well-Developed
2011-2012	507	101
2012-2013	479	72
2013-2014	520	157
2014-2015	1237	604
2015-2016	473	257

One thousand two hundred and ninety- one of these public schools received a well-developed proficiency rating on Quality Statement 3.4 of the NYC DOE QR. Of those one thousand two hundred and ninety-one schools, only three hundred thirty-nine received a Well Developed on Quality Indicator 3.4 after subsequently receiving an Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient on the previous one.

This number is concerning for a variety of reasons. First, a school's proficiency rating in Quality Statement 3.4 is also used as a data source in calculating a school's rating on the Supportive Environment section of the NYCDOE School Quality Report. Secondly, it is used as a data source for calculating a principal's job performance rating in the Measures of Leadership Practice (MOLP) section of the NYCDOE Principal's Performance Review (PPR). Finally, it identifies schools that have not achieved a Well Developed rating in QR Indicator 3.4, and were incapable or too overwhelmed with other issues to put systems in place to improve their rating.

The impact of the ability of a school leader to establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations is well documented. Macneil, Prater, and Busch (2009), noted that strong school cultures have more motivated teachers and motivated teachers have greater success in terms of student performance and student outcomes.

For schools to be successful on the Quality Review, school leaders need to have a keen understanding of their school's culture. They also need an understanding of successful strategies and approaches that can create or change culture to meet the needs of their students.

As Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005) stated, culture can have a positive or negative influence on a school's effectiveness. Effective leaders build cultures that positively influence teachers, who have a similar influence on students. Marzano et al. (2005) concurred with

Scribner, Cockrell, Cockrell, and Valentine (1999) that building principals have a minimal effect on student achievement. Therefore, an effective culture is the most efficient tool a leader wields to foster change (Marzano et al., 2005).

Schein (2010) concluded that there are major tools that leaders have available to them to teach their organizations how to understand, think, feel, and behave based on their own conscious and unconscious principles. These primary embedding mechanisms are: (1) what a leader pays attention to, measures, and controls; (2) how leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises, (3) how leaders allocate resources; (4) how leaders deliberately role model, teach, and coach; and (5) how leaders recruit, select, promote, and excommunicate (Schein, 2010).

Ronald Sims (2000) used these tools to analyze efforts by Warren Buffett to change Salomon Brothers culture following the, “bond scandal fiasco” (p.66). He concluded that although Buffett lost talented but unethical employees in the process of changing the culture, he was successful in changing it to one that supported ethical behavior.

Establishing a culture for learning is imperative and paramount to a school's success. It is the underlying reason why other components of successful schools can flourish. As per the aforementioned data, more than sixty percent of the schools that received a QR, from 2011-2016, are at varying degrees of proficiency in establishing a culture for learning; which implies that school culture is difficult to change.

The literature and research reviewed for this study will be explored through the following sections: the NYC Quality Review and its role evaluating a school leader’s ability to establish a culture for learning in a school, and defining what culture, school culture and a culture for learning are. It will also address why establishing a culture of learning is essential for a school to

be successful, how to evaluate, change and establish a culture for learning, and the challenges associated with changing the culture of a school.

The NYC Quality Review

Arguably, the NYC Quality Review represents the external impetus that Schein (2010) attributes to triggering school communities to learn new patterns of shared beliefs and assumptions to comply with its mandates and thereby receive a favorable rating.

While the function of the NYC Quality Review has already been mentioned, it is important to explain its origin, the rationale and usefulness of its findings for new principals with or without prior experience. One of the school attributes that the NYC QR can provide vital information on is the degree to which a school leader has created a culture for learning.

It is important to begin by stating that cultures of learning, as previously defined, were not always a priority. Schmoker (2006), surmised that the root cause of most schools' struggles to be successful and intellectually engaging places lay at the feet of systems leaders within and outside schools who knew very little about what actually went on inside them.

This presumption is based on Elmore's (2000) idea that a protective barrier discourages and even penalizes close, constructive criticism of instruction and the supervision of instruction in school systems on local, national, and international level. This protective barrier is also known as a buffer. It is composed of an administrative superstructure, encompassing principals, board members, and administrators (Elmore, 2000).

Elmore (2000) continued by stating:

The by-products of this institutional form have been among other things: relatively weak professionalization among teachers, since teaching was thought not to require expertise on a level with other, "real" professions and conditions of work were not conducive to the

formation of strong professional associations among teachers; a relatively elaborate system of administrative overhead at the district and school level, thought to be necessary for adequate supervision of the relatively low-skill teacher force; and relatively large schools, thought to be a logical extension of principles of scientific management requiring economies of scale to produce efficiencies (p. 5).

“By the 1960s and early 1970s, researchers began to take notice of this protective barrier labeled as loose-coupling” (Elmore, 2000, p.5). Loose-coupling is the idea that decisions about the content students learn, the instructional strategies that are used, the benchmarks, groupings, and assessments resided in the hands of teachers as opposed to the administrators who were responsible for them (Elmore, 2000).

Murphy, Weil, Hallinger, & Mitman (1982) conducted research that affirmed the existence of loose-coupling and the trickle-down effect it had on the relationships between district offices and schools and between school offices and individual classrooms. Murphy et. al. (1982) described these interactions as fragile and attributed it to a lack of consensus about school goals, the absence of clear instructional technology, the transient flow of people into and out of the school community, and the public perception that the field of education was a pseudo profession.

According to Murphy et. al. (1982) the basic tenant of loose-coupling was that in the hierarchy of an organization, the lack of cohesiveness between adjoining levels within the infrastructure limits the capacity of the principal, for instance, to influence teachers or students.

In order to curtail the effects of loose-coupling, every year all NYC public schools receive a School Quality Report, NYC School Survey and a New York City Quality Review (QR). For the purpose of this study we will focus on the QR.

One of the evaluation tools that the NYCDOE uses to evaluate School Culture is the Quality Review (QR). The QR measures, “how the work in a school community impacts the quality of the instructional core across classrooms to prepare students for the next level” (NYCDOE, 2015, p.4). The perception is that the instructional core is paramount to the improvement and maintenance of high standards across classrooms within a school, and the school’s culture and systems for improvement must facilitate efforts to increase and sustain quality (NYCDOE, 2015).

The purpose of the QR is to: (1) deepen the work of improving the instructional core across classrooms; (2) incorporate language and expectations connected to the NYCDOE Citywide Instructional Expectations, which includes the integration of Common Core-aligned curricula and the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching for frequent cycles of teacher feedback; (3) continue to focus on the quality of teacher team work around collaborative inquiry and how the analysis of student work is used to inform the design of tasks and pedagogy; and (4) formally assesses five of the ten Quality Indicators across three Quality Categories (1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.4, 4.2)” (NYCDOE, 2015, p.8).

Reviewers for the QR are selected from a pool of educators. This includes community and high school superintendents, Quality Review Directors, School Achievement Technology Integration Facilitators (SATIFs), and retired educational leaders. The prerequisite is that each reviewer has a background in school improvement and receives training that equips them to effectively review and evaluate schools.

Quality Review trainings for reviewers occur every other month. During trainings, reviewers use the QR rubric to collaboratively evaluate school documents and reflect on evaluation criteria across rating categories (NYCDOE, 2015). Reviewers are also updated on

how new NYC DOE City-wide Instructional Expectations are integrated into the Quality Review to promote a shared vision of school quality (NYC DOE, 2015).

During a Quality Review, evidence is collected in the form of low-inference observations (NYCDOE, 2015). This strategy is derived from an instructional process that City, Elmore, Fiarman, and Teitel (2009) designed to improve the quality and level of student learning. City et al. (2009) labeled this strategy as the “seventh principle” which is “description before analysis, analysis before prediction, and prediction before evaluation” (p.34).

City et. al. (2009) defined analysis as requiring participants conducting instructional rounds to group their observations into mutually agreed upon categories and build consensus around how those categories are connected to one another. Prediction is, “learning to use the evidence of observation and the analysis to make causal arguments about what kind of student learning we would expect to find as a consequence of the instruction we observed” (City et al., 2009, p34). The focus of evaluation is not to debate the quality of instruction, but conferring about the next steps that need to be in place on classroom, school, and system levels to refine the instructional core.

The premise of this principle is that a common culture of instruction is vital to improving student learning. Building this culture requires an intentional focus, “on the language that people use to describe what they see and by essentially forcing people to develop a common language over time” (City, 2009, p.34). The value of using a common language alleviates confusion about what is witnessed during a classroom observation. Schein (2010) concurred with this point by mentioning that subcultures within an organization have derived different meanings from the words they use to describe things. For an engineer the term marketing means product development. For the product manager, it means studying customers through market research,

and to the manufacturing manager it means merchandising to the salesman, and constant change (Schein, 2010).

Schein (2010) continued by stating that:

If several members of a group are using different category systems, not only will they not agree on what to do, but they will not even agree on their definition of what is real, what is a fact, when something is true or false, what is important, what needs attention, and so on (p.94-95).

To avoid this linguistic confusion QR reviewers are trained intentionally to remain low on the Ladder of Inference when citing supporting evidence for any conclusion (NYCDOE, 2015). The term Ladder of Inference is derived from Elmore et al. (2009) and each rung of this conceptual structure has a specific meaning:

The bottom rung of the ladder is description. As you move up the ladder, you get farther from the evidence and closer to your beliefs, assumptions, and conclusions. If you start at the top of the ladder, it's hard to go back down-the other rungs are missing. If you start at the bottom of the ladder and work your way up - and you need to go up eventually to get to recommendations for improvement-then it is easier to go back up and down, to check assumptions and beliefs, and to be clear about what the recommendations are intended to address (p.87).

As an added layer of integrity, all QR reviewers are obligated to adhere to a Code of Conduct that guides their work during the review process (NYCDOE, 2015). The Code of Conduct requires that each reviewer:

(1) prepares thoroughly for site visits; (2) communicates clearly with the school ahead of time to set site visit schedules and reduce anxiety in a timely manner; (3) works with

integrity, treating everyone with courtesy and respect; (4) minimizes stress, not over-observe staff or demand unreasonable amounts of paperwork or time; (5) undertakes training and development as required; (6) acts with the best interests and well-being of students and staff; (7) evaluates objectively and impartially, using low-inference observations; (8) consistently shares emerging issues with principals and other members of the school during site visits; (9) reports honestly and fairly, ensuring that evidence and conclusions accurately and reliably reflect the school's practices; (10) accepts and complies with the monitoring and quality assurance policy; (11) respects the confidentiality of information; (12) submits all report drafts in a timely manner, taking into account constructive feedback from readers; and (13) communicates clearly, frankly, and sensitively (NYCDOE, 2015, p.6).

Every year, the determination as to which subset of schools received a Quality Review was based on publicized selection criteria that has changed with each year of its existence (NYCDOE, 2015). See Appendix L for a chart detailing how the selection criteria has changed for determining which subset of schools received a NYC QR from 2010-2017.

Evidence gathered during the QR process is assessed based on criteria outlined in the NYCDOE QR Rubric. The rubric is comprised of ten sub-indicators within the following three quality categories or three big ideas: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems of Improvement.

There are two quality indicators that relate to School Culture: Quality Indicators 1.4 & 3.4. Quality Indicator 1.4 evaluates:

- (1) how the school's approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support results in a safe environment and inclusive culture that is

conducive to student and adult learning; students and adults treat each other respectfully and student voice is welcome and valued; (2) how structures are in place to ensure that each student is known well by at least one adult who helps to coordinate attendance, social-emotional learning, child/youth development, and guidance/advisement supports that align with student learning needs; and (3) the school community aligns professional development, family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports to promote the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors (NYCDOE, 2015, p.17).

Quality Indicator 3.4 evaluates:

(1) school leadership's ability to consistently communicate high expectations (professionalism, instruction, communication, and other elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching) to the entire staff and provide training and have a system of accountability for those expectations; (2) school leaders and staff ability to consistently communicate expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness and offer ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress toward those expectations; and (3) Teacher teams and staff's ability to establish a culture for learning that consistently communicates high expectations for all students and offer ongoing and detailed feedback and guidance/advisement supports that prepare students for the next level (NYCDOE, 2015, p.18).

To maintain the integrity of the process, Quality Review directors collect artifacts from reviewers and carefully and critically examine them to create a set of expectations for what a

rating of Well Developed entails for a given Quality Indicator. The goal of these expectations is “to foster a common understanding of practices aligned to that rating” (p.8).

To be Well Developed in Quality Indicator 3.4, it is expected that:

(1) school leaders create an elevated level of expectations for all staff, which is evidenced throughout the community through verbal and written structures, such as new teacher orientations, ongoing workshops, staff handbook, or school website, that emulate a culture where accountability is reciprocal between all constituents; (2) the school has clearly defined standards for professional development that include professional development plans that incorporate staff input and classroom practices as well as embed elements of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to ensure that learning for all stakeholders consistently reflects high expectations; (3) school leaders and other staff members work as a team in study groups, planning sessions, and other professional development modes, establishing a culture of professionalism that results in a high level of success in teaching and learning across the school; (4) staff members implement effective strategies for communicating high expectations about college and career readiness and partnering with families to ensure all students are challenged to meet or exceed those expectations; (5) the school orchestrates ongoing events and creates multiple opportunities to partner with and engage families in learning, fostering their participation in a culture of high expectations connected to college and career readiness, and offering them feedback on their children’s progress towards meeting those expectations; (6) the school provides ongoing, clear lines of verbal and written communication to families that might include online progress reports, parent-teacher conferences, parent informational sessions and workshops, parent handbook, student

handbook, and student-led conferences. This communication serves to deepen parents' understanding of college and career readiness expectations for their children and to empower them to support their children in meeting or exceeding those expectations; (7) teachers and other staff have a set of clear, systematic structures, such as advisory, guidance, or college counseling, for articulating high expectations and sharing information with students, leading to student progress towards mastery of CCLS and college and career readiness expectations; and (8) staff members have instituted a culture for learning that provides all students, especially those in high-need subgroups, with focused, effective feedback including clear next steps that determine student accountability for learning goals and expectations to prepare them for their next grade while ensuring their ownership of the learning process (NYCDOE, 2015, p.34).

The Quality Review has four stages: the pre-review work, the school visit, the Quality Review Report, and report verification.

During the pre-review stage, the principals receive an official notification via email at least two weeks prior to their review. The email describes the steps principals need to take in preparation for the visit. Principals, along with other stakeholders, are assigned to complete and submit a School Self-Evaluation Form (SSEF), current table of organization, bell schedule, and master schedule or program cards to the reviewer. Once the reviewer receives all of the requested documentation, they collaborate with the principal to create a school-specific schedule for the day of the visit.

During the school visit, the reviewer will collect low-inference evidence to verify the information found in the SSEF. Intermittently, the reviewer will place this data in a Record Book, which contains documentation, notes, analyses, concrete examples of evidence, and

findings. At the end of the review a feedback conference takes place and the reviewer provides preliminary verbal feedback along with a printed Preliminary Ratings Form to the principal. This form provides a preliminary rating for each of the ten Quality Indicators and lists an Area of Celebration, an Area of Focus, and eight Additional Findings. A written, and more comprehensive report is constructed; which includes the ratings for each of the ten Quality Indicators and narrative feedback on six high-leverage indicators. One indicator is identified as the Area of Celebration, another as the Area of Focus, and four others as Additional Findings. As part of a quality assurance protocol, every Quality Review Report is reviewed to ensure that the report is rooted in the rubric and reflects the evidence gathered during the review with fidelity (NYCDOE, 2015).

Once the draft report has gone through the quality assurance process, the draft report is emailed to the principal for verification.

After participating in a QR a school will have:

(1) a comprehensive report detailing the factors that support and limit effective learning; (2) clear recommendations that can be used to move the school forward in specific areas; (3) an enhanced ability to self-evaluate and strategies for continuous self-assessment; (4) a sharper view of how different elements of the school directly affect student learning; (5) an increased capacity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning; and (6) tools for creating and capitalizing on new and existing links with parents and the community (NYCDOE, 2015, p.43).

The NYC DOE's initial introduction to Quality Reviews (QR) started when 100 schools opted to participate in a pilot test in the spring of 2006. The QR's aim was to, "balance outputs,

such as tests scores, with a more qualitative snapshot of how schools are functioning” (Archer, 2016, p.1). “Since 2006, NYC DOE’s school QRs have served as the counterpoint to the quantitative student and survey outcomes in its accountability model” (Knecht et al., 2016).

Quality Reviews were an adaption of an evaluation tool used by Cambridge Education to conduct school inspections used in England. The primary objective of this system was to design a process for weighing a school’s ability to make decisions about instruction. Initially QRs started out as three-day visits focusing on a school’s use of data and other information to determine how to meet the needs of its students; now they are two days (Archer, 2016).

“The signature quality of the Cambridge Education SQR system is its emphasis on the evaluation of impact on students’ learning” (Cambridge Education, 2015, p.1).

The reviewers use the following questions to determine impact on student learning:

- (1) How well are students learning?
- (2) How effectively do teachers facilitate student learning?
- (3) How rigorously do school leaders monitor the effectiveness of learning and teaching?
- (4) What are the main classroom factors that accelerate student achievement?
- (5) What are the special characteristics of the school?
- (6) How well does the school engage parents and the local community (Cambridge Education, 2015, p.2)?

As time progressed, the policy and process of the QR evolved, and became owned and operated internally by the NYCDOE (Knecht et al., 2016). During the 2009-2010 school year, the NYCDOE unveiled a new rubric with 20 Quality Indicators and 60 sub-indicators that were, embedded in best practices from across the country and world and aligned with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards (Knecht et al., 2016). During the 2011-2012 school year:

The Office of School Quality commissioned a study by Eskolta School Research and Design, Inc., a non-profit focused on strategic school improvement that examined the redundancy of the scoring of indicators, among other things. This report was a key factor in the decision to reduce the rubric to ten indicators with thirty sub-indicators; the ten-indicator rubric was then launched in the 2012-2013 school year (NYC DOE, p.13).

During the 2014-2015 school year, Chancellor Carmen Fariña, endeavored to acquire a set of baselines QR data on all schools. In order to accomplish this task:

(1) every school received a Quality Review during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years; (2) the QR was reduced from two days to one day; and (3) while, the rubric remained unchanged, but the number of formally assessed indicators was reduced to five: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.4, and 4.2. In the 2015-2016 school year, all QRs were conducted by Office of School Quality staff for the first time ever (p.3).

Starting in 2007, the Quality Review has been used as a component of the Principal Performance Review (PPR) and counted for twenty-two percent of the overall PPR score. This policy was enacted to adhere to the mandates of Education Law 3012c. The QR rubric was adopted as the NYC DOE's rubric of leadership practice. As a result of this policy, a school that was eligible for a QR satisfied one of the two required supervisory visits for the year because the reviewer collected evidence on school quality and leadership practice simultaneously.

From 2010 to 2015, Doug Knecht, Nancy Gannon, and Carolyn Yaffe were leaders of the Quality Review for the NYCDOE. They co-wrote an article entitled, *Across Classrooms: School Quality Reviews as a Progressive Educational Policy*. The paper focused on the rewards, challenges, and considerations of investing in a QR process deduced from their involvement with implementing it on a large scale. The gist of the article focused on how the QR could leverage

student experiences across classrooms to promote sustainable change that resulted in high-quality schooling for all children (Knecht et al., 2016).

Knecht et al. (2016) identified three central challenges they encountered during the evolution of the QR. The first challenge was to resolve the compliance mindset with which many educators approached the QR. Knecht et al. (2016) noted that it was common for school leaders to approach the QR with a compliance mentality. To his dissatisfaction, school support and supervisory staff habitually worked to prepare the community for a QR, as if it were an event, rather than seeing it as a valuable process to develop sustainable planning practices that would yield positive outcomes for students. Knecht et al (2016) reported that this mindset resulted in a “dog and pony” show through which school principals manufactured a false perception of the school culture during the two- to three-day review. He continued by mentioning that a plethora of schools wasted enormous amounts of time creating extensive binders of documents to be presented during the QR. Yet, these had little effect on the QR rating, because the rubric and process required evidence from low inference data retrieved from classroom visits and interviews with constituents as the foundation for quality judgments (Knecht et al., 2016).

The second challenge focused on maintaining the credibility of QR, as a viable qualitative assessment, despite the perception that the identity of the reviewer played a more significant role in the final outcome for a school principal (Knecht et al., 2016). In order to accomplish this task, an exorbitant amount of time and resources was allocated to ensure that reviewers maintained a high level of consistency in terms of both rating on the rubric and adhering to review protocols. More specifically reviewers were arranged into small groups and engaged in activities that focused on sharpening their abilities to transform the low-inference

observations they collected during reviews into shared norms and a common understanding of quality within the school community (Knecht et al., 2016).

The third challenge involved providing schools with detailed and useful feedback while simultaneously ensuring that it was clear for educators and non-educators; most notably parents. Knecht et al. (2016) stated that, “one of the greatest hurdles of using the QR as one of the two major tools of the district’s accountability system was guaranteeing that the findings from the process provided descriptions of a school’s quality that would be clearly understood by both educators and non-educators. He acknowledged that, similar to other professions, educators used professional language that many inside and outside the system refer to as verbiage, or edu-speak. He concluded by stating:

In New York City, the high bar for evidence for ratings meant that QR reports were typically too long and not easily understood by the general public. Over time, we began to envision ways of summarizing the key findings and producing more accessible versions of these more technical reports. Continued work needs to be done to find ways to address this particular challenge (Knecht et al., 2016).

External measuring tools like the NYC QR, can provide an objective lens through which school leaders receive feedback, pertaining to the progress their schools are making toward a QR rating of Well Developed. The QR process is equally beneficial for school leaders to internally evaluate their school culture. Daly (2010) advocated for internal audits of school culture, warning that it is a mistake to think that schools will change as a result of being provided with overwhelming evidence from an external expert as to how to engage in reform. This kind of feedback led to short lived and unsustainable advancements.

For a new or seasoned principal inheriting a school this information is vital, because “knowing the type of school culture you have will help you to plan the one you want” (Gruenert and Wilson, 2015, p.66). Deal and Peterson (2009) stated, “the most common pathway to cultural decline starts when a new leader becomes principal and fails to read the existing ritual order, does not understand the historical evolution of values, or doesn’t respect beliefs and ceremonies that are deeply rooted in the community” (p.168).

It is for this reason that Gruenert and Valentine (2000) believed that school leaders need to determine how collaborative their schools are if they have ambitions for teachers to learn from one another as a means of improving their schools.

Gruenert and Wilson (2000) developed a tool designed to assist leaders in making this determination: The Culture Typology Activity. This activity immerses school leaders in the nuances of their school culture and requires them to determine the degree to which they observe and participate in certain behaviors. The activity requires its user to look at the following twelve key aspects of a school culture: (1) student achievement; (2) collegial awareness; (3) shared values; (4) decision making; (5) risk taking; (6) trust; (7) openness; (8) parent relations; (9) leadership; (10) communication; (11) socialization; and (12) organizational history.

Gruenert and Wilson (2015) used the student achievement indicator to measure the degree to which teachers discussed student achievement in-depth. The collegial awareness indicator focused on the degree to which, teachers believed that their colleagues could help them be better practitioners. The shared values indicator focused on the degree of cohesiveness pertaining to the building’s educational values. The decision-making indicator focused on the degree to which teachers valued the opportunities to make decisions that affect student achievement. The risk-taking indicator focused on the degree to which the school culture

encouraged risk in delivering instructional strategies and teachers sharing their results, with the school community. The trust indicator focused on the degree to which members of the school community felt comfortable discussing their professional struggles with another member of the community without fearing a breach of confidentiality. The openness indicator focuses on the degree to which, members of the school community engaged in instructional rounds and offered constructive criticism. The parent relations indicator focused on the degree to which parents felt that their contributions to the educational process were valued. The leadership indicator focused on the degree to which the leadership hurt or hindered instructional improvement. The communication indicator focused on the degree to which written or unwritten rules and expectations regulated the verbal and nonverbal interactions amongst staff members. The socialization indicator focused on the degree to which new teachers were embraced by the existing faculty. The organizational history indicator focused on the degree to which long standing traditions and rituals continued to influence the present and future school community (Gruenert and Wilson, 2015).

For each of these key aspects there were six descriptors that ranged from what the school looked like under the ideal conditions to the most toxic conditions. These descriptors, were entitled: (1) toxic; (2) fragmented; (3) balkanized; (4) contrived collegial; (5) comfortable collaborative; and (6) collaborative.

The instrument had seven columns. In the first column, all twelve aspects of school culture were listed. In each adjoining column, one of the six descriptors were listed. Under each descriptor was a specific behavior that was characteristic of the aspect. The protocol for using this instrument required participants to determine the degree, on a scale of 0 to 10, which descriptor, for each of the twelve aforementioned aspects of school culture, reflected the

behaviors in their school. For example, if trust was the aspect of focus, the rater would have to determine if it was toxic, fragmented, balkanized, contrived collegial, comfortable-collaborative, or collaborative in their school community. Based upon the behaviors described, the rater would give it zero points for the descriptor that was unheard of; while if the descriptor matched what consistently occurred in the school, the resulting rating would be ten points. After each of the twelve aspects of school culture was given a descriptor that matched it, the rater find the sum of each of the six columns. The column with the most points represents the culture that most participants believe the school embodies.

Bambrick-Santoyo (2012) added that even with observations, school leaders can still be blind to gaps in their culture. During the course of his research, he discovered trendsetting school leaders; those who closely monitored the culture of their schools by creating objective tools to assess their culture and create opportunities to produce feedback. These leaders established times, throughout the course of the school year, to evaluate culture in accordance with the evaluation tools. Bambrick-Santoyo (2012) identified best practices in cultivating culture, including one where a principal delegated the responsibility of conducting culture focused walkthroughs, using a school based rubric, to a team of instructional leaders and veteran teachers. Another best practice and useful source of objective feedback was to invite leaders from neighboring schools to participate in the school walkthroughs.

The stated purpose and adaptive nature of the NYC Quality Review provided a means through which system leaders could dismantle the ill-effects of loose-coupling and allot for close and constructive scrutiny of instruction and the supervision of instruction to occur on a consistent basis. The QR provided school leaders with entry points to begin the process of building

professional learning communities. Yet without having a clear understanding of the culture of the school community these efforts will be for naught.

Defining culture

Schein (2010) argued that if leaders are not conscious of the cultures that exist in their organizations those cultures will manage them. Schein's opinion is consistent with that of Hardy and Aitken (1990) who believed that understanding the culture that exists did not automatically help to identify the issue, but was a first step towards sensible action. Consistent with the opinions of Hardy, Aitken and Schein, it is imperative that school principals have a clear understanding of what culture is, how it develops over time, and the challenge associated with its difficulty to change.

Schein (2010) noted that the concept of culture has a "long and checkered history" (p.13). He continued by stating:

Laymen have used the word to indicate sophistication. Anthropologists have used the word to refer to customs and rituals that societies develop over the course of their history. Organizational researchers and managers have used the term culture to describe the norms and practices that organizations develop around their handling of people or as espoused values and credo of an organization (p.13).

Schein (2010) defined culture as:

a pattern of shared beliefs and assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (p.18).

DuFour and Fullan (2013) defined culture as, “the way we do things around here” (p.2). Terrell and Lindsey (2009) define it as, “the set of practices and beliefs shared by members of a particular group that distinguish that group from other groups” (p. 16). Hardy & Aiken (1990) cited the Chambers Dictionary definition of culture as:

The total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge, which constitute the shared bases of social action and the total range of ideas and activities of a group of people with shared traditions which are translated and reinforced by members of a group (p.83).

Given the multitude of definitions for culture, Edgar H. Schein (2010) asserted, “culture is, an abstraction, yet the forces that are created in social and organizational situations deriving from culture are powerful” (p.7). He continued by stating that failure to “understand the operation of these forces makes us victims to them” (p.7). An additional value to understanding these cultural forces is they can provide an explanation for the puzzling and frustrating experiences in social and organizational life.

Schein (2010) stated that some of the confusion with the definition of the concept of culture derives from not acknowledging the multilayered attributes it encompasses. He noted that culture can be analyzed at several different levels. The term “levels” was used to describe the degree to which the cultural phenomenon was discernible to the observer. According to Schein, the three levels of culture were artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. An iceberg is the perfect depiction through which to visualize these levels.

Like an iceberg, on the surface laid the artifacts. Artifacts describe those things that you would see, hear, and feel when you encounter a new group with an unfamiliar setting. The most important point about this level of culture, is it very, “easy to observe and very difficult to

decipher” (Schein, 2010, p.24). He further noted the danger in trying to “infer the deeper assumptions from artifacts alone because a person’s interpretations will inevitably be projections of his or her own feelings and reactions” (p.25). In order to obtain some semblance of observations, Schein recommended that cultural analysts talk to insiders to analyze the espoused values, norms, and rules that provide the day-to-day operating principles guiding the behavior of members of the group (Schein, 2010).

It is at this point that most researchers end their description of culture. To the contrary, however, Schein (2010) continued by including espoused beliefs and values and basic underlying assumptions.

The upper portion of the unseen structure of the iceberg depicts espoused beliefs and values. These represent “the articulated publicly announced principles and values that the group claims to be trying to achieve, such as “product quality” or “price leadership” (Schein, 2010, p.15). Khandelwal and Mohendra (2010) defined espoused values as values that are conveyed on behalf of the organization or attributed to an organization by its leadership. These are values that are shared by all or a large proportion of an organization’s members.

One factor that can influence espoused beliefs and values are subcultures. Schein (2010) stated that the interactions of subcultures within organizations are the stimulus behind their overarching routines and interactions. The duality of subcultures lay in their commitment to the shared underlying assumptions of the total organization and those that are characteristic of their functional tasks, educational background, the occupations of their members, or their unique experiences. Trice and Beyer (1992) also noted the importance of subcultures and noted that they have, “distinctive patterns of shared ideologies and distinct sets of cultural forms, yet they differ noticeably from the core they are embedded” (as cited by Trice, 1993, p.xi). Subcultures

habitually form within informal and formal groups within an organization that are defined by age, sex, and ethnicity. In the school setting, these subcultures encompass non-pedagogical staff, pedagogical staff, grade teams, content specific teams, administrators, coaches, teachers, parents, students. It also includes external subcultures that impact schools, including district office personnel, field support center personnel, and the central office personnel.

Schein (2010) described three generic subcultures present in every organization that need to be identified and managed to minimize destructive conflict: the operator, engineering/design, and executive. These conflicts, which can be misdiagnosed as interdepartmental fights, power maneuvers, or personality conflicts, are the result of different groups evolving into different subcultures that ultimately contribute to the overall well-being of the organization. To avoid this problem leaders must ensure that these subcultures are aligned toward shared organizational goals. In the context of the school, this research forewarns principals and other school leaders of the necessity to identify and interact with subcultures within the community.

The operator subculture consists of, “those employees who produce and sell the organization's products or services” (Schein, 2010, p.58). In the context of the school setting this may be employees that work directly with students like teachers, school aides, school safety, paraprofessionals, cafeteria, and custodial staff.

The engineering/design subculture, “consists of a group who represents the basic design elements of the technology underlying the work of the organization, and this group had the knowledge of how technology is to be used” (Schein, 2010, p.60). Trice (1993) identified this subculture as the occupational subculture. This group includes employees who have mastered and applied specialized knowledge about the performance of set of specialized tasks. One of their underlying assumptions is that only certain workers have the right to perform certain tasks,

to control training for the access to doing such work, and to control the way it is performed and evaluated. In the context of the school setting this may be members of the school leadership team, grade leaders, coaches, and administrators. It also includes the central or district curriculum chairs, and superintendents.

The executive subculture consists of, “those who manage the financial issues of the survival and growth of their organization” (Schein, 2010, p.63). Trice (1993) described this subculture as the higher echelons of management. One underlying assumption is that that they are responsible for dictating how to organize work and arrange the division of labor among employees. In the context of the school setting, this may be the school administrators, school leadership team, and budget managers. It also includes the central or district student enrollment centers, superintendents, school boards, and directors of budget and finance.

Schein (2010) noted that basic underlying assumptions “are the unconscious, taken for granted beliefs and values” (p.24). Sathe (1985) defined underlying assumptions as the set of important assumptions that members of a community share in common. Buck (2001) pointed out that underlying assumptions make it difficult to analyze and change culture because they are not directly observable and instead must be inferred from what can be seen and heard in organizations. He continued by mentioning that change agents and employees err in their diagnosis of an organization’s culture by assuming that the artifacts and espoused values are congruent with, or reflective of, the basic underlying assumptions. This is not always the case. In some cases, the artifacts and espoused values are desired attributes that may be quite different from the true culture. Buck (2001) defined this as a cultural misalignment.

Handy & Aiken (1990) had a different perspective on organization culture. They introduced four cultures observed in both corporate and school environments. These are the club culture, the role culture, the task culture, and the person culture.

The symbol that best characterizes the club culture is the spider web. Likened to a spider web, the source of the espoused values and beliefs, within this culture, lies at the center surrounded by extending spirals of close friends and influence. The spirals or relationships are based on trust and communicated so seamlessly that an outsider may assume that the existence of telepathy is taking place. Like a spider in the web, the leader moves from staff member to staff member engaging in conversations as opposed to using other forms of written communications. These interactions enable the leader to capture initial reactions to new information or infect them with their enthusiasm. The club culture thrives on fabled stories from the past and can be very exciting places to work if you share the values and beliefs of the spider. The short lines of communication and the centralization of power enable this culture to respond immediately and intuitively to opportunities or crises. The flaw in this culture is that when the spider dies so does the web. Furthermore, if the spider has no back-bone, is immoral, incompetent, or makes poor hiring decisions the organization is also weak, immoral, incompetent, or staffed with degenerates. This form of culture is best suited for small settings. When the size of the organization increases; communication is stifled. Functioning at an efficient level requires hiring people who blend with the core team and can act on their own. Therefore, a good measure of time is invested in the hiring selection process and ongoing assessments to determine if new hires are good fits; to the extent that they can have a reek of nepotism and cronyism.

The symbol that best describes the role culture is a Greek temple. The organization, represented by a triangle, rests on pillars or departments. Each department has a specialty.

Within each department, the role or job description is more important than the individual assuming the role (Handy, 1993). These individuals are selected for satisfactory performance of the role, and the role is usually so described that a range of individuals could fill it. In essence, this culture exists on the premise that organizations are sets of responsibilities, joined together coherently and methodically for the uniform purpose of completing the work of the organization (Handy & Aiken, 1990). The role of the pillars and communication between the pillars are prescribed by procedures for roles, communication, and rules for settling disputes. Role cultures thrive when they are engaged in repetitive, established, and monotonous tasks. Change is unwanted and individualism is shunned.

The symbol that best describes the task culture is a net. The organizational vision of this culture is a group or team of talent and resources, liken to the cords of a net, should be flexible enough to remedy varying projects, problems, or tasks. Once their purpose has been fulfilled, the cords snap back into place until needed. This process ensures that each task receives the differentiated treatment it requires as opposed to applying standardized service across the organization and expecting progress. This culture is usually sincere and welcoming as a result of being built around cooperative groups of colleagues with a smaller management team who are responsible for allocation of projects, people, and resources (Handy, 1993). These cultures flourish in conditions where the tasks are beyond the capacity of one individual to solve, for which no procedure exists or the work can't be automated (Handy & Aiken, 1990).

The symbol that best describes the person culture are stars loosely grouped together in a cluster constellation. Unlike the other three cultures, in the person culture, "the organization exists to serve and assist the individuals within" (Handy, 1993). These individuals possess unique talents that afford them the flexibility to carry out their tasks without intrusion from upper

management. In this culture, “management is not only lower in status but has few if any formal means of control over the professionals (Hardy & Aiken, 1990, p. 90).”

Having described these four pure forms of the cultures, it is important to note that few organizations are composed of only one of them (Handy & Aiken, 1999). Often organizations have a mix of all four. The difference between a successful or failing organization is based on the selected blend. Handy and Aiken (1999) reported that the final blend depends on the following factors: the size of the organization, work flow, the work environment, and history of the organization.

As it relates to understanding culture in the context of the school environment, the previously presented research creates a lens through which the community at large can gain a clearer understanding of how and why schools function. This lens is not limited to the day to day procedures, but the espoused beliefs and values and basic underlying assumptions of the subcultures that together form the school community.

The next section of this literature review will examine culture in the context of the school environment. For as noted by Pounder (1998), “when we speak of changing schools into more collaborative organizations, what we really mean is that we want to change the nature of relations or patterns of relating” (cited by Gruenert and Wilson, 2015, p.51).

Defining school culture

Gruenert and Whitaker (2015), stated that contrasting the concepts of school climate with school culture is the best way to understand why they are different. Gruenert et al. (2015) described the concept of climate as the group's attitude:

Differing from Monday to Friday, February to May, creating a state of mind, easy to change, based on perceptions, can be felt when you enter the room, surrounds you, is the

way we feel around here, and is the first thing that improves when positive change is made (p.10).

Conversely, the concept of culture is a group's personality:

It gives Monday's permission to be miserable, provides for a limited way of thinking, takes years to evolve, is based on values and beliefs, can't be felt, even by group members, is the way we do things around here, and determines whether or not improvement is possible (p.10).

Handy (1986) suggested that the aforementioned definition of culture applies to schools at least as much as it applies to other organizations. The findings of his research reported that teachers preferred working in a task culture. Very few preferred a person culture, and still fewer a club or role culture. The results of questionnaires distributed to primary and secondary school teachers showed that elementary schools were pure task cultures, while secondary schools were predominantly a role culture. In the secondary schools, only senior teachers saw the secondary schools as a person or task culture in which they were left alone. Those in the middle perceived there to be a club on top of the role culture.

Schein (2010) viewed climate as the, "product of some of the underlying assumptions and is, therefore, a manifestation of the culture" (p.24).

"Knowing the type of school culture, you have will help you to plan the one you want" (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015, p.66). Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) identified five types of school cultures: (1) collaborative; (2) comfortable-collaborative; (3) contrived-collegial; (4) balkanized; and (5) fragmented (cited by Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015, p.50). Deal and Kennedy (1999) added a sixth, toxic, to the round out the list (cited by Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015, p.50).

Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) defined collaborative school culture as, “the theoretical nirvana of school culture” (p.50). It is a culture that embraces learning for all adults, parents, and students. There are shared values, an unfailing pursuit for new professional learning opportunities, and a commitment to improvement. In a collaborative culture conversations focus on student achievement and providing constructive feedback after completing instructional rounds.

Further, they continued:

Collaborative cultures are difficult to pin down in time and space, living as they do mainly in the interstices of school life, Collaborative cultures are also unpredictable in their consequences. The curriculum that will be developed, the learning that will be fostered, the goals that will be formulated- these things cannot always be predicted confidently beforehand (p.57).

Comfortable-Collaborative or Collegial Culture is another type of school culture. It is defined as a type of culture where, “being nice to each other is generally a good idea, but it can inhibit the practice of providing feedback in the form of criticism or even an alternative viewpoint” (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015, p.52). Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) stated that collegial culture can be restricted in the sense of not extending to classroom settings where teachers might be involved in joint teaching, mutual observation of one another's work, or action research. These boundaries hamper the extent to which teachers can engage in professional learning opportunities. This in turn reinforces norms of privacy and stifles the buds of a collaborative culture (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1996).

Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) further noted that this kind of collaboration rarely has sustainable outcomes nor does it have substantial impact on pedagogical practices. Furthermore,

it is limited to specific units of study or subjects of study; not cohesive across grades or subjects. It is the sort of collaboration that focuses on the immediate, short-term, and feasible as opposed to that which is long-term.

Research on site-based management also shows little evidence that this sort of collaboration results in instructional improvement in classrooms (Levine and Eubanks, 1989).

Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) state that in a contrived-collegial school culture, leadership attempts to control staff behavior by enforcing collaboration and controlling the situations that foster it. These controlling situations are characterized by a set of formal, specific, and bureaucratic procedures used to increase the attention being given to joint teacher planning, consultation and other forms of working together. In schools, suffering from contrived collegiality, new leaders mistakenly attempt to jumpstart a collaborative culture without laying the proper foundation. They use devices such as peer coaching, mentor schemes, joint planning in specially provided rooms, site-based management, formally scheduled meetings and clear job descriptions and training programs for those in consultative roles to accomplish this task (Fullan and Hargreaves 1996).

Unfortunately, these efforts diminish teacher autonomy because they are perceived as superficial and an attempt to force relationships among those who might not otherwise collaborate; thus, reducing teacher's motivation to cooperate with any changes to the status quo (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015). Daly (2010) supports this claim by adding that merely providing time and directives to collaborate does not equate to meaningful interactions between vertical and horizontal teams. In fact, forced collaboration may create resistance.

In a balkanized culture, collaboration only occurs within subcultures similar to those described by Schein (2010), Trice (1993) and Gruenert and Whitaker (2015). In a balkanize

culture, members of each distinct subculture congregate on a consistent formal and informal basis; primed to converge when school leadership creates conflicts by employing party line decisions (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015). Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) also described a balkanized culture; whereby they equated these subcultures to loosely connected independent city-states jockeying for position and supremacy. They add that, balkanization may lead to miscommunication, apathy, or cause groups to refocus on the going their separate ways in a school (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1996).

In order to offset the dangers of balkanization, Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) recommended principals do the following policies: (1) prepare time arrangements, which give intermediate teachers covering for primary and junior classes an appreciative sense of the difficulties and skills involved in teaching younger children as this helps to develop appreciation of their colleagues' expertise; (2) implement temporary exchange of teachers for days, a few weeks or even a year between secondary school and the intermediate years of one of its "feeder" schools as this potentially promotes greater understanding and continuity in meeting the needs of the transition years" (Hargreaves and Earl, 1990); and (3) arrangements for cross-grouping involving teachers and students from different grades working together, as this can soften the effects of balkanization while creating more understanding among teachers who normally remain relatively isolated from one another.

Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) observed that competition is encouraged among individuals in fragmented cultures. They describe a fragmented culture as:

People pretty much doing their own thing. Staff are collegial, and may share a laugh on occasion, but for the most part each has his or her own territory and likes it that way.

Meetings may feel like meaningless rituals, with most teachers watching the clock so that

they can get back to their silos. Classroom doors stay closed- both literally and figuratively. Successful teachers might attribute their effectiveness precisely to the autonomy that they are afforded by administrators (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015, p.56).

Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) stated that in a fragmented culture, the underlying assumption is that teacher work best in isolation. They rationalized by stating that isolation provides teachers with the freedom to use their discretion in making decisions benefiting their students; however, it eliminates them from obtaining meaningful feedback about their practice.

Deal and Peterson (2009) added that, “division decreases the sense of shared mission and purpose. Staff members, like teachers, go through the motions. Cooperation is non-existent. Students pick up a fragmented sense of purpose and become disengaged themselves” (p.164).

Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) warned that a toxic culture should be avoided at all costs. They continued by stating that in a toxic culture teachers:

focus on the negative aspects of the school’s operations and personnel and even use these flaws as a justification for poor performance, do little more than sleep at their desks, hand out worksheets, humiliate students publicly, and gossip about colleagues, and ineffective teachers or negative teachers can be perceived as heroes by colleagues with the same mindset if they blame students’ parents or the administration for their failings (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015, p.62).

Deal and Peterson (2009) identified the following characteristics as common in schools with a toxic culture:

schools become focused on negative values or parochial self-interest, schools become fragmented silos; meaning is derived from subculture membership, anti-student sentiments, or life outside work, schools become hostile and destructive, the informal

network is filled with hostile people, exemplars of the school are anti-heroes or villains, valued for their opposition or lack of commitment and drive, in toxic schools students are viewed as superfluous or as burdens, septic schools are frequently spiritually fractured, toxic schools have few positive rituals or ceremonies that bring people together, and stories in toxic schools highlight incompetence, low expectations, and apathy (Deal and Peterson, 2009, p.166).

Leaders can contribute to toxic cultures through commission or omission. Commission involves terminating valued rituals and ceremonies and replacing them with new values that are not reached through consensus. Omission involves focusing on standards, rules, and test scores at the expense of core values, opportunities to build trusting relationships, allowing negativity to grow, ignoring or changing core symbols, neglecting and forsaking the core story and core mission of the school (Deal and Peterson, 2009).

To combat a toxic school environment, Deal and Peterson (2009) offered the following solutions:

(1) confront the negativity head on; (2) give people a chance to vent their venom in a public forum; (3) shield and support positive cultural elements and staff; (4) focus energy on the recruitment, selection, and retention of effective; (5) positive staff; (6) rabidly celebrate the positive and the possible; (7) consciously and directly focus on eradicating the negative and rebuilding around positive customs and beliefs; (8) develop new stories of success, renewal, and accomplishment, and help staff find other places to work (p.179)

The premise that school cultures are made up of smaller subcultures and that each of these subcultures has its own shared beliefs and assumptions that are a result of finding solutions to problems of external adaptation and internal integration has already been established. It has

also been established that interactions between these subcultures weigh heavily on the overall functioning of the school community. Therefore, if school leaders want to create or maintain a positive school culture, it is imperative that they establish a school culture that consists of the previously stated elements of a collaborative school culture. Without this collaborative culture, each of these subcultures will continue to function in silos.

Defining a culture for learning

According to the 2015 Principals Guide to the QR, look-fors that define the existence of a culture for learning in a school include, but are not limited to: (1) a school handbook and/or school website that communicate high expectations for all stakeholders; (2) teacher orientations; (3) a professional development plan aligned with various components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching complimented by a calendar of professional learning opportunities (PLO); (4) study groups; (5) Collaborative Teacher Teams; (6) curriculum maps and units of study that are constructed to prepare students to be college and career ready; (7) Opportunities for parents to receive professional learning opportunities to their children in the process of becoming college and career ready; (8) systems and structures developed to provide parents with consistent updates on their children's progress; (9) advisories; and (10) systems and structures in place to provide students with consistent updates on their progress towards reaching learning goals.

This criterion is supported by research conducted by Weeks (2012) who identified the following characteristics as typical of a culture of learning:

- (1) a multilevel learning environment, in which learning opportunities are part of all activities; (2) a learning community, engendering shared responsibility and purposeful behavior to achieve school organizational outcomes; (3) a different mindset amongst

teachers, they are caring, prepared and determined to perform their duties, thus creating conditions conducive for student learning, they additionally navigate their own and their student's 'inner landscape' by literally learning to mentally and spiritually "dance together" with their students; (4) networks of collaboration are established, among all stakeholders, in order to facilitate learning; (5) a context is crafted where students attend school, are punctual, accept authority and feel safe; (6) the availability of physical resources, geared for creating a stimulating learning environment; (7) clarity exists as to the school mission and values, which are supported by all; (8) principals who as leaders engender a context of trust, mutual respect and understanding; and (9) parents establishing a partnership with teachers (p. 334).

Murphy et.al (1982) referred to a culture of learning as an "academic press" and define it as:

The degree to which environmental forces press for student achievement on a school wide basis. This concept however, is broader than high expectations; it pulls together various forces school policies, practices, expectations, norms, and rewards generated by both staff and students. Together these forces constitute the academic environment experienced by students and press them to respond in particular ways specifically to work hard in school and to do well academically (p. 22).

Murphy et. al. (1982) maintained that specific school level policies and enforcement practices and classroom level practices and behaviors are essential to communicating to students that success in academic work is expected and attainable. The former includes:

(1) defining a school purpose; (2) student grouping methods; (3) strategic usage of instructional time; (4) an orderly environment; (5) homework and grading policies; (6)

monitoring of student performance; (7) remedial policies; (8) the creation and timely distribution of progress reports and (9) retention and promotion policies. The latter includes: (1) establishing an academically demanding climate; (2) conducting orderly, well managed classroom; (3) ensuring student academic success; (4) implementing instructional practices that promote student achievement and (5) providing opportunities for student responsibility and leadership (p. 25).

Trubowitz (2005) identified a thinking atmosphere, open communication, the value of an outside observer, the need to develop a common language, and respecting teacher autonomy as vital elements needed to create a culture for learning in a school. Haertal (1997) added that task-oriented learning environments confer academic and motivational benefits on students. Tichnor-Wagner et. al (2016) added that establishing a culture for learning in a school:

(1) encourages frequent and instructionally focused collaboration among adults in the school; (2) adults operating in schools that foster cultures of learning participate in communities characterized by a supportive, positive climate, high expectations for adult and student performance, and a strong belief in the individual and collective efficacy of the faculty and staff; (3) support the development and maintenance of such cultures through the creation of school structures facilitating community and collaboration and the provision of supportive resources over time; and (4) cultures of learning encompass the student body, engendering communities marked by a high degree of academic focus and collaboration among students. All of these factors have been linked to positive student outcomes (p.603).

Trubowitz (2005) also identified the hierarchical structure of schools, through which communication seems to flow unidirectional leaving little opportunity for groups to dialogue

about instructional issues, the limitations of professional preparation, the culture prevailing in the society outside schools also impacts the task of creating a thoughtful school community, and the inevitability of resistance to new ideas as obstacles to developing a culture for learning.

Tichnor-Wagner et al. (2016) added that creating and sustaining cultures of learning can be challenging in today's current hierarchical accountability structure that is overly fixated on the academic achievement of students.

Schein's definition of culture provides a framework for school principals to evaluate the present condition of their schools by examining it through a multi-layered lens, identifying the subcultures that exist within them, and improving it.

Changing the organizational culture of a school

It is imperative for systems leaders to understand that creating a collaborative culture takes time and energy to nurture and maintain. It also involves a keen understanding of how the organizational change process works. Kotter (1996) presented an eight-step strategy to affect change in organizations. They are: (1) creating a sense of urgency to clarify the purpose of the change; (2) shaping a vision to steer change; (3) raising a force of people who are ready, willing, and able to affect change; (4) removing obstacles to change, change systems or structures that pose threats to the achievement of the vision; (5) consistently produce, track, evaluate and celebrate volumes of small and large accomplishments – and correlate them to results; (6) use increasing credibility to change systems, structures and policies that don't align with the vision; (7) hire, promote and develop employees who can implement the vision; reinvigorate the process with new projects, themes and volunteers; and (8) articulate the connections between the new behaviors and organizational success, and develop the means to ensure leadership development and succession.

Prewitt, Weil, and McClure (2011) concurred with the strategy of using crisis to create a sense of urgency by noting that without crisis it is extremely difficult to transition an organization from a state of comfort to a state of growth. Heifetz (1994) added that change is powerful because, “it threatens stable relationships, balance of power, standard operating procedure, and/or the current distribution of resources” (cited in Prewitt et al., 2011, p.60). Schein (2010) added that crisis is instrumental in culture creation and expansion because they result in heightened emotional involvement of the staff and thereby increases the intensity of learning. Unfortunately, due to the fear of causing pain, leaders struggle with the decision to enact crisis even though they are aware of their organization’s need to change (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, Prewitt et al., 2011).

Daly (2010) noted that change in organizations is usually socially constructed. Therefore, using a network theory approach is an effective means to identify the motives of resisters to change, spheres of social influence, and the subcultures that must be catered to when change is enacted. Informal networks create webs of understanding, influence, and knowledge, prior to, during and after the implementation of a change strategy (Daly, 2010).

Curtis and City (2009) asserted that designing and implementing a change strategy is an arduous task because it is hard work, counter-cultural, and developmental as opposed to instantaneous. Yet, it is important because it is the only way to help children learn. These researchers present a variety of tools and mechanisms that guide school leaders through the development of coherent systems and models that improve student achievement via monitoring and revising a school’s vision, multi-year plans, and checklists. They also introduce a three-step strategy to ensure that children learn. They are: (1) brainstorm all the active initiatives in the system; (2) sort and categorize the initiatives; and (3) assess the team members’ initial analysis

of the categories and initiatives. Once these steps are applied, a school leader is then encouraged to utilize tools such as the ‘start, stop, and continue list’, which guides leaders to assess their current state and determine their next steps for improvement (Curtis and City, 2009).

Schein (2010), identified three stages of the change process. The stages are: (1) unfreezing; (2) learning new concepts, new meanings for old concepts, and new standards, and (3) internalizing new concepts, meanings, and standards. Similar to Kotter (1996), Schein (2010), believed that change begins with creating a sense of urgency. He stated, “if any part of a core cognitive structure is to change in more than minor incremental ways, the system must first experience enough disequilibrium to force a coping process that goes beyond just reinforcing the assumptions that are already in place” (p. 300).

Unfreezing occurs in three stages: (1) climate disruptive data is presented to the members of the organization; (2) this data is connected to important goals and ideals; and (3) stakeholders buy-in to the idea that solving the problem and learning something new will be done without loss of identity or integrity (Schein, 2010).

Once the organization is unfrozen, the change process proceeds along one of two pathways: through trial and error or imitation of role models (Schein, 2010). The leader is free to choose the pathway that will lead to the goals he/she wishes to achieve, but, in order for imitation and identification to occur clear expectations for the new method of working must be communicated and the underlining concepts must be clear (Schein, 2010). The final stage in change process is refreezing. During this stage, new learning must result in a favorable outcome. If it does not the change process must begin again.

Yet what sets Schein’s change theories apart from those of Kotter, Daly, Curtis and City is the belief that a leader’s advertent or inadvertent behavior can set in motion the desired change

in the culture of an organization. In the next two sections of this chapter, we will together take a closer look at Schein's primary embedding mechanisms and associated research that has been conducted on them.

Schein's Primary Embedding Mechanisms

Whether founding a new organization or assuming leadership of one that is pre-established, systems leaders have mechanisms to reinforce the adoption of their own beliefs, values, and assumptions as the group gradually evolves into an organization (Schein, 2010). While the simplest way to accomplish this goal is through charisma; it is not the only option (Schein, 2010). System leaders who lack charisma impact the organization through the use of primary embedding mechanisms. While all of the primary embedding mechanisms are useful they are not equally potent in practice. Yet, they can reinforce each other to make the total message more potent than any individual components (Schein, 1983). The most important mechanisms are role modeling by leaders, what leaders pay attention to, and leader reactions to critical events (Schein, 1983).

What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control. The most powerful mechanism that founders, leaders, managers, and parents have is what they systematically pay attention to. Schein (1985) stated that, "as a reputation rebuilding redressive action, attention is what the leader (and in our case new leader or CEO) focuses his or her employees' concentration upon (what is criticized, praised, or asked about), which communicates his and the organization's values about them" (as cited in Sims, 2009, p.459- 460). Muse and Abrams (2011) added that principals should conduct a needs assessment, and develop a timeline for addressing goals based on highest to lowest need.

Mouton, Just, and Gabrielson (2012) observed that one school of thought is rooted in Schein's use of the six primary embedding mechanisms to shape culture. The other is founded on the fact that leaders should engage in dialogues with other people, negotiating, selling, discussing, sharing, questioning, organizing, reporting, motivating, encouraging, challenging, and persuading them to adopt their viewpoint.

Goldman (2013) conducted a study to define and then investigate the incidence of organizational leadership practices that encourage a culture of strategic thinking. She used Schein's primary embedding mechanisms to perform an experiment. She organized participants into small groups and instructed them to identify leadership practices indicative of each primary embedding mechanism that would encourage a culture of strategic thinking. Overall, the findings suggested there were, "many opportunities for executives to increase their utilization of leadership practices that encourage a culture of strategic thinking" (p.35).

Leaders reactions to critical incidents and organizational crises. Schein (2010) pointed out that there is significant value in crisis. He explained that crisis is instrumental in culture creation and expansion because they intensify the emotional involvement of the staff and thereby increase the intensity of learning. Additionally, crisis heightens anxiety in an organization which in turn triggers the need to reduce anxiety; which is a powerful motivator for new learning. When people share intense emotional experiences and collectively learn how to reduce anxiety, they are more likely to use that prior experience to moderate anxiety in the future.

Prewitt, Weil, and McClure (2011) defined crisis as an unpredictable, dramatic, and unique event that places an organization into a state of chaos and has the potential to destroy the organization if urgent and decisive action is not enacted. The roots of crisis grow out of a rift between the values, beliefs, culture, or behavior of an organization and the climate within which

the organization operates. To avoid a crisis a leader must be able to predict impending crises and be ready to activate measures to proactively diffuse emergencies brought on by the situation (Prewitt et. al., 2010).

Organizational crises reveal what a leader values (Sims, 2009). Each impending crisis provides leaders with new opportunities to communicate, on a system wide level, what the organization values, and which values are especially important as an organization attempts to rebuild its reputation (Sims, 2009). Schein (2010) concurred with Sims by adding how a leader deals with an organization crisis reveals key underlying assumptions and creates new standards, beliefs, and working procedures in the event that a similar situation occurs.

Prewitt et al (2011) stated that:

Organizations need a structured dialog, systematic decision analysis, and they must conduct continuous planning in order to ensure that actions are prioritized toward the organization's long-term health. Unfortunately, leaders often tend to ignore problems and avoid making the much-needed hard choices; this is why it is important to build the team within the organization. Leaders who construct effective teams are able to rapidly respond to crisis in a unified manner. It is the leader that overcomes these obstacles and mobilizes resources toward learning, who may avoid crisis altogether (p.63).

If successful, the leader can reduce the probability of potential dangers and take full advantage of the resulting opportunities (Prewitt et al., 2011). Bazerman & Watkins (2004) added that the best way for a leader to prepare for a crisis is to identify, rank, and rally awareness for change. The leader must understand and focus on the core purpose of the organization. "This strategy is at the crux of understanding how an organization's values are related to a changing environment" (cited in Prewitt et al., 2011, p.62).

Prewitt et al. (2011) further instructed that “leaders must also continually balance the severe pressure to remove stress from their organization while fighting the tendency to return to the status quo. In order to facilitate organizational adaptation or prior to crisis, the leader must establish credibility and create an atmosphere that allows people to face change in relative safety. It requires them to lead from the front” (p.62).

“Positive illusions, self- serving biases, and a tendency to discount the future often prevent leaders from listening to their environment and gaining much needed feedback. Sometimes leaders are unable to overcome the state of denial or the awareness of indicating tremors” (cited in Prewitt et al., 2011, p.62).

How leaders allocate resources.

Schein (2010) stated that, budget configuration is an indicator of a leader’s assumptions and beliefs. These assumptions and beliefs are based on a myriad of factors. Gonzalez and Bogotch (1999) identified compliance with state policies, and the context of spending as the most influential factors in a principal’s decision in terms of spending discretionary funds. Bloom and Owens (2011) conducted a study to compare and contrast the perception of influence factors like staffing, curriculum issues, budgetary spending, and discipline policies had on high school principals’, from high- and low-performing urban high schools. One of the findings was that principals from low-achieving schools tended to have a greater influence on the disbursement of funds than principals at high-achieving schools have. This was due to the fact that lower achieving schools received federal Title One funding that allowed the principal to budget the monies that best suit the needs of the campus.

Marrs-Morford & Marshall (2012) stated that effective leaders have a positive fiscal attitude. This means assuming a mindset that ensures that all funds are expended to guarantee the

greatest benefit. This also requires principals being transparent with their staff members about budget decisions and reassuring them that every decision is a result of a collaborative effort to identify what budget priorities are most important in their schools (Morford & Marshall, 2012). Fostering a fiscal attitude begins with creating a budget team that includes representatives from the staff and other school stakeholders, such as parents, local businesses and community members; and if appropriate, students.

Deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching

Schein (2010) stated that founders and new leaders of organizations inherently understand that their demeanor has great value in communicating assumptions and values to other staff members, especially newcomers.

Sims (2009) identifies this mechanism as the foundation upon which leaders set forth the ground rules for ethical or unethical behavior within an organization. He continues by adding that, the old adage “actions speak louder than words” is still relevant. He concludes by stating that individuals pay much more attention to what they see than to what they are told.

Bambrick-Santoyo (2012) concurred and added that the feedback a leader gives staff members is equally important. Thus, his rationale and advocacy for giving "bite-sized" changes for newer teachers. He added that presenting too much feedback too quickly is detrimental to an instructor's ability to make meaningful progress. Improvement does not come through extravagant rubrics, but slight, simple changes. The point is that feedback also must be actionable. “Yet the best coaches don't just tell their players what to do; they guide them through it” (p.3).

How leaders allocate rewards and status

Current or prospective employees can infer what an organization values or disdains by researching the distribution of promotions, performance appraisals, and from conversations with the supervisor (Schein, 2010). The behavior of the reward recipients in an organization, signal to onlookers what is necessary to succeed in an organization. Schein (2010) called this phenomenon the allocation of rewards mechanism. Sims (2009) concluded that, “from a behavioral science perspective, we know that which is rewarded tends to be repeated. People perform to obtain rewards and rewards shape the behavior of individuals in organizations” (p.461).

How leaders select, promote, and excommunicate

According to Schein (2010), “One of the subtlest yet most potent ways through which leader assumptions get embedded and perpetuated is the process of selecting new members” (p.249).

In his 1990 study, Golden investigated the relationship between, recruitment, selection, orientation, and rewarding activities, two of Schein’s six primary embedding mechanisms, in three elementary schools. The researcher examined how the criteria, practices, and outcomes of personnel selection activities contributed to school culture. His research focused on personnel selection activities carried out by principals and teachers in schools as primary mechanisms for embedding culture in the organization. He sought to find out how the criteria, practices, and outcomes of personnel selection activities contribute to school culture. His goal was to determine if there was congruence between assessments of the principals and teachers as they related to personnel activities in their schools. Lastly, he examined any differences between teachers and principals in their assessments of perceptions and practices related to personnel activities and to what degree do these differences influence school culture.

A key finding was that teachers had no idea how the hiring process worked due in part to their non-involvement in the hiring process (Golden, 1990). The principals in the study generally excluded teachers from the hiring process. Finally, teachers welcomed the opportunity to get involved in the initial screening and interviewing process of selecting teachers and paraprofessionals in their schools (Golden, 1990).

Sims (2009) stated that, a leader's hiring and firing decisions communicate their values to all of his or her employees. He concludes that, hiring new staff members is a powerful way for a leader to rebuild an organization's reputation.

All school reform begins with leadership. This is especially true for school principals who are attempting to create or reboot a culture for learning that has high expectations in their schools. In order to accomplish this task, school principals must emphasize their assumptions regarding what a culture of learning with high expectations entails to the stakeholders in their school community. This can be accomplished through powerful daily messages that revolve around the primary embedding mechanisms as previously described by Schein. It can also be accomplished by keeping the data in front of people. Yet no matter how successful these strategies may be, school leaders must also be prepared to combat the imminent resistance that comes with attempting to disrupt the present culture of an organization or create a new one.

Challenges to changing the organizational culture of a school

While change is considered to be the only constant in life, organizations like schools still seem unprepared when it occurs. Sims (2000) contends that changing an organization's culture is more difficult than developing a new one because members of a new organization are open to learning and accepting the culture of their new organizational home. This is due in large part to the human tendency is to want to preserve the existing culture.

It is for this reason that many leaders attempt to shape a new culture in their school by introducing policies or strategies that feel forced or smack of micromanaging (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015). They continue by mentioning that school cultures can't improve without purposeful leadership; they can only become better at protecting themselves. They conclude by stating that, whatever a principal does to make improvements to the school culture will be seen as a threat to the belief systems and identity of the school community (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015).

"It isn't the changes that do you in, it's the transitions" (Bridges, 2009, p. 3). This quote emphasizes that change and transition are not the same thing. "Change is situational while transition is psychological. Transition is a three phase process people go through as they internalize and come to terms with the details of the new situation that the change brings out." (Bridges, 2009, p. 3). According to Bridges (2009) there are three phases of transition are: (1) the ending; (2) the neutral zone; and (3) the new beginning.

During the ending phase of transition, Bridges (2009) stated that it is the leader's responsibility to assist its stakeholders in letting go of something. In order to successfully move from the ending to the neutral zone, organizations must take the following steps: (1) identify who is losing what; (2) accept the reality and importance of the subjective losses; (3) don't be surprised at overreaction; (4) acknowledge the losses openly and sympathetically; (5) expect and accept the signs of grieving; (6) compensate for losses; (7) give people information, and do it again and again; (8) define what's over and what isn't; (9) mark endings; (10) treat the past with respect; (11) let people take a piece of the old way with them; and (12) show how ending ensures the continuity of what really matters. "The beginning will take place only after they (the stakeholders), have come through the wilderness and are ready to make the emotional

commitment to do things the new way and see themselves as new people” (p. 58). Bridges (2009) continued by stating that, “Beginnings cannot be forced according to your personal wishes, they can be encouraged, supported, and reinforced. You can’t turn a key or flip a switch, but you can cultivate the ground and provide nourishment” (p. 60). In order to successfully accomplish this task, leaders must: (1) clarify and communicate the purpose; (2) paint a picture; (3) lay out a step-by-step plan; and (4) give each person a part to play.

Beginnings also require patience, latitude for error, and trust. As it relates to patience, it is also important to note that:

the pace of culture change is slow; people need time to process and reflect on what’s new and attain a sense of ownership over it; jumping back into the driver’s seat too soon can cause the shift to lose traction. Although it can be frustrating to contrive situations designed to build a new culture and then watch as nothing happens for a while, remember that culture resides in people’s minds, so to expect an immediate shift in mindset is not realistic (Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015, p.55).

As Hanford and Leithwood (2011) pointed out:

change in organizational behavior involves a temporary shift from ‘optimal’ performance of an existing behavior to ‘sub-optimal’ performance of a new behavior (the well-documented “implementation dip”); realizing the superior potential of a new practice over an existing practice typically results in initial efforts which are clumsy or less than skillful (p.195).

It is for this reason that trust in leadership is essential to making the change process work. “Trust in leaders increases the likelihood that a person will temporarily risk unskillful

performance. Trust, as this explanation implies, is important because it reduces social complexity” (Luhmann, 1979, Handford & Leithwood, 2011, p.195).

Pounder (1998) stated that, “when we speak of changing schools into more collaborative organizations, what we really mean is that we want to change the nature of relations or patterns of relating” (cited by Gruenert and Whitaker, 2015, p.51). Daly (2010) concurred by stating that “what is missing from the change equation is attention to the relational linkages between educators through which these changes efforts flow” (p.1).

Daly (2010) continued by stating:

Research suggests that relationships and collegial support are central for retention, increased professionalism, and depth of engagement of educators. The stronger the professional network, the more likely educators at all levels are to stay in the profession, feel a greater sense of efficacy, and engage in deeper levels of conversation around teaching and learning (p.1).

He further emphasized this point by stating, “lasting change does not result from plans, blueprints, and events rather it occurs through the interaction of participants” (p. 3). It is therefore important to analyze the social structure of an organization before enacting change (p.3). It is for this reason that Daly (2010) cautioned school leaders not to underestimate the power of informal networks.

Summary

To reach the desired state of a culture to which school principals aspire they must be cognizant of the impact introducing information that will disrupt the present state of affairs will produce. Patience on the part of leadership is required while staff come to grips with the reality that the pattern of shared beliefs and assumptions it learned, due to successfully solving

problems of external adaptation and internal integration in the past, may have been beneficial to them, but not the students they teach. Now new goals and a strategy for reaching those goals must be established without compromising their identity, integrity or being fearful that they will face punitive measures if they make mistakes. Lastly, attention must be given to the social construct of each particular school community. The stronger the relationships that exist in a school building the greater the likelihood that key information integral to a sustainable change process will be shared and accepted.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology that guided the investigation of successful leadership practices that changed the existing organizational culture of a school from 2011 through 2016, as evaluated by the New York City Quality Review.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact and response to the findings of the Quality Review, in twelve selected schools in NYC, as it related to Quality Indicator 3.4. It focused on the challenges these principals had to overcome to move from an Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient rating to Well Developed rating in Quality Indicator 3.4. It focused on the strategies these principals used to change the then-existing organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the subsequent Quality Review. Finally, it sought to determine if elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein (2010), were prevalent in the strategies principals used to change the organizational culture and therefore make improvements in their Quality Review proficiency ratings.

Research Questions

There were four research questions in this study. They were as follows:

1. Did the findings from the first Quality Review, have an effect on the climate of the school?
2. Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect the strategies principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?

3. Did the findings from the first Quality Review have an effect on the leadership style the principal used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?
4. Were elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein, prevalent in the strategies principals used to make improvements in their Quality Review ratings?

Research Design

Creswell (2014) advised that determining a research design should be based on the nature of the research problem, the researcher's personal experiences, and the audience for the study. As it relates to this study, the researcher discovered between the years of 2011-2016, sixty percent of NYC school principals were unable to obtain a rating of Well Developed in Quality Indicator 3.4 of the NYC Quality Review as rated by a NYC DOE certified Quality Reviewer. This is important because students that are enrolled in schools that didn't received a Well Developed in Quality Indicator 3.4 are not being exposed to high expectations for learning. This study is of personal interest to the researcher because he was a principal and engaged in at least 4 NYC Quality Reviews, yet was unable to attain a Well Developed rating in NYC QR Indicator 3.4. The researcher wanted to study the experiences of principals who were successful in accomplishing this feat. It was the goal of the researcher to learn how the leaders included in this study were able to achieve a rating of Well Developed and provide this information to the systems leaders, who may find interest in learning the same.

Instead of relying on a single data source, the researcher gathered information from multiple sources including interviews, observations, documents and audiovisual information (Creswell, 2012). The researcher used NVivo software to analyze the information gathered and

to identify patterns, categories, and themes into increasingly more abstract units of information (Creswell, 2012). The researcher focused on learning about how the NYC QR affected each leader's school climate, their leadership style, and the successful change strategies used to accomplish success in achieving a subsequent Well Developed rating. It is for this reason that a qualitative research design was best suited for this work. More specifically this qualitative study would fall under the umbrella of a phenomenological study because the researcher described the lived experiences of NYC DOE school leaders grappling with challenges presented by the NYC QR. Data was collected through interviews.

Population, Sample and Sampling Procedures

According to data obtained from the NYC DOE website, from 2011 through 2016, three hundred schools, encompassing all five boroughs of NYC, received at least two NYC Quality Reviews. These schools improved their score on the NYC Quality Review, Quality Indicator 3.4, by at least one proficiency level. Their results are as follows:

Table 2.

Schools identified in the target population, by borough, who moved from a score of Undeveloped, Developing, or Proficient to Well Developed in QR Indicator 3.4 from 2011-2016

	Undeveloped to Well Developed	Developing to Well Developed	Proficient to Well Developed
Queens	1	4	77
Brooklyn	0	11	84
Manhattan	0	3	54
Bronx	0	12	70
Staten Island	0	1	9

Sample

For the purposes of this study twelve out of three hundred thirty-nine principals were randomly identified for the target population. They were selected because they were able to move from an initial score of Under Developing, Developing, or Proficient to Well Developed in Quality Indicator 3.4 from 2011-2016.

Sampling method

The sampling design utilized for this research was stratified sampling. Vogt et. al. (2012) defines this technique as selecting, “groups or ‘strata’ from a population and then using the techniques of simple random sampling within each of those groups” (p.125). The researcher chose this method because the research focused on principals who could obtain a Well Developed in Quality Indicator 3.4 in 2015 or 2016, after receiving a proficiently rating below that in 2011-12, 2012-13, or 2013-14. The probability of being able to identify these school by conducting a random sample of the one thousand one hundred and ninety-one schools that were engaged in a Quality Review from 2011 to 2016 did not result in the identification of those specific school principals.

Through the stratified sampling method three hundred thirty-nine principals representing all five boroughs of the NYC DOE were identified. The researcher then conducted a random sampling method to identify three to five principals from each pool of elementary, middle, and high schools to become participants for this research.

Instrumentation

Researchers conducting qualitative research use research questions as opposed to objectives or hypotheses (Creswell, 2012). These research questions should take the form of central questions and associated sub-questions (Creswell, 2012). The central questions should be

broad and focus on the central phenomena of the study. The associated sub-questions should have a narrow focus. The associated sub-questions become the specific questions used during interviews (Creswell, 2012).

It is within these guidelines that the researcher developed four central questions and eleven associated open ended sub-questions to interview principals and collect data. In order to ensure that the questions were reliable, the researcher enlisted the assistance of his dissertation chair, and an expert panel to review all questions. As a result, the number of interview questions were reduced.

Data Collection

After obtaining IRB approval, the researcher used the NYC DOE Outlook directory to obtain the contact information for each of the principals identified in the sample population. The researcher emailed an introduction letter to each participant. This correspondence identified the researcher, the purpose of the research and requested an opportunity to interview the participant. The introduction letter also informed the participant of opt out options, maintenance of confidentiality, and the safeguarding of data. The researcher sent a follow-up email to each participant to confirm receipt of the introduction letter. As participants began to respond to the correspondence, the researcher called to schedule appointments. If the participants could not meet face-to-face, the researcher scheduled a conference call or used video conferencing, via Skype, or Facetime in order to interview the principal.

In addition to interviews, the research collected data through observations, Quality Review reports completed by, NYC certified Quality Reviewers outlining the scores on Quality Indicator 3.4 and the rationales for the scores, NYS School Report Cards, NYC School Quality

Report and Snapshots, audio and visual materials in the form of photographs, art objects, and other artifacts with the permission of the subjects.

During the interview, the researcher used a digital recorder to collect the information that the participants shared. Also, the researcher took descriptive notes to ensure that the information was captured comprehensively. The researcher used transcriptionpuppy.com to transcribe the conversations.

In order to protect the privacy and assure the confidentiality of research subjects, the researcher ensured that electronic data was stored on password-protected computers or files. Files containing confidential data were closed when computers were left unattended. Contact lists, recruitment records, or other documents that contained personal information will be destroyed when no longer required for the research. Data collected from participants was stored on a memory stick. A back up memory stick was created as well and placed in a separate location from the original. No one, but the researcher had access to this memory stick. All computers used during the research process were protected with sign-on passwords. Each interview was labeled with each participant's ID number, school, grade level and whether the interviewee was the founding principal or inherited their school, excluding any identifying information. Participants were given pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality in the results.

Data Analysis

The interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder. The contents of the interviews were transcribed using Transcriptionpuppy.com. After the interview transcript conversion was completed, the researcher cross-referenced the contents of the audio recordings with the conversions to avoid any erroneous interpretations or misunderstanding of what the

interview. The transcribed interviews were then sent back to the participants for their verification and to address any errors.

Once any discrepancies were addressed, the researcher uploaded the transcripts, related Quality Review reports, and NYC School Quality Guide Reports to the NVivo software to categorize this information into cases and nodes for further analyzation. This software was useful in distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information relative to the research questions of the study. This software also enabled the researcher to code significant information and identify themes, sub-themes, and inter-related patterns that assisted the researcher in arriving at findings, conclusions, and recommendations connected to the studies' research questions.

Researcher bias

Sarniak (2015) identified confirmation bias, and culture bias as biases that qualitative researchers must be aware of in order to ensure that their research is authentic.

Confirmation bias occurs when the researcher forms a hypothesis or belief and uses respondents' responses to confirm that belief. The researcher attempted to avoid this form of bias by designing interview questions that made no reference to Schein or his primary embedding mechanisms.

Culture bias refers to judgements made about another culture based solely on the values and standards of one's own culture. The researcher avoided this form of bias by ensuring that questions were neutral with regard to race, sex, gender, or religion.

Additionally, qualitative researchers should avoid the usage of moderator bias, and biased questions, answers, sampling, and reporting in conducting interviews and take extreme measures to reduce if at all possible ("What Is", n.d.).

In order to avoid researcher bias, the researcher attempted to remain neutral in dress, tone, and body language during interviews. The researcher also refrained from giving his opinion in response to statements made by respondents.

In order to avoid using biased questions, the researcher attempted to keep questions neutral, and avoided using leading questions.

Additionally, the researcher attempted to ensure that the research questions were simple, clear, and concrete in order to reduce misunderstanding.

In order to avoid biased sampling, the researcher verified that each of the respondents in the study was a current or retired NYC DOE school principal and was the sitting principal for both Quality Reviews included in this study.

Validity

To ensure the validity of this study the researcher triangulated the data received from the interviews with school data specific to demographics, and student performance, NYC Quality Review reports completed by NYC certified Quality Reviewers outlining the scores on Quality Indicator 3.4 and the rationales for the scores, to identify common themes. The researcher used member checking to confirm the accuracy of responses to questions during the interview and provided participants with an opportunity to provide feedback on the findings.

Reliability

To ensure the reliability of this study the researcher followed an interviewing script and asked each respondent the same questions. The researcher conducted mock interviews with an expert panel to determine if the results were consistent. These principals had participated in Quality Reviews. As a result, the number of interview questions was reduced.

Summary

This chapter described the research design and methodology selected for this research study. In this chapter, the researcher provided a brief summary of the study, the research design, the sampling procedures, instrumentation, data collection strategy, the process of ensuring validity and reliability, and explaining data analysis techniques. In Chapter 4, the findings of the data obtained will be presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact and response to the findings of the Quality Review, in twelve selected schools in NYC, as it related to Quality Indicator 3.4. It focused on the challenges these principals had to overcome to move from an Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient rating to Well Developed rating in Quality Indicator 3.4. It focused on the strategies these principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review. Finally, it sought to determine if elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein (2010), were prevalent in the strategies principals used to change the organizational culture and therefore make improvements in their Quality Review proficiency ratings.

The participants in this study included twelve principals at the elementary, junior high, and high school levels. These individuals were selected to be part of a target population of principals who were able to acquire a Well Developed in Quality Indicator 3.4 after receiving an Underdeveloped, Developing, or Proficient on the preceding QR.

Table 3 provides participant demographics.

Table 3.

Participants demographics

Participants	Gender	Ethnicity	Years at School	Years of Experience	School Level	Date of Interview
PA	Female	Black	9	9	Elementary	3/30/17
PB	Female	White	5	5	High	3/30/17
PC	Female	Black	7	7	High	5/04/17
PD	Female	Hispanic	4	4	Elementary	5/03/17
PE	Female	Black	10	13	Elementary	5/08/17
PF	Male	Black	10	10	Elementary	4/06/17
PG	Male	White	12	12	High	5/06/17
PH	Female	Indian	8	14	Elementary	5/17/17
PI	Female	Hispanic	17	17	Elementary	4/27/17
PJ	Female	White	10	10	Middle/High	6/02/17
PK	Female	White	8	8	High	6/23/17
PL	Female	Black	6	7	Middle	6/23/17

Principals participating in the survey are from diverse school settings. The diversity of the schools is highlighted in Table 4.

Table 4.

Demographics of Schools

Participants	ELL Population	Spe. Ed. Population	Percentage of Free Lunch	Enrollment	NYS STATUS
PA	11%	34%	89%	337	Focus
PB	2%	23%	85%	271	Good Standing
PC	15%	15%	80%	246	Focus
PD	14%	17%	70%	874	Good Standing
PE	0%	16%	57%	233	Reward
PF	2%	15%	72%	515	Good Standing
PG	13%	23%	79%	447	Focus
PH	10%	18%	91%	665	Focus
PI	24%	15%	75%	597	Good Standing
PJ	7%	25%	71%	637	Focus
PK	84%	0%	81%	228	Good Standing
PL	2%	22%	62%	444	Good Standing

Data was collected using the interview questions developed by the researcher, the School Quality Review (SQR), and the NYC Quality Review reports for each of the participating schools. Collected data was transcribed into codeable units for analysis. All data were loaded into NVivo software and analyzed by highlighting certain texts, comparing the responses of one participant to another, and compiling text.

Each of the 12 participants in this study responded to the same defined set of open-ended questions (Appendix A). Participants were interviewed during a time and in a location convenient to them and of their choosing. Locations were free from noise and distraction. Data was collected between January 2017 and July 2017. Responses were audio-recorded using an electronic, digital, portable device, de-identified and transcribed using an established online transcription service. Protecting the identity of the respondents was achieved by using pseudonyms for the name and location of each participant in this study. A signed non-disclosure agreement was obtained from the transcription company (Appendix B) prior to the submission of audio- recordings for transmission. Each participant signed the informed consent forms.

Research Question 1

Did the findings from the first Quality Review have an effect on the climate of the school?

Participant responses included their perception of how the Quality Review influenced the school community. Interview questions specific to research question one include:

- Did the findings of the first QR have an effect on your school climate? If yes, what were the effects?

School Climate

Nine participants cited the initial results of the initial Quality Review to have an influence on the climate of the school community. Seven of the participants noted, the QR results confirmed their school climate had improved. This provided motivation to continue pursuing their goals.

For PA, PB, PC, PH, PI, PJ, & PL the NYC QR results were confirmation that their work was having a positive impact on their school.

PA's comments support this contention:

I think because it was such a positive Quality Review and they saw where we were trying to go. We didn't get a lot of Well Developed. We didn't expect to because it was the first year of our school, but the reviewer could see the impact we had already in such a new developing school. So, we were making strides and we were looking at our data closely especially OORS (Online Occurrence Reporting System).

This sentiment was also shared by PB:

The findings guided us in strengthening the work we had already begun to develop. Before the first QR, the school examined the rubric and evaluated current practices. Clearly, there were gaps and we worked as a community to address them with strong systems and research-based practices. The QR helped to confirm what had been messaged earlier; which was that we were not Well Developed and it was not the fault of our student population. Therefore, it did have an effect for change and teacher practice

PC added:

I think so. Definitely. When I inherited the school, it had received an Underdeveloped with Proficient features. We had a vision of wanting to become Well Developed. We felt

it was necessary to really, step one, change the culture of the school. That became the primary focus. If we changed the culture of the school then hopefully everything else would kind of fall in place. When we received the Proficient after coming from an overall, Underdeveloped, it was an indication that we were moving in a right direction and receiving some recognition for our efforts. We were proud of this but it wasn't enough.

Confirmation that schools were improving took many forms. PH noted, "it gave recognition and accolades to the people who were following along, showed evidence of utilizing best practices of implementing the professional development support that they had been provided with. There was a transfer. I think that validated efforts."

PI stated:

the fact that we were Proficient was sitting well with the staff. The fact that we went to Well Developed was even better for the staff, and they themselves felt that what we were doing and the changes we'd made had helped us move to that level. They were happy about that.

PJ further illustrated this point when it was stated:

Well, I think, when you go back to the year when there were some Developings (on the initial QR report). I think that motivated the people a little bit more. It's not that we were not doing it. It's just that we don't talk about ourselves well and sell ourselves well. You know, we just do the work quietly. We're not like.... other schools can be really showy and they look really good. So, they got that beautiful outside but go inside and they are not what we are. And we have the core. We just don't have the fine toppings around it so

people don't necessarily give us credit for all that we do. That kind of motivated us once we got Proficient.

PL affirmed this by mentioning:

I would say yes, it did. Our first Quality Review was impactful because we just opened at the school so being able to have somebody come in and look at the school and give us feedback was kind of like an affirmation of the things that we were trying to accomplish that year. So, it helped the climate because we got a lot of positive feedback and they let us know that all the work that we did just opening the school actually would be paid off based on feedback from outside observers. We have received one comment about instruction. They wanted it to be more inquiry-based and our idea was we needed to do gradual release because we knew our students but it did kind of push us to say, "Yeah, maybe we're doing too much and we're not getting to the release part." We're doing too much modeling so it has had an influence on us.

The final NYC QR report noted elements that contributed to the existence of a positive environment for learning. At PA, PC, PE, PF, PI, and PJ's schools, the administration communicated high expectations for students, staff, and parents through structures like the staff handbook, weekly updates to staff, newsletters to parents, a school Twitter account, the internet via programs like the Online Gradebook, Classroom Dojo and Skedula, voicemails, text blasts, the school website and direct teacher contact.

Pictures of all staff members in their caps and gowns and descriptions of their Alma Maters and educational background hung prominently on the college and career awareness bulletin board at PI's school. College Spirit Day occurred on a monthly basis at PC's school. There are many internship opportunities and the extra support for ELLs on Saturdays to help

them “meet the challenge” of the college process. At PH’s school, teachers shared with students their experiences as college students so that they can see for themselves the manner in which higher education could open doors to future personal benefits.

Community gatherings occurred consistently, during and after school, in the schools led by PC, PE, PI, PF, and PJ. High expectations were conveyed through the distribution of awards that focused on high academic achievement, and service learning initiatives. Career days were scheduled whereby parents and staff members shared their journey and career moves. Teachers wore their undergraduate or graduate school paraphernalia and discussed their college experiences. PC shared that:

we enroll our students in summer programs...from 8 to 4. It's a long day (at a disclosed university). We treat them like little college students. They have a relaxed supervised lunch. They're able to go to ...the Subway on campus or the campus grill. They have a Starbucks. You know, they can get like ice cream so they love it.

Teachers working at PB and PF’s schools were offered several opportunities to engage and better understanding the Danielson framework via professional development and pre- and post-observation feedback sessions.

In order to ensure that the individual needs of students were met, PH scheduled meetings with the school’s leadership and teachers on a regular basis to ensure that the teaching practices focused on the skills that encouraged students to excel.

A daily bulletin was distributed, at PI’s school, to all constituents informing them about school progress, adjustments to schedules, the expectations of the day and assessment results.

Teacher-student meetings occurred on a regular basis at PC’s school. During these meetings students were challenged to take advantage of opportunities such as Advanced

Placement (AP) classes, as well as additional classes needed to obtain the highest possible diploma option.

One of PG's school-wide goals was to ensure that at least one adult knew each student well. Building these relationships helped students develop independence and self-advocacy so that they are well prepared and college ready.

Students at PD's school used feedback from teachers and school based rubrics to determine what they needed to do to improve their work and get to the next level.

Staff members at PA's school were encouraged to refer to students as scholars for the purpose of reinforcing the importance of academics. The students had to articulate a set of clear objectives that they needed to achieve to be prepared for the next level.

At PF's school, an opportunity entitled "Principal Talk," was implemented. This initiative ensured that parents were cognizant of school policy, knew what students were learning; and further, aware of what was expected. Parents also received an opportunity to shadow the principal. The goal was to allow parents to understand better the expectations that existed at the school and to see those expectations in action.

PB and PG used online grading systems including Pupil Path and Skedula to keep parents informed of their child's progress towards college and career readiness. PG instituted a grassroots Student Needing Academic Plans (SNAP) team, composed of staff who regularly analyzed student data and were assigned to keep in touch with students and families to offer support. The SNAP team brought all parties together when necessary to develop plans and contracts to help improve student behavior, attendance and academic achievement.

The QR results noted additional supports principals provided for parents, students, and teachers which improved their rating. During family fun nights, parents at PE, PF, PH and PJ's

schools had the opportunity to receive training to extend their children's learning experiences at home. These subjects included but were not limited to literacy, math, yoga and character education programs. PA's school offered a kindergarten literacy workshop through which parents could read a book used in class with their children to reinforce vocabulary at home. Common Core Standards based workshops were also offered. PF shared that, "every other month, ...once in the morning, for parents who come in the morning and then in the evening, I just make myself available to say, "Hey parents, come to talk to me about whatever you want talk about".

Teachers at PB & PH's school benefitted from a system of extensive modeling and inter-visitations to support and improve pedagogy. During formal and informal teacher meetings, professional articles and teaching resources were provided to support the tailoring of lesson plans to meet the needs of individual students across grades.

Students at PJ's school were organized into advisory groups to support their social and academic development. During advisory, students had an opportunity meet with advisors and have their transcripts and report cards reviewed and receive feedback with next steps. High school students received guidance in the college essay process and filling out the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application.

Three out of twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC QR did not influence the climate of the school community.

PE distributed QR information immediately to all staff for feedback. She noted that, "...they are probably a bit more defensive than I am and you know they get to say this is what it is, this is what we like, this is what we did, we disagree here or you know that sort of thing."

PF declared, “I mean, I really can’t say. That was in 2013. In my school, we use feedback to grow. You know, we took it at face value. We actually disagreed with the findings of the reviewer.”

PG affirmed this by stating:

I think it's safe to say I founded the school in 2005. The idea of establishing a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families and provide supports to achieve those expectations, has been something that we have been working toward since day one. This was a case where we were building the school with the idea that high expectations for all members of the learning community were non-negotiable.

The majority of principals, (nine out of twelve) in this study, perceived that the QR results confirmed their school’s climate was improving and provided impetus for them to keep moving forward.

Research Question 2

Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect the strategies principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?

Participant responses included their perception of how the Quality Review influenced the strategies they used to change the organizational culture of the school community. Interview questions specific to research question two include:

- Did the results of the first Quality Review have an effect your school’s core values? If yes, how?

- Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect the strategies you used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review? If yes, what were the key strategies?

Core Values

Nine out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did not have an impact on the core values of the school.

PB affirmed this by stating that the core values remained intact, but the systems of implementation changed:

No, our core values settled on strong structure. But after the quality review, we used the feedback to further strengthen our systems of implementation. We then worked to assure all systems were interrelated and connected with no add-on type programs just to fill in the gaps.

PF added that his school values were also intact, but needed time for fruits of labor to mature:

No, our school values were already intact. We felt that we were on the right track, to continue to develop the school values. It takes time, like with any business, right? You know, you start a business, the first five to six years are the developmental years so if I came in 2007, what was that? 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, that 2012-2013 year was the fifth year and so it was kind of like with five years into the work that we're doing; we felt like we're in a good place.

PJ stated that her core values were unaffected and that the good was to continue to stick with them until evidence of their maturity became visible.

PK concluded that the core values of the school remained intact. Unfortunately, after the initial NYC QR, the staff started to view the Quality Review as a valueless tool.

PL stated that the results of the QR didn't affect their core values it affirmed that they were knowledgeable about the diverse needs of their students. She described a moment when the QR Reviewer asked her teachers about random students. He was impressed that they were able to provide the students' grade, as well as areas of strengths and areas of needed improvement.

Three out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on the core values of the school.

For PA and PH, the feedback from the Quality Review increased their staff members buy-in to the core values.

PA shared that, "I think it had a positive impact because it helps the teachers with the buy in. When you have a new school, it's hard to get everybody on board because they don't know you".

PH added that the results of the QR motivated her teachers to meet outside of the contractually agreed upon time and discuss how they could assist one another in planning lessons that were differentiated based on the needs of their students.

For PD, the feedback from the Quality Reviews was a distraction, that steered the staff away from the core values of the school. She states that climate turned into a culture of "you're out to get me and you're never good enough."

System Changes

Eight of the twelve participants cited the results of the initial Quality Review influenced them to make various system changes to the organizational culture of their school in preparation for the imminent QR.

Data Collection System

PA made a decision to revise the system for data collection:

I'm developing a new system on how do we collect data. Using more technology as opposed to the paper. Collecting paper and dividing it up I don't want to do that. My secretary and I hate all this mess. We're trying to constantly evolve and grow so each review we look at exactly where it says that we're not doing well. I remember one review talked about consistency and coherency with something new we were starting that year. We have developed some Math rubrics. My AP is really big on Math and they saw some really promising practices in some classes. The reviewer asked, 'why this is not happening school-wide?' And so, we talked about how we wanted to start this small but, in Central's eyes, it should have been started everywhere. Okay so now we know what we do is school-wide and also we had to reflect about what other people see because once you're in it, and living it you think you've done a good job. But until you have someone else's perspective you don't realize what's really happening. You know, how you may or may not be moving student achievement; in the right direction.

Student Behavior System

PC revised the systems in place for monitoring student behavior. PC shared that changing the culture also related to changing of the behaviors of students and teachers. To the best of his ability, he implemented Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS). PC sent paraprofessionals for further training on its methodology. Then, they changed the expectations by posting them in the hallways and began to use the PBIS model to recognize positive behavior. This mindset was a change from focusing on the positive rather than the negative behavior. PC

began to have pizza parties and ice cream socials to recognize grades of students doing the right thing. He stated that he'd paid for students to go to Six Flags Adventure Park. The teachers also bought into the system and purchased little coins to reward students. The culture changed from taking punitive measures to utilizing reward systems, bringing attention to recognizing students doing the right thing. PC added that the school changed how they operated and harped on all the positive things. For the past four years, PC held an "I will graduate" pep rally to get students excited. There would be dancing at these rallies, but importantly, PC noted that there was a message that they can do it and the event ends with a pledge to graduate. PC stated that this year would be the first year that they also have a pep rally at the end of the year also. Ultimately, PC put support systems in place as PC recognized that "it's one thing to raise the academic expectations but you also have to provide the support as necessary."

Findings from the final NYC QR reports confirmed claims relative to the existence of a system being put in place to monitor student behavior. At PG's school, a program entitled Restorative Practices/Justice (RJ) was used proactively to decrease the number of suspensions and incidents. Through a partnership with Lincoln Center Education (LCE), students worked several times throughout each semester to study works of art with teaching artists, classroom teachers, and parents.

Common Language System

For schools to improve their QR rating, it is important that schools understand the process and what is expected of them. PD focused on developing a system of common language around the QR. Focus on understanding one quality indicator per week was PD's goal:

With the Quality Review, what we did was we took the indicators, and what does that mean in regular language? And then where does that live well right here in our school?

We're not going to show a team a video of somebody teaching it in upstate New York. We're going to show it right here in our room. You see what I'm saying? So, we did that and then we did a vertical team. So, week 1, I named what the indicator meant, user-friendly, how we lived in it our school, and then week 2, you had to come in and show how you did it and what made sense and how did it work or not. Right? Then we started developing that kind of language.

Student Achievement Systems

Three of the twelve participants cited that the results of the initial Quality Review influenced how they focused on developing systems to increase student achievement in preparation for the imminent QR.

Advanced Placement Program

In order to raise student achievement, PC focused on increasing the number of students taking AP courses:

When I started here, we had AP everything. And if we didn't have it, we would send students to the school upstairs. We have a partnership with them and they will take the AP courses there. Senior students weren't used to being asked to take AP courses. They were accustomed to having what they called a dummy program which had gym maybe, just whatever was required by the time you got to your senior year. Maybe gym and English, that's it. When they received the schedule with AP courses and it was a full course load or the expectation was to go down the street to a neighboring college to take classes and enrich themselves. They pushed back and the parents pushed back with them. Yes. And I heard excuses such as, 'We don't want this to affect our GPA.' You know, just any excuse you can think of in order to support this dummy program or doing less or

mediocrity...it was just unbelievable, because you invest in taxpayer dollars. Right? To provide the best education possible. And people that you're serving or in service for don't want it, or don't have any interest. My student body is primarily students of color. And to me, it says a lot. When we think about like where students of color or people of color have come in this country. There was lots of interest but low opportunities. Now, we have lots of opportunities and very little interest. It's heartbreaking.

Feedback from the final NYC QR report confirmed PC's and other participant's claims relative to the implementation of systems to encourage students to engage in AP courses. At PC's school, students in ninth through eleventh grade were enrolled in College Launch, a mentoring program that provided high school students with counseling, test preparation, college and transfer admissions information. In twelfth grade, students transitioned into College Summit, a program that trains, deploys, and coaches a team of high school students who volunteer to boost college preparation and enrollment across their entire school, mobilize their friends and classmates to realize their true college and career potential. There was a Bio-Med class and an AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) Program. AVID is a program that provided educators, working within elementary, secondary, and higher education, with research-based teaching strategies and curriculum. These resources focus on developing students' critical thinking, literacy, and math skills across all content areas.

Seventh graders had the opportunity to take Living Environment, Common Core Algebra and the US History Regents in PJ's school. For the high school students, the school restructured the science sequence and students began with Active Physics in grade 9, taking Regents or Active Chemistry in grade 10 and taking an enriched Biology course or a Syracuse University Placement Advance (SUPA) College Level Biology course in grade 11. A transition team,

headed by the IEP teacher, was trained in multiple pathways to graduation and supported students in obtaining their Career Development Occupational Studies (CDOS) credentials.

In order to provide more exposure to college and career readiness, teachers at PB's school, developed a curriculum; which was implemented during the ELA class. Embedded in the program were college trips, visits from college staff, topics such as career exploration, financial awareness, and the college admission process. Eleventh and twelfth grades had the opportunity to take college courses in select city universities the school was partnered with.

Student Centered Learning Environment

Achievement strategies that focused on the school's core values were implemented by PF. He felt that the results of the prior QR impacted the instructional strategies, but more so for strengthening the evidence of the school's core values. To highlight the school's belief in student voice a student government was formed. To stress the belief that children learn through wonderment, and inquiry through discovery enrichment programs were established. In order encourage parent voice, he began having town hall meetings with the principal. Once a month two sessions were held, once in the morning, and another in the evening.

Findings from the final NYC QR report confirmed claims relative to improvements in systems created to provide more opportunities for student agency. At PA's school, student-led conferences were conducted during Parent/Teacher Conferences and Tuesday parent engagement afternoons. At both PA and PI's school's students could articulate to their families what skills and concepts they knew, understood and could implement. They explained their next learning steps, and what they needed to do to be prepared for their next grade level.

Instruction

Increasing student engagement in the classroom was PL's goal:

We have received one comment about instruction...they wanted it to be more inquiry-based and our idea was that no, we needed to do gradual release because we knew our students but it did kind of push us to say, "Yeah, maybe we did too much and we're not getting to the release part. We're did too much modeling so it has had an influence on us.

The NYC QR feedback confirmed the participant's claims as it related to the implementation of new systems to improve teacher pedagogy. It was noted that PF's school used Google applications to share instructional materials, review observation feedback from administration, communicate assignments and feedback with students, and provide updates to parents.

Grade teams at PH's school shared best practices through teacher-initiated videotaped lab-site classroom visits, where they observed a lesson, provided each other feedback and adjusted the practice, with follow-up visits by the team.

PI used the Danielson Framework for Teaching to refine teacher thinking and expectations around teaching and learning. Teachers held each other accountable as they ensured that their Professional Learning Community (PLC) reflected collaboration and professionalism focused on their own learning to provide students with the quality education. Teachers were consistently engaged in differentiated professional development that contributed to their implementation of research-based strategies in classrooms.

The planning sessions involved interdisciplinary grade-wide teams in PG's school. All staff members received training in visual learning models provided by ongoing professional development at Lincoln Center Education (LCE). As a result, the school created a visual learning inquiry team in collaboration with LCE to study student engagement and the effects of aesthetic learning on engagement.

At PD's school, the administrative team, instructional coaches, and selected teachers provided ongoing professional learning opportunities to teachers, at PD's school, as a direct result from observation findings and feedback that addressed teacher's pedagogical practices. Four out of twelve of the principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did not have an impact on the strategies they used to change the organizational culture of the school. PJ and PK's comments below capture their sentiments:

We weren't getting credit for what we were doing because they were looking for a very specific type of thing. Like a particular lens and the language that we were using that in our school didn't match the language that they were waiting to hear. So, it was about the teachers meeting and talking about what happened to learn the right vocabulary to use when talking during a Quality Review. That they came across...as you know hitting the points that they were waiting for ... because obviously saying it the way we said it wasn't working so they had to learn to say it the way it needed to be said.

PK's statement was more direct:

Again, I would probably say no. I mean after we got that quality review, once we got past feeling really devastated about it, we basically put it away and never looked at it again because we did not feel like we could learn from it. And it had also quite honestly made us extremely skeptical for our second quality review when we got one, because we were anxious, we were like, "We're going to get someone that doesn't know anything again." So, when we prepared for our second quarter review, a lot of our emphasis was less on how we're going to show who we are. But more on how do we educate a potential uneducated reviewer and how do we deal with that.

Eight out of twelve of the principals in this study perceived that the QR results affected the strategies they used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review.

Research Question 3

Did the findings from the first Quality Review have an effect on the leadership style the principal used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?

Participant responses included their perception of how the Quality Review influenced their leadership style in the process of changing the organizational culture of the school community. Interview questions specific to research question three include:

- Did the feedback from the first Quality Review affect your leadership style in preparation for the second Quality Review? If yes, how?

Four out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on their leadership style.

PA shared that having a NYC QR almost every year was disheartening and caused her to become callous towards the process:

I think that having so many for so long has affected me in many different ways. I've had one every year when I wasn't supposed to according to their own rubric. When my scores have gone up, or when I've got off the Focus list; I still had one. I became a little disgruntled. I did actually nothing, my AP did every single thing; him and one of my teacher leaders. They came in the weekends, I didn't. I sat and when the reviewer came in I said, "This is their show, I know nothing about what they have prepared. I know my school community. I know what I do as the leader, so I have let go of a lot of the

leadership responsibilities. To help develop and build capacity in others. There are people here who know the Quality Review rubric better than I do. And it's an exhausting job and I was, I can't do this anymore so it has to be that we are collectively doing it and everybody know the information.

Feedback provided to PF was suggested that his tone was abrasive and that he needed to find other alternatives to affect change. He decided to have a meeting with his staff and commit to changes in his leadership style. He listed some areas of improvement for his staff and requested a commitment from them as well

The feedback PH received made her more open-minded to external views. Having another set of eyes assisted her in identifying areas of improvement that she didn't realize. It also showed her areas that she thought she was doing well, but she wasn't:

It's like, "But I'm sending them to professional development. We're having these exposures to professional learning." We're having conversations. I'm giving them time to meet, and discuss.... we're doing it together. How can I additionally, monitor that process so that it becomes more effective? And so, that's a feedback that's useful for me....to know that, "Okay, so you might think you have it all happening here". You're spending all this money on professional development and professional learning but you're skipping a beat somewhere. There is a misstep somewhere.

PL felt that her leadership style became more stern and confrontational due to the recommendations from the initial QR. The following year was challenging because new hires were resistant to the vision and mission of the school. She resorted to writing letters to file for insubordination and asked specific members of the school community to leave before they were fired.

Eight of the twelve participants cited that the results of the initial Quality Review did not have an impact on their leadership style in preparation for the forthcoming QR.

PB believed that while her leadership never changed, how the community worked in preparation for the next NYC QR did. PB stated that, “more teachers stepped up to the plate and contributed after seeing the Quality Review's findings and realized that we have been working towards a shared goal after all and indeed it needed to improve.”

PC noted this by mentioning that:

I think that my leadership style has been pretty consistent even without this report. I'm a transformational leader and I'm a thinker/planner and I think big. I don't look at dollars, because some people are driven by dollar signs. "Oh, we can't afford this. We can't do this." We always find a way to do everything we want to do. If we don't have it, we find resources and money and partnerships. That's pretty much my leadership style. I also bring a sense of urgency. I think I lack patience. Anyone who knows me knows that I, even when I respond to emails, I'm like it's instant. I don't like my workload to build up. This is an urgent matter.

PE added that from the inception of her school, she has worked without an assistant principal. Therefore, prior experience weighed heavily on her radar when making hiring decisions. For her distributive leadership was birthed out of a necessity to stretch resources as opposed to filling roles. She described her leadership style as very distributive. She is the sole supervisor on-site. She intentionally hired experienced teachers who can handle an additional workload. This enables her to redistribute funding to support teachers as opposed to hiring additional staff members.

Distributive leadership has been the driving force behind PI's success before NYC QRs were being conducted. PI does not believe that this style abdicates position, as long as PI is informed, PI gives latitude to staff to make decisions:

My leadership style has always been one of distributed leadership. I always believed that one person cannot achieve everything that you want to achieve in a school, and there is a lot of talent within the school community that you really need to tap into, and I think when you do that, you affect climate and you affect culture. And therefore, it continues to be distributive. That does not mean, as I tell my staff, that I abdicate my position, I don't abdicate it but, I give them a lot of leeway in helping to make decisions and with my assistant principals even in making decisions; as long as I know.

PK declared that the results of the NYC QR shifted her priorities, but not her leadership style:

I don't know if it had an effect in the leadership style, but again, it affected a little bit of my emphasis. I mean we prepared for our second quality review. I mean every year, what we do as a staff anyway, is we go back and we basically self-reflect on where we are on these factors. For both of the Quality Reviews we did the same thing. We took the Quality Review work and we went through it. We looked at it as the staff and we said, "Okay, so this is what they're looking for. Where do we think we fall? What's the evidence that supports that?" Both in terms of being prepared to present information and kind of a self-assessment of where we were in that process.

The majority of principals, (eight out of twelve) in this study, perceived that the QR results did not have an impact on their leadership style.

Research Question 4

Were elements of the primary embedding mechanisms, identified by Edgar H. Schein, prevalent in the strategies principals used to make improvements in their Quality Review ratings?

Participant responses included their perception of how the Quality Review influenced strategies they used to change the organizational culture of the school community. Interview questions specific to research question four include:

- How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect how you set priorities for yourself and your school community in preparation for the second Quality Review?
- How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect your level of urgency in preparation for the second Quality Review?
- How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect how you allocated resources to the school community in preparation for the second Quality Review?
- How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect your approach to instructional improvement in preparation for the second Quality Review?
- How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect your approach to staffing your school in preparation for the second Quality Review?

As a strategy to change the culture of an organization, Schein (2010) concluded there are major tools that leaders can use to influence how their organizations make perceptions, think, feel, and behave based on their own conscious and unconscious convictions. He labeled the tools as primary embedding mechanisms and they are as follows: (1) what a leader pays attention to,

measures, and controls; (2) how leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises; (3) how leaders allocate resources; (4) how leaders deliberately role model, teach, and coach; (5) how leaders allocate rewards and status; and (6) how leaders recruit, select, promote, and excommunicate.

Results of the data from Research Question Four yielded five emergent themes that are linked to Schein's primary embedding mechanisms: priorities, urgency, resources, instructional practices, and hiring practices.

Priorities

Ten out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on what was prioritized as it related to school improvement.

PA stated that monitoring and improving student behavior become a priority. She mentioned that the early QRs recommended creating a system to analyze when students were misbehaving. They purchased the SWISS System, a combination of three web-based data and reporting systems used for screening and monitoring student behavior. The SWISS System enabled the school to easily collect and analyze behavior data around school climate. A bonus was that the system was specifically aligned with school-wide PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System); which was effective in not only identifying when students misbehaved, but providing incentives to curb it. They also collaborated with the UFT to provide TCIS (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention System), a four-day training for behavior management, for the staff. Through these systems, there was a school wide revelation that the misbehavior stemmed from malnourishment. To rectify this situation, they made snacks available to students throughout the day. They recently established a food pantry for families.

PB shared that, the results of the initial NYC QR, “were very helpful and we were able to use the feedback to work together to improve what we were doing. As a result, we developed a common language and coherence around instruction throughout the school.” The NYC QR influenced how PC prioritized getting staff members to step out of their comfort zone:

Yes. Priority one was changing the school culture. They wanted to continue what's comfortable. "Why do more, I'm comfortable with what I'm already doing." Really what was key to getting all this movement from Under Developed to Proficient was starting to embed the vision in the younger grades and building the capacity of teachers. Letting them know that this is information to help us improve what we do and how we serve students. This is not going to be something that's going to be punitive or "I got you". Look at your test scores! Under Developed or Ineffective, it's not for that purpose. And that helped to transform the culture.

PD made transparency and encouragement a priority when communicating with her staff members:

When I saw the results of the review, and I saw the assessment of the staff on how they became more defiant, dry, insecure, and paranoid, it was okay. In order to meet this outcome, I never changed the outcome, I change the approach. I said, "Oh, I need to share with them, I need to become their cheerleader and share more my story." I need to share my story and show them that I'm their biggest cheerleader, and I need to highlight their strength.

PE's and PJ's schools developing systems that mirrored the Well Developed features in multiple areas of the NYC QR became the priority. PE pointed out that this accomplishment was due in part to looking at the rubric of the QR and making a concerted effort to created systems in sync with the Well Developed qualities of each QR indicators. The sentiment of the school

community was that if they didn't do well in a particular indicator, it was because they didn't provide enough evidence; not that the evidence didn't exist.

The feedback from the QR influenced PJ to put her faith in a small group of loyal staff members to help keep staff spirits high and stay focused on doing better on the next QR. The sentiment was that the QR Reviewer had not given them enough credit for the work. In order to ensure that the climate of the school did not become toxic, she assembled a core group of people who were really collegial and really onboard. She relied on them to rally the staff to keep pushing hard and not giving up.

While the stakeholders at PG's school were happy to receive Proficient ratings on the initial NYC QR; being Well Developed in multiple NYC QR indicators was the ultimate goal. PE stated, "Following the first quality review, of course, we went back and looked at every domain, and quality indicator and recommendations that were made to us about how to improve." PH disclosed that the priority was on holding her staff members accountable:

Prioritizing is constantly keeping it on the students and reminding them of that and you know sometimes you have difficult conversations. You have to have difficult conversations because you have to remind them, "You know what, we are getting paid for a job here. We have a responsibility. We are not doing this because we are just being generous with you all, right."

PI shared that, "I think that my goals, my priorities just kind of intensified, you know, to continue my path to making this one of the best schools." The results of the initial QR motivated PL's staff to continue to focus on improvement:

I think it helped us to keep up expectations as high as we had them because we were one of the very few first schools opening that got Proficient and we didn't expect to get

Proficient. So, the priority was just that to keep going, like now that we are doubling, how do we maintain the quality? Once we increase the staff size how do you find people who are just as dedicated as a people who founded the school? I don't think I've ever found, I found a lot of dedicated teachers over the years, but in terms of that unity everyone felt like they were part of creating something and it's a different vibe than people who come and transfer in and out and just look for a job. Yes, we want to keep doing well.

Urgency

Two out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on their level of urgency.

For PD, the initial NYC QR feedback was shocking:

So, what the prior quality review did for me was like, "Gasp! No, that's not really what is happening and that's not what's going to be happening in our school!" The Quality Review was a good tool for me to develop a common language. One of the things that we did, and I had this PD when we did the PD, it was a six-week series, and week 1, you have one indicator, we show you how it was in our school, then week 2, you brought it in, but all along, no one was able to see underdeveloped, developed, proficient. The only language we worked off was Well Developed.

The urgency at PJ's schools was shaped around ensuring the school community adopted the language of the QR rubric in their regular discussions. The goal was to figure out what it is they needed to say, and how they needed to say it to get credit for what they were already doing. She was confident the systems she had in place at her school were comparatively better than those at the surrounding schools. She was disturbed that many of these surrounding

schools received better ratings on the QR than her school did. She made the insinuation that some of these schools may have put on a “dog and pony” how to be successful; which she did not want to do.

Ten out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did not have an impact on their level of urgency.

PA concluded that the introduction of the Common Core standards was a greater impetus for urgency than the initial results of the NYC QR:

It wasn't so much the feedback from the Quality Review, it was more so, that at that time, the Common Core standards was coming about. It was more about okay, we have to get good at this because this looks hard. It was more about that curriculum and the standards are changing. What are we going to do about it to make sure that these kids who have so many deficits, because the first Quality Review came in during the first year I took over. I had only been a principal for few months and here I had a Quality Review and these kids were level ones. That was a sense of urgency; the fact that these kids were level ones and here's a new Common Core curriculum coming out. That propelled us to thinking about ways that we can help impact kids you know.

PB was not shocked by the initial results of the NYC QR:

The first QR was exactly what I expected. I have been an AP in another school and had participated in three Quality Reviews already. All three we received the Well Developed at all categories. I knew what to expect that our school was still working to build community and coherence to get better. However, having had that background experience was very helpful when I became a principal.

PC responded that the urgency was already there. She was the Assistant Principal at the school prior to becoming the Principal. During this period, the school received an F, the lowest grade a school can receive, on the NYC Progress Report. Therefore, she already knew she needed to create a sense of urgency to bring about the change she envisioned. She caught people off guard because she made demands that first-year principals typically wouldn't make because first year principals wanted to ensure they were appointed before introducing major changes.

PE was adamant that everything is urgent in her school:

Everything is urgent here. You'll hear me say to kids in the morning, "walk with a sense of urgency," when they are strolling down from being late. It's part of like get it done and what they know is if I ask for something I wanted yesterday, that's just who I am. I am clear about that. You know I know who I am. They tell me who I am as well so we are understanding that. Being that we all have so many jobs and we can't afford to put anything else on our plate it's, "address it so can come off of your plate". It doesn't benefit us to let it drag on. I'm not-- this is not a place where I am writing people up all the time. I'd like-- I rarely put pen to paper because it's a talk and once they feel like if it's valuable enough to speak about it then it's valuable, like I don't waste their time. It is not about wasting anybody's time. Their jobs are hard enough to wasting your time for frivolousness like we don't have time for that. If I am speaking to you about it then it's an issue, let's address it and move on.

Maintaining a sense of urgency was a constant at PF and PG's schools. PF noted that she always tried to maintain a sense of urgency. For her anything related to culture and climate was urgent. Her focus was on motivating the staff to buy into more of the vision and the mission. She

believed that people had a natural resistance to change, so she didn't get offended when people pushed back. She continued to focus on getting people on board.

The sentiment that his children only had a limited amount of time to finish high school sparked more of an urgency than the initial results of QR at PG's school. He reiterated that his students only had one shot at high school and every student, at every grade level, required his staff to work with absolute focus on providing them the opportunities they needed. This included, but was not limited to, fulfilling the expectations articulated in IEP, conducting an end of year assessment with the students starting with the seniors working toward graduation beginning in February and March, and then conducting group advising for the 10th and the 9th grade students toward the end of the year. This was helpful in making sure students understood why they did or did not meet the academic goals that would lead to promotion.

At PH's school they do not wait for the Quality Review or for a superintendent's visit to come in. "We shine the spotlight on wherever it has to be because we look to make that it is part of the language and the communication that we want consistency. We don't want pockets of excellence we need consistency across the board."

PL stated, "I don't think that for the first Quality review, it really, everything is urgent when you're opening the school and so I don't think that the feedback affected me in that way except to say they think we're doing really well."

Resources

Six out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on how they allocated resources.

PA redirected resources towards creating opportunities for teachers to collaborate, plan, and attend professional learning opportunities. One piece of feedback that the QR Reviewer

shared was that teachers felt they didn't have enough time to plan. Therefore, ensuring that her teachers had time to collaborate became the priority. She put aside money to do planning. She has hosted retreats in and out of state, primarily on Saturdays in May and June every year. She mentioned that she was sending an instructional team to Texas for the NCTM training.

Redirecting resources towards ensuring that teachers could conduct inter-visitations and attend professional learning opportunities during the school day became a priority for PC:

In terms of our budget and resources, we're paying a lot of money for coverages because some of these PD's are external and sometimes in order for teachers to observe other teachers, you got to cover their classes. That's how we're aligning our resources and I guess my theory of action is that the more we develop the teachers the better student outcomes will be and a lot of this cultural stuff, you know, that sometimes bleed into the hall and other places won't exist.

PD assigned resources to put systems in place to compensate for the varying degree of teacher proficiency in pedagogy. For example, she mandated that every teacher use a blended learning model.

Strategic professional learning opportunities for teachers became a resource focus for PF:

That's a great question. I think I allocated more resources towards professional development in terms of growing the content knowledge and expertise of the staff. The other idea was looking at the idea of questioning so you're looking at the Danielson Framework, right, and looking at how we are measuring success. Content knowledge is number one, right, for us and then we look at questioning, student engagement, and guiding discussions. I think we put more money into professional development and you

know, I did some more work in terms of per session work, after school work and Saturday work as well.

Six out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did not have an impact on how they allocated resources. PB and PI represent two examples.

Upon assuming the principalship at his school, PB was in a financial deficit where “no added resources were available to spend after salaries.” PB ultimately “exceeded ... people and invested in teacher development, when available.”

PI shared that the style of distributive leadership freed up resources that would have been used for staffing purposes. Thus, PI shared there was no major change in resources following the review.

Instructional Practices

Eight out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on improving instructional practices.

The initial results of the NYC QR caused PA to focus on strategies for differentiating instruction for her students. One of the consistent areas of growth different QR Reviewers had identified was differentiating instruction to address the multiple needs of her students. To be more specific differentiation of instruction was not coherent across classroom and grade levels. In order to address this concern, the staff integrated a lot of station work into the lessons. This enabled them to provide their students with more opportunities for small group of instruction. They also decreased the adult to student ratio by hiring more paraprofessionals. The paraprofessionals were trained so that they were a better support and resource to the school teachers. They also used task cards, and created opportunities for students to have more

independent use of the rubrics. They gave students the opportunity to look at the rubrics with each other, and do checklists for each other. Another strategy that was employed was creating and disseminating an in-house survey. The results of the survey were used to determine what was working well, what wasn't, and what could be done between February to June to work on improving. One of her criticisms of the QR Reviewers was that there seemed to be an inconsistency about what differentiation looked like.

PB affirmed the impact of the QR results on their instructional strategies stating that:

Our school didn't have a college and career readiness program and it was a big gap. Instead of just simply adding on some type of prescribed program to cover the Quality Review piece, we examined what programs we have in place and decided that we would create a college and career program that would complement existing instructional programs. We created double period ELA blocks that included lesson planning that supported college and career readiness.

PC developed purpose driven and differentiated professional learning opportunities for her teachers:

I take professional development very seriously here and I always have and that's been one of the structures that's been sustained over the years. One of the things I did change, this was a school that had short Wednesdays, for professional development. The professional development was very random. Today is basket weaving, tomorrow is who knows? I wanted it to be very focused and I aligned it to just things that the data show and then I also allow for differentiation as well as PDs that we might not planned for but we see the majority of the teachers, based on my observations, need help with this. I have a plan for the entire year before September even comes based on what we know. And what we've

also collaboratively decided upon in June of last year. That was one of the structures that I've put in.

Double periods were incorporated into the school day at PD's school. The implementation of these periods contributed to holding teachers more accountable for time spent during common planning time:

That's how I did the double block, but the double block had to be structured. It just can't be "let's come together and kumbaya," so they get double block once a week, common planning time with their grade, they get another prep with their grade, and then the vertical on Mondays now with this new contract, it's vertical, because you have to know what the whole school's saying, okay? You have to be very strong with your structure and follow through with your system. That helped to make sure that I had to have a structure that everything that the adult learner needed, I need to give during the day.

Increasing content specific professional learning opportunities for the teachers became PG's focus. The idea that instructional improvement begins with the affirmation that all students need the opportunity to excel is an espoused belief in the school. PG mentioned that her instructional team constantly re-evaluated the impact of the instructional support they provided for the teachers, and ongoing professional development opportunities through both the co-worker level teams and the departmental teams. This included, but was not limited to content or instructional strategies, that were coherent across the grade levels and then have spoken to articulation through the curriculum toward graduation. After the first QR they spent more time and planning on the teams and the teamwork itself. The fact that she only had one teacher per grade level lead her team to look at several professional learning community models that focused on content teachers working to align instructional goals, content wise, across their grade levels.

PI affirmed the impact by stating:

Well, I think that's where it did affect, because we wanted to move into that Well Developed area, so we were still focusing on teaching pedagogy, on lifting the instruction on student achievement and so our efforts are, as I say, mainly based on that through professional development, through mentoring our new teachers, you know, through dealing all of these things that we know. I even changed the curriculum's and now we threw out the city curriculum and we've put together our own curriculum. We're working on that and on direct instruction because the data that we were seeing was not where we knew our kids are, and what we know we have to do as instructors, as educators to move the children forward. Again, just wanting to move to that Well Developed state which means that we are reaching the children. We are making headway, you know, we are instructionally prepared to meet the needs of the students I think that just kind of made it a thrust in our focus. We do that.

The results of the initial QR caused PL to rethink how classroom instruction could become more student centered:

Yes, I think similarly we did have to question that gradual release model and the fact that the classrooms were teachers dominated, in terms of who was in charge of the lifting. The teachers were doing a lot of it and kids were kind of following behind. It wasn't student-centered and we're also very time on task so this many minutes and that many minutes, you were too long and so we were trying to learn how to be more flexible and responsive and the feedback for quality review brought that to life.

Four out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did not have an impact on improving instructional practices.

PE felt that she hadn't done a great job of making the instructional practices in the school visible during the initial NYC QR:

Again, it is about making it visible. It's making it visible. Unfortunately, like where I feel there is one thing that you wish you improved or you had done better, we don't document a lot. A lot of things happen, via conversation, we eat breakfast together, we eat lunch together, honestly you will see like, "Oh, alright let's try that." Now I'm on Twitter, I find something on Twitter, I text it to them and they are like, "Oh, this was great." We're doing visitations. A lot of change or things that happen here happen organically and they happen also because we're small enough to do that. Like I don't think that this will work in a large school and it definitely does not work in a school that does not have a positive staff and student culture.

PF stated that ADVANCE, another NYC DOE evaluation tool, was more instrumental in changes to instructional practices than the initial NYC QR:

Again, the Quality Review for us is not necessarily a driving forward factor. But for example, we've always been good with data and so we started looking at the overall teacher evaluations in Advance. Looking in Advance, we found out that assessment was probably the most challenging area for our staff so then we shifted to how we are assessing students. When do we assess those students? So, a big shift was our students now are they involved in self-evaluation? They evaluate their own work. Raise in metacognition of what work they've been doing. We also do a lot of peer evaluation work. Our students get a chance to redo their work so the assessment piece has been really heavy for us.

PJ shared that the advent of the Danielson Framework for Teaching Standards, another NYC DOE evaluation tool, was more instrumental in changes to instructional practices than the initial NYC QR. Improving instruction has always been a focus at PJ's schools and the Danielson Framework for Teaching Standards assisted her in evaluating the quality of the teaching practices in the school and where improvement was necessary. They decided to pay particular attention to Components 3B, Using Questioning and Discussion techniques, 3C, Engaging Students in Learning, and 3D, Using Assessment in Instruction. The consensus was that focusing on these three components would yield the greatest increase in instructional effectiveness. Confirmation that this strategy was effective was elicited during the subsequent Quality Review report. The QR Reviewer documented, during their classroom visits, that they observed students working collaboratively and were actively engaged in the discussions within their groups.

Hiring Practices

Eight out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did not have an impact on their hiring practices.

PB stated that, "It didn't. I had a hiring committee in place already and continue with the same hiring practices when I was able to re-staff positions."

PC made hiring decisions based on trust as opposed to the initial feedback given by the NYC QR:

I think I began to staff eventually for trust especially coming from a staff that was hurt honestly. They become bitter and resistant. I think eventually that was transforming more so than a QR. Like how can we get people with the right knowledge and skills but also people that I can trust and people that are going to be loyal.

Experience is PE's first criteria for hiring staff members. She mentioned that she did not hire new teachers. She had only hired two new teachers in the ten years she was at the school. She had nothing against new teachers. She said that she wasn't a "hand holder". It wasn't her style of leadership. She needed people experienced people. She mentioned colleagues that enjoy building up and coaching new teachers into being the teacher that they wanted them to be. That was not her.

There was already a hiring criteria in place at PH's school prior to receiving the initial results of the NYC QR. She mentioned that she looked for candidates who were instructionally sound, had experience working with diverse populations, were empathetic to the needs of children in the community, and bilingual.

PI focused hiring decisions on community compatibility not the initial results of the NYC QR. She believed that compatibility was the most important factor in making hiring decisions. She believed that compatibility was conducive for a positive school climate and culture. For this reason, interview questions were framed around how feasible it would be for a potential candidate to assimilate into her school. If a hiring mistake was made, new hires were given the option assimilate or find a new place of employment.

PJ affirmed that the results of the QR had no impact by stating:

No, because I only looked for reflective practitioners. I always look for, we always looked for people knowledgeable in their content area and we always looked for people who had that liking for kids and wanting to be that adviser. That was the most appealing thing to them and what really drew them to our school. Obviously, the issue is always whether or not we find that and there's enough candidates out there that we can hire so we don't always get that but that's always what we look for. The thing is to really just keep

getting more of that, because that kind person, that kind of educator gives us the ability to do those other things but then ultimately lead to those ratings in the quality review.

PK stated that the initial results of the NYC QR were, “Negligible. Our staffing choices and hiring are always based on the needs of our students. In terms of the content and the type of person that can understand how to provide instruction to ELL's. So, Quality Review did nothing.”

Four out of twelve the principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on their hiring practices.

The initial NYC QR identified and confirmed for PA who his strong teachers were; especially those in the special education department. Potential hires with dual licenses had an advantage over those who did not. His rationale was that even in the general education setting, teachers with dual licenses had a lot of training and knew how to deal with issues so that no matter what child sat in front of them.

The initial results of the NYC QR were used by PF to make decision about which staff members would be asked to leave at the end of the year:

I mean if anything, it may be in a sense and again, for me, the Quality Review, it's one data point amongst others data points... And so, what's interesting in the areas of the Quality Review, that we may not have done well in, I looked at the alignment of correlation with my teachers who did not score well, in those areas, with their evaluation. It helped me focus professional development on teachers who needed support in the areas of their practice that were related to the quality review and so then it became the idea supporting teachers, right and giving them an opportunity to grow their willingness,

ability to deliver, and their practice at the level that we expect; which is the high level. If they're unable to do that, then it's about counseling them off the ship so to speak.

PG shared that having a growth mindset became a favorable "look for" in making hiring decisions. Part of the interview process was requesting potential hires to articulate why they believed all students could learn and become productive citizens. This was important to PG because members of the student population had physical disabilities and required different levels of support. PG also expanded the role of the hiring team in both recruitment and interviewing. This team provided PG with final selection recommendations.

The initial results of the NYC QR caused PL to make some hires that were detrimental to the climate and culture of the school:

In one way, I made a poor choice based on a comment that happened during the Quality Review. The comment was, "Oh it seems like you hired yourself so many times?" In his opinion we were alike in so many ways, right? And so, the next year, like a dummy, I went and said, "Well, no we need the diverse people in their thinking and this one doesn't have to be like us." Wrong, wrong. The second year was a disaster because the strategy was to find people who weren't maybe Type A in you know that kind of way. We were ethnically diverse, but we were Type A people. And I won't hire these other people who were different and it, they were terrible. They didn't have the same dedication to the kids.

Ten out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on what was prioritized as it related to school improvement. Ten out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did not have an impact on their level of urgency. Four out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on how they allocated resources. Eight out of

the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did have an impact on improving instructional practices. Eight out of the twelve principals interviewed responded that the initial NYC Quality Review did not have an impact on their hiring practices.

Summary

The majority of the participants interviewed, in this study, indicated the Quality Review feedback had a positive impact on their school climate. This impact permeated throughout the school community. It confirmed to the schools they were moving in the right direction and provided them the reassurance they needed to continue to pursue their improvement goals.

They also agreed the results of the initial QR inspired them to make systemic changes to the organizational culture of their schools. Systems were implemented to improve data collection, monitoring student behavior, developing a common language pertaining to instruction, and student achievement. As it related to student achievement, the researcher noted that in order to increase student achievement, time was invested in encouraging students to enroll in advanced placement courses, ensuring the classroom were more student centered, and that instruction was more coherent across classrooms.

As it pertained to leadership style, the initial results of the QR had little to no effect on how the participants in this study, interacted with their staff members. The majority of them were resolute in their philosophies about how to influence people to work towards a common goal, and manage behaviors to ensure that everyone stayed on task. Additionally, their core values remained intact as well.

Finally, certain elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein, were prevalent in the strategies principals used to ensure that they received a Well Developed in the following Quality Review; especially in regard to QR indicator 3.4. The

participants made addressing the areas of needed improvement, as per the final QR report, a priority. The participants paid a great deal of attention to instruction; with a specific focus on ensuring that their students were college and career ready, teachers' lessons were differentiated, and classrooms were student centered. Although uninfluenced by the initial results of the QR, a sense of urgency was already established. The participants strategically used their resources to improve the professional learning opportunities available to their teachers; which included inter-visitations and off-site seminars. There was also an increase in the level of accountability for student achievement. Lastly, the participants did have hiring strategies in place to ensure that the organizational culture was stabilized.

Chapter 5 is will provide conclusions and recommendations based on the findings presented in this chapter. Finally, the researcher will offer recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand how a group of NYC principals were successful in improving the culture of learning with high expectations in their individual schools over a three-year period, as determined by the results of a NYC QR. The researcher was also interested in discovering the effect an external evaluation tool, the NYC QR, had on the climate of the school community, the effects it may have had on the leadership style of the principal, and the strategies the principal used to change the organizational culture of the school. The researcher also sought to determine if elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein (2010) were prevalent in the strategies principals used to make change in their organizational culture and therefore, contributed to improvements in their QR proficiency ratings.

Data was collected using interview questions developed by the researcher, the School Quality Review documents (SQR), and the NYC Quality Review reports for each of the participating schools.

There were three hundred and thirty-nine principals, ranging from elementary, middle, and high; qualified to be part of the pool for this study, the researcher selected twelve principals for inclusion in this study. The interviews were conducted using the same defined set of open-ended questions. Participants were interviewed during a time and in a location convenient to them and of their choosing. Locations were free from noise and distraction. Data was collected between January 2017 and July 2017. Responses were audio-recorded using a portable electronic digital device, de-identified, and transcribed using an established online transcription service.

Protecting the identity of the respondents was achieved by using pseudonyms for the name and location of each participant in this study. Each participant signed the informed consent forms.

Summary of Findings

Research Question 1. Did the findings from the first Quality Review, influence the climate of the school?

Research question 1, Finding 1: Ten of the participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had an influence on the climate of the school community. Seven of the ten participants, viewed the results of the initial NYC QR as positive and confirmation that the strategies that had been initiated to raise student achievement were worthwhile and they were headed in the right direction. This confirmation came in the form of an affirmation that the planning implemented was consistent with the feedback from the prior Quality Review. It also provided recognition and accolades to the staff members who showed evidence of turn keying the professional development support with which they had been provided with.

The remaining two participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had a negative impact on the climate of the school community. One participant cited that it surfaced insecurities among the staff.

Research Question 2. Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect the strategies principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?

Research question 2, Finding 1: Ten of the participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had no influence on the core values of the school community.

Research question 2, Finding 2: Three of the participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had an impact on the core values of the school in preparation for the next Quality

Review. Two of the participants stated that the results of the NYC QR resulted in more buy-in of their schools' core values. For many of the stakeholders in both cases, the results of the NYC QR served as confirmation that the practices for school improvement that were instituted, as a result of the school's core values were acknowledged and commended.

Research question 2, Finding 3: Eight of the twelve participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had an influence on the strategies they used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next NYC QR. These strategies took the form of system changes. These system changes included monitoring student behavior, data collection, student achievement systems and developing a common academic language.

Research question 2, Finding 4: Four out of twelve participants cited that the findings of the first of the NYC QR had no influence on the strategies the principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community. One of these four participants felt that the QR reviewer was not adequately trained to understand the needs of her population and thereby the strategies that had been put in place to address those needs. One of the four participants felt that her staff members had evidence of Well Developed features, but could not speak to them effectively enough for the Quality Reviewer to confirm their work.

Research Question 3. Did the findings from the first Quality Review influence the leadership style the principal used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?

Research question 3, Finding 1: Eight of the participants cited the findings of the first NYC QR had no influence on the leadership style they used to change the organizational culture of the school community.

Research question 3, Finding 2: Four of the participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had an influence on the leadership style the principal used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review. Each of the four principals cited a different impact on their leadership style.

One of the four participants stated that having a QR almost every year left her feeling disgruntled. This resulted in her delegating the responsibility for an imminent review to her assistant principal and a lead teacher.

One of the four participants stated that the results of the initial NYC QR caused her to change her hiring practices; which ended up backfiring on her. This in turn caused her to be more stern with people who displayed a lack of professionalism.

One of the four participants stated that the feedback from the NYC QR was that their tone was harsh towards the staff. This led to a conversation with her staff during which she stated that some things she would change about herself.

One of the four participants stated that although he thought he was reflective, the results of the NYC QR provided growth in areas where he thought he was strong.

Research Question 4. Were elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein, prevalent in the strategies principals used to make improvements in their Quality Review ratings?

Research question 4, Finding 1: Ten of the participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had an impact on what was prioritized in preparation for the next Quality Review. Each of Schein's primary embedding mechanisms utilized by the participants was a result of the feedback they received from their respective QR. The two most prominent of Schein's primary

embedding mechanisms employed were focused on setting priorities and reviewing instructional practices.

Research question 4, Finding 2: Nine out of the twelve participants cited the findings of the first NYC QR had no influence on the level of urgency in preparation for the next NYC Quality Review. Respondents felt that urgency already existed in their schools.

Research question 4, Finding 3: Three of the twelve participants cited the findings of the first NYC QR had an impact on their level of urgency in preparation for the next NYC Quality Review. Two of the three participants stated that there was an urgency to ensure their staff members learned and used the language of the QR rubric in preparation for the next NYC QR. Although they disagreed with the initial results of the NYC QR, they understood that being able to use the language of the QR rubric to describe why they were Well Developed in a particular category was essential; yet they fell short in doing that.

Research question 4, Finding 4: Six of the participants stated that the findings of the first NYC QR did not have an impact on how they allocated resources in preparation for the next NYC Quality Review. One of the six participants shared that she was in a budget crisis and was limited in how she could spend money. As an alternative, she provided her teachers with more professional learning opportunities.

One of the six participants mentioned that she had a surplus of resources and everyone was free to utilize them as needed.

Research question 4, Finding 5: Six of the participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR did have an influence on resources in preparation for the next NYC Quality Review.

Four of the twelve participants stated that they set-aside funding in the budget for in and out of state professional learning opportunities (PLOs). Some of these PLOs took place during

the school day so the funding went towards paying for teacher substitutes. Additionally, funding went towards paying for teacher substitutes for the purpose of inter-visitations. One of these four participants stated that results of the initial NYC QR led her to believe that her staff needed more time to plan. During the NYC QR some of her teachers mentioned to the reviewer that they didn't feel like they had enough time to plan. As result, she increased the funding set-aside for after-school and weekend tutoring for her teachers to work with their students. One of these four participants stated that they set-aside funding in the budget for retreats.

Research question 4, Finding 6: Eight of the twelve participants cited the findings of the first NYC QR did have an impact on improving instructional practices in preparation for the next NYC Quality Review.

One of the eight participants stated that combination of the advent of the Common Core standards, and the results of the initial NYC QR, were the impetus of the sense of urgency that existed in her school.

Two of the eight participants stated that the results of the initial QR identified a need to improve differentiation of instruction. In response, they mentioned the challenge of defining it relative to how the reviewer defined it. They added workstations, the addition of paraprofessionals to increase the student to adult ratio, task cards, and training students to self-assess using school based rubrics.

One of the eight participants stated that as a result of the initial feedback from the NYC QR, she realized that her teachers' lessons were too teacher centered and that students did not have the liberty to engage in conversation about their learning, or engage in activities that allowed them to demonstrate their proficiency in meeting the goals of the lesson.

One of the eight participants stated that they revised how her teachers were executing the double block or two periods of instruction in the same content area. She wanted it to be more structured so that students received an equal amount of time in both the reading and writer's workshops.

Three of the eight participants stated that the results of the QR caused them to revise the school Professional Learning Opportunities Plan. More specifically, this included: classroom management, and differentiation of instruction with a focus on using task cards. Additionally, one of these three participants mentioned that they made the PLO Plan more purposeful by aligning it with data obtained from observations as opposed to the prior PLO plan; which was inconsistent and bordered on being aimless.

One of the eight participants stated that the results of the initial NYC QR led her to reflect about how she was providing instructional support for her teachers. She began the process of planning to provide ongoing professional development opportunities through both co-workers' grade level and department teams. She also considered whether the support would focus on content or instructional strategies. The ultimate goal was that this support would be coherent across the grade levels.

Two of the eight participants stated that they made changes to their curricula in response to the feedback from the initial NYC QR. One of these two participants stated that they did not have a college and career readiness program. In response, they created one that would complement existing instructional programs as opposed to purchasing one. They created a double block in ELA that included lesson planning that supported college and career readiness. One of the two participants stated that they threw out the city's curriculum and put together their own.

Research question 4, Finding 7: Four out of the twelve participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had no influence on the instructional practices used in preparation for the next NYC Quality Review.

Research question 4, Finding 8: Nine out of the participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR had no influence on hiring practices in preparation for the next NYC Quality Review.

Research question 4, Finding 9: Three of the twelve participants cited that the findings of the first NYC QR did have an impact on their hiring practices in preparation for the next NYC Quality Review.

One of the three participants stated that the results of initial NYC QR confirmed who her strong teachers were; especially in the special education department.

One of the three participants stated that as a result of the initial NYC QR they decided to begin recruiting teachers with dual licenses. The rationale was that these teachers were able to work with students regardless of their disabilities.

One of the three participants stated that as a result of the initial NYC QR they became more vigilant in hiring staff that had a “growth mindset” when working with students.

One of the three participants stated that a result of the initial NYC QR she was advised to hire staff members that were more diverse in their educational philosophy. She attempted to follow this recommendation, however she recorded that it did not work out well for her school.

Conclusions

Conclusions for Research Question 1

Did the findings from the first Quality Review, influence the climate of the school?

One conclusion that could be made based upon the findings of research question one is disrupting the climate of a school is a viable strategy for bringing about cultural change. One of the goals of this study was to determine the effectiveness of an external assessment tool, like the NYC Quality Review, to create a sense of urgency within the school community. Therefore, the researcher was interested in finding out if the results of the NYC QR had an effect on the climate of the school community and the extent to which that impact influenced the launch of new initiatives focused on improvement school-wide.

The responses of the participants confirmed the results of the NYC QR had an impact on the school climate; yet the responses to the data were mixed. For many of the participants, the results were positive and therefore staff members were relieved to hear that their hard work was confirmed. This information served as a lever for continued change in the school community. It solidified the buy-in of the staff in continuing to work hard to ensure that new initiatives and the vision of the school would continue to be brought into fruition.

One of the respondents felt that the results of the NYC QR were inaccurate. Another felt that the results provided an opportunity for her staff members to express their agreement or disagreement with the findings, but did little more.

As noted by Schein (2010) organizational cultures are formed out of adaptation to an external force; in this case school communities and their response to the results of the NYC Quality Review.

Kotter (2012) and Schein (2010) agree that in order to change the culture of a school you must create a sense of urgency. Schein (2010) stated:

If any part of a core cognitive structure is to change in more than minor incremental ways, the system must first experience enough disequilibrium to force a coping process that goes beyond just reinforcing the assumptions that are already in place (p. 300).

Conclusions for Research Question 2

Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect the strategies principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?

A conclusion could be made based upon the findings of research question two that participants core values remained unfazed by the results of the initial QR. The successes each of the participants in this study were able to achieve can be attributed to their ability to hold on to what they valued and not allow the results of the initial NYC QR to second guess their decision making. Many of the principal participants surveyed in this study, were cognizant of the requirements of the NYC QR and instituted systems to yield Well Developed qualities in the school culture, yet they knew that change was a process not an event; thereby understanding that the results would take time to reach maturity. As PB stated, “no, our core values settled on strongest structure. But after the quality review, we used the feedback to further strengthen our systems of implementation. We then worked to assure all systems were interrelated and connected with no add-on type programs just to fill in the gaps”.

Another conclusion that could be made based upon the findings of research question two is that solving problems of external adaptation can lead to significant breakthroughs in a school leader’s ability to change the organizational culture of a school. Within the context of the New

York City Department of Education, schools that were unable to achieve Well Developed features in each of the QR indicators could be viewed having an issue of external adaptation. The participants in this study were able to obtain a Well Developed in NYC QR 3.4 after previously receiving a lower score. They did so by using the Well Developed features of the NYC QR rubric as a benchmark for all their practices in the school building. In order to make advancements at PB's school, there was a collaborative effort to translate each of QR indicators into a common language. Once this was accomplished staff members were responsible for collecting or creating artifacts that addressed the look fors listed for each indicator.

As per Schein's (2010) definition, the culture of an organization is:

a pattern of shared beliefs and assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (p.18).

Conclusions for Research Question 3

Did the findings from the first Quality Review influence the leadership style the principal used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?

A conclusion could be made based upon the findings of research question three that the impact an external evaluation tool, like the NYC Quality Review, can have on the leadership style, or strategies of a school leader are predicated upon the way the feedback is perceived by the school leader. If the school leader views the NYC QR as a viable tool for school improvement, despite agreeing or disagreeing in the findings, it can have positive results on the school community. PB believed that while her leadership never changed, how the community

worked in preparation for the next NYC QR did. PB stated that, “more teachers stepped up to the plate and contributed after seeing the Quality Review's findings and realized that we have been working towards a shared goal after all and indeed it needed to improve.”

A conclusion could be made based upon the findings of research question three that while specific artifacts must exist in order to proliferate a culture for learning, there must also be an espoused belief that learning is paramount and supersedes all other agendas.

A conclusion could be made based upon the findings of research question three that school leaders must understand what culture is, how to identify the subcultures that exist within them, and the boundaries that keep them isolated from one another in order for a culture of learning to develop and grow. Schein (2010) supports this reasoning by listing the following reasons to decipher the culture of an organization: (1) academic research, (2) prospective job compatibility, and (3) organization revitalization.

Conclusions for Research Question 4

Were elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein, prevalent in the strategies principals used to make improvements in their Quality Review ratings?

One of the goals of this study was to determine if any of the primary embedding mechanisms that Schein identified as being useful for a leader to change the organizational culture of a school, were present in the practices these principals used.

A conclusion could be made based upon the findings of research question four that the NYC QR was influential in refocusing school leaders on where their priorities lie. The majority of the principals in this study stated that they realigned their priorities. This in turn led to improvements in subsequent NYC QR ratings; especially in QR indicator 3.4.

Finally, the majority of the participants in this study reported the use of four of Schein's mechanisms when addressing QR feedback to improve their schools. They were: (1) what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control; (2) how leaders allocate resources; (3) how leaders respond to critical incidents and organizational crises; and (4) deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching. A conclusion could be made based upon the findings of research question four is that Schein's primary embedding mechanisms are not only relevant in the corporate world, but in organizations like schools as well.

Recommendation for Practice and Policy

Recommendation 1:

Increase the frequency of NYC QRs during the course of the school year. The impact NYC QR results can have on the climate of a school community can be positive, but not necessarily create the level of urgency needed for a leader to introduce new ideas. Increasing the frequency with which QRs are administered could make a difference. A three-stage process, three times per year, could be implemented. After the initial QR is completed, two follow up visits could be scheduled to ensure that the recommendations for all the QR indicators that are not deemed Well Developed, have been implemented and change is gradually taking place. This would ensure that the QR becomes a process instead of being perceived as a yearly or bi-yearly event. The results of the QR could also be used to establish primary goals that are not attached to standardized testing.

Recommendation 2:

Align school wide improvement plans with the Well Developed features of the QR rubric. In order to improve the chances of obtaining a Well Developed rating in each QR indicator, principals should develop school wide improvement plans aligned with the Well

Developed features of the QR rubric; in each of the ten rated QR indicators. Additionally, principals should ensure teachers, parents, and students are well versed in the terminology of the QR and that those terms are used to describe school-wide initiatives.

Recommendation 3:

Reassign the responsibility of QRs to Superintendents and include the findings of QRs in principal PPR ratings. In 2015 -2016 the Chancellor enacted two policy changes that could negatively impact the future of the Quality Review. The first was that NYC superintendents are no longer responsible for conducting QR's. This became the sole responsibility of the NYC Office of School Quality.

The second change was that the QR will no longer be considered a supervisory visit and will not count toward principals' final rating. Prior to 2015, having a Quality Review (QR), satisfied one of the two required supervisory visits that principals had for the year. The current principal evaluation system for the NYC DOE requires that a minimum of two supervisory visits per school to calculate an overall rating for Measures of Leadership Practice (MOLP).

These changes revive concerns held by Knecht (2016). Absolving superintendents of the responsibility for conducting QRs reinforces concerns about the credibility of the QRs reviewers. Secondly, no longer factoring the results of the QR into a principals final rating may reduce the sense of urgency and preparation associated with this process.

Recommendation 4:

School leaders who aspire to obtain a Well Developed in QR indicator 3.4 should consider adopting the following practices:

- School leaders should use multiple modes of communication to inform teachers, parents, and students what they value.
- School leaders should conduct instructional rounds using the QR walkthrough protocol to develop a common language around instruction and thereby align instructional practices with the QR rubric.
- School leaders and staff members involved in hiring decisions, should use the rubric as a reference tool in decisions regarding the recruitment of new staff members, selecting teacher leaders, and identifying staff members who are not a good fit for their school community.
- School leaders should set aside funding per-session & per diem service, for afterschool and weekend opportunities, and coverages, during the workday, in order for teachers to collaborate.
- School leaders should provide students at all levels of school with opportunities to take accelerated courses.

Recommendations for Further Study:

Further studies could be conducted to investigate the extent to which Schein's primary embedding mechanisms are applicable for school system leaders.

Further studies could be conducted to determine if there is a correlation between schools that received Well Developed in NYC QR 3.4 and student achievement on the NYS ELA & MATH, regents, and graduation rate.

Further studies could be conducted to determine why the remaining fifty-two percent of schools in the NYCDOE, that also received a Quality Review, were deficient in the Well Developed features as outlined by Quality Indicator 3.4.

Summary

The impact that the NYC QR has on school climate plays a role in creating the sense of urgency needed to initiate a change process. While the NYC QR does not appear to significantly alter the leadership style of the participants in this study, it is important to point out that vast majority of participants consider themselves distributive leaders.

Leaders who have been unable to attain a Well Developed in QR indicator 3.4, or other indicators on the NYC QR, should reflect on their leadership style. There is evidence that the participants in this study made changes to the organizational culture of their schools, with an emphasis on QR Indicator 3.4 by communicating and monitoring instructional priorities in multiple ways on a regular basis. Finally, the participants established a school wide sense of urgency, and allocated resources based on priorities. Many of the priorities appeared to be aligned with many of the primary embedding mechanisms that Schein (2010) identified as being useful for a leader to change the organizational culture.

REFERENCES

- Archer, J. (2016, May 16). British Inspectors Bring Instructional Focus to N.Y.C. *Education Week*. Retrieved December 13, 2016, from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2006/05/17/37inspect.h25.html>
- Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2012). Good coaching leads to good leadership. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 94, 70-71. doi.org/10.1177/003172171209400419
- Bridges, W. (2009). *Managing transitions: Making the most of change*. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.
- Buch, K., & Wetzell, D.K. (2001) Analyzing and realigning organizational culture. *Leadership & Organizational Development Journal*, 22, 40-44. doi.org/10.1108/01437730110380219
- Cambridge Education. (2015). School Quality Review (SQR). Retrieved from: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/ccsa/conference/2015/presentations/71.1.pdf>
- City, E. A., Elmore, R. F., Fiarman, S. E., and Teitel, L. (2009). *Instructional Rounds in Education: A Network Approach to Improving Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2009.
- Charteris, J., & Smardon, D. (2014). Dialogic peer coaching as teacher leadership for professional inquiry. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, 3, 108-124. doi:10.1108/IJMCE-03-2013-0022
- Curtis, R. E., & City, E. A. (2009). *Strategy in action: How school systems can support powerful learning and teaching*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Clark, B.R. (1972). The Organizational Saga in Higher Education. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17(2), 178-184. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ058444>

- Daly, A. J. (2010). *Social network theory and educational change*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Education Press
- Deal, Terrance, E., & Peterson, Kent, D. (2009). *Shaping School Culture: Pitfalls, Paradoxes, and Promises, Second Edition*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass
- Elmore, R.F. (2000). *Building a new structure for school leadership*. Washington, D.C.: The Albert Shanker Institute. Retrieved at <http://www.ashankerinst.org/resource/building-new-structure-school-leadership>
- Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (1996). *What's worth fighting for in your school?* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Goldman, E.F. (2012). Leadership practices that encourage strategic thinking. *Journal of Strategy and Management*, 5, 25. doi:10.1108/17554251211200437
- Golden, D. J. (1990). *Mechanisms for embedding culture: An analysis of the recruitment, selection, orientation, and reward activities in three schools* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from The Pennsylvania State University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. (9032281.)
- Grojean, M.W., Resick, C.J., Dickson, M.W., & Smith, D.B. (2004). Leaders, values, and organizational climate: Examining leadership strategies for establishing an organizational climate regarding ethics. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 55, 223-241. doi:10.1007/s10551-004-1275-5
- Gruenert, S. & Valentine, J. (2006). School Typology activity. Developed at the Middle Level Leadership Center, University of Missouri.
- Gruenert, S. & Whitaker, T. (2015). *School Culture Rewired: How to Define, Assess, and Transform It*. Alexandria, Va.: ASCD

- Handford, V., & Leithwood, K. (2013). Why teachers trust school leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 51, 194-212. doi:10.1108/09578231311304706
- Handy, C. (1993) *Understanding Organizations*.
New York, NY: Oxford University Press
- Handy, C. & Aitken, R. (1986) *Understanding Schools as Organizations*.
New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- Hargreaves, A. and Earl, L. (1990) *Rights of Passage*.
Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education.
- Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers*.
Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Heifetz, R. A., & Linsky, M. (2002). *Leadership on the line: Staying alive through the dangers of leading*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Knecht, D., Gannon, N., & Yaffe, C. (2016). Across Classrooms: School Quality Reviews as a Progressive Educational Policy. *Occasional Paper Series*, 35. Retrieved from <https://educate.bankstreet.edu/occasional-paper-series/vol2016/iss35/10>
- Khandelwal, K.A., & Mohendra, N. (2010). Espoused Organizational Values, Vision, and Corporate Social Responsibility: Does it Matter to Organizational Members? *Vikapla*, 35(3), 19-35.
- Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*.
Boston, Mass: Harvard Business School Press.
- Kunjufu, J. (2013). *Changing School Culture for Black Males*.
USA: African American Images.

- Levine, D. & Eubanks, E. (1989) 'Site-based management: Engine for reform or pipedream?' Unpublished manuscript.
- Lynch, J. M. (2012). Responsibilities of Today's Principal: implications for Principal Preparation Programs and Principal Certification Policies. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 31(2), 40-47.
- Machi, L.A. & McEvoy, B.T. (2009). *The literature review: Six steps to success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Macneil, A.J., Prater, D.L., & Busch, S. (2009). The effect of school culture and climate on student achievement. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 12(1), 73-84.
- Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. (2005). *School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results*. Denver, Colorado: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning.
- Mouton, N., Nørholm Just, S., & Gabrielsen, J. (2012). Creating organizational cultures. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 25, 315-331. doi:10.1108/09534811211213973
- Murphy, M. G., & MacKenzie Davey, K. (2002). Ambiguity, ambivalence and indifference in organizational values. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 12, 17-32.
doi:10.1111/j.1748-8583.2002.tb00055.x
- Murphy, J.F., Weil, M., Hallinger, P., & Mitman, A. (1982, December). Academic Press: Translating High Expectations into School Policies and Classroom Practices. *Educational Leadership*, 40(3), 22-26.
- Muse, M. D., & Abrams, L. M. (2011). An investigation of school leadership priorities. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, 77(4), 49.

New York City Department of Education. (2015). *Principal's Guide to the Quality Review 2015-2016*. Retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/FA95168E-3A4A-4DA4-AC06-FE7B52B08DD8/0/PrincipalsGuide1516.pdf>

New York City Department of Education. (2015). *Reviewer Handbook for the Quality Review 2015-2016*. Retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/5CC3B3DF-49BF-4BA6-AFD0-0FE6BFBD3E1/0/ReviewerHandbook201314CFarina.pdf>

New York City Department of Education. Fair Student Funding & School Budget Resource Guide FY 2013. (2013). Retrieved from:
http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/d_chanc_oper/budget/dbor/allocationmemo/fy12_13/FY13_PDF/FSF_Guide.pdf

New York City Department of Education. (n.d.). A History of the Quality Review.

Pounder, D. (1998). *Restructuring schools for collaboration: Promises and pitfalls*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Prewitt, J.E., Weil, R. & McClure, A.Q. (2011). Crisis Leadership-An Organizational Opportunity. *Australian Journal of Business and Management Research*, 1 (6), 60-74.

Ravitch, D. (2005). The UFT Agreement. Retrieved February 21, 2017, from
<http://www.nysun.com/opinion/uft-agreement/20949/>

Sarniak, R. (2015). 9 types of research bias and how to avoid them. Retrieved from:
<https://www.quirks.com/articles/9-types-of-research-bias-and-how-to-avoid-them>

Sathe, V. (1985). *Culture and Related Corporate Realities text, cases, and readings on how on organizational entry, establishment, and change*. Homewood, IL: Irwin.

- Scribner, J.P., Cockrell, K.S., Cokrell, D.H., & Valentine, J.W. (1999). Creating professional learning communities in schools through organizational learning: An evaluation of the school improvement process. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 35 (1), 130-160.
- Sims, R.R. (2000). Changing an organization's culture under new leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 25, 65-78. doi:1006093713658
- Sims, R. (2009). Toward a better understanding of organizational efforts to rebuild reputation following an ethical scandal. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 90, 453-472. doi:10.1007/s10551-009-0058-4
- Schein, E. H. (1983). The role of the founder in creating organizational culture. *Organizational Dynamics*, 12, 13-28. doi:10.1016/0090-2616(83)90023-2
- Schein, E.H. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*.
San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
- Trice, H. (1993). *Occupational subcultures in the workplace*.
Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.
- Trice, H., & Beyer, J. M. 1993. *The culture of work organizations*.
Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall.
- Website, C. E. (n.d.). Main menu. Retrieved December 13, 2016, from
<http://www.camb-ed-us.com/QualityReview.aspx>
- Weeks, F. (2012). How do a Culture of Learning Impact on Student Behaviour? *Journal of Social Sciences*, 8 (3), 332-342.
- Zulu, B.M., Urbani, G., van der Merwe, A. and van der Walt, J.L. (2004). Violence as an impediment to a culture of teaching and learning in some South African Schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 24 (2), 170-175.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER

Dear Principal,

My name is William Cooper and I am a doctoral student at The Sage Colleges in conjunction with CITE and the CSA. You may be interested to know that over the course of the last five years only 40% of public schools in the New York City Department of Education, that participated in a NYC Quality Review, of which your school is one, have received a Well Developed rating on Quality Statement 3.4.

The opportunity to interview you and discuss the leadership strategies you utilized in order to accomplish this noteworthy accomplishment would be invaluable in providing other NYC principals with best practices they can use to achieve similar results. The results may also be helpful to school leaders on an international level exploring ways to affect the organizational culture of their school community in a positive way. I will be using the research of Edgar Schein as a lens for conducting research.

Attached you will find an informed consent form. This document will provide more in-depth information regarding the purpose of this study, your role as a participant, and the procedures of the research. I hope you will agree to become a participant in this important study by completing this informed consent form and returning it to the above address by (Month, Day, Year). Thank you in advance for your time and hopeful participation in this important study. If you agree I will send you more information about my research prior to the interview. Please contact me at the phone above if you have any concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

William E. Cooper

APPENDIX B: PHONE CALL RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Good Afternoon Principal _____,

My name is William Cooper and I am a doctoral student at The Sage Colleges in conjunction with CITE and the CSA. You may be interested to know that over the course of the last five years only 40% of public schools in the New York City Department of Education, that endured a NYC Quality Review, of which your school is one, have received a Well Developed on Quality Statement 3.4.

It would be an honor to interview you and discuss the leadership strategies you utilized in order to accomplish this noteworthy achievement. It would be invaluable in providing other NYC principals with best practices they can use to achieve similar results. The results may also be helpful to school leaders on an international level exploring ways to affect the organizational culture of their school community in a positive way. This would interview would be strictly confidential and you are free to end the interview at any time.

If you are interested I have the following dates free _____.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

APPENDIX C: EMAIL RECRUITMENT

Good Afternoon Principal _____,

My name is William Cooper and I am a doctoral student at The Sage Colleges in conjunction with CITE and the CSA. You may be interested to know that over the course of the last five years only 40% of public schools in the New York City Department of Education that participated in a NYC Quality Review. Your school was identified as a school that achieved a Well Developed on Quality Statement 3.4.

It would be an honor to interview you and discuss the leadership strategies you utilized in order to accomplish this noteworthy accomplishment. It would be invaluable in providing other NYC principals with best practices they can use to achieve similar results. The results may also be helpful to school leaders on an international level exploring ways to affect the organizational culture of their school community in a positive way. This would interview would be strictly confidential and you are free to end the interview at any time.

This interview can take place over the phone or I can come to your school. If you are interested I have the following dates free _____. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form 2016-2017

To: _____

You are being asked to participate in a research project entitled: **A qualitative research exploring how principals manage organizational culture in their schools.**

This research is being conducted by: William E. Cooper, Student Researcher from Sage College.

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact the NYC Quality Review process has on the organizational culture, as defined by Edgar H. Schein, of a school community and the leadership strategies school principals use to modify the organizational culture to adhere to mandates of Quality Review Indicator 3.4 sub component (a) , which states that : “School leaders consistently communicate high expectations (professionalism, instruction, communication, and other elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching) to the entire staff, and provide training, resulting in a culture of mutual accountability for those expectations ” (NYC DOE, 2015, p 8).”

This research will seek to answer four core questions:

1. Did the findings from the first Quality Review, have an effect on the climate of the school? If so, how and how did principals respond to the staff’s reaction to the feedback?
2. Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect the strategies principals used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review? If yes, what were the strategies?

3. Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect have an effect on the leadership style the principal used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review?
4. Were elements of the primary embedding mechanisms identified by Edgar H. Schein, prevalent in the strategies principals used to make improvements in their Quality Review ratings?

This study is important because it will assist new and current systems leaders in improving their school culture and student achievement. More specifically they will learn how to:

- Create, “an elevated level of expectations for all staff, which is evidenced throughout the community through verbal and written structures, such as new teacher orientations, ongoing workshops, staff handbook, or school website, that emulate a culture where accountability is reciprocal between all constituents (NYC DOE, 2015, p.11)”.
- Create and implement, “clearly defined standards for professional development that include professional development plans that incorporate staff input and classroom practices as well as embed elements of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to ensure that learning for all stakeholders consistently reflects high expectations (NYC DOE, 2015, p.11)”.
- Work, “with other staff members work as a team in study groups, planning sessions, and other professional development modes, establishing a culture of professionalism that results in a high level of success in teaching and learning across the school (NYC DOE, 2015, p.11)”.

As a participant in this study, you will be interviewed for 30-60 minutes and asked a series of questions. The questions will be relative to your preparation for the initial and subsequent Quality Reviews, challenges you endured, leadership strategies that you used to ensure success, and modifications you made based on initial Quality Review in preparation for the proceeding Quality Review. During the interview, the researcher will use a digital recorder to capture the conversation between the researcher and the participant. Also, the researcher will take notes as a secondary means of capturing the conversation if the audio recorder malfunctions.

Although this research is not anonymous, it is confidential, and therefore minimal risks to participate in this study. In order to address these risks, the researcher will safeguard participants' privacy via the use of pseudonyms so that information cannot be traced back to participants or the researcher. All information provided by participants will be maintained in securely locked cabinets or rooms. The researcher will ensure that electronic data is stored on password-protected computers. Files containing electronic data will be closed when computers will be left unattended. Contact lists, recruitment records, or other documents that contain personal information will be destroyed when no longer required for the research.

The recordings will be used for data analysis and the findings from that data analysis will be made public. The recordings will NOT be played for an audience beyond the researcher. Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time during the interview. Information obtained during the interview will be destroyed and will not be used in the final findings of the research

I understand that I may at any time during the course of this study 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: _____ Date: _____
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. Donna Heald, PhD
Associate Provost
The Sage Colleges
65 1st Street
Troy, New York 12180
518-244-2326
healdd@sage.edu

APPENDIX E: CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Confidentiality Agreement

I, **William Cooper** individually and/or on behalf of **Sage Colleges**, do agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audiotapes, videotapes, and/or oral or written documentation received from [name of researcher(s)] related to the research project entitled **A qualitative research exploring how principals manage organizational culture in their schools**. The information in these tapes and/or documentation has been revealed by those who participated in this research project with the understanding that their information would remain strictly confidential. I understand I have the responsibility to honor this confidentiality agreement.

Furthermore:

1. I will follow the established protocol for my role in the project.
2. I will not share any information in these tapes and/or documents with anyone except the researchers listed on this form.
3. I will hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual who may be revealed in these tapes and/or documents.
4. I will not disclose any information received for profit, gain or otherwise.
5. I will not make copies of the audiotapes, videotapes, and/or oral or written documentation, unless specifically requested to do so by [name of researcher(s)].
6. I will store audiotapes, videotapes, and/or oral or written documentation in a safe, secure location as long as they are in my possession.
7. I will return all materials; including audiotapes, videotapes, and/or oral or written documentation; to [name of researcher(s)] within the mutually agreed upon time frame.
8. I will return all electronic computer devices to the researchers at the end of the project. I will not save any data provided to me in any format, electronic or otherwise.

Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards and I pledge not to do so. I am also aware I am legally liable for any breach of confidentiality agreement, and for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclose identifiable information contained in the audiotapes, videotapes, and/or oral or written documentation to which I have access.

Printed name William E. Cooper

Signature _____

Title and/or affiliation with the researchers Student Researcher at Sage Colleges

Date 11/27/2016

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol

I. Basic Information

A. Place of Interview: _____

B. Date of Interview: _____

C. Time of Interview: Started at _____ Ended at _____

D. Interviewee's:

1. Name _____

2. Title _____

3. School _____

E. Interviewer's Name _____

II. Instructions for Interviewer

Protocol Script

Thank you for your time and willingness to speak with me today. This interview will hopefully take no more than one hour and it will be audio recorded. The audio data will not be accessible to any person except this researcher. After transcription, the audio data will be erased. The transcription and the subsequent data analysis will use a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality of your identity.

Before we begin the interview, you are required to sign an informed consent form. Participation is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time.

Introduction Script

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact the NYC Quality Review process has on the organizational culture, as defined by Edgar H. Schein, of a school community and the leadership strategies school principals used to modify the organizational culture to adhere to mandates of Quality Review Indicator 3.4 sub component (a). This sub component states that: “School leaders consistently communicate high expectations (professionalism, instruction, communication, and other elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching) to the entire staff, and provide training, resulting in a culture of mutual accountability for those expectations (NYC DOE, 2015, p 8).” I have eleven questions that touch on the leadership strategies you utilized in order to achieve a score of Well Developed rating on Quality Statement 3.4 of the NYC Quality Review.

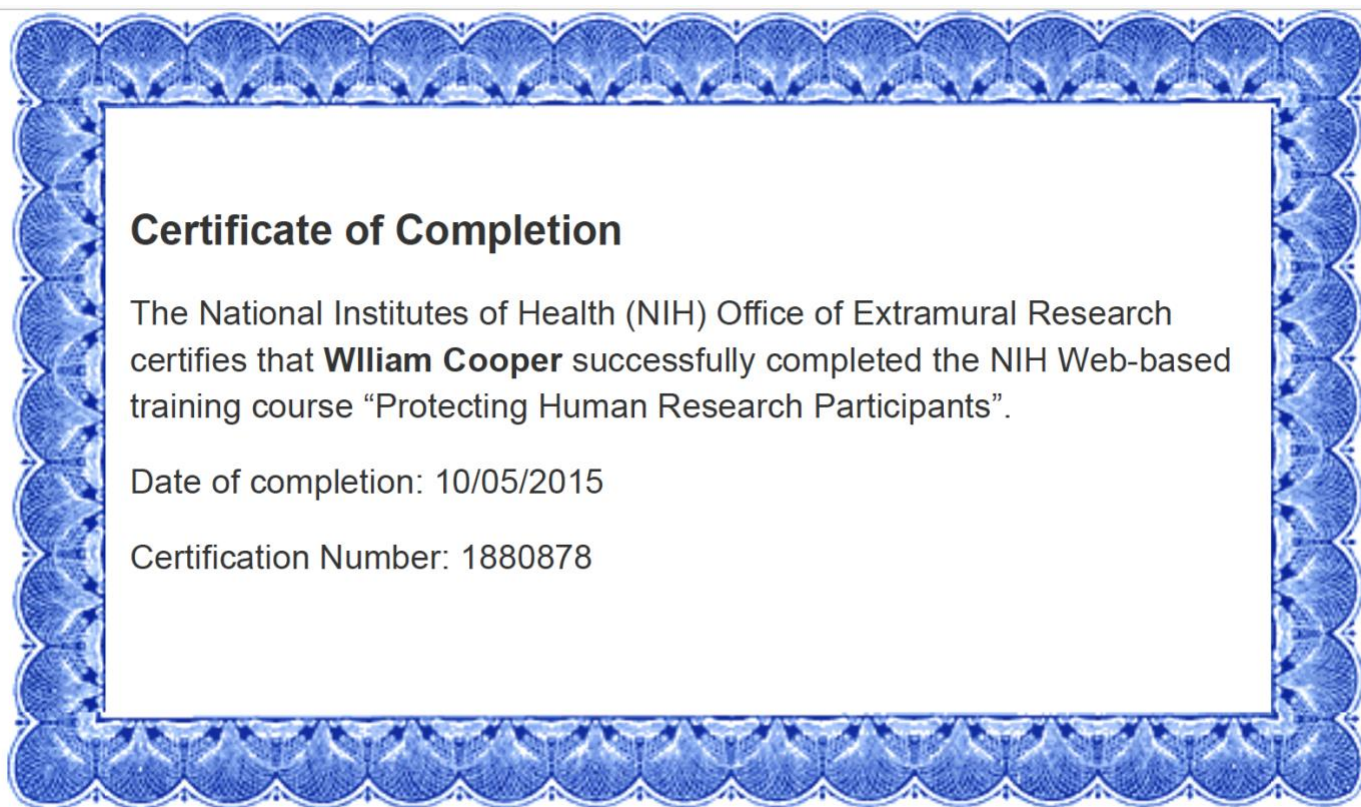
III. Interview Questions

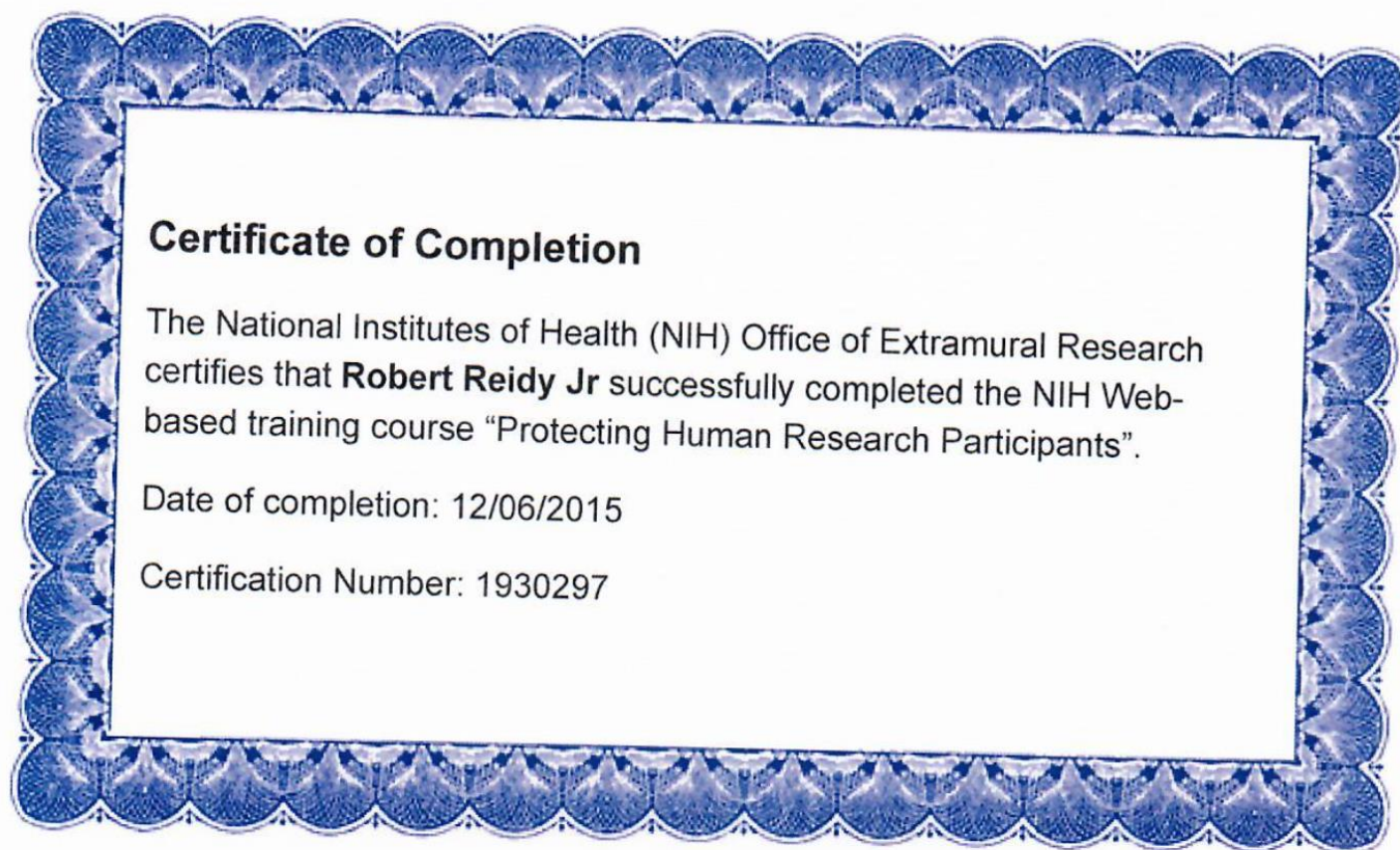
1. How long have you been principal?
2. How long have you been at your present school?
3. Did the findings of the first Quality Review (QR) have an effect on your school climate?
If yes, what were the effects?
4. Did the results of the first Quality Review have an effect your school’s core values? If yes, how?
5. How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect how you set priorities for yourself and your school community?
6. Did the findings from the first Quality Review affect the strategies you used to change the organizational culture of the school community in preparation for the next Quality Review? If yes, what were the key strategies?

7. Did the feedback from the first Quality Review affect your leadership style in preparation for the second Quality Review? If yes, how?
8. How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect your level of urgency?
9. How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect how you allocated resources to the school community?
10. How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect your approach to instructional improvement?
11. How did the feedback you received from the first Quality Review affect your approach to staffing your school?

IV. Closing

Script: I have concluded my questions. Thank you for your contribution to this important work. When I complete the draft data analysis, I plan to share it with my research participants so they can check for accuracy before it goes public. Would you be interested in receiving a draft data analysis and providing feedback? It would be greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX G: NIH CERTIFICATE FOR STUDENT INVESTIGATOR

APPENDIX G: NIH CERTIFICATE FOR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

APPENDIX I: SIGNATURE PAGE

Signature Page

IRB Project Number ____ IRB#:526-2016-2017_____ (required)

I (we) certify that:

- a. I (we) have read this completed proposal, and the information provided for this project is accurate.
- b. No other procedures will be used in this project.
- c. Any modifications in this project will be submitted for approval prior to use.
- d. The IRB will be notified immediately of any harm or injury suffered by participants while participating in the study or of any potential or emergency problems posing additional risks to participants.
- e. If required by the IRB, a final report will be filed with the IRB with 90 days of completion of the project.
- f. If the project will take longer than a year to complete, the researchers will file an annual report and request a continuation before the one-year anniversary of IRB approval.

Signature of Primary Principal Investigator/Faculty Advisor Date

Robert J. Reidy, Jr., Ph.D.,

Please print name legibly (Primary Principal Investigator)

Signature of Principal Investigator

Please print name legibly (Principal Investigator)

Signature of student (if student project) Date
William E. Cooper

Please print name legibly (Student Investigator)

* Duplicate the above lines if there are more than one Principal and/or Student Investigator.

* Scan this signed page to submit with your IRB electronic application.

Revised September 2016

APPENDIX J: SAGE IRB APPROVAL LETTER

APPENDIX K: NYC DOE IRB APPROVAL LETTER

APPENDIX L: SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE NYC QR 2010-2016

Year	Progress Report Criteria	Quality Review Rating Criteria	NYSED Status Criteria	Other Criteria
2010-2011	2009-10 F, D, or third C in a row.	2009-10 Quality Review rating of Underdeveloped with Proficient features (UPF) or Underdeveloped.	Schools identified as Persistently Lowest Achieving by New York State.	Schools with Principals at risk of not receiving tenure, and schools chosen from a lottery that have not had a review since 2007-08.
2011-2012	2010-11 Progress Report of F, D, or third C in a row and Schools in the 10th percentile or below of the Progress Report scores.	2010-11 Quality Review Rating of Underdeveloped.	Schools identified as Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) by New York State Education Department.	All schools that have not had a review since 2007-08, a portion of schools chosen from a lottery, within districts, that have not had a review since 2008-09, and those schools in the lottery that do not receive a review this year will receive one in 2012-13.
2012-2013	2011-12 Progress Report rating of F, D, or third C or below in a row, or Schools in the 10th percentile or below of the Progress Report scores.	2011-12 Quality Review Rating of Underdeveloped, or Schools who participated in a Developing Quality Review (DQR) in 2011-12, or Schools in their 3rd year of existence (that did not have a formal Quality Review in 2011-12, or All schools that have not had a review since 2008-09, or Schools that were proposed for closure as part of the Turnaround process and who did not receive a QR in 11-12.		A portion of schools chosen from a lottery, within districts, that have not had a review since 2009-10 (and that do not qualify for a peer review); those schools in the lottery that do not receive a review this year will receive one in 2013-14
2013-2014	2012-13 Progress Report rating of D or F, or Schools at the 10th percentile or below of the 2012-13 Progress Report.	2012-13 Quality Review rating of Underdeveloped, or Schools who participated in a Developing Quality Review (DQR) in 2012-13, or Schools in their third year of existence (that did not have a formal Quality Review in 2012-13).		All schools that have not had a review since 2009-10 (that do not qualify for a peer review) or a portion of schools chosen from a lottery that have not had a review since 2010-11, or schools in the lottery that do not receive a review this year will receive one in 2014-15
2014-2015		Schools whose most recent Quality Review was conducted	Schools designated as Priority or Focus	Schools in their first, second, or third year of existence.
		in 2011-12 or prior, or schools whose most recent Quality Review was conducted in 2012-13, AND received a rating of Proficient, Developing or Underdeveloped on that review, or schools whose most recent Quality Review was conducted in 2013-14, AND received a rating of Developing or Underdeveloped on that review.		
2015-2016		Schools that did not receive a Quality Review in 2014-2015.	Schools designated as Renewal Schools.	Schools in their first year of existence
2016-2017		Schools that received a QR in 2014-2015 AND Received at least one Underdeveloped or Developing rating in any QR indicator OR Received at least one "Not Meeting Target" in any SQR element.	Schools designated as Renewal Schools, Schools designated as Priority or Focus AND Received at least one "Not Meeting Target" or "Approaching Target" in any SQR element AND Did not receive any "Exceeding Target" ratings in any SQR element.	