

**AN INVESTIGATION OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES THAT YIELD  
SUCCESS IN RENEWAL SCHOOLS**

**A Doctoral Research Project**

**Presented to**

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**The Sage Colleges**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Education  
In Education Leadership**

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**AN INVESTIGATION OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES THAT YIELD  
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**ABSTRACT****AN INVESTIGATION OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES THAT YIELD  
SUCCESS IN RENEWAL SCHOOLS****Mauricière A. de Govia,****The Sage Colleges, Esteves School of Education, 2017****Dissertation Chair: Dr. Marlene Zakierski**

The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) set forth the Renewal School initiative as a method of school turnaround that preserves the existing school community; with necessary leadership changes when applicable, and supplied human and operational resources. Educational research has cited that school leadership is the second leading indicator in a school's ability to improve (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson, 2010). Therefore, this study investigated the leadership qualities that yield success in Renewal Schools. The research questions for this study considered the necessary leadership qualities, systems and structures, and professional development required for Renewal School leaders to be successful. The study focused on three questions:

1. What are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools?
2. How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success?

3. What model(s) of professional development is (are) most effective in nurturing  
Renewal School leaders towards success?

This study identified several key findings, including Renewal School principals need to be strong organizational managers who are resilient and emotionally intelligent. Furthermore, Renewal School leaders require supportive systems and structures that enable effective communication across the organization and streamlined accountability and data constructs for all leaders. Lastly, the study found that Renewal School leaders need professional development that is anchored in instructional leadership, adult learning that facilitates turnaround as unique genre of leadership, and professional learning that teaches how to effectively evaluate leadership and pedagogy.

*Key Words: Renewal schools, turnaround schools, leadership, principals*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Opening Pages.....	ii-iv
Acknowledgements.....	v-vi
Abstract.....	vii-viii
Table of Contents.....	ix-xiv
List of Tables... ..	xv
List of Figures .....	xvi
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Statement of Problem.....	5
Research Questions .....	6
Theoretical Framework .....	6
Significance of the Study .....	7
Definitions.....	8
Delimitations.....	9
Limitations of the Study.....	10
Organization of the Study .....	10
Chapter II: Review of the Literature .....	12
The History of School Reform... ..	12
School Reform in the United States... ..	12
Education Reform in New York City .....	15
The Elements of Effective School Turnaround.....	17
Executing Education Reform in Turnaround Efforts... ..	20
Assessments, Data, and School Turnaround.....	23

The Role of Teacher and Principal Evaluation in School Turnaround .....	25
New York City Schools Adopt a New Framework.....	30
Funding Impacts School Turnaround.....	33
Establishing and Executing Change in an Organization . . . . .	36
Adult Learning Impacts Change .....	37
Facilitating Organizational Change .....	41
Effective Educational Leadership . . . . .	45
Principal Leadership Behaviors . . . . .	45
Effective Principals . . . . .	49
Summary .....	53
Chapter III: Methodology .....	55
Introduction . . . . .	55
Research Design . . . . .	55
Sample and Sampling Procedures . . . . .	55
Research Questions . . . . .	57
Instrumentation .....	57
Data Collection .....	58
Reliability.....	59
Validity .....	59
Data Analysis .....	60
Researcher Bias . . . . .	60
Summary .....	61
Chapter IV: Findings.....	62

	xi
Participants.....	62
Research Question One .....	65
Theme 1: Organizational Management.....	65
Theme 2: Resilience through Managing Difficulty .....	68
Theme 3: Demonstrates Emotional Intelligence .....	72
Research Question One Findings Summary .....	75
Research Question Two .....	75
Theme 1: Improve Systemic Communication... ..	76
Theme 2: Make Data-Driven Decisions.....	79
Research Question Two Findings Summary.....	84
Research Question Three .....	86
Theme 1: Instructional Leadership. ....	88
Theme 2: Turnaround Leadership is Unique... ..	92
Theme 3: Evaluating Leadership and Pedagogy.....	96
Research Question Three Findings Summary.....	98
Summary .....	100
Chapter V: Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations... ..	116
Summary of Findings.....	102
Research Question 1: findings one, two, and three .....	103
Research Question 2: findings one and two.....	103
Research Question 3: findings one and two.....	103
Research Question 3: finding three .....	104
Conclusions.....	105
Research Question One .....	105

Conclusion One.....	105
Conclusion Two... ..	106
Conclusion Three .....	107
Research Question Two .....	108
Conclusion One.....	108
Conclusion Two... ..	111
Research Question Three .....	113
Conclusion One.....	114
Conclusion Two... ..	115
Conclusion Three .....	116
Conclusions.....	117
Recommendations.....	120
Research Question One Recommendations .....	120-124
Research Question Two Recommendations... ..	124-130
Research Question Three Recommendations... ..	130-133
Recommendations for Further Studies.....	133-135
Summary .....	135-136
References.....	138-152
Appendix 1- Enrollment of New York City Public School Students by Borough .....	153
Appendix 2- Enrollment of New York City Public School Students by Race in each Borough .....	154
Appendix 3 - 2015 Map of Child Poverty in New York City.....	155
Appendix 4 - Child Poverty by Race/Ethnicity in New York City.....	156

Appendix 5- Overall Data for the Top 20 Communities at Risk in New York City .....	157
Appendix 6A- The Estimated Income of NYC Students and Zones... ..	158
Appendix 6B- The Racial Makeup of NYC Students and Zones... ..	159
Appendix 6C -The Estimated Income of Manhattan Students and Zones and the Racial Makeup of Manhattan Students and Zones .....	160
Appendix 6D- The Estimated Income of Bronx Students and Zones and the Racial Makeup of Bronx Students and Zones .....	161
Appendix 6E- The Estimated Income of Queens Students and Zones and the Racial Makeup of Queens Students and Zones... ..	162
Appendix 6F- The Estimated Income of Brooklyn Students and Zones and Racial Makeup of Brooklyn Students and Zones .....	163
Appendix 7A- Renewal Schools in New York City .....	164
Appendix 7B- Renewal Schools in Brooklyn .....	165
Appendix 7C Renewal Schools in Manhattan .....	166
Appendix 7D - Renewal Schools in Queens .....	167
Appendix 7E- Renewal Schools in Bronx .....	168
Appendix 8- Framework for Great Schools .....	169
Appendix 9 - Interview Questions .....	170
Appendix 10- De Govia Assessment Tool of Desirability and Capacity for Turnaround School Leaders (DADC) .....	171-172

Appendix 11- Recruitment Letter .....	173-175
Appendix 12-Informed Consent Form .....	176-179

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: 21 Responsibilities of School Leaders.....	7
Table 2: The Demographics of the Participants.....	64
Table 3: Interview Questions aligned to Research Questions.....	64
Table 4: Interview Questions and Themes.....	65
Table 5: Themes and Research Questions .....	100

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Components of Teacher Evaluation .....	28
Figure 2: De Govia Matrix of Desirability and Capacity (DMDC) .....	123
Figure 3: Renewal School Communication in the New York City Department of Education as Experienced by Participants .....	127
Figure 4: Recommended Flow for Renewal School Communication in the New York City Department of Education .....	128

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The National Center for Children in Poverty (2014) determined that an estimated 15 million children in the United States live at the poverty threshold. The poverty threshold according to the U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines (2017) is \$24,600 for a family of four. Families living at this level are unable to afford lunch in schools and are therefore entitled to free lunch. A National Equity Atlas (2014) analysis indicates the racial breakdown for students receiving free lunch in schools was 7.6% White, 47.5% Black, 48.1% Latino, 17.6% Asian or Pacific Islander, 35.9% Native American, 17.4% Mixed/other, and 42.6% identified as people of color. These numbers indicate a high correlation between poverty and race as 42% percent of students of color in the United States learn in high-poverty schools as opposed to 7.64% of their white counter-parts (National Equity Atlas, 2014).

As the nation's largest school system, New York City public schools serves over 1.1 million children in over 1800 schools (New York City Department of Education, NYC Data, 2017). Appendix one depicts a graph of the enrollment numbers of New York City public students by borough. Appendix two illustrates a graph of the enrollment of New York City public students by race. Approximately 1.7 million children in New York City live in poverty (Citizen's Committee for Children of New York, 2014). Communities such as East Tremont, Bronx and Fort Greene, Brooklyn are among the highest percentages of poverty in New York City with 89.9% and 86% of the children living in poverty respectively (Cheney, 2014). Appendix three presents a map of child poverty in New York City. Appendix four shows a map of child poverty as examined through race and ethnicity.

In conjunction with the challenges of poverty, these children face community risks such as health obstacles associated with higher infant mortality rates, low birth weight babies, and children without health insurance. Furthermore, issues associated with housing burdens such as inconsistent rent payment, overcrowding, and homelessness are factors in these communities. There are also elements that facilitate the school to prison pipeline via failing schools with low early education enrollment, poor reading and math test passage rates, and low graduation rates. Lastly, communities at risk have limited economic security such as poor yearly income, adult unemployment, education limitations, and limited opportunities for youth, family, and community development. The latter issues cited yield teen idleness, youth unemployment, and adults without degrees (Citizen's Committee for Children of New York, 2016). The top 20 out of 59 New York City communities with the highest risk are (1) Hunts Point, Bronx-District 8, (2) East Tremont, Bronx-District 12, (3) Mott Haven, Bronx- District 7, (4) Brownsville, Brooklyn-District 23, (5) Morrisania, Bronx- District 9, (6) University Heights, Bronx- District 10, (7) Concourse/Highbridge, Bronx- District 4, (8) East New York, Brooklyn- District 19, (9) Unionport/Soundview, Bronx- District 9, (10) Bedford Park, Bronx-District 10, (11) Williamsbridge, Bronx-District 11, (12) Bushwick, Brooklyn- District 32, (13) Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn- District 16, (14) East Flatbush, Brooklyn- District 17, (15) East Harlem-District 4, (16) Central Harlem- District 5, (17) Jamaica/St. Albans, Queens-District 29, (18) Crown Heights North- District 17, (19) Pelham Parkway, Bronx- District 11, and (20) Coney Island, Brooklyn- District 21. Appendix five provides the statistics of the risks of these communities in detail.

Living in poverty, confronted by community risks, and isolated by race creates limited opportunities for students living at or below the poverty threshold to experience success in

schools. The New York State Education Department (2015) concluded that the academic performance and achievement of the students at or below the poverty threshold is facilitated by inadequacies in their education as these students are more likely to receive inexperienced teachers, go to schools with high teacher turnover rates, and be taught by teachers who are not highly qualified. These factors have led researchers to believe that schools facilitate poverty as opposed to eradicating it. Claims such as, “Students from poor families must endure an environment whose primary mission is to train students to be docile and accept authority” (Soling, 2016, p.1) and Williams and Noguera (2010) who claimed that while poverty does not cause academic failure, reduced school funding, failure to address the unmet social-emotional needs of children, and lack of expertise of personnel does facilitate student failure and leads to an analysis that systematically embeds poverty and racial constructs into learning institutions. These community risks hinder college and career readiness and therefore, the economic viability of the students subjected to its plan.

At his campaign kick-off, then soon to be Mayor of New York City, Bill de Blasio declared, “I have a bold plan to break from the Bloomberg years, and end the *Tale of Two Cities* by providing real opportunities to all New Yorkers, no matter where they live” (Walker, 2013, p.1). In support of this claim, Mayor de Blasio launched his *Excellence and Equity* initiative that incorporated a component entitled the Renewal School Program as an opportunity for the New York City Department of Education’s (NYCDOE) to support its most struggling schools. This program was fundamentally designed to change the direction of teaching and learning in New York City’s lowest performing schools, while simultaneously improving students’ academic and social-emotional progress and performance. Initially, 94 schools were identified to participate in this program. Renewal Schools were distributed throughout most of New York City’s most

challenging communities in four of the five boroughs. Forty-three were located in the Bronx, with twenty-seven in Brooklyn, twelve in Manhattan, and twelve in Queens. These schools are located in the areas above described as *communities at risk* (Citizen's Committee for Children of New York, 2016). These schools were identified by the New York State Education Department as *Priority* or *Focus Schools*. The Office of School Renewal, NYCDOE (2014) revealed that these schools demonstrated low academic achievement for each of the past three years, ranking in the bottom twenty-five percent of NYC's schools' Math and English Language Arts state exam scores and/or possessing graduation rates that were significantly lower than the State's average. Furthermore, these schools showed limited capacity for improvement with a rating on their most recent Quality Review of "proficient" or below. Lastly, all of the schools were in receipt of Title I funding which is designed "to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education and reach, at minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments" (Malburg, 2015, p.1).

The Office of School Renewal, NYCDOE (2014) shared that at launch of the Renewal School initiative, City Hall and the New York City Department of Education committed to providing Renewal Schools with tailored, targeted supports that would be measured via strict accountability benchmarks and expectations over the course of three years. Schools that failed to meet these measures would face dire consequences such as school closure or consolidation. According to the Office of School Renewal, NYCDOE (2014) the latter indicated that a failing school could be absorbed into a more successful school due to poor enrollment and performance. Presently, the Renewal School initiative is in its third school year. As of February 2017, there are 86 schools remaining since the onset of the program, three Renewal Schools have been

closed and five Renewal Schools have been consolidated as of April 2017. In March of 2017, the Panel for Education Policy voted to remove an additional eight Renewal Schools. Therefore, as of September 2017, six Renewal Schools will be closed and two more will be consolidated. This leaves 78 Renewal Schools in the 2017-2018 school year. The leaders of these closed or consolidated schools have been placed in alternate leadership positions in the NYCDOE such as Assistant Principal and Education Administrator. None of the leaders was given an immediate principal position in another school (Office of School Renewal, NYCDOE, 2017).

### **Statement of the Problem**

One of the clear keys to successful turnaround is strong leadership (Herman, Dawson, Dee, Greene, Maynard, & Redding, 2008). Therefore, schools require strong leaders who can change culture and influence staff efficacy (Duke, 2008). Despite these findings about the significant role that leadership plays in ensuring school success, principal retention remains a challenge for low performing schools with high poverty rates. Students in high poverty school districts are unlikely to have the same principal throughout their enrollment at a school (Superville, 2014). Appendices 6A-6F presents maps of the estimated income and the racial make-up of students in boroughs throughout New York City's. Appendices 7A-7E depicts maps that identify the location of Renewal Schools by New York City borough. A review of the maps indicates that where there is poverty, there are failing schools. A national study revealed that, "The problem of retention is greatest at high poverty schools where 27 percent of principals leave each year and are replaced most frequently with new, inexperienced leaders, as compared with 20 percent attrition at more affluent schools" (Goldring, Taie, and Owens, 2014, p.10). Furthermore, as principals become more experienced, those that stay tend to move to schools that are easier to run: schools with higher income, higher achieving students, and fewer minorities

(Branch, Hanushek, and Rivkin, 2008). The significance of leadership in successful school management coupled with the challenges of school turnaround are the anchors that drive this qualitative case study to investigate the leadership practices among school principals that successfully address the New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Renewal School model. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate leadership practices among principals that successfully address the New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Renewal School model.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools?
2. How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success?
3. What model(s) of professional development is most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success?

### **Theoretical Framework**

To design the research questions, the researcher considered three core factors. (1) The challenge of turning around Renewal Schools, (2) the intended outcome of the study, and (3) the research of Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) which identified 21 principal leadership qualities that improve student achievement. To conduct this research, six New York City Renewal School principals and six Renewal School superintendents were interviewed considering the theoretical framework of Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) whose research identified 21 principal leadership responsibilities that are integral to student success. The 21

qualities and the correlations between the responsibility and student achievement are captured in Table 1. Bridging these three factors led the researcher to create the above research questions.

Table 1

*21 Responsibilities of School leaders Listed in Order of Correlation with Student Academic Achievement*

Correlation with Achievement	Responsibility
.33	Situational Awareness
.28	Flexibility
.27	Discipline
	Outreach
	Monitoring/Evaluating
.25	Culture
	Order
	Resources,
	Knowledge of Curriculum,
	Instruction, and Assessment
	Input
	Change Agent
.24	Focus
	Contingent Rewards
	Intellectual Stimulation
.23	Communication
.22	Ideals/Beliefs
.20	Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
	Visibility, Optimizer
.19	Affirmation
.18	Relationships

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2006). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Heatherton, Vic: Hawker Brownlow Education.

### Significance of the Study

In New York State, there are 188 priority schools and 442 focus schools. Priority schools are the bottom 5% of lowest performing schools statewide. Focus schools are the bottom 10% for progress of respective subgroups (of learners) statewide (NYSED, 2016). In the 2006 study *The Silent Epidemic*, researchers Bridgeland, Dilulio and Morison (2006) revealed that students

who fall victim to school failure are three times more likely to be unemployed than college graduates. Moreover, they are twice as likely to be in prison, collectively represent a loss of about 1.6 percent of the gross domestic product each year, and earn \$9,200 less per year, on average, than high school graduates. These findings highlight the need for school improvement that will increase student achievement. “Turning around the “bottom five” percent of schools is the crucible of education reform. They represent our greatest, clearest need –and therefore a great opportunity to bring about fundamental change” (Calkins, Guenther, Belfiore, and Lash, 2007).

In 2014, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio introduced the Renewal School model as a part of his *Equity and Excellence* initiative for New York City (NYC) Schools. Unlike his predecessor, Mayor Michael Bloomberg (who closed schools when they were failing), Mayor de Blasio introduced a plan to allocate resources that supported and helped re-brand and re-direct struggling schools from academic failure to academic success. This investigation creates an opportunity to influence solutions that will help policy makers in the New York City Department of Education address the challenge of accurately placing competent and able principals into Renewal Schools (the lowest performing schools) and reverse the challenge of high principal turnover towards retention of the best-qualified principal candidates.

The intended outcome of this research is to provide the NYCDOE, the United States’ largest school system, with a research-based roadmap to leadership preparation for struggling schools. This study will help the NYCDOE design policy that will assist in building a sustainable leadership pipeline that possesses a new understanding of the role of the principal, and how it needs to be managed to lead and transform the most fragile schools in New York City.

## **Definitions**

The following terms are used throughout the research study:

*Renewal Schools:* (1) were identified as *priority* or *focus* schools by the New York State Department of Education. *Priority schools* are in the bottom 5% lowest performing schools statewide and *focus schools* are in the bottom 10% of progress in a subgroup. (2) Have demonstrated low academic achievement for each of the three prior years (2012-2014). This includes elementary and middle schools in the bottom 25% in Math and ELA scores and High schools in the bottom 25% in the four-year graduation rate. (3) Have scored “Proficient” or below on their most recent quality review (NYCDOE-Office of School Renewal, 2017).

*Renewal School Principal:* The school leader of a Renewal School.

*Renewal School Superintendent:* The district leader who has a Renewal School(s) in the cohort of schools they supervise.

*Renewal School Success:* The accountability benchmarks for student performance and progress in English Language Arts (ELA), math, attendance, graduation rates, and safety mandated by the New York State Education Department (NYCDOE- Office of School Renewal, 2017).

## **Delimitations**

The study was limited to the perspectives of 12 participants; six were Renewal School Principals and six were Renewal School Superintendents in NYC. The scope of this study is also limited to investigating leadership practices that yield success in New York City’s Renewal School initiative. This program was launched in the fall of 2014 in support of New York City’s most struggling schools as identified by the New York State Education Department. This qualitative case study investigated the various viewpoints raised by the study’s participants via interviews. Using this approach assisted the researcher in exploring the perceptions of the school and district leaders as it provides flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing data. The

researcher engaged in an interview process that engaged the participants in ten open-ended questions. The data from the theoretical framework of Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) assisted the researcher in the design of the questions and the selection of the participants was limited to their demonstrated ability to achieve the expectations of the benchmarks delineated by the New York State Education Department.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This research was conducted using a purposeful sampling method. This approach provided the researcher with intentional sampling “to better understand a central phenomenon of a site or selected individuals” (Creswell, 2012, p. 206). The subject selection was based on principal performance data that indicates achieved New York State publically mandated benchmarks. This data revealed that three schools were able to make their benchmarks as stipulated by the New York State Education Department. To attain a larger participant sample, the researcher had to extend the data expectations to the other school leaders who did not meet their benchmarks, but fell within the range of those who did. Therefore, all participants in the study did not meet their NYSED benchmarks, but fell within a range that is competitive with the three schools that did meet their benchmarks.

### **Organization of the Study**

This study is comprised of five chapters. Chapter one introduces the reader to the research and describes the context of the issue via background information, the statement of the problem, the theoretical framework which the study is thought through, and the significance of the study. Chapter one also provides insight into key terms used throughout the study and concludes with delimitations and limitations of the study. Chapter two provides a review of the literature that is related to this study via historical as well as present day context that anchors the

study in the theoretical framework and opportunities for further research. Chapter three describes the researcher's methodology for conducting the study. It contains the plans, procedures, and process of the data collection and analysis based on the researcher's actions. Chapter four presents the data collection, the researcher's analysis, and results of the research. Lastly, chapter five presents the researcher's conclusion via a summary of the study, and provides recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2014, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio introduced the Renewal School model as a part of his *Equity and Excellence* plan to improve struggling schools. In the previous mayoral administration, Mayor Michael Bloomberg orchestrated the closure of schools when they were failing. In opposition of this agenda, the de Blasio administration identified 94 Renewal Schools and set forth a new standard for the treatment of struggling schools by introducing a plan to allocate resources that supported and helped re-brand and re-direct struggling schools from academic failure to academic success. In order for this to occur, the New York City Department of Education engaged in an overhaul of the school system that demanded changes in the manner in which struggling schools were managed and supported by central offices, superintendents, and principals.

This chapter investigates the elements, viability, and conditions that anchor the Renewal School initiative via a review of the literature about school turnaround and principal success efforts. It has four major sections: the history of school reform, the elements of effective school turnaround, establishing and executing change in an organization, and the characteristics of effective educational leadership. In the first section, the researcher explores the history of school reform efforts in the United States and examines reform efforts in New York City schools.

#### **The History of School Reform**

**School reform in the United States.** Turning failing schools into schools where children succeed has been a long-standing challenge in the United States of America. President Lyndon B. Johnson developed the Elementary and Secondary Education in 1965 as a part of his

Great Society Program. This act allowed for the federal government to participate in K-12 policy, offered more than \$1 billion a year in aid to Title I, and supported districts in educating disadvantaged and underserved students (Klein, 2015). In 1983, Secretary of Education, Terrel Bell commissioned a blue-ribbon panel to investigate the poor public perception of America's school system. This investigation resulted in a report entitled, *A Nation at Risk*. The findings of this report indicated that American education was failing at an alarming due to poor performance in literacy, math, and teacher capacity. Furthermore, the report cited the need for more rigor in curriculum and teaching, new teaching standards, and greater preparation practices and pay for teachers. To counteract these issues, the panel presented recommendations that were,

Based on the belief that everyone can learn, that everyone is born with an urge to learn which can be nurtured, that a solid high school education is within reach of virtually all, and that life-long learning will equip people with the skills required for new careers and for citizenship (Nation at Risk, 1983, p.1).

Furthermore, the report concluded that education inadequacies in the nation's school system were to blame for the overarching failure of children and encouraged a greater degree of standardized testing to ensure improved student achievement (Babones, 2015). Critics of this report pointed to the composition of the committee, which possessed no experts on America's education system" (Babones, 2015).

Almost twenty years after *A Nation at Risk* was published, President George W. Bush signed the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act of 2002 into law. This law updated President Johnson's ESEA Act of 1965. According to Klein (2015), NCLB positioned the federal government to have a greater role in the academic progress of students. The NCLB law required states to administer tests to students in grades 3-8 in the areas of reading and math. In addition,

NCLB required that high school students take state level tests, and that school districts report graduation rates. Lastly, states were required to report their results; indicating overall student performance and progress; and the academic achievement of students in sub-groups (Klein, 2015).

Since the *No Child Left Behind Act* was passed in 2001, districts have been identifying failing schools as those that do not demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in improving their performance. These schools face an escalating process of corrective action, which ultimately might lead to replacing the school's leadership or restructuring the school itself... With more than 5,000 schools in the restructuring stage in 2010, Mass Insight Education recently estimated that more than 2.5 million students — particularly high-poverty students and students of color — are at risk of or are already receiving a woefully inadequate education. (Kutash, Nico, Gorin, Rahmatullah & Tallant, 2010, p. 10).

Critics of NCLB blamed the law for the strong interference of the federal government in local school districts and felt that the law made schools focus too much on testing and not enough on learning (Klein, 2015). Contrarily, there was support for the aspect of the law that ensured stronger qualifications requirements for teachers. NCLB defined high quality teachers as those who possess a Bachelor's Degree and were able to pass a "rigorous" state test and obtain complete state certification (United States Department of Education, 2004).

In December 2015, President Barack Obama updated NCLB by re-writing and signing into law the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA). According to the Office of the President (2015), the *Every Student Succeeds Act* will improve on NCLB via six advantage points. (1) ESSA will ensure that states set high standards so that students graduate college and

career ready. (2) ESSA will maintain accountability by focusing “on the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools, high schools with high dropout rates, and schools where subgroups of students are struggling” (Office of the President, 2015, p.1). (3) ESSA will ensure that state and local governments own and develop strong school systems that improve their schools. (4) ESSA will preserve annual testing; however, it will encourage the reduction of over testing of students unnecessarily throughout the school year. (5) ESSA will provide students with access to high-quality preschool programs, and (6) ESSA will Establish new resources to test promising practices and replicate proven strategies that will drive opportunity and better outcomes for America’s students.

**Education reform in New York City.** The history of education reform in the United States has evolved over time and has created the expectation that the federal government and competitive grants be entry points to improve schools. Education reform in New York City has been impacted and driven by these mandates via initiatives such as the Chancellor’s District which was an organizational management structure that clustered failing schools together in an effort to centralize financial supports and improve student achievement efforts. “The goal of the Chancellor’s District was to increase the instructional capacity and the academic outcomes of the failing schools the district incorporated” (Phenix, Siegel, Zaltsman, & Fruchter (2004). It was concluded that the, “Chancellor’s District schools do significantly better than other SURR (Schools Under Registration Review) schools in reading, but not in math” (Phenix et al., 2004). This initiative was terminated when Mike Bloomberg became the mayor of New York City and attained mayoral control of the school system from the previous Board of Education . Under the 12 year leadership of Mayor Bloomberg, education reform efforts ranged from the establishment of a leadership academy which trained principals to lead failing schools, to the closing of schools

that historically failed to meet state expectations, to the letter grading of schools that correlated to their progress, to refining evaluation procedures of teachers and principals, and the removal of principals who exhibited leadership that didn't accelerate student achievement. Under Mayor Bloomberg, the NYCDOE became a recipient of *Race to the Top* (RTTT) funding and the New York City Department of Education mobilized its policies and initiatives around the guidelines for spending these funds. Reform efforts such as an overhaul of the teacher and principal evaluation system and professional development efforts in support of the Common Core state standards were funded by this grant (RTTT, NYCDOE, 2012).

As a part of his *Equity and Excellence* initiative, Mayor Bill de Blasio introduced the Renewal School program to transform struggling schools on NYC from failure to success. Presently, in its third year of existence, the Renewal School budget boasts approximately \$400 million.

\$397 million is expected to flow into the program between the 2014-15 school year and the 2016-17 year, with about \$180 million coming from the city, \$79 million from the state, and \$143 million from the federal government, plus \$7 million from other sources" (Wall, 2015, p.1).

The Renewal School model presents the opportunity to extend learning time for students, reorganize staff and leadership, and revamp curriculum and professional learning opportunities for teachers (Office of School Renewal, NYCDOE, 2017). It also grants schools the opportunity to use high leverage tools, resources, and partnerships such as *Data Wise* training from Harvard University to accelerate both student and adult learning. "Data Wise offers a step-by-step process and habits of mind that teams of educators can use to work collaboratively on school improvement through looking at student and teacher work" (Office of Renewal Schools, 2016,

p.5). Accountability expectations are also in place as, “Each Renewal School is assigned annual benchmarks with the expectation that they meet those benchmarks each year” (Office of Renewal Schools, 2016, p.6). Critics of the program feel it is too expensive and has not yielded the type of results needed to “renew” the identified schools.

School turnaround is a notoriously difficult task, particularly in large urban school districts, and New York City's system of 1.1 million children is the largest school system in the nation. But, education reform advocates have argued the city should close schools that have underperformed for decades, rather than spending close to \$400 million trying to improve them (Clukey and Shapiro, 2016, p.1).

In response to critics, New York City Department of Education Chancellor, Carmen Fariña stated, “The city has replaced principals at 43 of the 94 schools, attendance has improved at 76 of the schools, and the four-year graduation rate among the Renewal high schools has increased 2.5 percentage points” (Shapiro, 2016, p.3).

The history of school reform in the United States is traceable to The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. All federal policies that have followed are heavily anchored in ESEA and have driven state policies, money allocations, and resources. Most importantly, federal mandates have affected the process of how failing schools are turned around and improved. In the next section, the researcher investigates the elements of effective school turnaround and seeks to define and establish the essential characteristics that make school turnaround possible.

### **The Elements of Effective School Turnaround**

Kutash et al. (2010) defines turnaround as: “a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing school that: a) produces significant gains in achievement within two years;

and b) readies the school for the longer process of transformation into a high-performance organization. (Kutash et al., 2010, p.4)”. Turning around failing schools in the United States school system is a long-standing issue that plagues us as a progressive nation. According to Kutash et al. (2010), 2.5 million students in over 5,000 schools attend chronically failing schools. Moreover, the number of failing schools are increasing at an alarming rate year after year. To address this challenge, principal leadership has been identified as the second leading indicator (after classroom instruction) for school improvement and turnaround efforts (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson, 2010). Furthermore, policies, laws, data disaggregation, teacher and principal evaluation and funding models have also played a role in activating school turnaround in our nation’s most difficult schools. Therefore, history and research has shown that the evolution of school reform in the United States has heavily affected how turnaround efforts are employed in schools to improve student achievement.

According to Baroody (2011), successful school turnaround efforts are anchored in consistent and coherent strategies that bring about change. To succeed in the demands of school turnaround, Murphy and Meyers (2009) claimed that failing organizations that prioritize rebuilding as the first effort toward turnaround are more successful. In alignment with this claim, Zimmerman (1991) suggests that in turnaround situations, how the organization is managed is the most important lever towards success. In agreement with Zimmerman (1991), Short, Palmer, and Stimpert (1998), claim that the management of the turnaround determines the success or failure of the change. Within the confines of management, Khandwalla (1983) suggests that turnaround leaders need to steer their membership towards a firm mission to reduce challenges and resistance. Additionally, Slatter (1984) asserts that turnaround leaders set must priorities and goals to create a sense of urgency in order to be effective. Urgency works once the

membership is motivated and driven by the same purpose (Grinyer et al., 1988). Contrarily, Argenti (1976) proposes that not all failing organizations are worth saving. Murphy et al.(2009) supports this claim. “There are no doubt times when it is neither wise policy nor in the best interests of youngsters to fight to restore what should not be saved” (Murphy et al., 2009, p.162). Bennis and Nanus (1985) propose that leadership is an organization’s best chance for survival and turnaround. Furthermore, Grinyer et al. (1988) claims that the leader fosters change and affects the organizations culture, climate, and vision. This sets a new course for the organization. Bibeault (1982) suggests that leadership occurs in turnaround via two methods. Either you change the existing management structure or the existing management structure must change their approach. Modiano (1987) reinforces Bibeault (1982) first suggestion and claims that failing organizations need “new top managerial blood to revitalize the company and direct the turnaround” (Modiano, 1987, p. 174). Moreover, (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2001) stress that the new leader must be visionary. The vision reinforces and provides a foundation to a common goal (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2001). Shook (1990) goes beyond the idea of leaders having a vision and proclaims the significance of examining a leader’s performance and commitment to continuous improvement. Furthermore, Cotton (2003) challenges the leader to have a set mindset that outcomes can improve and effectiveness can be strengthened as an integral aspect of effective turnaround. While leadership is determined to be a high leverage indicator in turnaround, funding and resources also drives the capacity of turnaround efforts.

The United States Department of Education has invested heavily in turnaround efforts via funding sources that school districts compete for to assist them in their turnaround efforts. The three most competitive grants are (1) *Race to the Top Funds*, which totals \$4.35 billion, (2) *School Improvement Grants*, which totals \$3.55 billion, and (3) *Investing in Innovation Fund*

(i3), which totals \$6.5 billion (Kutash et al., 2010). There are four turnaround models that the United States federal government requires school districts applying for funding to utilize. They are (1) Turnaround, (2) Restarts, (3) School Closure, and (4) Transformations. In a Turnaround, the principal is removed and the new principal is allowed to rehire 50% of the staff. In Restarts, control of the school is handed over to a new operator who is selected via a review process. In a School Closure, the school is closed and then restructured with new leadership and teachers. Lastly, in Transformations, the principal is replaced and there are increased professional learning opportunities for teachers, and extend learning time for students (Kutash et al., 2010).

**Executing education reform in turnaround efforts.** Despite funding and varied models of school turnaround, sustainable improvement has been hard to solidify in education. Researchers and policy makers influence the policies and programs that educators are asked to implement. However, the tools applied don't help schools improve. (Bryk, (2015). Researchers Leithwood and Riehl (2003) further agree that the complexity of school leadership requires the leader to be a resilient assessor of the expected varied and inconsistent demands. Bryk et al. (2015) stated that organizations engage in a phenomenon called *solutionitis*, which “is the propensity to jump quickly on a solution before fully understanding the exact problem to be solved” (Bryk, et. al., 2015, p. 24). To remedy these challenges, Bryk et al. (2015) recommend that organizations become more user-centered, which “Means respecting the people who actually do the work by seeking to understand the problems they confront. It means engaging these people in designing changes that align with the problems they really experience” (Bryk, et. al., 2015, pp. 32-33).

Kanov et al. (2005) suggests that leaders who exhibit compassion to their membership improve the interpersonal culture among colleagues and the outcomes of the organization.

Likewise, Bryk, et al. (2015) suggests that once education reform become user-centered, it will change and confront the issue that, “Teachers have far less input than do other professionals into the factors that affect their work. Far too many efforts at improvement are designs delivered to educators rather than developed with them” (Bryk, et. al., 2015, p. 34). This approach ensures that, “Engaging insights from the job floor can break the susceptibility to *solutionitis* and the prevailing one-size-fits-all approach to education reform” (Bryk, et. al., 2015, p. 34).

Conversely, Picucci, Brownson, Kahlert, and Sobel (2002) highlight how turnaround school leaders are impacted by a unique resistance when trying to reach solutions to create a collaborative school culture and employ change. Therefore, leaders need to foster resilience within themselves and anchor their goals to an agenda that is transformative and meaningful. Once leaders and teachers have equity of voice, positive relationships can be established between the leadership and teaching body. This fosters networking, strengths, and enhanced communication, which yields supportive feedback to transform the organization. Additionally, the feedback creates an opportunity for the membership to participate in the turnaround process via learning and training. This helps rebuild the infrastructure of the organization (Zimmerman, 1991).

Similarly, to Bryk’s (2015) claim about *solutionitis*, Kim (1990) shares the phenomenon known as *fixes that fail*. In these scenarios, symptoms that stem from a problem arise. The symptoms are then prescribed a quick solution. However, an unintended consequence of the “fix” exacerbates the problem. Eventually the original symptoms appear and the problem persists and at times gets worse than it was originally. Senge (1990) offers problem solvers of *fixes that fail* an opportunity to *shift the burden*, which is an archetype of short-term solutions that instantly remedies some of the problem. Senge (1990) also suggests that problem solvers

increase “the fix” so the problem reduces before the unintended consequences rise. Pfeffer & Sutton (2008) offers a different explanation of why executing turnaround efforts can be challenging for organizations by suggesting that there is an existing *knowing-doing gap*. “One of the main barriers to turning knowledge into action is the tendency to equate talking about something with actually doing something about it” (Pfeffer et al., 2008, p. 1). Organizations that understand how to convert knowledge into action succeed over ones that don’t. Furthermore, leaders must know how to use language, structures, and consistent application of what’s been learned to close the *knowing-doing gap* (Pfeffer et al., 2008). “Fear helps create knowing-doing gaps because acting on one’s knowledge requires that a person believe he or she will not be punished for doing so; that taking risks based on new information and insight will be rewarded, not punished” (Pfeffer et al., 2008, p. 110). To ameliorate this gap Pfeffer et al., 2008) suggests that leaders and organizations establish purpose before execution, practice habits of doing to strengthen self-learning and then teaching others how to meet the set expectation, commit to action, be willing to make mistakes, and to drive out fear as it fosters the *knowing-doing gap*.

“Educational outcomes emerge from multiple processes that interact in classrooms, schools, districts and in families, community organizations, and public social services” (Bryk, et. al., 2015, p. 63). Therefore, Bryk et al. (2015) recommend framing educational improvement as a systems problem. Systems theory synthesizes a multitude of disciplines in order to investigate phenomena holistically (Capra, 1997). Furthermore, they also focus on the parts and how they impact the whole while considering the interaction among those pieces to highlight observations, problems, and/or challenges that engage towards a shared purpose (Capra, 1997). To operationalize systems thinking, Mele et al. (2010) suggest that managers need to know and understand systems thinking in order to organize new interpretations of business possibilities

that enable transformation. To accomplish the latter, Bryk (2015) suggests the use of, “A variety of tools and processes scaffold effective ways of thinking and acting on complex systems. They help make visible the actual organizational structures and policies at work” (Bryk, et. al., 2015, p. 65). Bryk et al. (2015) recommend the use of a fishbone diagram, a system improvement map, and the driver diagram to systematize school improvement. The fishbone diagram is a brainstorming tool that assists in the analysis of the problem and provides a visual representation of the issue. “Each major bone represents a key factor thought to contribute to the unsatisfactory outcomes. The smaller bones capture the details that emerge from conversations about these factors” (Bryk, et. al., 2015, p. 68). The school improvement map is an analytic tool that helps stakeholder decipher how the institution organized to accomplish work in a specified area. The driver diagram, “Focuses on a small set of hypotheses about key levers for improvement, specific changes that might be attempted for each, and the interconnections that may exists among them (Bryk, et al., 2015, p. 73).

**Assessments, data, and school turnaround.** Policymakers and educators have positioned the analysis and application of data metrics to improve student achievement as an integral part of 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching. “Measuring outcomes is only useful if you know what the target should be. If the target is different in each classroom, then we have no way to know how students are doing across the cohort relatively to each other. The students are stuck with varying degrees of rigor depending on which teacher they have. That's not fair to our students” (Bambrick, 2012, p. 45). To improve Renewal Schools by “Emphasizing data use begs the question: Data by whom? Which stakeholders should use data, which data should they use, and how do we envision them using it? Answering this question involves a thorough explication of the theory of action associated with increases in education efficacy” (Betebenner and Linn,

2009, p. 20). In order for this occur, educators need to have an enhanced understanding of statistical literacy. Wallman (1993) stated that statistical literacy is one's ability to understand and engage statistical results as well as value the contributions they make to our progress. In conjunction with this claim, *W.M. Keck Statistical Literacy Project* cited statistical literacy as thinking critically about numbers, possessing the ability to interpret and read numbers in graphical representations, and recognizing how statistical associations have deeper connections beyond the evident numbers they display (Mittag, 2010). In support of statistical literacy, Betebenner and Linn (2009) claim that "The widespread availability of annual student assessment results during the last decade has greatly expanded the use of assessment data nationwide. Receiving particular interests are analyses of student academic growth" (Betebenner and Linn, 2009, p. 3). The researchers state, "Because learning is demonstrated by changes in student achievement from one point in time to another, an interest in the process of student learning is an interest in academic growth" (Betebenner and Linn, 2009, p.3). Betebenner and Linn (2009) identify growth models as the recommended method analyzing student achievement data for accountability purposes (Betebenner and Linn, 2009, p.3). The researchers recommend that educators, "Unpack issues related to student growth by situating the discussion within three larger, intersecting topics: Measurement, longitudinal data analysis, and accountability" (Betebenner and Linn, 2009, p. 4).

When analyzing the growth of students and supporting the data's merit, Darling-Hammond, and Adamson, (2010) argue that most of the knowledge and skills that are important in the classroom are not assessed on standardized tests. This claim is also supported by Wiggins (1989) who argues that traditional testing fails to measure academic skills. Furthermore, Brandt (1989) asserts that standardized testing cannot effectively assess a diverse body of students using

the same measurement tool. To address this issue, Chittenden (1991) suggests that at the onset of any assessment activity, purpose and goals be established by the assessors to ensure alignment between the cause for the assessment and the outcomes. Furthermore, Stiggins (2001) determined that there are five quality standards to assess the reliability of assessments as true indicators of student achievement. Standard one claims that assessments are derived from targeted and appropriate expectations for students. Standard two claims that assessments are directly linked and impactful of instruction. Standard three proposes that administered assessments are aligned to the “intended target” or purpose and serve students. Standard four connects the quality of the assessment to confident conclusions suggesting that, “The classroom teacher’s quality control challenge is to know how to adjust the sampling strategies to produce results of maximum quality at minimum cost in time and effort” (Stiggins, 2001, p.22). Lastly, standard five proposes that effective assessments eliminate bias and distortion opportunities that compromise the validity of results (Stiggins, 2001). Considering these standards, Stiggins (2001) argues that principals must be assessment literate and remove all barriers to teachers being and becoming assessment literate themselves. Furthermore, Stiggins (2001) places the responsibility on principals to ensure the school environment is assessment literacy accessible and barrier free to any impediments that prevent the employment of the five standards. This is accomplished via professional development of teachers and school leaders as they refine their assessment practices and create a culture of effectively assessing learners (Stiggins, 2001).

**The role of teacher and principal evaluation in school turnaround.** In addition to accountability systems, data analysis, and feedback as an indicator of school success, policymakers and educators have turned towards more rigorous teacher and principal evaluations to determine the quality of teaching and learning in schools across the United States. Renewal

Schools are no different, as the benchmarks set require school leaders and teachers to perform at high levels to turn around poor student performance in these failing schools.

Accomplishing the maximum impact on student learning depends on teams of teachers working together, with excellent leaders or coaches, agreeing on worthwhile outcomes, setting high expectations, knowing the students' starting and desired success in learning, seeking evidence continually about their impact on all students, modifying their teaching in light of this evaluation, and joining in the success of truly making a difference to student outcomes (Hattie, 2012, p.35).

To facilitate stronger measures of teacher and principal evaluation in the state of New York, former Governor David Patterson in 2010 added a new section entitled 3012- c to Education Law Chapter 103. 3012-c established a comprehensive evaluation system for classroom teachers and building principals. It stated that each classroom teacher and building principal would receive an annual professional performance review (APPR) resulting in a single composite effectiveness score and a rating of “highly effective,” “effective,” “developing,” or “ineffective” (D’Agati, 2012). The Annual Professional Performance Review or APPR, is a state governed process that determines that standards for teacher and principal effectiveness. An integral component for states to receive *Race to the Top* federal funding, this teacher and principal evaluation process had three main goals (1) to improve the quality of instruction in classrooms, (2) to improve student performance on assessments, and (3) to improve college and career readiness for all students. The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) was one of the recipients of this funding, and immediately launched its *Teacher Effectiveness Program*; which prepared teachers for the new standards in evaluation and the *Advance* databased system, which tracked teacher performance. For principals, the NYCDOE launched the *Principal Observation Practice*

*tool* (PPO) and the PPO tracker, an online databased system to track and monitor principal performance during their PPO.

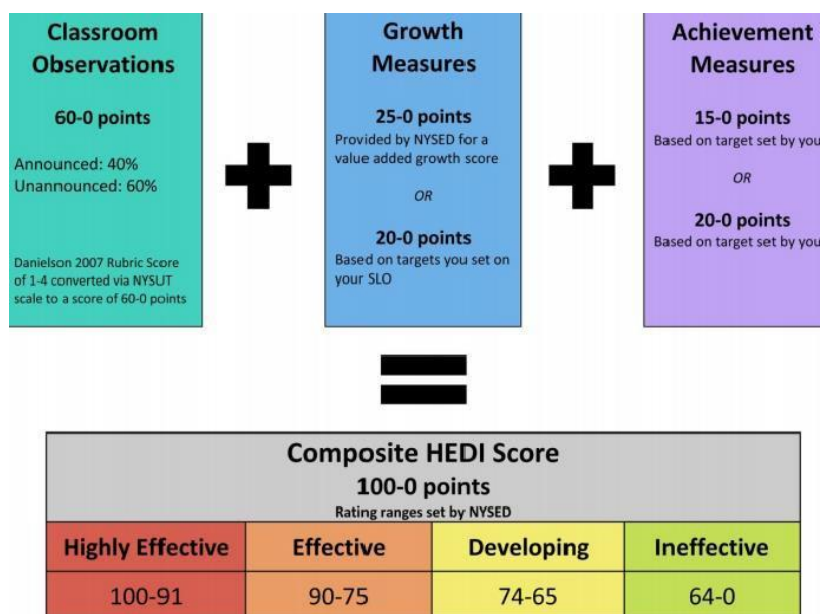
The New York State Education Department set forth guidance on the implementation of 3012-c via the New York State Board of Regents, who are the governing body who voted on the implementation of the law into districts. The New York State Board of Regents stated,

The New York State Board of Regents has committed to the transformation of the preparation, support, and evaluation of all teachers and school leaders in New York State... The purpose of the evaluation system is to ensure that there is an effective teacher in every classroom and an effective leader in every school. The evaluation system will also foster a culture of continuous professional growth for educators to grow and improve their instructional practices... The results of the evaluations shall be a significant factor in employment decisions, including but not limited to promotion, retention, tenure determination, termination, and supplemental compensation, as well as teacher and principal professional development (including coaching, induction support, and differentiated professional development) (NYSED, 2016, p. 7).

APPR evaluates teachers and principals with a final score in three core areas. They are classroom observations, student growth, and student achievement. This score is then converted via a rating scale that uses one to four as an effectiveness rating to determine if the teacher and principal is “highly effective”, “effective”, “developing”, or “ineffective”. This scale is also known as the HEDI rating (See Figure 1). Observation and evidence account for 60% of the total 100-point evaluation. These 60 points come from two observations. There are two types of observations; announced and unannounced. Announced observations are planned between the

teacher and the principal or the principal and the superintendent. Announced observations make up 40% of the observation score and unannounced observations make up 60% of the observation score. Unannounced observations can take place at the will of the principal or superintendent. Student growth accounts for 20-25% of the total 100-point evaluation. Student growth scores are determined by either state-provided growth measure or progress towards student learning objective targets. Student achievement accounts from 15-20% of the total 100-point evaluation. It is measured via locally selected evaluation measures.

Figure 1: *Components of Teacher Evaluation.*



The New York State Education Department, 2010.

Renewal School teachers and leaders are evaluated by the same metrics as non-Renewal School teachers and leaders. A review of teachers' and school leaders' respective contracts indicates that their unions have not negotiated any contractual differences for members serving in the Renewal capacity. In January 2016, the Renewal School initiative came under fire by the

President of the Council of School Administrators (CSA), Ernest Logan. Once a strong supporter of the plan, he claimed that,

While the Renewal Principals are doing all this paperwork, they are also being pulled out of their schools to DOE and District meetings designed specifically for Renewal Schools. In addition, while in their schools, they are commonly called on to entertain various visiting monitors who want to discuss data from the aforementioned alphabet soup. At the same time, they are required to make sure their schools provide rigorous instruction (Logan, 2016, p. 1).

In addition to the paperwork, visitors, and the demands of being an instructional leader, Logan (2016) also highlighted that,

Principals are frequently being challenged for setting teacher standards, and while this is also happening in all kinds of schools, it is particularly harmful in Renewal Schools. For things like rating their teachers “in need of improvement,” they are often subjected to anonymous allegations and must take time out from school to defend themselves at investigations, including against a new charge classified as a “procedural violation.” Such a violation can be leveled on a Principal who spent 13 instead of 15 minutes at an observation (Logan, 2016, p. 1).

This claim surfaces a core challenge as principals being able to rate teachers appropriately and accurately are integral to the success of a Renewal School. Also, teaching and leading capacity in Renewal Schools is constantly assessed and nurtured via professional development as the NYCDOE recognizes a need for improvement of delivery of instruction. In a counterclaim to Logan (2016), Chancellor Farina, the head of the NYCDOE stated, “A lot more teachers apply to teach in Renewal schools than apply to leave Renewal schools. These teachers have been rated

“highly effective” in their existing schools. I think it was 248, but the number’s changing, “effective” and “highly effective” teachers moving into Renewal schools” (Feldman, 2016, p.1). Furthermore, Farina commented on the importance of quality school leaders for Renewal Schools. She stated, “All principals weren’t the highest quality leaders. We moved about 30, 40 principals just from Renewal Schools” (Feldman, 2016, p.1). The NYCDOE also responded to Logan (2016), by revising aspects of the Renewal program that were highlighted as issues. During the 2016-2017 school year, Renewal principals were not taken out of their building as much as in previous years for professional development. Instead, the Office of School Renewal streamlined the amount of PD outside of schools and organized systems with the Superintendent’s Office and the Field Support Centers to limit the amount of time that principals spent outside of their building and hosting visitors (Office of School Renewal, NYCDOE, 2017). These revisions to the Renewal model were anchored in the NYCDOE’s commitment to their newly adopted model, *The Framework for Great Schools*.

**New York City schools adopts a new framework.** On January 22, 2015, New York City schools’ Chancellor Carmen Fariña announced her plan to eliminate the 55 *Children’s First Networks* (CFNs) that supported schools across New York City. *Borough Field Support Centers* (BFSCs) would now support schools in the areas of instruction and operations. The goal of this change from CFNs to BFSCs was to provide schools with a roadmap for improvement anchored in the *Framework for Great Schools* (Appendix 8). The *Framework for Great Schools* is a systematic way of assessing schools’ strengths and areas that need improvement. The framework was developed at the University of Chicago’s Consortium on School Research and led by researcher Anthony Bryk. The research examined schools that beat the odds and asked why did certain schools succeed and others fail? Using robust survey instruments, they

identified the following six elements as integral to school success: (1) *Rigorous Instruction* (2) *Collaborative Teachers* (3) *Supportive Environment*, (4) *Strong Ties to Family and Community*, (5) *Effective Leaders*, and (6) *Trust*. In the NYCDOE document, *A Vision for School Improvement: Applying the Framework for Great Schools* (2016), it states that,

Through the *Framework for Great Schools* and the research of Dr. Anthony Bryk, we are reminded that our work must encompass the full complexity of our schools and the interaction among the six essential elements. While each element of the Framework is a unique ingredient for school success, the impact on student learning is strongest when all elements are connected throughout the school community. By working collaboratively to make sense of how the Framework can support continuous improvement, we will learn as a City what works best for each individual school (NYCDOE, 2016, p.3).

The *Framework for Great Schools* provides the foundational expectations for Renewal Schools in New York City. Educational leaders are expected to rally communities to assess needs, establish goals, and engage in cycles of learning using this model as a guide. NYCDOE officials often reference the *Framework for Great Schools* as it is now seen as an anchor of instruction and school-based systems in the NYCDOE. For the Renewal School initiative, the *Framework for Great Schools* has provided an expectation and protocol for inclusive school environments that integrate students and families via the six elements and the incorporation of the Community Learning School (CLS) Model. The latter provides an opportunity for all Renewal Schools to collaborate with community-based organizations to address the comprehensive needs of the whole child. CLS as Renewal Schools provide services on a daily basis for an hour of extended learning time that benefits the immediate community. Students and families receive services

such as medical care, food pantries, laundry services, GED and job training, healthcare, and fitness/health classes (New York City Department of Education-Community Learning Schools, 2016). Furthermore, the CLS model supports and enacts Mayor de Blasio's *Equity and Excellence* plan for all students in the NYCDOE. The CLS plan notes that,

Every Community School is different and reflects the strengths and needs of its students, families, and local community. However, the most successful Community Schools are anchored in a set of common values that serve as a foundation: Strong instruction designed to provide personalized learning opportunities for students; robust engagement, anchored in positive youth development, ensuring that schools are welcoming and empowering to students, families and community members; and continuous improvement using school and student data to tailor programming and instruction focused on results (Office of the Mayor-Community Learning Schools, 2017, p.2).

This model has provided a boost to some Renewal schools as it has created a platform for parents and families to participate in the turnaround success of the school while working with community-based organizations that address basic as well as accelerated needs of the community (Office of School Renewal, NYCDOE, 2017). The core challenge associated with the bridging of the CLS model with the Renewal school model is funding the additional resources required to accommodate the demands of the expectations. In regards to this issue, Mayor de Blasio's office has stated that, "Making efficient use of current and new public resources; establishing the framework for the City's provision of "foundational funding"; helping schools leverage existing and new resources to expand their programs; and engaging private sector organizations in developing partnerships that support sustainability" (Office of the Mayor-Community Learning

Schools, 2017, p.4) are funding priorities. Management of funds coupled with the NYCDOE commitment to the Renewal School model working, has created a platform for funding streams that are designed to move the work of improving teaching and learning forward in the NYCDOE (NYCDOE, 2017).

**Funding impacts school turnaround.** The additional resources to ensure turnaround in Renewal Schools has required higher amounts of funding that are essential and integral to the execution of the program. Renewal Schools have additional opportunities such as becoming a community learning school, providing extended learning time to students, daylong summer school, intervention services, and specified professional development for leaders and teachers. Assessors of the program have claimed that,

In order to be successful, the Renewal Schools program will have to overcome formidable challenges in three areas: the very depressed level of performance in these schools prior to the program's inception; a trend of declining enrollment in these schools; and a short timeline to show measurable results" (New York City Independent Budget Office, 2015, p. 1).

Presently it is estimated that, "Over \$397 million is expected to flow into the program between the 2014-15 school year and the 2016-17 year, with about \$180 million coming from the city, \$79 million from the state, and \$143 million from the federal government, in addition, \$7 million from other sources (Wall, 2015, p.1). Additionally, another unique feature of Renewal Schools is they receive 100% of their Fair Student Funding money at the start of each school year. Non-renewal schools receive 60% of their funding at the start of the school year.

Fair Student Funding, FSF aims to achieve five major goals: improving student achievement, funding schools equitably, making school budgets more transparent,

empowering school leaders and aligning financial policies with the Framework for Great Schools the Strong Schools, Strong Communities model, and the central tenet in the Framework for Great Schools (NYCDOE, DOF, 2016, p. 11,).

It is the expectation of the NYCDOE Division of Finance that all NYCDOE personnel in charge of budgets follow FSF principles, which state that,

School budgeting should fund students adequately, while preserving stability at all schools. Different students have different educational needs and funding levels should reflect those needs as best as possible. School leaders, not central offices are best positioned to decide how to improve achievement; and School budgets should be as transparent as possible so that funding decisions are visible for all to see and evaluate. In keeping with these principals, FSF means that: Money follows each student to the public school that he or she attends; Schools receive funding for each student based on grade level; Schools may also receive additional dollars in accordance with the needs of their students; Principals have greater flexibility about how to spend money on teachers and other investments; and Key funding decisions will be based on clear, public criteria (NYCDOE, DOF, 2016, p. 12).

Each NYCDOE school is given a foundational budget allotment of \$225,000. From this baseline amount, different weights are added depending on the needs of the schools. There are grade weights, which affect the amount of money a school receives, based on the grade levels of their student population. Needs weights are determined by educational needs of students. Students who receive Special Education services or English Language Learner support benefit from these weights. Students who are in NYCDOE portfolio high schools receive enhanced

weights to meet the fiscal demands of project-based learning opportunities. Staff that needs to be hired due to collective bargaining agreements with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), the teachers' union or the Council of Supervisors and Administrators (CSA), the administrators' union is funded with FSF and considered a weighted area. Lastly, FSF considers the poverty weight for school funding.

The poverty weight is based on the number of free lunch eligible pupils divided by student enrollment. Pupils are deemed free lunch eligible if there is a completed free lunch form for the child or the student is receiving public assistance that has the same or lower income requirement as free lunch (NYCDOE, DOF, 2016, p. 20).

The NYCDOE aligns the weighted formula of school budget allotments to school programming needs to meet the requirements of the attending student population. The allotment of teachers is determined by projected class registers. For example, in a NYCDOE resource guide entitled *Mastering the Schedule* (2014), stipulations such as contractual class size, teachers per grade and high school periods per grade as tabulated so principals can determine how many teachers they need for their school program. A half-day Pre-K class allows for 18 students, 1.2 teachers, and one UFT paraprofessional. Whereas an elementary classroom in grades four through six, allows for 32 students and a teacher allotment of 1.4, with no paraprofessional.

Critics of the Renewal School model have highlighted the discrepancies and waste in FSF being heavily allocated to a small, failing subset of schools. "The education industry's cry that more money will solve the problem is false. We have been putting more money into this system every year for a decade and it hasn't changed" (Shapiro, 2015, p.1). Contrary to this opinion, supporters of the Renewal Model suggest that, "Underfunding has caused many schools to

stumble, and that their transformation will require a major infusion of funding. In fact, some advocates and experts say the city may need to spend even more on the Renewal program than it currently plans to” (Wall, 2015, p. 2).

The elements of effective school turnaround are anchored in the organization’s ability to effectively synthesize and leverage federal and state policies, create and monitor accountability systems, establish and execute effective teacher and principal evaluations, apply models of thought and purpose to drive the work, and fund models to improve student achievement. The Renewal School model has positioned all 86 schools with this opportunity. However, each school was at different entry points in their ability to receive the change that the Renewal School model offered them. In the next section, the researcher examines the role of change in moving organizations forward along with the Renewal School model’s preparation and engagement of 86 schools in their change process.

### **Establishing and Executing Change in an Organization**

In the fall of 2014, 25 of the initial 96 Renewal Schools were spotlighted by officials in the NYSED as “out of time schools” due to their persistent academic failure. These schools were notified that via a receivership meeting they would know their fate of existence since New York State designated them as failing. At the completion of the receivership meetings, it was determined that Carmen Farina, NYCDOE’s school Chancellor would be the receiver of the schools and hence began the Renewal School model as we presently know it (Office of School Renewal, NYCDOE, 2014). These schools along with the other identified Renewal Schools were given three years to improve academically and meet state mandated benchmarks. If they failed to do so, they faced the possibility of closure or management by another organization such as a charter management organization. All of these schools were given immediate notice that

they were Renewal Schools. According to Bennis (2011), it is integral to the success of change management that stakeholders participate in expected changes. They need to be educated and made to feel secure about the impending change as it the district's responsibility to work with the community via communication streams and team work to move a collaborative agenda forward Rorrer, Skrla, & Scheurich (2008). During the receivership process, superintendents, principals, teachers, students, and families were invited to attend, participate, and ask questions during the receivership meetings. However, the designation of Renewal was not up for debate. A new expectation had brought about a change and all stakeholders both students and adult learners were in that space whether they were ready for it or not.

**Adult learning impacts change.** During an address to a group of educational officials in January 2017, NYC Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina stated, "It's up to us to get this right." The "us" in the room were all well positioned due to the nature of their work to influence Renewal Schools. During this meeting, she shared her beliefs that the success of the Renewal School model is dependent on the adult stakeholders' ability to learn and adopt to change, as they are the drivers of teaching and leading in school communities (Farina, 2017). From her point of view, understanding the mechanics of adult learning would assist in the needed changes in utilizing and maximizing the 80 minutes for professional development that occurs every Monday in New York City schools.

Knowles (1980) introduced andragogy theory with the academic world as a way to define the art and science of adult learning. Knowles (1984) concluded that there are five characteristics of adult learners that inform the best ways in which to teach them. They are (1) *self- concept* in which the adult journeys from being a dependent personality to being a self-directed human being, (2) *adult learner experience* acknowledges the accumulated experiences

as an increased resource for learning, (3) *readiness to learn* where the adult's readiness to learn grows to the expected tasks of his/her role, (4) During the *orientation to learning stage* adults transition from knowing information to applying what they know, and (5) motivation to learn explains that adults reach a stage where learning is driven from an internal as opposed to an external source (Knowles, 1984). In that same year, Kolb (1984) introduced a learning style inventory that operated on two levels. The first was a four stage learning cycle and the second stage was four separate learning styles. Kolb (1984) claimed that, "Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p.38). The four stage learning cycle positions the learner to reach all four experiences. The first stage is the *concrete stage*. During this stage the learner has the experience and are "doing" the actual learning. The second stage is the *reflective observation* stage. During this stage, the learner reviews or reflects on the experience. The third stage is the *abstract conceptualization* in which the learner makes conclusions and learns from the experience. The fourth and final stage is *active experimentation*. In this stage the learner plans and tries out what he/she has learned. Kolb (1984) also set forth four learning styles. (1) Learners with a *diverging* leaning style are able to look at things from different perspectives and prefer to observe rather than do by using their imagination to solve problems. (2) Learners with an *assimilating* learning style prefer logic, ideas, and concepts rather than interactions with people. (3) Learners with *converging* learning styles use their learning to solve problems to practical solutions and are more concerned with technical tasks than people. (4) Learners with *accommodating* learning styles rely on intuition and logic via hands on experiences and experiential approaches.

According to Kegan's (1999) constructive-developmental theory, human beings continuously make sense of their experience and over time prescribe different meanings to their

experiences. This is how growth and change occurs. Furthermore, “Research suggests that in any school or team, it is likely that adults will be making sense of their experiences in developmentally different ways. Therefore, we need to attend to developmental diversity in order to understand and attend to our different ways of knowing (Drago-Severson, 2008, p. 61).

Drago-Severson (2008), proposes three ways of knowing that adults exercise. “A person’s way of knowing shapes how she understands her role and responsibilities as a teacher, leader, and learner, and how she thinks about what makes a good teacher, what makes a good leader, what constitutes effective teaching practice, and the types of supports and developmental challenges she needs from colleagues to grow from professional learning opportunities (Drago-Severson, 2008, p. 61). The three ways of knowing are: (1) The instrumental way of knowing, (2) the socializing way of knowing, and (3) the self-authorizing way of knowing.

A person who has an instrumental way of knowing has a very concrete orientation to life... A person who makes meaning mostly with a socializing way of knowing has an enhanced capacity for reflection... Adults with a self-authorizing way of knowing have the developmental capacity to generate their own internal value system, and they take responsibility for and ownership of their own internal authority” (Drago-Severson, 2008, p. 61).

Aligned to Drago-Severson (2008), Falasca (2011) considers adult learning as adults participating in their own learning via the actual span of learning from early childhood to the adulthood life experiences.

Adults are autonomous and self-directed, they need to be free to direct themselves; adults have accumulated a foundation of life experiences and knowledge that may include work-related activities, family responsibilities, and

previous education; adults are relevancy-oriented, they must see a reason for learning something (Falasca, 2011, p. 584).

Falasca (2011) also considers the differences between adult learners and children as learners. “Adults are different from children and youth as learners in many respects and therefore different methods from those of traditional pedagogy would be likely to be more effective with them” (Falasca, 2011, p. 585). Furthermore, the research pushes on the uniqueness of adults as learners by determining that, “No two adults perceive the world in the same way...adult learners need to understand that they themselves decide what occurs for them in the learning event (Falasca, 2011, p. 585). In order for the latter to occur, the adult learner needs to see how new learning is beneficial to the work in which they are engaged. Merriam and Bierema (2014) also support this claim highlighting that adults are positioned to balance the implications of life such as family, work, and health. Whereas a child’s full time activity in life is simply learning.

According to Falasca (2011), the two major barriers to adult learning as “external or situational, and internal or dispositional” (Falasca, 2011, p. 585). The external barriers are the influences that are outside of the individual that are beyond their control. The internal barriers “reflect personal attitudes, such as thinking one is too old to learn” (Falasca, 2011, p. 586). To overcome these barriers to adult learning Galbraith (2004) determined that adult learners need to be involved in the planning of their learning, assess their learning needs, create their learning objectives, identify their learning resources, execute their learning plans, and evaluate their own learning. Furthermore, feedback given to adults need to be specific and offer a reward for learning. These findings lead Falasca (2011) to conclude that,

Adult educators will be able to ‘bridge the gap’ as long as they provide a climate conducive to learning and view themselves as participating in a dialogue between equals with learners (Falasca, 2011, p. 588).

In conjunction with this claim, Kearsley (2010) suggested that adult learners should be active participants in the planning and evaluation of their lessons. Furthermore, he stresses the importance of honoring adult experiences by teaching subjects that are most relevant to their personal lives and job from a problem-centered stance as opposed to a content-oriented stance. Similarly, Pappas (2013) suggests that because of adults’ multitude of life responsibilities, learning opportunities need to possess a high level of expectation where the teaching is concrete and useful to the adult’s immediate life. In agreement with Pappas (2013), Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, and Cohen (2007) attest that pre and in-service professional development for school leaders should be rigorous, multifaceted, and allow for participants to focus on instructional and transformational leadership.

A review of the literature indicates that adult learners need to be seen as uniquely different from child learners. Whether you consider the “ways of knowing” or the need for adults to be the authors of their learning experiences, Chancellor Farina’s charge of, *It’s up to us to get this right* positions designers of professional development to consider the needs of adults as they draft and execute curriculum and design the structure of the Renewal initiative to be received by the students as well as the adult stakeholders.

**Facilitating organizational change.** Throughout the history of organizational change management, theorists have set forth models of change that have driven the course of transformation in institutions. Change is an outcome effect of innovation (Covey, 1989).

West et al. (2003) assert that innovation is the new and improved way of doing what was once considered the norm. Change models provide the difference between stagnation and innovation. They use stages, steps, and images to guide leaders towards desired change that propel their organizations forward. Kotter (1996) is one of the most referred to change models in operationalizing change management. This model suggests that leaders should employ eight steps to affect change in organizations. They are: (1) create a sense of urgency to clarify the purpose of the change, (2) shape a vision to steer change, (3) raise a force of people who are ready, willing, and able to affect change, (4) remove 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. Appelbaum, Habashy, Malo & Hisham (2010) claimed that Kotter's model lacked rigor, but acknowledged that it is considered landmark research in the area of change management. Moreover, Balogun and Hailey (2004) assert that change is not a process that can easily be achieved through a step or stage recipe. Their claim indicates that change is not a linear process, but multidirectional one with no ordinal sequencing. To counteract these criticisms, Kotter (1996) clarified that his eight steps address the basic changes in how businesses operate and cope with change in new challenging markets. Furthermore, he affirms that change is messy and filled with surprises. Therefore, he too agreed

that change is not linear and that there are no absolutes in change. Todnem (2005) suggests that Kotter (1995) be used in conjunction with other models to find the outcomes for change.

Lewin (1951) provided three steps for innovation and change in an organization. They are (1) unfreezing the organization by diagnosing the need for change and then eliminating the attitude that stakeholders have against the change, (2) changing or transitioning the organization towards the new behavior. During this step, the organization experiences the change and makes adjustments to engage the new expectation, and (3) the refreezing stage where the organization is gets locked into a new condition; establishing the change as the new normal for the organization. Stage two of Lewin (1951) is the most challenging for organizations as that is when they go through the transition of making the change a new reality. Bridges (2009) claims that, “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). The 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) states that it is the leader's responsibility to assist its stakeholders in letting go of past expectations and structures. 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) except 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... 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 (Bridges, 2009, pp. 58-60).

Hayes (2010) integrates Lewin (1951) and aspects of Kotter (1995) but doesn't consider the role of transitions as proposed by Bridges (2009) into his five-stage model for change. He claims that in order for organizations to effectively change they have to (1) acknowledge the need for change and analyze the reason for change, (2) diagnose the current state, design a new future, and create a sense of urgency for the current stakeholders, (3) create a timeline that depicts the plan for the change management team, (4) implement the change and review the outcomes, and (5) make a plan for sustaining the change, which is similar to refreezing stage in the Lewin (1951) model. Schein (2010) identifies three stages of change. 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. Integrating aspects of Lewin (1951) and Kotter (1996), Schein (2010) believes that change begins with creating a sense of urgency. He states that, "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 (Schein, 2010, p. 300)". He refers to this stage as unfreezing. There are three stages of unfreezing: (1) data is presented that causes a serious disruption, (2) connect the data to important goals and ideals, and (3) be able to see a possibility of solving the problem and learning something new without loss of identity or integrity (Schein, 2010, pp. 300-301). Once the organization is unfrozen, Schein (2010) believes

that the change process proceeds along a number of pathways that reflect either new learning, through trial and error or imitation of role models. The leader is free to choose the pathway that will end in the goals he/she wishes to achieve, but, “Imitation and identification work best when (1) it is clear what the new way of working will be, and when (2) the concepts to be taught are themselves clear” (Schein, 2010, p. 310). The final stage in Schein (2010) change process is refreezing. During this stage, new learning must result in a favorable outcome. If it doesn't, the change process must begin again.

Each of the change models in this review facilitate transformation in an existing organization utilizing stakeholders, culture, and problem solving skills. This is an indicator that change represents the assets that already exist in an organization (Balogun et al., 2004). Furthermore, while the stage and/or step are listed numerically, there is limited linearity when approaching change. It is a fluid process that requires flexibility and focus to acquire the needed transformation (Covey, 1989). Change is an ongoing process that never ends (Weick and Quinn, 1999). It requires getting an organization to change its habits and behaviors so that members are able to participate in a collaborative environment that drives the work through conversations and meaningful and authentic networks (Daly, 2010).

### **Effective Educational Leadership**

**Principal leadership behaviors.** A principal's leadership is contingent on their ability to set high expectations anchored in goals for all stakeholders. Their behaviors and habits are the catalysts for transformation (McKinney, 2015). Burns (1978) describes the transformational leader as one who raises the consciousness of followers via inspiration and mobility. He claimed that meeting the needs of subordinates helps leaders exert influence over their followers. Bass (1985) called transformational leaders “change agents” who could move and inspire followers

beyond their known limits. Howell and Avolio (1993) contend that transformational leaders are holders of a larger vision in which stakeholders identify and align themselves. Furthermore, they claim that, transformational leaders are not confined to the limits of the organization. Instead, they expand the organization to meet the possibilities of the vision. Hackman and Johnson (2000) go beyond the idea that transformational leaders hold vision. They found that transformational leaders are creative, visionary, interactive, empowering, and passionate. A school leader who possesses these characteristics is transformational in nature (Rowland & Higgs, 2013). Furthermore, they have a strong capacity to monitor student progress and therefore, increase student performance (Lezotte and Snyder, 2011).

According to Elmore (2000), a leader's visibility practices such as participating on teacher teams, visiting classrooms, and enacting effective data analysis and application improves student achievement. Closely aligned to Elmore (2000), Catano and Stronge (2006) offer a pragmatic assessment of a leader's effectiveness and attest that it's their daily practices and management of occurrences that define their effectiveness. According to Schawbel (2011), these qualities of transformational leadership are significant through the lens of emotional intelligence. Schawbel (2011) contends that when a leader possesses self-awareness, self-management, and empathy they are higher performing and are able to institute change as they understand the emotional needs of their team and respond in accordance. In conjunction with Schawbel (2011), Fiedler (2006) claims that a leader's knowledge of his or her strengths and deficiencies determines effectiveness. Whereas Hallinger (2011) contends that it is a leader's situation that determines their ability to be effective. Chapman (2010) considers the elements of school turnaround a leadership situation and claims that a multitude of approaches and talents need to be applied to help a turnaround leaders achieve effectiveness. Chapman (2010) shares that a

leader's ability to analyze data, identify patterns in student achievement, facilitate urgency and mutual accountability, establish goals, and face and overcome barriers enable them to achieve success. Therefore, it is this combination of expansive ability and situational awareness that enable turnaround school leaders to be effective.

Bolman and Deal (2006) presents the leadership stances of the wizard and the warrior. "The warrior's world is a place of combat, of allies and antagonists, courage, and cowardice, honor, and betrayal, strength and weakness" (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 3). Whereas, "The wizard inhabits a realm of possibility, magic, and mystery. The wizard's strength lies not in arms or physical courage, but in wisdom, foresight, the ability to see below and above appearances" (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 3).

Bolman and Deal (2006) present three distinct roles of warriors. They are (1) toxic, (2) relentless, and (3) principled. "Toxic warriors are often tragic figures who destroy more than they create" (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 29). To counteract toxicity, Bolman and Deal (2006) recommend that managers develop alertness about their behavior via receiving feedback from constituents to develop a strong sense of self-awareness where they would be enabled to replace old behaviors with new habits. "Relentless warriors also have demons, but their hunger for combat is more disciplined. Relentless warriors are passionate about their aims" (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 37). In this category of warrior, Bolman and Deal (2006) portray Bill Gates, Carly Fiorina, and George W. Bush as relentless warriors who "Make almost as many enemies as friends, but their focus, passion, and persistence often make them leaders of extraordinary impact" (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 46). The principled warrior changes history and leaves a legacy that is committed to a larger purpose. "They are the warriors most likely to be

remembered far more for what they built than for what they destroyed” (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 54).

Bolman and Deal (2006) present three distinct roles of wizards. They are (1) authentic, (2) wannabe, and (3) harmful. “Authentic wizards have discovered their passion or calling through hard work and inner reflection” (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 92). Furthermore, authentic wizards are wise as they exercise integrity by bridging and aligning their words to their deeds often applying symbols and rituals to memorialize events and leadership opportunities. The wannabe wizard gets, “Caught up in their noble intentions and anticipated success, only to trip over unforeseen events” (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 104). The wannabe wizard often underestimates the cultural values of the organization and over-estimates the power of their own image as a lever for success. The harmful wizard, is “Self-serving, sinister, or both” (Bolman and Deal, 2006, p. 115). This wizard vacillates between the role of the victim and the villain with a limited view that often leads to a destructive path.

Toxic warriors and harmful wizards can be authoritarian in nature. Nystrand (2001) contended that the authoritarian model of leadership is most dominant in American schools. This model sets limits on communication, job duties, and leadership capabilities and capacities. According to Nystrand (2001), effective principals balance goal setting and the demonstration of strong interpersonal skills. Therefore, he suggests that high performing leadership is a result of bridging being task-oriented and understanding the value of human capital. Whether leaders enact their inner wizard or warrior, Fiedler (2006) contends that leaders must know their strengths and deficiencies. Applied to schools, leaders who choose to lead in aligned with their leadership characteristics are able to build a strong, mobile culture. Furthermore, Vroom, Jago, and Arthur (2007), propose that strengths and deficiencies can be ameliorated via the application

of contingency theory. This theory supports distributive leadership, where tasks and expectations are shared to counteract deficiencies and empower strengths. There are six Contingency Leadership Strategies. They are “rewarding all staff members for goals attained, facilitating and fostering student achievement, active involvement in instructional supervision, clear expectations for staff members, reduction of academic obstacles, and performance-based incentives for teachers meeting and exceeding academic goals (McKinney, 2015, p. 158).

A principal’s leadership style is exhibited in their behaviors and characteristics. These traits are closely linked to their ability to improve or hinder the performance of their stakeholders (Hoy & Miskel, 2007). Kelley et al. (2005) suggests that the principal is the most important factor in student achievement. Therefore, whether they are transformational leaders, wizards, or warriors; school leadership has a responsibility to be mindful of how their behaviors whether anchored in authoritarian or contingency theory influence and affect students and teachers.

**Effective principals.** Being a principal of a school is extremely complex. School leaders must provide direction for staff members and exercise influence in order to move student achievement. This process requires simultaneous development of people and the organization. In collaboration with stakeholders, effective principals articulate a vision, create shared meaning and language that drives school culture, and monitors the organization’s performance (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003). Furthermore, successful principals interconnect building vision, understanding, and developing people, redesigning the organization, managing the teaching, learning program via staff motivation, commitment, and facilitating healthy working conditions (Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins, 2008). According to Horng and Loeb (2010), success is not only contingent on the leader’s personal leadership strengths and behaviors. The researchers claim that principal success is heavily anchored in their hiring practices of teachers. These

researchers call for an expanded view of instructional leadership that considers personnel and resources allocation practices as integral to student achievement. They argue that principal presence in the classroom doesn't compensate for day-to-day teaching and learning. Horng and Loeb (2010) conclude that, successful principals are strong managers who are able to use their organizational management skills to hire effective teachers. This requires the leader to know and understand budget allocation, human resource management, and how to support and grow a work environment. In conjunction with this study, Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010), claim that when principals prioritize organizational management, student outcomes improve. In this study, the researchers indicate that classroom observations do not improve student achievement. Instead, it is principals' attention to organizational management that increases the school leaders' effectiveness and accelerates student learning. Contrary to Horng et al., (2010), Hallinger (2011) declares that a leader's effectiveness depends on the leadership situation. This researcher cites external factors such as staff characteristics, hierarchy, availability of resources, and power dynamics as strong indicators of a leader's success. Moreover, Hallinger (2011) claims that leaders need to build human capacity as opposed to only hire strong teaching candidates. In conjunction with Hallinger (2011), Hargreaves and Fink (2003) claim that, school leaders need to lead learning and foster shared leadership that connects community and builds stakeholders' capacity for teaching. Both Horng et al. (2010) and Hallinger (2011) present arguments in support of student achievement. Anchored in a similar intent, Waters, Marzano, & McNulty (2004) conducted a meta-analysis that focused on the relationship between school leadership and student achievement. They found that principal leadership is highly correlated with student achievement and that there are strong links between specified principal behaviors and student learning. One such behavior was the extent to which the principal "is aware of the details and

undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems” (Waters et al., 2004, p. 4). Indicating that, “effective leadership means more than knowing what to do—it’s knowing when, how, and why to do it” (Waters et al., 2004, p. 2).

Linking principal effectiveness to school leader responsibilities was an inherent principle embedded in Waters, Marzano, & McNulty (2004). This quantitative study of historic, research-based principal responsibilities determined the impact that leadership duties have on student achievement. The researchers reviewed over 5000 studies and found 70 that met their established criteria of “Quantitative student achievement data; student achievement measured on standardized, norm-referenced tests or some other objective measure of achievement; student achievement as the dependent variable; and teacher perceptions of leadership as the independent variable” (Waters et al., 2004, p. 3-4). From this research, Waters et al. (2004) established a list of 21 responsibilities that effective school principals exercise. The researchers then aligned each responsibility to the impact that it had student achievement due to the leadership characteristic’s statistical significance. The 21 responsibilities of effective principals are affirmation, change agent, communication, contingent rewards, culture, discipline, flexibility, focus, ideals/beliefs, input, intellectual stimulation, involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, monitoring/evaluating, optimizing, order, outreach, relationship, resources, situational awareness, and visibility (Waters et al. 2004). “The authors imparted that the improvement of a principal on the 21 responsibilities by one standard deviation would translate to the improvement of student achievement from the 50<sup>th</sup> to the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile on a standard achievement test, which would be a significant gain” (Rammer, 2007, p. 69). Waters et al. (2004) had three core findings. The first finding quantified the general effect of leadership where the researchers claim that, “We can now reasonably assert the strength of the

correlation .25” (Waters et al., 2004, p 2) as a significant gain to move student achievement. The researcher’s second finding identified 66 leadership practices of which 21 leadership practices showed statistically significant relationships (.25 or higher) to student achievement. The third finding focused on “differential impact” of leadership.

That is, just as leaders can have a positive impact on achievement, they also can have a marginal or— even worse—a *negative* impact on achievement... In some studies, we found an effect size of .50 for leadership and achievement. This means a one standard deviation difference in demonstrated leadership ability is associated with as much as a 19-percentile point increase in student achievement... In other studies, we found correlations as low as -.02. This indicates that schools where principals demonstrated higher competence in certain leadership areas had *lower* levels of student achievement. In these studies, a one standard deviation improvement in leadership practices was correlated with a one-percentile point *decrease* in student achievement (Waters et al., 2004, p. 5).

Waters et al. (2004) is often compared to Cotton (2003) who presented 25 essential traits and behaviors of effective principals that are connected to student success in the areas of academic achievement, student attitudes, and social behavior. The 25 traits are categorized in five categories that consider leaders’ habits as it relates to student learning, interaction, school culture, instruction, and accountability. Unlike Waters et al. (2004), Cotton (2003) examines leadership differences between elementary and secondary principals, male and female principals, and principals who work in high and low socioeconomic schools to determine the 25 essential traits of leadership. This difference in research methodology was counteracted by Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2004) that stipulated that while all 21 responsibilities are important,

principals are encouraged to utilize and differentiate them according to the level or change impact they are trying to accomplish.

## **Summary**

Chapter 2 of this study presented the review of the literature in support of the investigation of leadership practices among Renewal Schools principals that yield success. The researcher conducted the literature review considering the research questions of the study. They are: (1) what are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools? (2) How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success? (3) What model(s) of professional development is (are) most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success? The literature review explored these research questions via four sections. (1) The history of school reform, (2) the elements of effective school turnaround, (3) establishing and executing change in an organization, and (4) the characteristics of effective educational leadership. By combining these four sections, the researcher comprehensively investigated the process and possibility of transforming struggling schools into ones that succeed. The researcher chose to launch the chapter with the history of school reform in the United States as turning failing schools around has been historically influenced by federal policy and state compliance. Furthermore, the researcher provided context as to what distinguished turnaround schools versus schools in good standing, the significance of change management, and aspects of educational leadership that impact school turnaround such as the usage of data, teacher and leader evaluations, and the behavioral responsibilities of effective principals. Therefore, chapter two provided the researched-based context that guides school turnaround. Chapter three of this investigation will examine the methodology used by the

researcher to conduct this investigation of leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter documents the research methodology that guided this investigation of successful leadership practices that improve Renewal Schools. As described in chapter one, the purpose of this study is to investigate leadership practices among principals that successfully address the New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Renewal School model. In this chapter, the researcher describes the methodology of this research by detailing the elements that guided the research process and fulfilled its purpose. The methodology for this investigation includes describing the research design, the research questions, explaining the population and sample of participants, detailing the interview process and questions, presenting the sampling method, stating the procedures of reliability and validity of the research, and explaining the data collection and analysis process.

#### **Research Design**

The research design is a qualitative study that used grounded theory design as a method for exploring the various viewpoints raised by the investigation's participants. Using this approach assisted the researcher in exploring the perceptions of the school leaders as it provides flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing data. Furthermore, grounded theory design is considered a viable approach for skilled researchers to apply to qualitative studies as it allows for researcher and participant processing, action, and interaction (Creswell, 2007).

#### **Sample and Sampling Procedures (Participants of the Study)**

Purposeful sampling was used to select the volunteers. This approach provided intentional sampling that assisted the researcher, "To better understand a central phenomenon

of a site or selected individuals” (Creswell, 2012, p. 206). The subject selection was based on principal performance data that indicated achieved New York State publically mandated benchmarks. The researcher reviewed the publically available Renewal Schools website that lists all (original) 94 Renewal Schools and their data to assess the highest performers as determined by New York State. This review indicated that three Renewal Schools met all of their 2015-2016 targets, and 45 Renewal Schools met at least half of their goals during 2015-2016. The researcher then reviewed and selected the top 1/3 of schools that (closely) accomplished their goals in alignment with the expectations of the NYSED. This resulted in the researcher assessing a performance combination that considered attendance, state test scores in English language arts and math, credit accumulation in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, graduation rates for high schools, pass rates on Regents exams and course completion. 18 schools (three who met their benchmarks and the top 1/3 of 45 Renewal Schools who met 1/2 their goals-15; totaling 18 schools) across seven districts were selected. The researcher then sought and received approval from the Office of the Superintendents to recruit participants (principals and superintendents) for the study via mailings with addresses retrieved from the New York City Department of Education website (Appendix 3). 12 out of the 18 solicited participants responded and were interviewed for this study.

For the purpose of this study, 12 education leaders, both superintendents and principals, in the New York City Department of Education were interviewed. Six participants were Renewal School superintendents and six participants were Renewal School principals. The researcher chose the top 12 responding participants (superintendents and principals) whose schools closely met the NYSED benchmark expectations out of 18 who met the criteria. Participants 13-18 were more than 13.5 percentage points away from participants 1-12.

Furthermore, the researcher considered that Renewal Schools are not evenly distributed throughout New York City, and that there is no equality of ratio for the supervision of superintendent to principal for Renewal Schools. These findings reinforced the researcher's choice of the top 12 participants who were closest in performance metrics and representative of the NYCDOE borough and district distribution as support for the purpose of the study and provided the researcher with reliability for the research questions.

### **Research Questions**

The researcher used the theoretical framework of Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) to design the research questions. Marzano et al., (2005) identified 21 responsibilities that have statistically significant correlations between the responsibility and improved student achievement Table 1 in chapter one lists the 21 responsibilities. The research questions that guided this investigation were:

1. What are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools?
2. How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success?
3. What model(s) of professional development is (are) most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success?

### **Instrumentation**

This qualitative study utilized an interview as the data collection instrument. The interview questions allowed participants to reflect on their experience, respond with big ideas and details, and move beyond the realm of 'yes' and/or 'no' responses that provide little to no insight. Through asking open-ended questions, the researcher provided an opportunity for

participants to discuss in depth the core elements that lead to school transformation. Patton (1987) contends that researchers may use informal talk, an interview guide, or an open-ended interview as possible strategies for interviewing. The researcher chose the interview guide approach as the structure enable for systemic data collection from each participant.

### **Data Collection:**

This qualitative study used interviewing as its method to collect data from the subjects. The interview questions for this study were developed by examining the research of Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2005) and expanded the ideas embedded in the three-core research questions. Once the researcher completed the recruitment process, each participant was contacted and given an overview of the interview process and the associated paperwork to review. The researcher also scheduled the interview date, time, and location with the participants. Since the interviews required one hour of the participants' time, the researcher offered a great degree of flexibility of dates and times to meet participants' schedules.

The researcher asked each participant 10 open-ended interview questions that allowed each participant to reflect, consider examples, and go beyond "yes" "no" responses. The researcher began each interview with the following opening script, *"I am conducting an investigation of leadership practices that yield in successful Renewal Schools. Today I am conducting an interview with Principal/Superintendent (confidentiality number). The interview will consist of 10 questions. Principal/Superintendent (confidentiality number) has a copy of the questions. I will begin with the first question"*. Each participant of the study was asked the same questions. The interview questions are located on Appendix 9. In closing, the researcher stated, *"This concludes the interview. Thank you for your time and responses."*

During the interviews, the researcher used an audio recording device to capture

the interview. Following the interview, the researcher transcribed the recording via the transcription service *Transcribeme!* The transcription was used to code, organize findings, and identify trends. The audio recording was only used to conduct a data analysis and was not played for an audience beyond the researcher. Once the recording analyses were complete, the recordings were placed into a secured file cabinet with a lock in a secured room that was locked. The recordings will remain in this secured location for three years. In addition, the researcher took descriptive notes to ensure that the participants' responses were comprehensively captured and documented.

### **Reliability**

To ensure reliability within the study, the researcher worked with experts in the field of Renewal Schools and conducted practice interviews. Additionally, the researcher asked several clarifying questions about official documentation and expectations to ensure that the interview questions were aligned to the research and would be fit for the participants' engagement in the interview process.

### **Validity**

The researcher used the same set of questions for all of the participants in the research. To accomplish this expectation, the researcher recited a script that was consistently read at the start of the interview. The researcher also allowed participants to answer the questions without interruptions from the interviewer. Participants were given a name identifier and were referred to as such during the course of the research. Additionally, the researcher conducted a member check of the transcripts with the participating subjects to ensure that their statements were accurate and in alignment with what they intended to express. Lastly, the researcher had experts from the Office of School Renewal and the Office of the

Superintendents review the research questions and interview questions during this investigation. Both offices agreed that the questions were contextualized in the research of Water et al.(2005) and were relevant to the expectations of Renewal Schools.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis process for this study included transcribing and organizing notes by theme or category using a coding process that identified the data and the information stated by the participants. To do this successfully, the researcher followed these four steps after each interview, (1) organize the data, (2) review all the information, both notes and the recordings, (3) code the information based on the understanding of what was collected and (4) categorize the information. The transcription process was handled by *Transcribeme!* This transcription service took the audio and converted it into narrative form. For step three and four, the researcher used NVivo services to code and classify the data. The researcher entered the data into NVivo and then this tool assisted the researcher with identifying recurring terms, themes, and phrases per participant. Once the data was categorized, the researcher considered the number of participants' responses in each category and classified them into themes that occurred the most in each category. The researcher then referred to the interview questions and considered how they aligned to the research questions to determine which themes applied to which research questions. Once this was completed, the researcher was able to match themes, which were then identified as the answers to the research questions.

### **Researcher Bias**

Prior to this study, the researcher served as a middle school principal for seven years. Three of those seven years was in a school that was set to phase-out due to academic failure of the students. The researcher was placed in the school by education officials to

manage the closure and then restructure the school into a new middle school based on community needs. Once the school was phased-out, the researcher was a principal for four years in the newly restructured the school; which was an academically top performing middle school in the NYCDOE. The researcher acknowledges that there may be unintended bias towards closing schools to ameliorate failure as opposed to “renewing” them toward achievement due to the success of this experience. It is for this reason that the researcher examined turnaround models, case studies of turnaround, and participated on the Renewal School steering committee to gain greater insight and set understanding about the work of turnaround with newly learned researched parameters that prevent bias.

### **Summary**

Chapter three presented the details, methods, and procedures for this investigation on leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools in the New York City Department of Education. As a qualitative study that is anchored in the theoretical framework of Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) using interviewing of participants as its prime data collection tool, the researcher acquired greater insight based on participant experience and paralleled that information with student performance data to determine leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools.

Chapter four presents the findings of this investigation via the presentation of quotes and statements aligned to the three research questions from the participants in the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to investigate leadership practices among principals that successfully address the New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Renewal School model. This qualitative study highlights and explores the point of views of 12 New York City Department of Education leaders, six of whom are principals of Renewal Schools and six of whom are superintendents of Renewal Schools. The researcher collected data for this study via individual interviews of the 12 participants the following three research questions:

1. What are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools?
2. How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success?
3. What model(s) of professional development is (are) most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success?

Chapter 4 provides the findings for each of the three research questions via an overview of the methodology, themes that were prevalent per questions, and a summary of the chapter.

#### **Participants**

Twelve (12) participants took part in this study. Of these 12 participants, five were male and seven were female. At the time of the study, all participants were leaders of Renewal Schools in the New York City Department of Education. Table 2 depicts the pseudonym, gender, role, and date of the interview details of the participants.

Of the 12 participants, three were elementary principals serving grades PreK-5, one was a middle school principal serving grades 6-8, two were high school principals serving

grades 9-12, four were Community School District Superintendents serving grades Pre K-8, and one was a High School Superintendents serving grades 9-12. Five participants' schools are located in Brooklyn. One participant's school is located in Manhattan. Two participants' schools are located in Queens. Three participants' schools are located in the Bronx and zero participants are located in Staten Island as there are no Renewal Schools in that borough. Each participant was asked ten interview questions (see Appendix 2), which were aligned to the research questions. Table 3 provides information on the alignment between the interview questions and the research questions. Table 4 summarizes the alignment between the interview questions and the themes.

**Table 2***The Demographics of the Participants*

Participant	Role	Gender	Date of Interview
S0001	Superintendent	Female	March 11, 2017
P0002	Principal	Male	March 13, 2017
P0003	Principal	Female	March 13, 2017
S0004	Superintendent	Male	March 13, 2017
P0005	Principal	Female	March 14, 2017
P0006	Principal	Male	March 14, 2017
P0007	Principal	Male	March 16, 2017
S0008	Superintendent	Female	March 17, 2017
P0009	Principal	Female	March 17, 2017
S0010	Superintendent	Male	March 21, 2017
S0011	Superintendent	Male	March 22, 2017
S0012	Superintendent	Female	March 24, 2017

**Table 3***Interview Questions aligned to Research Questions*

Interview Questions	Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Research Question 3
1	X		
2			
3		X	
4			X
5	X		X
6	X	X	X
7		X	X
8	X		
9	X		X
10		X	

**Table 4***Interview Questions (IQ) and Themes*

Themes	I Q 1	I Q 2	I Q 3	I Q 4	I Q 5	I Q 6	I Q 7	I Q 8	I Q 9	I Q 10
Organizational Management Resilience through Managing Difficulty	X	X					X	X	X	
Demonstrates Emotional Intelligence	X			X			X	X	X	X
Improve Systemic Communication	X	X		X		X	X	X		X
Make Data-driven Decisions		X			X	X	X			
Instructional Leadership	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Turnaround Leadership as Unique			X	X	X		X			X
Evaluating Leadership and Pedagogy			X	X	X	X	X			X

**Research Question One: What are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools?**

Question one investigates the critical attributes to leaders' success in Renewal Schools. The data used for analyzing research question one were based on responses of participants to interview questions one, five, six, eight, and nine. The participants' responses generated three themes. They are *organizational management, resilience, and emotional intelligence*. In the following sections, the researcher will share the interviewees' responses and themes to research question number one.

**Research Question 1-Theme 1: Organizational management.** Eight out of 12 participants cited a leader's organizational ability as a key factor in being able to be successful as a school leader in a Renewal School. The interviewees shared that organizational management needs to occur via strong systems and structures that are embedded with creativity, fairness, and trust to ensure that leadership that succeeds.

P0060 stated, “When it comes to leading a Renewal School, organization is a must. You have to handle everything that is happening in your building on a day-to-day basis but then also, all the different meetings, and visitors coming into your school. Organizing time and being very structured is a priority”. Other leaders shared a similar perspective regarding organizational management focusing in on the systems that need to be considered when organizing for success.

Interviewee S0010 stated,

Organization and knowledge is key. Putting systems and structures in place that would allow the school to function is integral to success. Systems such as putting in time for professional development, setting up opportunities for teachers to enter data and align it to instruction on teacher teams, and putting structures in place to make sure that there is parent communication and those parents are given time and opportunities to participate in reforming the school.

Two of the eight interviewees who cited organizational management as a high lever included the need for creativity and innovation into systems for leaders to be successful. Interviewee S0004 stated, “I think a leader who is able to effectively create, implement, and monitor actual systems and programs designed to support them in their efforts are the most successful. In other words, leaders who know what they need to win. This requires creativity, innovation about how one gathers resources, mobilizes the staff, and tracks students’ progress”. Interviewee P0009 cited creativity embedded into systems as a means to survival.

Creativity is crucial to being successful. It’s necessary if you want all of your systems and structures to work. For example, we had to get creative to improve student attendance. Our kids weren’t coming to school and my numbers were in the mid-80s. We started visiting homes, assigned parents and student buddies, the

attendance team had to change how they did logs and connect more with the classroom teachers and the parents, and we created more family events to let parents know we are here for them and their children. It took a lot but now our numbers are in the low 90s. Creativity matters, traditional will not work in a Renewal School.

Three of the eight interviewees cited trust and fairness as integral elements of the organizational systems that Renewal School leaders create in order to achieve success. Interviewee P0005 shared her journey going into a Renewal School and building trust and demonstrating fairness was integral to her success.

When I came into this Renewal School, one of the things I found was that the teachers were beaten down. Even though they were trying hard, nothing was ever good enough. I had to build a sense of trust with them that I was not here to beat them down, but to give them the skills and tools they needed to be successful. I began working alongside them in the classroom, in meetings, with parents. If they were doing the work, so was I. I also think being fair is a quality that you definitely need because teachers need to see what goes for one, goes for all. If one teacher is not doing lesson plans, you can't let them slide by with that and then write another teacher up when they're not doing lesson plans either.

Everyone follows the same suit. Everyone has the same consequences for actions that are not conducive to learning or building the school to be successful.

P0003 added an aspect of personal leadership in conjunction with organizational management by sharing that,

My teachers needed to trust that my systems were going to work for them as opposed to against them. They were hurt from years of failure and it took some time, but they realized that my visibility, time management decisions to be with them during lesson planning, participation in teacher team meetings, and collaboration when analyzing data was not only supervising them, but was with them on the journey to improvement.

The interviewees highlighted and provided insight into how organizational management is key towards a leader's success in a Renewal School. Organizational management is a lever that provides an entryway for the leader to demonstrate their creativity and level fairness and trustworthiness via the creation of systems and structures that provide a clear pathway towards success.

**Research question one- Theme 2: Resilience through managing difficulty.** 12 out of 12 participants agreed that Renewal School leaders need to be resilient and know how to manage challenges. The interviewees labeled challenges as conflicts, resistance, and change that need to be confronted with tenacity and commitment to what interviewee S0011 called, "The greater good of our moral imperative as educators":

Interviewee P0003 stated,

Renewal school leaders need the resilience to be able to manage and maintain the expectations from so many different sources in addition to the staff, parents, and students in their schools. There are many competing priorities and agendas that you have to fight through to get to the bottom line of improving teaching and learning".

Interviewee P0007 shared similar thoughts by stating,

As a Renewal School principal, I'm constantly trying to keep my head above water. I have been a principal before, so I get the challenges, but Renewal is different. Everyone wants your attention. Central, your superintendent, your school, the kids, the parents. Everyone. It's a different challenge. You have to be resilient to get through this. Be mentally tough for kids.

The interviewees also shared similar thoughts on how knowing how to be resilient as you manage change is an integral aspect of Renewal School success. Interviewee P0006 stated,

Resilient, you have to be resilient because they're going to be situations where things will change overnight, and you will have no power over it, but the request must be answered and you are the person to make it happen. You are the principal. So change it, get everybody else- the teachers, the parents, and the kids to believe that the change is necessary, and face the resistance in that. Make it happen, now.

S0008 also highlighted the success element connected to the difficulty of changing the Renewal School community stating that,

My principals who are most successful accept change as a friendly challenge. They help their teachers see the opportunity as opposed to the crisis and they are resilient through the storm. These calm leaders effortlessly make the difference occur like magic. Then the entire school community believes something new about who they are and what they can be for children.

One hundred percent of the interviewees agreed that the leader's capacity made all the difference in being able to navigate change and difficulty. According to S0012,

It's the principal. If the principal can't see the new vision, then the school won't change and it only gets worse with the outside expectations for school leaders in these schools. The principal makes the difference and dictates all outcomes.

Their success is dependent on their tenacity, grit, and resilience.

Five of the 12 interviewees shared how they acquired their "resilience" via job experience and training. P0007 shared that,

I was in charge of ESL and foreign language programs in a very large school. I managed a student population with over 20 languages. I had to know compliance, instruction, programming needs, and how to analyze data to help our English Language Learners (ELLs). These experiences prepared me and gave me the capacity to do this work now as a Renewal School leader.

In a similar vein, S0011 shared that,

I've been to the hall of fame. I've been a teacher, assistant principal, principal. I was a network leader, and then I was a DSR (Director of School Renewal) for one year before I transitioned to a superintendent. I think what prepared me the most, of course was being a principal, but I've worked my whole life in the most struggling, highest needs districts in New York City. I've worked in district 23, district 9, and district 7. Those districts are the most challenging our school system has to offer. That is where I got my best leadership training. Most importantly, I've been successful in turning around some very low performing schools in those districts. That victory gives you the resilience you need.

According to S0001, the training via a leadership pipeline fostered resilience for leading Renewal Schools.

I was trained to take the weakest, most challenging schools in the city of New York. I was trained to build a school from scratch in the neediest places in New York. Because of that, I think I have a very clear understanding of what it takes to shift a school that has been struggling for years, or has not attained the proficiency rates necessary to move the work. I am strategic and deliberate in my decision-making. This builds my resilience and I am able to move schools by being strategic and systemic.

One of the 12 interviewees discussed how they used the Framework for Great Schools to help navigate change in the school by setting new expectations for each of the model's six areas. P0002 stated,

I was so overwhelmed when I first became a Renewal School leader. Everything was in crisis. The school, the teachers, the parents. I had many doubts about what I said yes to. I attended a PD and the Framework was discussed. This model helped me look at the school with new eyes and I worked side-by-side with my teachers to redefine what and who the school community was. I think successful leaders need to have the courage and resilience to manage change. I would also suggest using a research-based model like the Framework to give everyone a common place from which everyone can understand.

As of March 31, 2017, P0002 learned that the school would be removed off the Renewal School list due to success as captured by multiple measures including school-wide and state data assessment, a significant improvement in attendance, and the 4-year graduation rate.

A Renewal School leader's ability to navigate change and be resilient to achieve success was agreed on by one hundred percent of the interviewees as a strong success measure. The

participants felt that resilience was essential to manage change and the elements of difficulty that comes along with change can only be conquered by a Renewal School leader's willingness and ability to push through with determination and commitment resulting in success fostered and nurtured by resilience.

**Research question one- Theme 3: Demonstrates emotional intelligence.** Seven out of 12 of the interviewees stated that a leader's ability to demonstrate emotional intelligence was integral to the success of a Renewal School leader (P0002, P0003, S0004, P0006, S0008, and P0009). In regards to self-awareness as an aspect of Emotional Intelligence, three out of the seven interviews claimed that surveys were integral to them becoming aware of who they are as school leaders in Renewal Schools. P0003 stated,

Taking the 360 survey and getting feedback about my leadership from those who knew me, best, my superintendent, colleagues, teachers and parents, helped me see myself in a new perspective. One thing I learned is that I'm a good listener, but when time is against me, I rush people and cut them off. This helped me change some of my time management strategies and how I communicate urgent matters. For example, I ask for additional time now, before I would drive myself and everyone else crazy.

P0006 also discussed participating in a personal development survey that was administered while in a leadership preparation program. P0006 shared,

When I got the results from the survey, it told me how public speaking was a strength and it made me reflect that I need to use more speaking forums to connect with teachers, parents, and kids. I have now implemented Town Hall

meetings with students to share information with them. Our student infractions have seen a significant decline since these forums began.

Four out of the twelve interviewees shared reflections on their self-management as a winning strategy towards their success. Managing time, resources, and relationships provided the interviewees with opportunities to stay focused on what mattered most, students learning. In regards to time management, S0008 stated,

I tell my principals all of the time that structure diminishes stress. The expectation is that they have daily agendas that chronicle their day is essential to their success. There are derailments at every turn. Effective leaders manage their time and Renewal School leaders are against the clock. My leaders who have demonstrated the most success value the school day as an opportunity to accomplish the mission of kids learning.

P0009 connected self-management to resource management as a lever to leadership success. P0009 shared that,

Valuing certain opportunities over others has helped my budget expand to help students. For example, I do not have a third assistant principal because that would limit afterschool programming and the arts. Instead, I empower my teacher leaders and guidance team to assist in getting the work done. The two biggest gifts I have as a school leader is how I use my time and my money.

Three out of the twelve interviewees shared how building relationships was integral to them succeeding as a Renewal School leader. Collaborating with teachers, parents, and outside partners moved the instructional agenda. In regards to building relationships P0002 stated,

Building relationships is everything to a school leader's success. This can be a challenge because people underestimate the people who are in failing schools and many leaders mess up with their staff because they believe they can't do it because of the history of failure. My attitude was build people up, and find a group of people who are aligned and believe in your mission and vision. You cannot do the work by yourself. This is why I believe in collaborative models. The only way to transform these schools is from the inside out. After all, these people are willing to show up, so you can only be successful with them.

S0004 shared the value of being a Community Learning School-CLS as a resource via an outside partner that has improved social-emotional learning in the school.

Being a Community Learning School has been the game changer for the school. This resource has been transformative to what we have been able to supply for students and families. Due to our community-based partners, we now have more guidance opportunities where students and families participate in advisory classes for college and family counseling. We have also offered laundry and dental services to families as well because of the CLS model. This model shows how much the school cares about the kids and their families and this has created more opportunities for learning because the kids and their parents know we are here for them.

A Renewal School leader's ability to demonstrate emotional intelligence to achieve success was cited as integral to success by seven out of 12 of the interviewees. The participants shared how a leader's willingness and capacity to demonstrate self-awareness, self-management, and empathy creates an opportunity for teaching and learning that is leveraged towards success.

### **Research Question One Findings Summary**

The data collected to answer research question one revealed that in order for principals and superintendents to be successful in Renewal Schools leaders must have strong organizational management skills, be resilient in the face of difficulty, and demonstrate emotional intelligence. Furthermore, a deeper examination of the interviewees' responses revealed that successful organizational management incorporates systems and structures that are creative and innovative and leaders employ effective time management strategies. Resilience through difficulty is birthed via training and experience that refines the leaders' skills and pushes them to success. Resilience is also fostered through the application of a researched-based model, which provides foundational approaches to leadership. Lastly, empathy in leadership strengthens when leaders have an opportunity to assess themselves, are assessed by others, and engage in building and leveraging relationships that benefit students.

### **Research Question Two: How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success?**

Question two investigated how the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) systemically and organizationally positions principals in Renewal Schools for success. By engaging the participants in an interview process with open-ended questions, they were able to reflect and share their experiences of how the NYCDOE's management and support structure facilitated their success. The data for this research was used from responses to interview questions one, two, four, six, seven, and eight (See Appendix 2).

Participant responses were categorized into two themes by the researcher. The first theme is to *improve systemic communication* and the second theme is *make data-driven*

*decisions*. In regards to improving systemic communication, eight out of 12 participants described how information transfers across the organization as compromised and confusing towards principal success. Five out of 12 interviewees described how as district and school leaders they modified received communication from the central offices to engage families and 11 out of 12 participants celebrated the integral role that the Director of School Renewal plays as a facilitator of coherence.

In regards to data-driven decision-making, 12 out of 12 participants shared that the quantitative as well as the qualitative data about students are the most essential indicators for leaders to examine daily. Seven out of 12 participants shared that their training on how to analyze data and how to use it to move instruction was key to their success. Six out of 12 participants discussed the role of teacher and principal evaluation in improving success outcomes. Lastly, seven out of 12 participants shared the necessity of focusing on students' work and task expectations.

**Research Question 2- Theme 1: Improve systemic communication.** In answering the researcher's questions, seven out of 12 interviewees (S0001, S0004, P0007, P0009, S0010, S0011, and S0012) discussed communication challenges with the central offices as impediments to effective communication and success. P0007 stated, "Principals wonder, do the central offices talk to each other"? The researcher captured comparable sentiments from the other interviewees. S0001 stated,

There's not a cohesive plan of action of what professional development is offered by central. As a superintendent, I have to go on the hunt to find what's available and make sense of it for my district. Everything is very scattered, and not necessarily structured in a way to get these schools hearing the same

message and committing to the same or similar actions. There are many messages and it's hard to align it to a city vision so I stick to what works for my district.

Similarly, P0009 shared an experience that highlighted the often-confusing messages between the superintendent's office and the central offices. She shared,

I just listen to my superintendent. He is accessible and near. During the first year as a Renewal School, it was crazy and I didn't know who to listen to for the right answer. This year, it's better, but every once in a while a directive comes down from central and throws me off. I usually call the superintendent, but there have been times when my superintendent is not even aware. You can't achieve or drive achievement when the key players are left out of essential conversations and expectations.

S0012 expressed concerns about a need for more,

Fluidity in communication between the central offices and the superintendents' office. The one experience that held us accountable and connected was the Renewal Room, but they took that away. Many complained about it, but I really liked that because principals had to know their school. The data, the attendance, which teacher was moving instruction, how were going to improve hiring practices. Principals and superintendents had to share in that knowledge to move the school forward. This is no longer an expectation. Now we get invites that say, "If you're available, please join." That choice creates a different type of accountability.

S0011 shared how the title “Renewal School” facilitates flawed enrollment policies and poor communication to families.

I think the label itself is problematic. I think that the other piece that I’d really thought about is the how enrollment manages and communicates with families about Renewal Schools. Both in terms of branding and the fact that even with successful turnaround efforts these schools will continue to struggle if we don’t create greater equity around the model and own our role in improving communication to the surrounding community and in the organization about the real work these schools are doing.

To solve the issue shared by S0011, S0004 revealed that, “My school leadership team and I have been with the district planning team to rename and rebrand the school. No parent wants to send their child to a “Renewal School”. The name compromises success”.

A highlight for seven out of 12 of the interviewees was their respective discussions and reflections about the role of the Director of School Renewal (DSR). The DSR is a member of the Superintendent’s team. Their role is to help manage, guide, and facilitate the Renewal Schools in their districts. S0001 stated, “I think that the DSR/Renewal School coach working in collaboration with the superintendent is one of the most effective ways of moving practice. Because of the DSR, all of my Renewal Schools have a chance at coherence. They speak to central more than I do (as a superintendent)”. Interviewee P0005 stated, “In school coaching is more effective that when we get pull out of our buildings, so I appreciate the work the DSR does on site, we have improved instruction especially assessment because of the data she provides”. P0009 agreed that the DSR is a lever in moving the instructional agenda.

The DSR works with all my Renewal Schools and my priority and focus schools. She is my central office translator, because of her I know what central expects. We talk all the time. She visits the schools 2-4 times a week and has really assisted in strengthening the early childhood literacy programs in the districts. We need to get the kids reading early and the data and professional development she provides has helped us start to move in the right direction.

Renewal School leaders cited the need for improved communication between the central, superintendents', and school offices. In this section, findings revealed that the Renewal School leaders questioned the titled of "Renewal" and expressed that it is a facilitator of failure as parents are not interested in sending their children to a Renewal School. Lastly, the participants celebrated the Director of School Renewal as a highlight and "translator" who communicates successfully between the offices.

**Research Question 2- Theme 2: Make data-driven decisions.** In answering the researcher's questions, 12 out of 12 interviewees discussed the importance of knowing, understanding, and applying data analysis to improve the performance of their schools. S0004 stated, "Principals must know their expected benchmarks, otherwise there is no foundation to plan from". Similarly, P0009 stated, "The benchmarks are set by the state, and it's the school's responsibility to meet those benchmarks by improving student achievement". P0005 agreed and discussed the importance of looking at student progress from a quantitative as well as a qualitative stance.

I measure success by looking at what students can do as of now as opposed to what they could do in September. It's not just test scores, its hearing the vocabulary that they are using, seeing how confident they are in their work,

watching their reading levels improve and yes, it's seeing growth on diagnostic tests.

P0002 shared, "The data let us know that constructed responses are an area that is most crucially in need of attention. This data has totally transformed how we do professional development in the district".

P0005 discussed the challenge of getting teachers data savvy.

As a Renewal School, we had the opportunity to participate in Data Wise at Harvard. This was really an important game changer for me and my teachers as it provided us with a lens about how to read and analyze data. Tiering students and placing them into cohorts affected how we programmed them. We were able to provide additional services like RTI and AIS services, which gave our more struggling learners small group instruction.

S0001 also discussed how Data Wise influenced how the teachers changed their approach to using and accepting data as a lever.

My teachers were not comfortable with data. We had data, the teachers looked at it, they even knew who were the top versus the struggling students in their class, but they didn't use it to really affect classroom instruction. Data Wise made the use of data operational and practical for planning purposes.

Furthermore, S0001 shared that the Data Wise experience was not systematic or coherent in the school district.

Data Wise is an example of how the support looks different depending on the school. For example, Public School AAA's principal attended the Data Wise training and Public School BBB's principal did not attend. BBB received the

professional development via a train the trainer model. That means half of the information was lost.

P0009 lauded Data Wise, but also addressed the concern of the low benchmarks set by the Office of School Renewal. “Data Wise was good, but the benchmarks are so low. So I don’t think that we are really improving student achievement when schools are expected to make gains that are less than one percentage point. That embarrassing and lacks rigor”. S0011 also discussed the low benchmarks that were set. “With all this work we are doing, I’m not clear why the benchmarks are so low. But the even crazier part is that schools are struggling to meet the low expectations”. Contrary to this sentiment, S0012 expressed that the benchmarks were, “Low, but fair to schools that are struggling. These schools need a chance. It is reasonable that the benchmarks are where they are”.

S0012 also expressed gratitude for the I-Ready Assessments provided by the Renewal Office and shared that, “Having the I-Ready Assessments this year was a great opportunity to routinely assess the students, but the messaging got confusing when we were also offered I Read as another assessment. This became too much for students in grades K to two”. S0008 also appreciated the I-Ready assessment, but shared concerns about the turnaround time of the results. “Having a common assessment was great, but the results didn’t come in a timely fashion to make it useful for schools”. S0010 stated, “My teachers used the results even though they came way after they were administered.” Contrary to this statement, interviewee S0011 stated, “The data from I-Ready was useful to the staff, it helped us see the school in real time and we were able to make some modifications in scheduling because of it. In agreement with S0011, P0009 shared, “The DSR was extremely helpful in helping us make sense of the results from the I-Ready

assessments. She worked with the teacher teams and helped us identify teaching gaps that were integrated into lessons. That was a huge learning curve for us this year.”

Half of the interviewees (6) interviewed shared that evaluation data for both principals and teachers influenced the success of their respective schools. Interviewee P0002 shared that, “I reviewed and tracked the Advance data system and compare teacher progress to the professional development that they participated in”. Similarly, interviewee S0001 shared that she reviewed, tracked, and monitored principal development plans via the Principal Performance Observation (PPO) process.

The PPO process is an opportunity for me to track principal growth via the Quality Review indicators. As a district, we are working on the instructional core and I’m seeing how the professional development is improving leadership performance and student performance on interim assessments. I also conduct data talks with the principals as a part of 2.2 (school-based and classroom assessments). Principals must know the data of their schools and connecting their knowledge to their evaluation has been an effective accountability strategy.

S0010 shared that she conducts informal surveys with students and parents to find out how they are progressing in school.

I ask a lot informal questions of parents and students and you learn a lot about leadership, teaching, and expectations in a school. I even talk to student governments to gauge the capacity and level of student voice in the school. My findings have revealed that my Renewal Schools that are student-centric and parent accessible are more successful than the ones that are teacher or adult dominated or centered.

S0011 also discussed the importance of collecting and analyzing data that focuses on students in the classroom.

When I visit schools, I tally the amount of student engagement opportunities I witness. This practice helps us see transformation in the level of student work and student engagement. I was in a Renewal School last week and in every single class, every single student was engaged in the assigned task. That was something I had not seen there before, that is progress. My team and I are also using rubrics with the principals to assess the quality of the tasks that students are doing. I'm seeing how tracking and monitoring changes the instructional conversation with the leader. It also influences the content of the professional development that my team provides the leaders.

P0002 shared how routine classroom visits have affected teacher teams lesson planning and teacher driven professional development,

As a principal, I participate on teacher teams and I insist on the review of student work be a part of each meeting. Student work tells the story of what's happening in the classroom and we spend many meetings reviewing lesson plans and students' work as outcomes. We are learning the habit of monitoring and revising. This so hard, but it's changed our standard and we now reteach as a strategy. This is so different from our previous practice of moving forward.

The result has been more evident progress in our formative assessments.

All participants agreed that Renewal School leaders need to be data savvy to improve teaching and learning in their schools. The participants shared the significance of quantitative and qualitative data as drivers and informers of leader success. The

Renewal School offices have provided the structures and systems in the form of professional development with Harvard's Data Wise methodology and assessments such as I-Ready for English language arts and math. Data has also been assessed in the areas of principal and teacher performance to drive school success. Lastly, participants shared the importance of remaining connected to students and families as they provide real time data whether it be via informal surveys or daily conversations.

### **Research Question Two Findings Summary**

The data collected to answer research question two revealed that the systemic influences and structural design of the Renewal School model would facilitate principal success via an improved communication strategy and using data to make decisions. The participants collectively voiced that there is little to no effective communication structure between the field and the central offices. This compromises communication from superintendents to principals, principals to school community, and school community to families. However, participants commended the role of the Director of School Renewal (DSR) as a beacon who brings clarity and understanding of expectations to the model. In regards to communication participants also shared concerns about the name of the turnaround strategy as *Renewal Schools* out of concern that the messaging of the title impacts and affects how parents and the surrounding community view the schools; namely as a failure. Therefore, parents would not want to send their children to a school known as a Renewal School. Claims in regards to these finding were closely linked to how participants viewed the role of the enrollment division of the NYCDOE as keepers of the type of student populations who are enrolled and funneled into Renewal Schools. "Enrollment impacts this issue. If you put anywhere from 24% to 30% of children in your school with an

IEP and you already have struggling teachers, a struggling leader, you are setting kids up to fail” (S0012, 2017).

Making data-driven decisions was supported by all of the participants as an opportunity for Renewal Schools to make informed decisions. Participants shared the importance of using qualitative as well as quantitative data to understand, assess, and apply transformative teaching and learning strategies. Seven out of 12 participants celebrated their opportunity to participate in Harvard’s Data Wise training, but voiced concerns about the equity of the opportunity as all Renewal School members did not get an opportunity to participate in that professional learning (P0002, S0012, and P0009, 2014). Participants also claimed that having the I-Ready common assessments was a lever towards gaining school-wide perspective on student progress.

Participants P0005, S0010, and S0012 voiced concerns about the timeliness of the data results from the central offices and the superintendents accessibly to the data to help drive professional development. The latter is closely tied to participant commentary on teacher evaluation and principal evaluation as both principals and superintendents in this study claimed that Renewal School leader success was closely linked to tracking, monitoring, and providing targeted professional development to school leaders and teachers that was aligned to their evaluations.

Lastly, participants S0001, P0005, P0009, and S0012 connected their success to paying close attention to the day-to-day data that students and parents provide the school community.

Participants shared the importance of surveying parents and leaders keeping connected to parental feedback via informal surveys. Participants also shared that the data provided in classrooms is viable towards tracking students’ progress. Furthermore, participants spoke of how tracking student expectations, tasks, and voice in the classroom provides real-time data that reveals the opportunity for learning and revised teacher professional development.

**Research Question Three: What model(s) of professional development is (are) most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success?**

Question three investigated the models of professional development employed by the Office of School Renewal that were effective at facilitating Renewal School leaders towards success. By engaging the participants in an interview process with open-ended questions, they were able to reflect and share their experiences of how the NYCDOE's- Office of School Renewal professional development model and structures facilitated their success. The data for this research question was used from participants' responses to interview questions one, four, five, six, seven, and nine.

Participant responses were categorized into three themes by the researcher. The first theme is *instructional leadership*, the second theme is *turnaround leadership is unique, and the third theme is principal and teacher evaluation*. In regards to instructional leadership, 12 out of 12 participants insisted that the Renewal School leader must be and participate in professional development that facilitates and creates an instructional leader. Two of the ten participants shared how they had to change and refine themselves into instructional leaders via professional development supports. Five out of 12 participants discussed instructional leadership as an essential component to a Renewal School leaders' professional learning. Ten out of 12 participants described how participating in professional development that was content and leadership focused assisted in their success as Renewal School leaders. Ten out of 12 participants claimed that being successful Renewal School leaders was deeply aligned to knowing how to conduct professional development that addressed the needs of the adult learner. These participants claimed there is a clear distinction between adult learning and student learning. Seven out 12 participants claimed that their superintendent was a lever of their success

due to their instructional knowledge. Three of these seven participants discussed how their superintendents differentiated professional development for their Renewal School needs. Eight of the 12 participants discussed the importance of leaders participating in professional learning with their teachers or school community members as indicative of their success. Lastly, four of the eight leaders discussed how working in classrooms and on teams with their teachers has been transformative to way their community learns and defines professional development.

In regards to determining turnaround leadership as unique, six out of 12 participants discussed the importance of recognizing Renewal Schools and/or school turnaround situations as unique experiences that require acknowledgement of its uniqueness. Six out of 12 participants discussed professional development that made them demonstrate mastering difficulty, especially with high needs populations. Lastly, five out of 12 participants discussed participating in professional development that offered customized training and job-embedded practices as integral to their success.

The last theme for research question three is *evaluating leadership and pedagogy*. The researcher found that five out of 12 participants benefitted from the superintendent's process and feedback on Principal Performance Observations (PPO). Three out of 12 participants discussed the benefit of being Learning Partner schools. Three out of 12 participants voiced concerns about Renewal School professional learning occurring in isolation of high performing schools. Four out of 12 participants criticized the leadership coaches as unhelpful in their leadership development. Lastly, 12 out of 12 participants lauded the professional development and feedback provided by the DSR. The following descriptions summarize the participants'/interviewees' reflections, experience, and evidence used to answer research question three.

**Research Question 3- Theme 1: Instructional leadership.** In answering the researcher's questions, 12 out of 12 interviewees shared that all Renewal School leaders need to be and participate in professional development that creates instructional leaders. S0001 stated, "We must recognize that adults and students learn differently. Adults can mask their lack of knowledge better than children can. Therefore, when in PD session, I believe adults need to demonstrate what they know. They have to show it." S0011 stated, "You can't improve a school if the leader doesn't know instruction". Similarly, P0003 stated, "The principal as the instructional leader is both responsible and inspirational to the staff. Being a leader who showed my vulnerability when I worked with the teachers on the math team was amazing PD for all of us". S0012 shared the challenge of, "Supporting principals who don't know instruction is the hardest challenge. If you don't know good pedagogy, how can you improve it?" Likewise, S0001 stated,

Unfortunately, we have a cadre of school leaders who really don't understand instruction. It's the elephant in the room and the elephant gets larger when that leader is working in a Renewal School. Professional development looks very different and takes on a more hands-on approach when teaching leaders who are at a deficit.

P0002 shared how becoming aware of deficits was a need that required immediate attention,

When we became a Renewal School and started getting the resources, I realized how much about reading and writing instruction that I didn't know and my superintendent had a hard talk with me about being the right person for the job. Immediately, I began reading more research and participating in the workshops

with my teachers. I needed to know what they were learning so that I could be a more effective supervisor.

In conjunction with this statement, P0009 shared that, “Professional learning for Renewal Schools needs to incorporate content knowledge and how principals should evaluate when observing lessons”. P0002 and P0007 celebrated the Renewal School work with Teachers’ College (TC). P0002 stated, “The principals only sessions helped me understand my role as an evaluator of the teaching, but I still needed to sit with the teachers and plan to really get the content”. P0007 said, “I’m also a learning partners school with a TC school and I think this has been the greatest influence on my teachers. They have been able to work with another school and learn from them”. Contrary to these statements, P0009 shared, “Professional development cannot work if you are only teamed with schools that are labeled as low performing. Some of my Renewal Schools partner outside the network of Renewal and others, that’s all who they talk to, you can’t improve instruction that way”.

S0001, S0004, P0006, and S0S0012 shared the importance of knowing and understanding adult learning in the designing of professional learning for Renewal School leaders. S0001 shared,

I was trained to be a principal via New Leaders for New Schools. This program trained me to take on the most difficult schools. During my entire training, I was uncomfortable, vulnerable, and anxiety-filled. Just like most principals who are under fire. That experience taught me that adults learn differently. Before NLNS, I was used to PD where the facilitator would talk you to death. Now I design trainings for my principals that considers what they

need to learn and feel to lead effectively. The curriculum is designed to create the experience for the leader.

Similarly, P0006 stated,

I was in LEAP (Leaders in Education Apprentice Program). I believe that was some of the best hands-on leadership PD. When I did LEAP, I was already an assistant principal and initially when my principal recommended me, I was resistant because I thought I was already doing the work. After one day of the program, I realized that this is preparing me to be a principal. The tasks were so challenging and on top of that, we had to do everything in groups. It was the best simulation of being a principal, without the real hits of being a principal. That is how you train people for this difficult job. Now, I tell anyone who wants a recommendation from me that they have to be trained first before I say yes to a recommendation.

S0004 shared how job experiences were the main driving force of their professional development journey throughout their career,

My experiences have been my greatest PD. I was a teacher, I was a staff developer, an Assistant Principal who was in charge of ELLs in a school with over 30 languages, I was a principal in a high-needs school, and now I'm a superintendent working with Renewal Schools. That the type of training you need to be successful in this. It's different from sitting and learning in a classroom. You have to do the work- it's the same thing with teachers. The best PD I've given my teachers is to do the feedback in real time, like right now as I'm standing in your classroom. It freaks people out, but athletes don't

practice by thinking or talking about it. They do the skill. Teachers need to do the skill. Don't talk about it. Adults need to do work.

S0012 also agreed that professional development opportunities are closely tied to a school leader's experience and that leaders need to be exposed to success.

A Renewal School principal should be an assistant principal (AP) first. They need to develop the skills of managing multiple tasks, people, and responsibilities. These leaders also need exposure to successful schools. A great deal of professional development needs to take place in functional and high performing schools. Leaders need to anchor their vision in success. This only occurs when you know success.

P0002, P0003, and P0005 talked about the role of their respective superintendents in moving their professional learning forward as leaders. Participant P0002 stated, "My superintendent is sensitive to my situation as a Renewal School leader and she shows this by providing me with many one-to-one sessions where I can talk about my challenges." P0003 shared a similar sentiment,

My PD with the superintendent is differentiated as I get to sit with the DSR and the Superintendent during principal training sessions. They help me track my progress and offer feedback, which is also tracked. This guides my next steps and I feel confident about what I have to do next.

P0005 discussed the superintendent's role in fostering collaboration between the principal and the teacher as professional learning,

My superintendent insisted that I participate on at least one teacher team in my school as a part of the feedback I received from my PPO. This was the best-

unexpected PD as I was learning alongside my teachers and seeing firsthand the gaps that my students were experiencing as we look at student work all the time.

Being with my teachers improved my ability to lead, because they knew I was with them every step of the way and I knew what direction to guide them in.

Instructional leadership was reported as the core element required for professional development of Renewal School leaders. Participants in the research shared that all Renewal School principals need to be instructional leaders and that all professional learning opportunities need to facilitate, create, and incorporate learning opportunities that strengthen content knowledge, observation skills, and collaborations with teachers and/or teacher teams. The participants shared that Renewal School leaders' success was greatly dependent on their knowledge of adult learning and their ability to create tasks and opportunities for adults to learn and feel as they took in new information. Lastly, the participants celebrated their superintendents' accessibility as professional development that appeared in their PPOs and next steps expectations.

**Research Question 3- Theme 2: Turnaround leadership is unique.** In answering the researcher's questions six out of 12 participants (P0006, P0007, S0008, S0010, S0011, and S0012) discussed the importance of recognizing Renewal Schools and/or school turnaround situations as unique experiences that require acknowledgement of its uniqueness, leaders who have mastered difficulty, especially with high needs populations, and special consideration when training and/or hiring leaders for these schools. P0006 stated,

Being a Renewal School leader is like nothing else. Your teachers need supports, your families are in crisis, the school only knows failure. There is nothing like it and now to lead and turnaround the school towards success. The

least Renewal School leaders need is to be acknowledged as different. To be seen as fragile and marginalized. It's a different experience than running a school in good standing or a specialized school. It leading and having vision in the constant face of failure.

S0010 shared similar sentiment and critiqued the fast turnaround pressures that Renewal School leaders face,

If there's a problem to be seen in a school, a Renewal School has it. (Renewal School) Leaders are overwhelmed with historical pain and crisis that has never been healed or redeemed. That's why the three-year turn around expectation is unreasonable. Who can fix historical wounds in three years with money?

P0007 also provided a critique of the improvement timeline, "These schools have been broken for years. It is unfair to treat them as if they are easily improved especially when all of the research says at least five years. That timeframe is more political than what is best for kids".

S0012 shared, "The first school I taught in was the number one performing school in the district. My Renewal School is nothing like it. Our children are so far behind and the teachers are on a steep learning curve. I don't remember my principal being driven in so many directions. It's very different when you are dealing with so much failure".

Participants S0001, P0006, P0007, S0008, and S0010 attributed their success to participating in professional development experiences that positioned them to navigate and master difficult situations with special populations, rigorous job training, and day-to-day work-related experience. P0006 stated,

In the five to six weeks training in the summer, we walked in the shoes of a principal. There were times in the session, we would be working, and someone would burst into the room with an emergency for you to solve. One time a parent needed me. When I sat down, she began speaking Spanish, she was going off, and I was so confused. It was great because I learned the lesson to not make assumptions and be prepared to connect and communicate with parents even if it means to speak another language.

In S0001's training program,

I had many of the top leaders in the field come and visit with us as we were training. We had to interview them, they questioned our work, and they assessed us as we were working. It was nerve racking. People like Jonathan Saphier and Paul Bambrick visited and taught us. It was overwhelming and hard, but I learned how to center my power and act in the best interest of students regardless of who is in the room. I apply this skill to this day especially when I have to manage central office mandates that are in conflict with what's best for my kids.

S0008 shared that,

When I was a teacher, I was a lead for the special education department and when I became an assistant principal, I supervised special education. I've worked through the different reforms and have prepared teachers and other leaders to be ready for the expected changes in special education. These experiences were the best PD for me. I learned on the job and I was connected directly to the central offices. It was also focused. My experiences taught me the nuances of special education. I became a special education specialist. This

has now transferred into how I work with teachers as principal and with struggling learners.

Managing special populations and receiving training for working with them was heavily engrained into S0010's experience, "My career has been dedicated to working in high needs communities. It's all I know. It's what I do. It's what I was trained to do. Now as a superintendent, I help my Renewal School leaders implement systems that I know work with the most challenging students". Participant S0011 echoed a similar sentiment,

I worked at a transfer high school and eventually became an assistant principal at the same school. Helping the students graduate was challenging, at times it seemed impossible, but when you helped them navigate through, it was rewarding. I learned about making classroom instruction work based on data, advisory programs that helped struggling students, working with parents to ensure graduation, how to distribute leadership so the work gets done, and empowering students to become owners of their own voice. That experience is what has prepared me for this one.

The findings for research question three, theme two indicates that Renewal Schools and/or school turnaround situations are unique experiences that require acknowledgement of its uniqueness. The participants shared that the demands, requirements, and expectations are what makes Renewal Schools unique and therefore, leaders who have mastered difficulty, especially with high needs populations are better prepared for the challenges these schools bring. Lastly, the participants shared that their pathway, training, and/or job experiences prepared them to take on leadership positions of Renewal Schools.

**Research Question 3- Theme 3: Evaluating leadership and pedagogy.** In answering the researcher's questions, seven out of 12 participants (S0001, P0005, P0007, P0009, S0010, S0011, and S0012) discussed how evaluations of performance affected their professional development experience. Participants discussed the role of the superintendent's process and feedback on Principal Performance Observation (PPO) as influencing their professional learning. Similarly, participants lauded the professional development and feedback of the Director of School Renewal (DSR) and the benefit of being a Learning Partner schools. Lastly, contrary to the benefits, participants criticized the leadership coaches as unhelpful in their leadership development.

P0005, P0007, S0010, and S0012 shared how the superintendents' process for conducting PPOs was a form of professional learning that moved their leadership. P0005 shared, "The PPO is my opportunity to work with my superintendent on what's best and next for my school. My superintendent is very thoughtful and consistent, so my PPO experience always grows me professionally. Similarly, P0007 stated,

My superintendent provides feedback to everything she sees in real time. She makes me fix issues in front of her. She watches me give real time feedback to teachers. I once had to call in an investigation during my PPO. It's exhausting but she is modeling best practices and its stretching me as a leader.

S0010 and S0012 both shared how the written feedback drives the professional development for leaders. S0010 stated, "As a superintendent, I take the written feedback to principals very seriously. The PPO is the document drives their next step. I keep it narrow and targeted to district goals. I also provide scaffolds so that the principal can achieve the expectations". S0012 stated, "I give the written feedback the day of the PPO. My feedback is

aligned to the Quality Review indicators. In my district, it is 1.2, 2.2, and 4.2. We are pushing the instructional core and teachers teaming, so that's the focus and the feedback. It's consistent with the goals".

All of the participants shared that the DSR was a benefit to their professional learning. Participant P0007 stated, the DSR visits me two to three times a week and walks through classes with me. She's also on the superintendent team, so her feedback is aligned to what the superintendent expects". P0005 shared, "I need the one-to-one coaching, and I think the DSR is great. She customizes and gives me PD for me and my school. It's targeted and we are moving kids in reading and writing". P0009 stated, "I think the DSR is the best part of being a Renewal School. She is the one person who I can rely on to come consistently and guide my practice. Thanks to her, our attendance improved. The data and systems with support she brought improved us by eight percent".

Contrary to the sentiment about the DSR, the participants criticized the leadership coaches provided by the Office of School Renewal. S0010 stated, "It's like anything else, some are good, some are bad. In these schools we can't lose time and when they are bad kids lose everything." S0011 shared, "The coach was unhelpful; she came sometimes once a week and asked a bunch of questions and provided little to no guidance. She needed coaching". Lastly, S0012 shared, "My coaches didn't provide timely feedback so I didn't gain much from the principals' visits. He was encouraging and positive, that's about it".

In response to research question three, theme three, participants shared the importance of superintendents' principal evaluations, how it connects to the professional learning of the leader, and how the Principal Performance Observation process, tool, and feedback drives expectations and conversations between superintendents and principals towards success. Participants shared

the importance of timely, targeted feedback while offering practical, applicable steps to accomplish the set expectations. Lastly, participants celebrated the process of visitations and feedback provided by the Director of School Renewal as professional learning that moved leadership success.

### **Research Question Three Findings Summary**

The findings for research question three revealed that models of professional development that are most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success incorporate *instructional leadership*, recognizing that *turnaround leadership is unique*, and presenting opportunities for *evaluation of leadership and pedagogy*.

In regards to instructional leadership, participants insisted that the Renewal School leader must be and participate in professional development that facilitates and creates an instructional leader. Participants shared how they had to change and refine themselves into instructional leaders via professional development supports as well as discussed instructional leadership as an essential component to a Renewal School leaders' professional learning. Participants also described how participating in professional development that was content and leadership focused assisted in their success as Renewal School leaders. Participants claimed that being successful Renewal School leaders was deeply aligned to knowing how to conduct professional development that addressed the needs of the adult learner. These participants claimed there is a clear distinction between adult learning and student learning. Linked closely to this claim, participants viewed their superintendents as a lever of their success due to their instructional knowledge. In this finding, participants discussed how their superintendents differentiated professional development for their Renewal School needs and discussed the importance of

Renewal School leaders participating in professional learning with their teachers or school community members as indicative of their success.

The second theme of research question three was that participants viewed *turnaround leadership as unique*. These participants acknowledged the experience and expectations of Renewal School leaders as unique and participated in a professional development design that was targeted to the Renewal School experience. Furthermore, participants who were positioned to master difficulty, especially with special populations also experienced success as leaders in Renewal Schools. Lastly, participants discussed participating in professional development that offered customized training and job-embedded practices as integral to their success.

The last theme for research question three was *evaluating leadership and pedagogy*. The researcher found that participants benefitted from the superintendent's process and feedback on Principal Performance Observations (PPO). In addition, participants discussed the benefit of being Learning Partner schools and voiced concerns about Renewal School professional learning occurring in isolation of high performing schools. Connected to this concern, participants criticized the leadership coaches as unhelpful in their leadership development. Lastly, 12 out of 12 participants lauded the professional development and feedback provided by the DSR. . Table 5 summarizes the study's themes as aligned to the research questions.

Table 5

*Research Questions and Themes*

Themes	RQ1	RQ2	RQ3
Organizational Management	X		
Resilience	X		
Emotional Intelligence	X		
Improve Systemic Communication		X	
Make Data-driven Decisions		X	
Instructional Leadership			X
Turnaround Leadership as Unique			X
Evaluating Leadership and Pedagogy			X

**Summary**

Chapter four revealed the findings and answers to the three anchoring research questions of this investigation. These questions yielded the following eight theme-responses from the participants: (1) organizational management, (2) resilience, (3) emotional intelligence, (4) improve systemic communication, (5) make data-driven decisions, (6) instructional leadership, (7) turnaround leadership is unique, and (8) evaluation of leadership and pedagogy

Chapter five is the final chapter of this study. It provides the conclusions and recommendations for this study. Additionally, chapter five offers suggestions for further research.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

Chapter one of this investigation provided an overview and the significance of investigating leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools. As the challenges and expectations of turnaround schools evolve, so does the demand for the school system's ability to equip leaders with the necessary skills, tools, and resources to be able to effectively lead and transform failing schools. The goal of this study was to investigate leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools. The study was anchored in the following three research questions:

1. What are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools?
2. How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success?
3. What model(s) of professional development is (are) most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success?

Chapter two, the literature review, described the evolution of school turnaround in the United States, responsibilities of principals and superintendents in turnaround situations, and the role of professional development as it pertains to adult learning and leadership development in equipping leaders to be able to manage turnaround efforts. Chapter two also presented the significance of teacher and principal evaluation as a mechanism to assess pedagogical and leadership effectiveness.

Chapter three described the methodology that guided the study. It detailed the plans and procedures of the selection of the participants, the data collection, and the data analysis. Grounded theory design was the method used to explore the various viewpoints of the participants. Through an interview process, the 12 participants shared their experiences, preparation, and challenges of successfully leading Renewal Schools. Purposeful sampling was used to select the participants. This approach provided intentional sampling, “To better understand a central phenomenon of a site or selected individuals” (Creswell, 2012, p. 206). The participants selected were six principals and six superintendents in the New York City Department of Education. Each participant was employed in one of three school levels: elementary, middle, or high school. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed. Each transcription was shared with its respective interviewee and checked for accuracy. Once vetted by the participants, the transcripts were reviewed, and themes and sub-themes were identified based on responses from the interviewees.

Chapter four presented the findings of the investigation via alignment of the participant’s quotes, the concluded themes of each research question, summary tables of the emerging themes. Chapter five presents the summary of findings, conclusions about the investigation, recommendations, recommendations for further study, and final summary of the dissertation that highlights a call to action to the readers. The first section of chapter five will be the summary of findings.

### **Summary of Findings**

This study revealed a number of findings. A summary of these finding are presented below, guided by the corresponding research questions

**Research Question 1, finding one.** *Organizational management* as a theme of this investigation indicates that successful Renewal School leaders exhibit creativity and innovation as an essential factor in effectively managing resources such as time, personnel, and budget.

**Research Question 1, finding two.** *Resilience* as a theme of this investigation indicates that successful Renewal School leaders engage in the uniqueness and difficulty of the Renewal School model.

**Research Question 1, finding three.** *Emotional intelligence* as a theme of this investigation indicates that successful Renewal School leaders are able to comprehend the emotional need of their school communities and use that skill to accelerate academic performance.

**Research Question 2, finding one.** *Improve systemic communication* as a theme of this investigation indicates that successful Renewal School leaders need to connect different parts of the organization via improved communication streams that build clarity of expectations across the New York City Department of Education.

**Research Question 2, finding two.** *Make data-driven decisions* as a theme of this investigation indicates that successful Renewal School leaders possess an understanding and application of qualitative and quantitative data analysis to improve the performance of their schools.

**Research Question 3, finding one.** *Instructional leadership* as a theme of this investigation indicates that successful Renewal School leaders are trained and exposed to professional development that supports their growth via content and leadership development.

**Research Question 3, finding two.** *Turnaround leadership is unique* as a theme of this investigation indicates that successful Renewal School leaders recognize the significance of

Renewal Schools and/or school turnaround situations as unique experiences that require acknowledgement of its uniqueness and difference from schools in good standing.

**Research Question 3, finding three.** *Evaluating leadership and pedagogy* as a theme of this investigation indicates that successful Renewal School know and understand the significance of connecting an evaluation of performance to professional development experiences that provides changed leadership and instructional practices.

## Conclusions

The New York City Department of Education set forth the Renewal School initiative as a method of school turnaround that preserves the existing school community; with necessary leadership and staff changes when applicable, and supplied human and operational resources. At the onset of the program in the fall of 2014, there were 94 Renewal Schools. As of August 2017, there are 78 Renewal Schools. The rate of attrition is attributed to closures, mergers, and declining enrollments in these schools. The controversy about the success of this approach is deeply embedded in its budget costs. Funding for this model has risen from an estimated \$387 million to \$582 million over the past three years with NYCDOE and City Hall officials claiming improvement in student achievement and critics claiming that there has been little to no improvement in student performance (Harris and Fessenden, 2017).

Qualified and capable Renewal School leaders who are able to transform schools are often challenged and overwhelmed by the expectation of turning a failing school around. They are responsible for improving teaching and learning, strengthening performance data across multiple disciplines and accountability measures, and nurturing community relations that maintains student enrollment and political support. Furthermore, Renewal School leaders are constrained by a three-year time timeline to ensure the turnaround via meeting the expected

benchmarks as outlined by New York State. This study investigated the leadership qualities that yield success in Renewal Schools. The research questions for this study considered the necessary leadership qualities, systems and structures, and professional development required for Renewal School leaders to be successful. The following section provides the conclusions for the three research questions of this study.

**Research question one.** Question one investigated the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools. Based on the findings it is concluded that in order to successfully lead Renewal Schools, school leaders must possess organizational management skills, resilience, and emotional intelligence to be able to navigate the challenges that are embedded in this school turnaround model. In assessing a leader's organizational management ability, the study revealed that leaders who are innovative and creative in their day-to-day management of resources such as time, personnel, and budget are most successful. Furthermore, leaders who exhibit resilience in the management of the difficulty that is inherent in Renewal Schools also experience greater degrees of success. Lastly, the study revealed that Renewal School leaders who possess emotional intelligence yield greater success as they are able to interpersonally connect with the fragile culture and academic needs of a disenfranchised school community. These leaders are empathic and empowering to faculty and community members as they engage in the challenge of rebuilding and redefining who they are on their journey from failure to success.

**Research question one, conclusion one.** Catano and Stronge (2006) contend that school leaders need organizational management skills that strengthen systems and structures in the day-to-day expectations of leading a school. In alignment with this claim and from the participants' responses, it is concluded that effective time management, personnel management, and

budgeting skills are integral to demonstrating strong organizational management skills. Furthermore, the data revealed the importance of school leaders of Renewal Schools being creative and innovative as they execute the rigors of their job. This means that school leaders of Renewal Schools must be able to solve problems beyond their immediate solutions by engaging various stakeholders in the brainstorming of ideas. Additionally, it was disclosed that school leaders need to be unconventional and non-traditional in their organizational management approach to leverage trust and institute fairness among the staff. The latter indicated that personal leadership is deeply connected to organizational management as school leaders who demonstrated high levels of visibility, engagement, and collaboration with staff members yielded higher degrees of trust and success in their schools (Cotton, 2003).

**Research question one, conclusion two.** Leithwood and Riehl (2003) contend that school leadership is extremely complex and requires the intersection and alignment of several factors that requires school leaders to be resilient in order to lead teaching and learning in their schools. Resilience is the factor that enables the school leader to multi-task, be interpersonal with a variety of stakeholders, and stay focused on the real work of improving student achievement. Resilience was found to be one of the dominant attributes in this study for Renewal School leader success (12 out of 12 participants stated this claim). It is important because the nature of Renewal Schools is demanding and unforgiving of school leaders' capacity. According to Picucci et al. (2002) turn around leaders are often met with resistance and need to anchor themselves as they engage change and develop a collaborative school culture. In this investigation, resilience was found to be connected to how school leaders affect change to establish success. Renewal School leaders are charged with changing the failure of their schools. This often comes with a great deal of resistance and the school leader who knows how

to effectively manage change is able to steer the school towards success as staff resistance and conflicts are reduced. In alignment with this conclusion, Fullan, Bertani, and Quinn (2004) attest that effective school leaders respond to demanding school cultures by building trust and demonstrating integrity and resilience through challenges.

Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) assert that pre-service and in-service school leadership development programs should be rigorous, diverse, and focus on instructional and transformational leadership that connects participants with real-world factors of the work. In alignment with this claim, this investigation on Renewal School leadership found that school leaders who had multiple experiences and/or professional development in difficult situations and worked with challenging student populations also exhibited resilience towards success. In addition, the data revealed that school leaders who were trained via rigorous professional development programs also exhibited resilience that fostered tenacity and boldness in the face of resistance. These training programs offered participants the opportunity to be virtually trained in situations that heavily mirrored the actual work of the turnaround leader and positioned the candidate to engage and respond to real-world situations.

**Research question one, conclusion three.** Renewal School leaders who are emotionally intelligent are more successful than those who are not. According to Schawbel (2011), self-awareness, self-management, and empathy are the three emotional intelligence capacities that differentiate high performing leaders from mediocre ones. Considering these three abilities, the study found that leaders who participated in self-reflective assessments such as 360-degree feedback were positioned to have greater awareness of self as a contributing factor to their success. These leaders use this knowledge to develop interpersonal relationships, team management, and community building skills that positively affect school culture and provide an

opportunity for less resistance and greater engagement that focuses on the work of student achievement.

**Research question two.** Question two investigated how the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal Schools model facilitates principal success. There needs to be an improvement in systemic communication where both verbal and written opportunities are designed and structured for clarity and comprehension across the organization. Furthermore, the study identified that leaders who make data-driven decisions are able to mobilize their schools towards success using both quantative and qualitative data.

**Research question two, conclusion one.** This investigation concluded that communication is integral to leadership success. Communication ranked fourth on Marzano et al. (2005) scale of 21 leadership responsibilities that impact student achievement. Marzano et al. (2005) recommend that the principal determine what type of change or result is needed before the application of the responsibility is used. They quantify first order changes are logical next steps and second order changes as more dramatic leadership moves that require a greater degree of strategy for successful employment. Contrary to this claim, the communication structure of the Renewal School model is compromised and hinders effective opportunities for principals and superintendents to know and act upon set expectations and standards for the Renewal School initiative. Additionally, the communication of the name of the initiative counteracts the work of the principals as they strive to improve the schools. The name influences enrollment policies and parental concerns about the viability of the school's potential to effectively teach students. This indicates that, this challenge poorly positions the principal for school improvement as it eliminates opportunities for communication streams that facilitate Renewal School leadership success. Lastly, in regards to communication, the Director of School Renewal provides a

highlight for principals and superintendents as they navigate expectations from the central office. The DSR acts as a bridge between the central offices and the schools. However, they are not evidently a decision-maker when assessing set priorities captured in communication streams. Instead, many school leaders defer to their superintendent's wishes to set priorities and act in a state of urgency. This choice may or may not counteract the expectations of the Office of Renewal Schools, which is where many New York State mandates are funneled and clarified through to then be communicated to the field.

Communication drives all of the information in the Renewal School initiative. Whether it is verbal or written, directives, expectations, professional learning, or next steps; each of these elements are all delivered via some form of communication. Among the participants, there was a shared sentiment that the central offices failed to effectively communicate their message and expectations to stakeholders who are deeply connected to the work of Renewal. This is not to indicate that there are no systemic communication structures. Actually, it's quite the opposite. There are emails, a Renewal School newsletter, and instructional and operational meetings to attend (Office of School Renewal, Communication, 2017). However, the challenge arises when principals and superintendents, at times, have to decipher who to listen to, how to prioritize instructional vs. compliance demands, and which mandated professional development to attend. For example, Renewal School principals need clarification on who to listen to. Mandates come from both the Office of Renewal Schools and their Superintendents. Also, Renewal School principals become confused when they need to decide which professional development (PD) to attend. They are offered PD by the central offices, the Borough Field Support Centers, and their Superintendents. If there is an expectation to attend all, Renewal School principals need to know how to prioritize their time to meet the mandates presented to them. Many Renewal School

principals tend to listen to their Superintendent, as that person is their rating officer.

Superintendents in the study also shared this concern as many said that they are often unaware of certain communication expectations from the Office of School Renewal and would prefer that information be delivered via a more streamlined approach.

Murphy and Meyers (2009) claimed that failing organizations that prioritize rebuilding as the first effort toward turnaround are more successful. Contrarily, Argenti (1976) proposes that not all failing organizations are worth saving. Murphy (2009) supports this claim. “There are no doubt times when it is neither wise policy nor in the best interests of youngsters to fight to restore what should not be saved” (Murphy, 2009, p.162). The Renewal School initiative was an attempt to bridge the divide of as Mayor de Blasio stated, a *tale of two cities*, however, participants connected the name of the Renewal School program as a another challenge in communication that affects the structural and systemic possibility of principal success. Participants shared the name of the program being *Renewal Schools* facilitated poor enrollment and communication policies that limited school and school leader success. Furthermore, the name indicates that there is something wrong with the school. This turns parents and the surrounding community away. These contributing factors limit student enrollment, which in turn affect budget capital per student, parental involvement, and community support.

Contrary to this problem with communication, more than half of the participants voiced that the work of the Director of School Renewal (DSR) was the most consistent and helpful communication outlet accessible to school leaders. DSRs are in constant communication with the central offices and they visit schools for coaching opportunities and professional development. According to Leithwood (2012), district level leadership requires transparency and progress monitoring in order for turnaround schools to meet the expected demands of student

achievement. Participants shared that DSRs were helpful and the most accessible members on the superintendent's team. However, no one mentioned if and how DSRs helped them make sense of conflicting mandates, directives from multiple stakeholders, and professional learning attendance and attention expectations.

**Research question two, conclusion two.** As a result of these findings, it is concluded that Renewal School principal success is facilitated by structural supports that included assessments and effective data-driven decision-making. According to Bambrick (2012), measured outcomes are only useful if you know the target. In this investigation, it was revealed that the NYCDOE provided common assessments to Renewal Schools, however, failed to ensure the timeliness of the return of the results. This prevented the assessments from being useful to the teachers and students. It also facilitated a degree of wasted time for students who are already high-risk learners and teachers who are teaching a standards-based curriculum with limited time. Additionally, the NYCDOE provided school leaders with an opportunity to learn a protocol entitled, *Data Wise*, to effectively assess data trends and establish a common language about assessments in Renewal Schools. Betebenner and Linn (2009) recommend that educators unpack data in a timely fashion to gain an accurate assessment of student growth. The expectation was that all Renewal Schools use *Data Wise*; however, all Renewal School leaders were not directly trained by the creators of the protocol. This led to a train-the-trainer model, which facilitated inequity of implementation and compromised the fidelity of the model.

All of the participants agreed that being a school leader who makes data-driven decisions is a strong indicator for principal success. The participants shared that a school leader who examines qualitative and quantitative success, student progress, and engages stakeholders in the process of examining data together as a team ensures that student achievement will improve.

Chittenden (1991) suggests that at the onset of any assessment activity, purpose and goals be established by the assessors to ensure alignment between the cause for the assessment and the outcomes. It was concluded that the Renewal Schools initiative's decision to embed Harvard's *Data Wise* protocol into its structural design offered school leaders a lever towards engaging their faculty with language and a process to examine data that is formative, summative, and based on students' work products. *Data Wise* influenced intervention structures and student groupings in schools. It also helped teachers become more comfortable with discussing data and making it more operational as their knowledge of data expanded from spreadsheets to integrating data into lesson plans. Participant concerns about *Data Wise* showed that not all of the Renewal School participants received *Data Wise* training. A cadre of school leaders were trained at Harvard and another group received the information via a train-the-trainer model. Many of the participants shared that this put the principals at a disadvantage and fostered greater inequity in a space where access to success was already limited.

The I-Ready Assessments were also discussed as another highlight of the structures that were available to schools. These assessments provided an opportunity for schools to have common assessments in the areas of English Language Arts and math. Participants lauded the intention of the assessments, but criticized the lack of timeliness in the return of the results. Stiggins (2001) argues that it's the principal's responsibility to ensure there are no barriers to assessment implementation or results as it compromises the purpose and application of the information learned about the student. In this investigation on Renewal School leadership, participants shared that the results of the I-Ready Assessments often came a long time after the assessments were administered, making them outdated and not useful to schools. Participants

who did benefit from them shared that it changed the way their school culture utilized and approached data in team meetings and in the classroom.

Lastly, in regards to data-driven decision making as a structural support, participants discussed the importance of principal and teacher evaluation data and feedback as a high lever for improving student achievement and ensuring principal success. Principal participants shared the advantage of using the Advance teacher evaluation system to capture teacher performance and growth over the course of the school year. These participants discussed how their prescribed professional development for their teachers is directly connected to the feedback they receive during classroom observations. According to Hattie (2012), leaders who set high expectations enable teachers' desire to improve instruction and use evaluation feedback to make a difference in students' performance. Principal participants in this investigation shared the importance of being in the classroom and collecting data that speaks to school-wide goals and the expectations of school instruction, supporting Hattie's (2012) claim.

In regards to principal evaluations, superintendents shared that the Principal Performance Review was integral to assessing principals' capacity to accomplish the task of improving student achievement. Superintendents shared that they have data talks with their principals and insist that their principals know the data of their schools and the students who constitute the data. This practice deeply affects how the superintendent evaluates the principal. Moreover, superintendents shared that they also conduct informal surveys with families and students to investigate the state of their schools. They use this data at meetings with their teachers, principals, and families.

**Research question three.** Question three investigated the models of professional development that are most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success.

Knowles (1980) claimed that adult learning evolves from a stage of self-conceptualizing to internal motivation for self-learning. Participants interviewed for this investigation responded that in order to effectively train Renewal School leaders, professional learning needs to focus on opportunities for instructional leadership that are based on content learning of the disciplines and leadership development. The data also revealed that the professional development of Renewal School leaders needs to identify turnaround leadership as unique and its own genre of schools that possess a required leadership skill set and assessment competencies.

**Research question three, conclusion one.** In conjunction with the research findings, it is concluded that Renewal School leaders must participate in professional learning that creates instructional leaders. Blase and Blase (1999) claimed that instructional leaders significantly affect student performance in classrooms via informal conversations with teachers, participating on study teams, coaching teachers about pedagogy, and problem solving issues as a community. Participants shared the distinction that children learners are different from adult learners. This claim facilitates the need for the design of Renewal School professional learning to incorporate demonstration opportunities and engagement of real-world experiences that are similar to the position of the Renewal School principal (Kolb 1984). Moreover, participants revealed that this type of professional learning was integral to improving instruction as Renewal School principals who are non-instructional struggle to assist teachers towards better practice. Additionally, participants shared that self-awareness as a growing instructional leader assist in strengthening leadership practices. Participants used reflective tools such as surveys given to stakeholders to gain a better understanding of themselves as leaders.

Participants shared that collaborating with other school leaders strengthened their instructional leadership. For example, principal-only sessions that focused on building content-

knowledge and effectively assessing teaching and learning were heralded by the participants as opportunities for growth in a nurturing environment that focused on the work they had to do. In support of this experience, Falasca (2011) claims that once the climate among equals is appropriate, adult educators can learn and make connections to work expectations. Professional learning that prepared participants for the role of the principalship was also seen as integral to their success. These sessions incorporated, professional learning that considered and understood adult learning needs and were more effective as they created real-world connections and opportunities for greater leadership progress (Kolb, 1984). In conjunction with adult learning principles, participants also argued that their success was deeply connected to them knowing and understanding what successful schools do and how they do it. Several of the participants had successful backgrounds in other schools or professions. In this case, participants identified their successful work experiences and exposure to high performing strategies as contributing factors to their success.

**Research question three, conclusion two.** It is concluded that turnaround leadership is unique and needs to be acknowledged as such. Factors such as high levels of resistance, toxicity in school culture, poor pedagogy, and historical low expectations for students are embedded into the uniqueness of school turnaround. Participants shared that leaders who are able to effectively manage these elements execute and make decisions in strategic ways that incorporate thinking, synthesizing, and mobilizing information and personnel to facilitate transformation and evident change.

Fiedler (2006) contends that leaders must know their strengths and deficiencies. Hallinger (2011) goes a step further and suggests that a leader's effectiveness depends on the leadership situation. In accordance with these researchers, Chapman (2010) claims, "The

research indicates there is no single strategy that is most effective for turning around schools and districts but rather a combination of strategies rooted in the uniqueness of specific situations is needed” (Chapman. 2010, p.1). Turnaround leadership is difficult.

Turnaround leaders have the capacity to analyze data, notice patterns and underlying issues that may be the cause of low student achievement, and act on the data in a focused and uncompromising manner. They create a sense of urgency as well as a sense of mutual accountability among all staff members at the school by communicating clear expectations that instruction is the first priority and by consistently monitoring the impact of instruction on student learning and holding teachers accountable for results. The most effective leaders accomplish both short and long-term results by building the capacity of school staff and encouraging shared leadership rather than acting in a dictatorial manner. Finally, turnaround leaders model initiative and persistence by doing more than is required and facing and overcoming barriers rather than using them as an excuse for poor performance (Chapman. 2010, p.3).

Considering the research of Fiedler (2006), Hallinger (2011), Chapman 2010, and the findings of this investigation, it is concluded that leaders managing difficulty is an aspect of identifying turnaround schools as unique. Participants shared that effective school leaders of Renewal Schools had previous experiences in managing difficult situations, special populations, compromised school cultures, and improving student achievement. These experiences led them to be able to engage effectively in Renewal Schools, which harbor similar challenges. Moreover, these participants claimed that professional development that incorporated these elements supported their leadership so that they would be successful once in the role of Renewal School leader.

**Research question three, conclusion three.** Based on the findings, it is concluded that professional development for Renewal School leaders needs to acknowledge the uniqueness of school turnaround and the requirements of adult learning in order to design a curriculum for professional growth that fosters transformative change in a failing school. Building on this conclusion, the school leaders interviewed shared that they had experiences in their work history and professional learning that positioned them to engage successfully with difficult situations and people. From this, it is concluded that in order to be a Renewal School leader, principals need to have experienced success in the past with special populations, turning around student achievement, and managing toxic cultures. Furthermore, findings show that Renewal School leaders need to be experienced leaders. At the time of this investigation, none of the participants were brand new. All of them had extensive training in managing difficulty whether it was via a principal training institution or via work experiences with high-risk populations and environments. Lastly, it is concluded that effective evaluation of leadership and pedagogy that is anchored in actionable, timely feedback fosters transformative change in Renewal Schools. This is accomplished by stakeholders at various layers of the organization (in this case the DSR, principal, or superintendent,) delivering feedback that is clearly aligned to a standard (the Quality Review rubric) and observable practices in the school.

Participants in this study shared how evaluations of performance affected their professional development experiences. Furthermore, participants described how observations and feedback improved their leadership practices and the pedagogy in their schools. Principal participants lauded the work of the Director of School Renewal (DSR) as a consistent provider of effective feedback and next steps. Participants claimed that the DSR coached and provided professional development based off the feedback delivered. Principal participants also discussed

the role of feedback to teachers as professional learning that changes and improves classroom practices. Lastly, superintendent participants shared their process for evaluating principals via walkthroughs and feedback that embedded observed practices and desired ones as assessed by the Quality Review rubric. Superintendents felt that the Principal Performance Observation (PPO) was vital to principals experiencing their schools as lab sites for learning. In conjunction with the PPO, principals praised the timely feedback that their superintendents delivered from their PPOs and expressed that succinct alignment between the walkthrough and the Quality Review rubric, provided insight and understanding for their next steps.

## **Conclusions**

The conclusions of this study indicate that the Renewal School initiative is a well-intentioned turnaround model that has provided and facilitated certain aspects of recommended research about turnaround schools, but overall it is a *fix that failed* (Kim, 1990). The research questions from this study was based on the findings of Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2005) who identified 21 leadership responsibilities in hierarchal order that have statistical correlations to student achievement. It is concluded that the Renewal School initiative positions school leaders to operate on the lower end of the Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2005) scale except for in the area of resources; which yields a statistical impact of .25 and is a strong indicator for improved student achievement. In other responsibilities, the Renewal School initiative focuses on the lower end of the scale. For example, in this study Renewal School leaders shared that there is a great deal of focus on school leaders being involved in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and visibility. According to Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2005), the responsibility of involvement with instruction, curriculum, and assessment yields a statistical impact of .20. This finding is also supported by the research of Horng et al. (2010) who found

that leadership participation in classrooms wasn't integral to principal success and student achievement. These researchers claimed that a principal's organizational management skills was more effective towards improving student achievement. Contrary to this finding, higher on the Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2006) scale it is indicated that a school leader's knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment yields a statistical impact of .25. Therefore, greater focus should be placed on building a school leader's capacity as opposed to ensuring their visibility and involvement in classrooms. Another example is the responsibility of communication that is placed at a statistical rating of .23 on the Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2006) scale. Renewal School leaders indicated that there needed to be significant improvements in communication systems and structures to clarify the expectations which needed to be accomplished. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2006) found relationships to be the 21<sup>st</sup> responsibility with a statistical impact of .18. Whereas the Renewal School leaders shared extensively how the relationships that they built internally and externally in regards to the school community was encouraged and expected by the NYCDOE. In alignment with the findings of this Renewal School leadership study, Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2006) identified situational awareness with a statistical impact of .33 as the number one responsibility. In response to research question three, the Renewal School leaders specified that treating the school turnaround situation as unique was a high lever for training Renewal School leaders. Similarly, the Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2006) scale identified monitoring and evaluating at a statistical impact of .27. This study also found that Renewal School leaders who were well-trained in the area of monitoring and evaluating leadership and pedagogy also had significant impact on improving student achievement.

Renewal School leaders require unique qualities and specified training in order to meet the demands of improving student achievement and teacher performance. In the next section, the researcher shares recommendations aligned to the research questions of this study that *shift the burden* (Senge, 1990) of how problems are currently being addressed in the Renewal School initiative in order for school improvement to take place.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made.

**Recommendations for research question one.** In order to ensure that leaders of Renewal Schools possess the necessary qualities of organization management, resilience, and emotional intelligence, two recommendations are presented to the New York City Department of Education and other organizations nurturing turnaround efforts in their schools. Recommendation number one is to supplement the Principal Pool process by highlighting or incorporating tasks that assess leaders' organizational management, resilience, and emotional intelligence into the selection criteria when hiring principals for Renewal Schools. Recommendation number two is to develop a robust, internal, three-tiered leadership pipeline with potential candidates who are ready to meet the demands of the Renewal School initiative.

**Research question one, recommendation one.** Based on the literature review, the theoretical framework provided by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2006), and the findings of this investigation, it is suggested that hiring managers for turnaround schools assess candidates' capacity and desire to take on this work by employing the use of an interviewing tool that determines candidates' ability and interest in becoming a Renewal School principal. Two possible tools that a hiring manager could use as an evaluation is (1) *De Govia Assessment Tool of Desirability and Capacity for Turnaround School Leaders* (DADC, Appendix 10) and the (2)

*De Govia Matrix of Desirability and Capacity* (DMDC, Figure 2). These instruments are based on the literature review, the theoretical framework provided by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2006) framework, and the findings of this investigation on Renewal School leadership.

The DADC was created in support of the literature review, the theoretical framework provided by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2006) framework, and the findings of this investigation as a suggested hiring tool to determine a potential turnaround leaders' viability towards success in a Renewal School. This 10-question survey assesses potential Renewal School leaders' desire and capacity to do the unique work of school turnaround on a scale of one to four. Questions one, three, five, seven, and nine are capacity questions. Questions two, four, six, eight, and ten are desirability questions. Question one on the DADC is *strongly disagree* and receives zero credit. Question two on the DADC is *disagree* and receives zero credit. Question three on the DADC is *agree* and receives one credit. Question four on the DADC is *strongly agree* and receives two credits.

It is recommended that the survey be administered during the hiring process while the hiring manager interviews the potential candidates. Candidates should be encouraged to bring a portfolio of their work that is directly related to the context of school turnaround and their potential to be a Renewal School leader. Based on the candidate's responses and evidence presented, the hiring manager determines and assesses where on the scale the candidate performs. Lastly, in conjunction with the DADC, it is recommended that the hiring manager share the data with the candidate as a concluding conversation to reflect on statements and evidence shared.

In conjunction with the DADC, it is recommended that hiring managers use the *De Govia Matrix of Desirability and Capacity* (DMDC, Figure 2). This model is named for the researcher

of this investigation and places potential principal candidates in one of four possible quadrants.

Quadrant I indicates that the potential candidate has low-capacity and low-desirability. These candidates score 0-4 credit on the DADC. Candidates assessed to be in Quadrant II have low-capacity and high-desirability. These candidates score 4.5 to 6.5 credits on the DADC.

Placement in Quadrant III indicates that the candidate has high-capacity and high-desirability.

These candidates score 10 to 20 credits on the DADC. Candidates who are assessed to be in Quadrant IV have low-desirability and high-capacity. These candidates score 6.5-10 credits on

the DADC. In addition to using the DADC and the DMDC, recommendation one requires the

need for a hiring committee who specializes in school turnaround. The hiring committee's

responsibilities would include canvassing candidates, setting the interview process, developing

interview tasks (an on demand writing sample), questions, and closure procedures which would

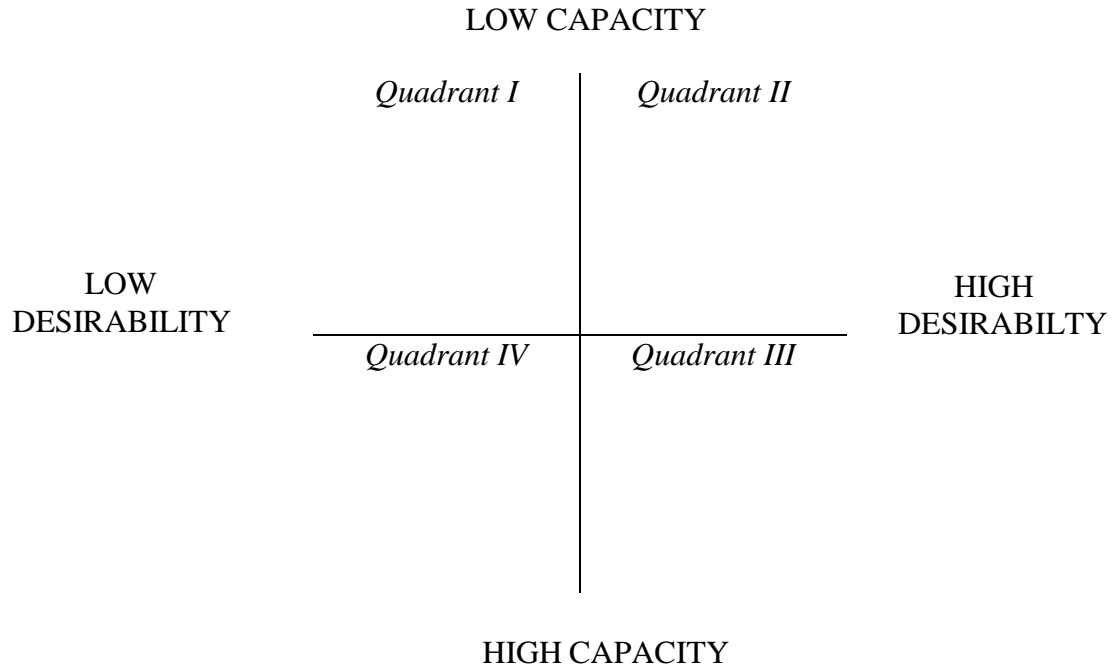
include letting the organization and the candidate know their exiting status from the interview.

The latter is key to developing a pipeline for Renewal Schools leaders as described in *research*

*question one, recommendation two* (see below) as it would set a standard for identifying what

leaders are the right fit for turnaround situations.

Figure 2: *De Govia Matrix of Desirability and Capacity (DMDC)*



**Research question one, recommendation two.** In conjunction with recommendation number one, recommendation two suggests that organizations canvas their most highly qualified candidates who possess the desire as well as the capacity to be principals using the DMDC. It is recommended that these candidates are grouped into three cohort of learners. Candidates who fall into Quadrant III should be considered candidates who are on the immediate turnaround leader bench. These candidates could lead a Renewal School immediately and are capable of on-the-ground training. Candidates assessed to be in Quadrant II need to be placed on a one to two-year training program that is designed to build up their capacity in the areas of organizational management skills, resilience, and emotional intelligence. These leaders need to be trained to do the work of the Renewal School leader as they are willing to go into the most difficult situations. Lastly, candidates who are assessed to be in Quadrant IV need to have their desirability nurtured and grown to serve in turnaround schools. These candidates need to participate in training that

exposes them to turnaround success in compromised communities. They also need additional coaching that is facilitative towards confronting fears, doubts, and possible contractual agreements that would secure their desire to do turnaround leadership work. During this process, all candidates should interact and be mentored by leaders who possess and enact these essential traits in schools in good standing as well as in Renewal Schools.

**Recommendations for research question two.** The systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model would ensure principal success if there were improved communication streams that fostered principals' ability to make consistent data-driven decisions. Three recommendations are presented to answer research question number two. Recommendation one impacts policy as it leverages and expands the licensure of the Director of School Renewal (DSR) from a School Building Leader (SBL) license to a School District Leader (SDL) license so that the DSR will be able to evaluate principals. Furthermore, it is proposed that the job expansion incorporates communication bridging between offices and evaluation of schools into the DSR position. Additionally, it is suggested that the Office of School Renewal is repositioned to intentionally communicate and participate in expectations with the Office of the Superintendents and the Office of Field Support. Lastly, Data Wise training would be provided to all Renewal School leaders.

**Research question two, recommendation one.** Throughout the course of the study the Director of School Renewal (DSR) was heralded as a lifeline for principals. The participants in the study presented the DSR as someone who provided quality professional development, targeted feedback of school walkthroughs, and a liaison and clarifier of the expectations from the central offices. Despite being viewed as an asset, principals in the study admitted that the number one person that they listen and defer to is the superintendent. This decision occurs because the superintendent is the lead evaluator and assessor of principals. There is a Principal

Lead Facilitator (PLF) on the superintendent's team who also assesses principals, but in this study principal participants only discussed their allegiance to the superintendent. Therefore, the DSR's position should be expanded to the licensure requirements of the School District Leader (SDL) so that they can operate as an informed communicator who is able to evaluate principals.

According to Honig et al. (2010) schools should experience clarity about how to receive district support. Furthermore, districts should have an executive leader who gives school leaders in turnaround situations regular supports. Presently, the DSR is only expected to possess a School Building Leader (SBL) license. Expanding this licensure expectation would enable the DSR to have more positional power and evaluative conversations with principals that would be inclusive of succinct messages, requirements, and expectations from the central office and the superintendent's office. This would establish consistent messaging and enacted directives as principals would understand the role of the DSR as a mobilizer of expectations on the superintendent's team. Lastly, another added benefit of DSRs with expanded licensure would be that they are able to conduct Quality Reviews. This would be another reinforcement of communication as "district instructional leadership builds capacity by coordinating and aligning work of others through communication, planning, and collaboration" (Rorrer, Skrla, & Scheurich, p. 318). Furthermore, it would foster an opportunity to align DSR information, feedback, and actions to improve student performance. The findings and conclusions show that this recommendation would work as principals respond to evaluator demands and the communication provided by the DSR.

**Research question two, recommendation two.** The Office of School Renewal should intentionally communicate and participate in the execution of expectations and initiatives with the Office of Superintendents and the Office of Field Support. This commitment to connection

between central offices would strengthen the lines of communication between central and the field. Furthermore, if done intentionally and consistently, the NYCDOE would be able to foster a cascading hierarchy where the work at central would be mirrored in the field as the Office of Superintendents would communicate with Superintendents, the Office of Renewal Schools, and the Office of Field Support. Each of these communication streams occur vice versa as well.

The Office of Renewal Schools would communicate with the Director of School Renewal who would also communicate with the Superintendents, and the Renewal School Liaison (RSL, a new recommended role by the researcher). This leadership addition to the FSC will support the DSR in the attainment of support for the Renewal Schools from the FSC's six divisions of (1) *Teaching and Learning*, (2) *Special Education services*, (3) *English Language Learner services*, (4) *Student Support Services*, (5) *Human Resources and Finance*, and (6) *Operations*. Figure three depicts the current system of communication as experienced by the participants in the investigation. Figure four depicts the desired and recommended communication stream for the Renewal School initiative.

Figure 3

*Renewal School Communication in the New York City Department of Education as Experienced by Participants.*

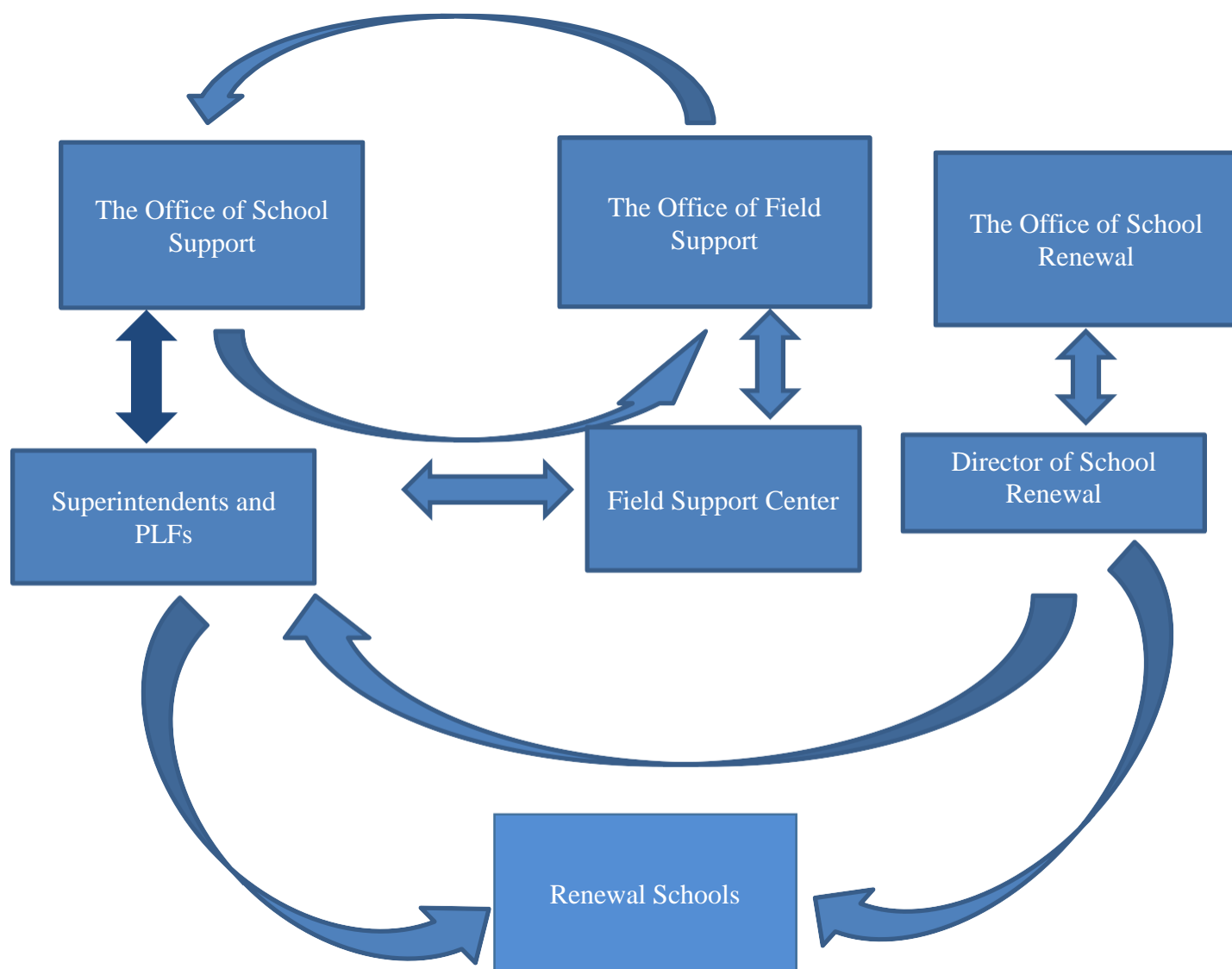
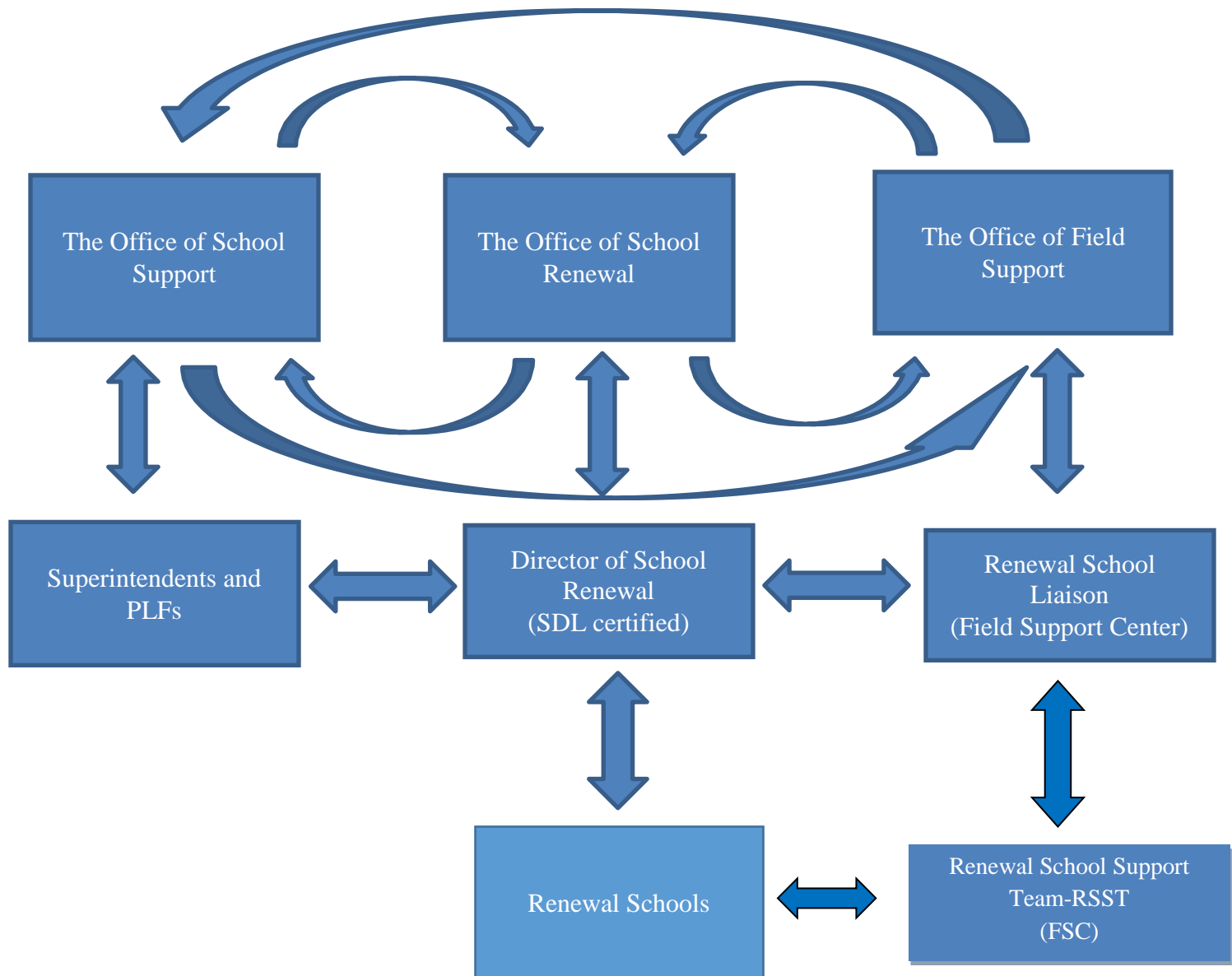


Figure 4

*Recommended Flow for Renewal School Communication in the New York City Department of Education*



Zimmerman (1991) contends that while there are many variables that affect school turnaround success, nothing is more impactful than how they are managed. Furthermore, Slatter (1984) claims that in turnaround situations it is the leader that sets priorities and goals to create a

sense of urgency. This is how change occurs. In support of these claims, Kotter (1996) presents a change model where creating a sense of urgency clarifies the purpose of the change and Short et al. (1998) proposes that competent management impacts the failure or success of that change. These claims are in alignment with the findings of this study on Renewal School leadership. Therefore, in addition to the Renewal School Liaison position, it is recommended that additional staff be added to the Field Support Center (FSC) to create a Renewal School Support Team (RSST) at the FSC. Presently, the FSC supports schools in the ISSP (Individual School support Plan) process. During this work stream, the Superintendents' Office and the FSC team via a collaborative agenda that determines next steps for Renewal Schools across the six divisional supports from the FSC. Once next steps are established, they are applied and monitored via benchmarked expectations established in the ISSP meeting; which happens twice a school year. It is recommended that the ISSP be taken a step further where the RSL and the RSST work in tandem with the DSR to support the operational work of the principalship across the six divisions of the FSC. This structural shift would alleviate the burden of principals overwhelming responsibilities of managing operations and instruction. It would refocus principals' attention to improving teaching and learning, assessment of and for learning, and the professional development of teachers. Ensuring that principals are solely focused on instruction, teaching, and learning during the school day. Furthermore, it would streamline supports with an experienced, focused team who are able to fully carry the compliance and operational work.

**Research question two, recommendation three.** The Office of School Renewal should ensure that all (at least) Renewal School leaders and their leadership teams (if possible) be trained in *Data Wise*. Stiggins (2001) argues that principals must be assessment literate and remove all barriers to teachers being and becoming assessment literate themselves. Participants

in the study shared that the *Data Wise* protocol was extremely beneficial to transforming the data and assessment culture of their schools. The challenge is that all Renewal School leaders were not trained in *Data Wise*. This gap created an inequity of access to information, as non-attendees received training via a train-the-trainer model.

**Recommendations for research question three.** The findings and conclusions determined that professional development of turnaround school leaders is an influential lever in building sustainable, systemic change in the New York City Department of Education. Applying a systems approach to professional development where there is collaboration between curriculum designers, Renewal School leaders, and hiring managers would ensure that consistency and coherence is facilitated in the teaching and training of potential and sitting Renewal School leaders. It has been determined that this can be successfully accomplished via the following three recommendations (1) recognize that turnaround school leadership is unique and therefore requires its own professional learning curriculum and set of skilled facilitators who have mastery in strategic school turnaround, (2) adult learners require the three R's of relevance, relatable content, and real-world teaching embedded in their curricular content, and (3) turnaround school leaders need extensive capacity building in the areas of instructional leadership, statistical literacy, and monitoring and evaluating leaders and teachers.

**Research question three, recommendation one.** Designers of Renewal School curriculum recognize school turnaround as a unique genre of school design that requires specified elements of leadership training. According to Baroody (2011), successful school turnaround requires the consistent, targeted efforts of the entire district to ensure and commit specified supports and a strategized methodology to bring about change. Therefore, Renewal School leaders should have exposure and training in the areas of organizational management,

resilience, and emotional intelligence in order to be successful. Furthermore, they require professional training in the areas of instructional leadership, assessment, and monitoring and evaluating pedagogy. Lastly, it is recommended that all aspects of the curricular design and execution, including facilitators and assessors of the professional learning program consider this distinct factor and embed the 3Rs into the design as explained in recommendation two for research question three.

**Research question three, recommendation two.** It is recommended that the designers of Renewal School leader professional development consider the research of Knowles (1980) and Kolb (1984) when constructing professional learning opportunities and activities for turnaround school leaders. Knowles (1980) suggests that adult learners require experiences that are built upon previous experiences and suggests that adult learning experiences be relevant to the actual day-to-day work expected of the leader. Kolb (1984) presents an adult learning cycle that integrates concrete, reflection, abstract, and active experimentation to foster an experiential learning opportunity. In support of these findings, Falasca (2011) can assist curriculum developers for Renewal Schools to incorporate the nuanced differences between adults and children learners. Renewal School designers must emphasize that adult learners need content that is relatable to their existence and that they are taught through real-world experiences. Therefore, activities should engage participants in emotional, physical, and intellectual connections that are more concerned with transformation as opposed to information. Lastly, it is recommended that Renewal School leaders participate in residencies with principals and schools in good standing and with successful Renewal School leaders who have been able to improve their schools.

**Research question three, recommendation three.** The final recommendation for research question three is that professional learning for Renewal School leaders (both principals and superintendents) bridge instructional leadership, statistical literacy, and the monitoring of and evaluating of pedagogy and leadership in the design of the curriculum. The Renewal School leaders who were interviewed for this study shared that the professional development that was most impactful for them focused on the areas of instructional leadership where they learned about curriculum, lesson execution, and effective teaching strategies. The participants also discussed the value of training centered on data analysis and accountability measures as celebrated in the *Data Wise* professional development. Lastly, Renewal School leaders shared that the evaluation process when executed in strategic ways with structured agendas, targeted observations, and supplied actionable feedback is an empowering professional learning process that improves teaching and leadership. The participants' responses are in line with research about principal leadership. According to Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2005), a school leader's knowledge of instruction and curriculum has great impact on student achievement. The statistical significance of this responsibility is .25. In conjunction with this finding, Stiggins (2001) claimed that school leaders' knowledge of statistical literacy affects a teacher's ability to effectively assess students. This finding indicates that a school leader's understanding of assessment is expansive and must go beyond the results of standardized testing as traditional testing fails to measure academic skills (Wiggins, 1989). Therefore, it is recommended that the content and process of professional learning for Renewal School leaders be comprised of teaching and training that embeds and intersects instructional leadership and statistical literacy. Finally, it is recommended that Renewal School leaders be trained on effective practices of monitoring and evaluating pedagogy and leadership as the principal and teacher evaluation

system determines a leader's and teacher's effectiveness via the exploration of multiple measures including observations, quantitative data review, parent and student surveys, and community feedback. The participants in this study stressed that feedback presented from evaluations offered pathways to relatable and relevant professional development that provided new learning about themselves as leaders and the ways in which they can influence and improve teaching and learning. Therefore, it is recommended extensive training to prepare Renewal School leaders in accurately and effectively evaluating leaders and teachers that simultaneously incorporates how to provide targeted and actionable feedback that improves teaching and learning.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This investigation was conducted to identify the leadership qualities that yield success in Renewal Schools. It was a qualitative study that interviewed 12 educators to answer three research questions about what constitutes Renewal School leader success. While Chapter five offers recommendations that are aligned to the findings of the study, there are implications for further studies of Renewal Schools and schools that are identified as turnaround schools. The proposed three ideas for further study. They are (1) change this investigation on leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools from a qualitative study into a quantitative study, (2) change the focus of this investigation on leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools from school leadership and the Renewal School model to examine superintendents and the Renewal School model, and (3) conduct an investigation on the impact and the use of the DADC and the DMDC on successfully matching the placements of principals in Renewal Schools.

The first recommendation for further study is to turn this investigation into a quantitative study. In order to do this, it is recommended that a survey be designed incorporating the use of

Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005). This research identified 21 principal leadership responsibilities that are integral to student success. Therefore, the recommendation for further study is to create a survey based on these 21 responsibilities and survey Renewal school principals and their respective superintendents to determine the correlation between Renewal school principal frequency of application of these responsibilities and superintendent assessment of Renewal school principal success. Upon completion of the surveys, the researcher would use the frequency distribution method to tally the group score for each of the 21 responsibilities. Following this step, the researcher would use cross tabulation to categorize the data into a table format in regards to each of the responsibilities to determine the correlation between Renewal School principal application of the responsibilities and superintendent assessment of success.

This investigation on leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools was mainly focused on school leadership and how it intersects and is supported by the Renewal School model. An idea for further study is to investigate the role of the superintendent and determine how superintendents are set up for success in the Renewal School model. In this investigation, it is suggested that the researcher examine superintendent qualities that yield success in Renewal schools by looking at structures, systems, and professional development that enable superintendent success in school turnaround.

The *De Govia Assessment Tool of Desirability and Capacity for Turnaround School Leaders* (DADC) and the *De Govia Matrix of Desirability and Capacity* (DMDC) are instruments that were designed in direct alignment to the findings of this study in order to assist hiring managers in search of turnaround school leaders to lead Renewal Schools. A suggestion for further study is to investigate if the instruments improved the successful placement matches of Renewal School leaders. The researcher recommends that this investigation be conducted as a

quantitative study where the attrition and success rates of leaders of Renewal Schools are accounted for prior to the implementation of the DADC and the DMDC. Then the researcher recommends a comparison study be conducted over the course of a three year period to determine how the use of the instruments impacted the successful placement of Renewal School leaders who were equipped to meet the expectations upon entering the position.

### **Summary**

Chapter one introduced the reader to the research and described the context of the issue via background information, the statement of the problem, the theoretical framework which the study is thought through, and the significance of the study. Chapter one also provided insight into key terms used throughout the study and concluded with delimitations and limitations of the study. Chapter two provided a review of the literature that is related to this study via historical as well as present day context that anchors the study in the theoretical framework and opportunities for further research. The literature review explored these research questions via four sections. (1) The history of school reform, (2) the elements of effective school turnaround, (3) establishing and executing change in an organization, and (4) the characteristics of effective educational leadership. By combining these four sections, the researcher comprehensively investigated the process and possibility of transforming struggling schools into ones that succeed. Chapter three described the researcher's methodology for conducting the study. In this chapter, the researcher shared the plans, procedures, and process of the data collection. Chapter four presented the data collected in response to the three research questions, the researcher's analysis, and results of the research. Lastly, chapter five presented the researcher's findings overview as well as conclusions for each research question, recommendations for each research question, and suggestions for further study.

This investigation has concluded that turning around failing schools is a complex task. It requires school leaders to exhibit a plethora of diverse leadership qualities, engage in strategic systems and structures, and receive professional development that yields transformative experiences. The Renewal School program in the NYCDOE is uniquely positioned to disrupt generational poverty in communities throughout New York City that have persistently been affected by failing schools. However, it is struggling to do so despite generous resources and support from the NYCDOE. “It’s an expensive program and the city has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in it. And at this moment, the payoff has not been very great. (Harris, 2017, p.1)”. Initially, the cost of this program was estimated to cost NYC \$150M. However, as of August 2017, the Renewal School program is estimated to cost \$582M (Harris and Fessenden, 2017). Harris et al. (2017) found that from the onset of the program, “the percentage of students who passed the reading tests increased by nearly 10.7 points; the percentage who passed the math tests grew by 2.9 points”. A review of the data indicates that schools in communities at risk continue to fail such as The Hunts Point School in the Bronx where there was little to no improvement in English and a dip in math performance that yielded a 1.8 proficiency rate among students (Harris et al.,2017). In conjunction with these finding, Pallas (2017) and Winter (2017) have reviewed data from the three past years and have determined that,

Over the past three school years, 20 elementary schools in the Renewal program have made larger gains on average in math and reading than 23 similar schools that didn’t get extra resources. The proportion of elementary school students considered proficient in reading at Renewal schools increased from 7 percent in 2014 to 18 percent last year -an 11-point jump. Meanwhile, the comparison schools also saw gains, but only by seven

percentage points, giving Renewal schools a four percentage point advantage (Zimmerman 2017).

To change this historical trajectory and disrupt the bonds of poverty that plague communities with failing schools, it would benefit the NYCDOE to implement and apply the research of this study via professional learning opportunities for both principals and superintendents that are anchored in adult learning as prescribed by Knowles (1984), Kolb (1984), and Drago-Severson (2008). When applied, these theorists' research, yield transformative behaviors and habits in how one executes leadership responsibilities and builds successful communities that facilitate learning. The success of children and families depends on the capabilities and giftedness of the leaders in charge of changing failing schools. The NYCDOE can no longer afford to exist in a *knowing-doing gap* (Pfeffer et al., 2008). Therefore, it is imperative that the expected school leaders of Renewal Schools be trained via transformative and experiential methods if they are in turn expected to lead and train children and teachers to be transformed via their respective school, teaching, and learning experiences. Positioning leaders to lead what they haven't experienced or been taught to change via specific measures and pathways leads to *fixes that fail* (Kim 1990). Furthermore, it leaves school leaders in a place where they have to figure out how to *shift the burden* (Senge 1990) with little to no leverage to change the position in which they have been sit

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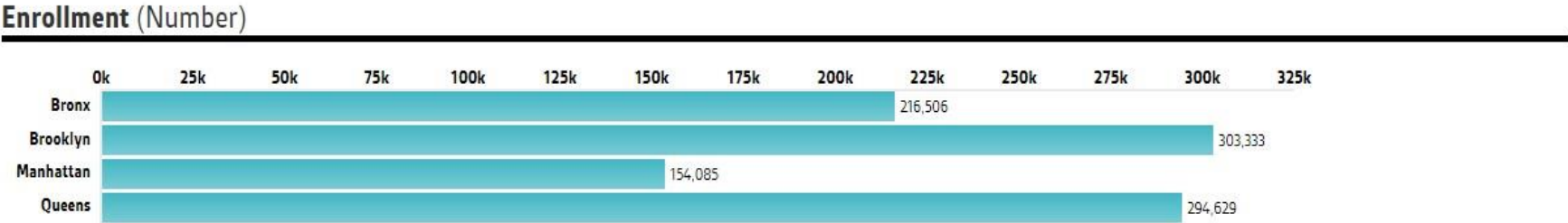
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Appendix 1  
Enrollment of New York City Public School Students by Borough



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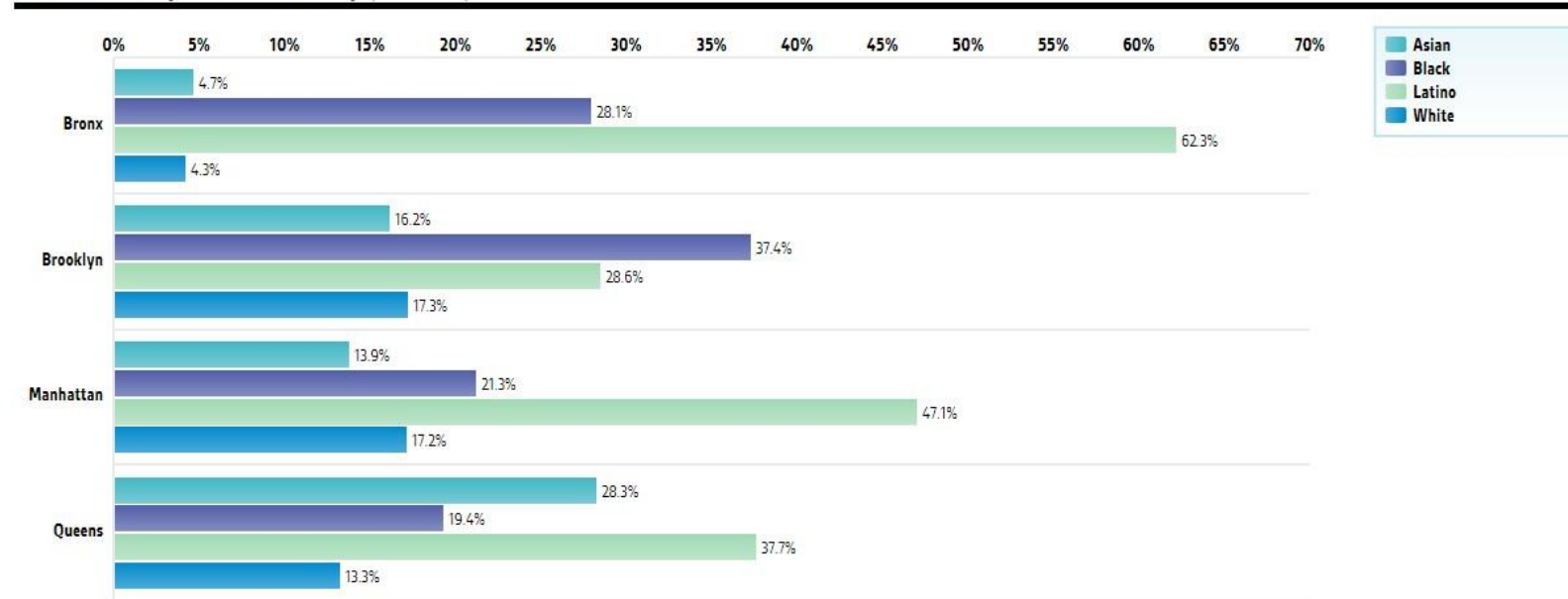
**Source:** New York City Department of Education, J-Form Register by District (School Years 1999-00; 2000-01; 2001-02; 2002-03; 2003-04; 2004-05; 2005-06; 2006-07; 2007-08; 2008-09; 2009-10; 2010-11; 2011-12; 2012-13; 2013-14); retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/data/stats/arreports.htm>.

**Definitions:** Enrollment (official register) in New York City public schools.

## Appendix 2

### Enrollment of New York City Public School Students by Race in each Borough

**Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (Percent)**



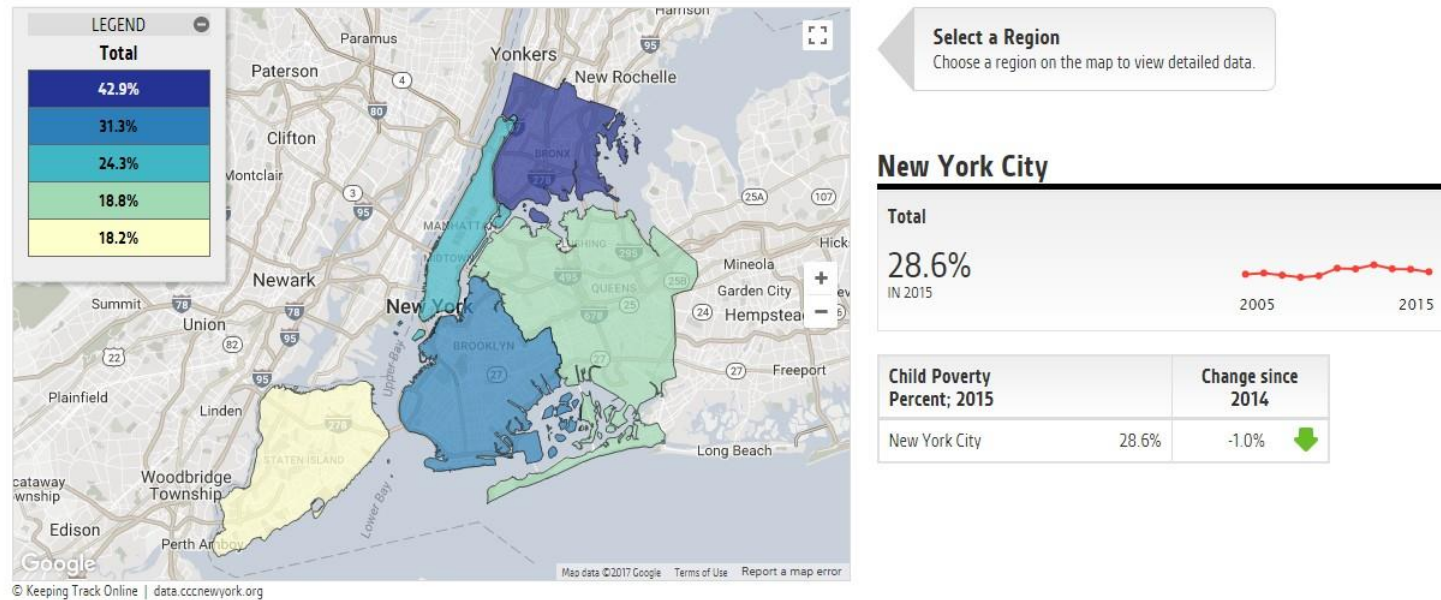
© Keeping Track Online | [data.cccnyc.org](http://data.cccnyc.org)

**Source:** New York City Department of Education, J-Form Register by District (School Years 1999-00; 2000-01; 2001-02; 2002-03; 2003-04; 2004-05; 2005-06; 2006-07; 2007-08; 2008-09; 2009-10; 2010-11; 2011-12; 2012-13; 2013-14); retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/data/stats/arreports.htm>.

**Definitions:** Enrollment (official register) in New York City public schools.

**Notes:** Percents refer to the percent of total enrollment.

### Appendix 3 2015 Map of Child Poverty in New York City



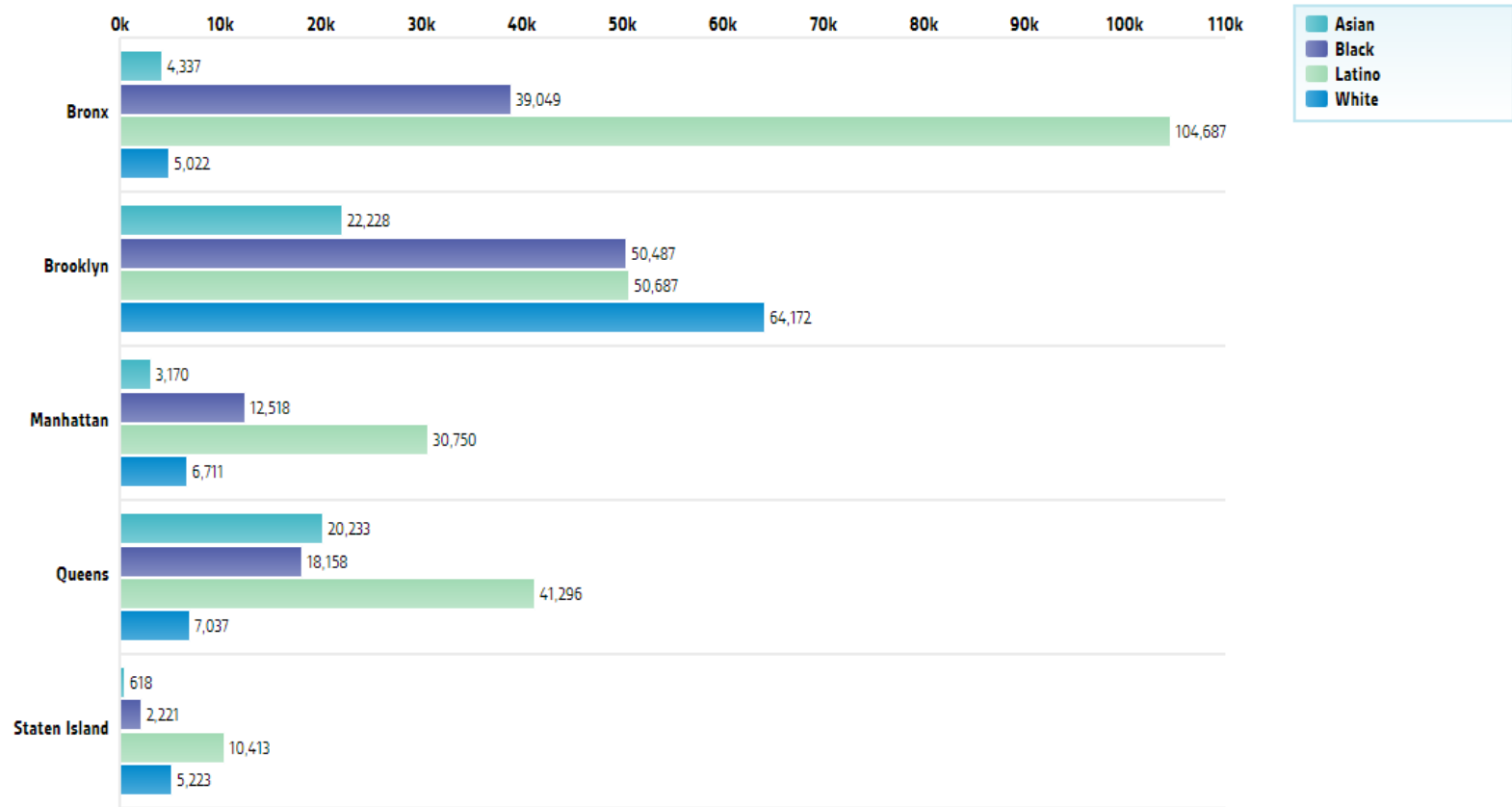
**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table S1701 (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015); retrieved from American FactFinder; <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>.

**Definitions:** Children under 18 years in households with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

**Notes:** The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is an income threshold calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau each year for the purpose of estimating the number of individuals and households living in poverty. The income threshold varies based on the number of children and adults in a household and the age of the head of household. In 2012, the FPL for a household consisting of two adults and two children was \$23,283. The Census Bureau excludes institutionalized individuals, individuals living in military group quarters or college dorms, and unrelated individuals under 15 years of age from poverty estimates. Percents refer to the percent of children for whom poverty status was determined.

Appendix 4  
Child Poverty by Race/Ethnicity in New York City

Child Poverty by Race/Ethnicity (Number)



Citizens Committee for Children of New York. (2016). *Community Risk Ranking*. Retrieved from <http://data.cccnewyork.org/riskranking#?domain=1245&year=20&communities=8%7C17>.

Appendix 5  
Overall Data for the Top 20 Communities at Risk in New York City

**Community District Detailed Data**

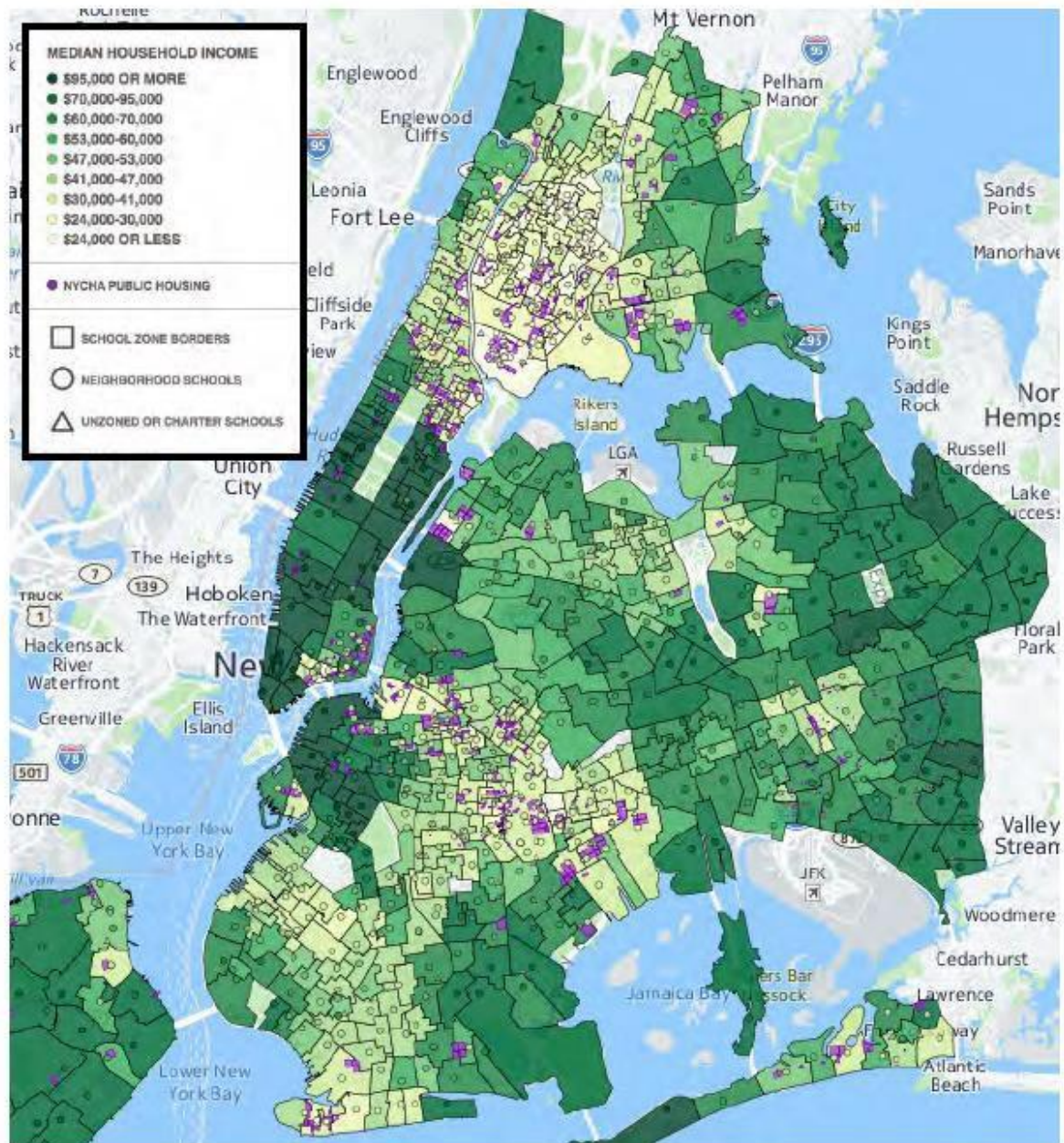
Community District	Overall Rank	Economic Security	Housing	Health	Education	Youth	Family & Community
✖ Hunts Point (B02)	1	6	4	24	1	2	1
✖ East Tremont (B06)	2	4	5	6	5	8	2
✖ Mott Haven (B01)	3	6	6	21	2	1	3
✖ Brownsville (K16)	4	1	10	1	4	5	8
✖ Morrisania (B03)	5	4	2	11	7	6	4
✖ University Heights (B05)	6	2	1	20	21	4	6
✖ Concourse/Highbridge (B04)	7	10	3	22	6	7	5
✖ East New York (K05)	8	17	8	9	8	11	7
✖ Unionport/Soundview (B09)	9	8	15	16	3	10	11
✖ Bedford Park (B07)	10	13	11	28	9	3	10
✖ Williamsbridge (B12)	11	28	13	4	19	13	14
✖ Bushwick (K04)	12	18	22	19	10	15	13
✖ Bedford Stuyvesant (K03)	13	14	14	45	16	9	12
✖ East Flatbush (K17)	14	29	21	5	25	17	16
✖ East Harlem (M11)	15	7	33	17	32	28	9
✖ Central Harlem (M10)	16	15	38	15	14	12	15
✖ Jamaica/St. Albans (Q12)	17	34	17	2	20	16	22
✖ Crown Heights North (K08)	18	21	32	3	27	19	20
✖ Pelham Parkway (B11)	19	30	29	8	15	22	28
✖ Coney Island (K13)	20	9	31	10	38	25	27

Citizens Committee for Children of New York. (2016). *Community Risk Ranking*. Retrieved from <http://data.cccnewyork.org/riskranking#?domain=1245&year=20&communities=8%7C17>.

## Appendix 6A

### The Estimated Income of NYC Students and Zones

**Figure 1: Estimated Income of NYC Students and Zones**



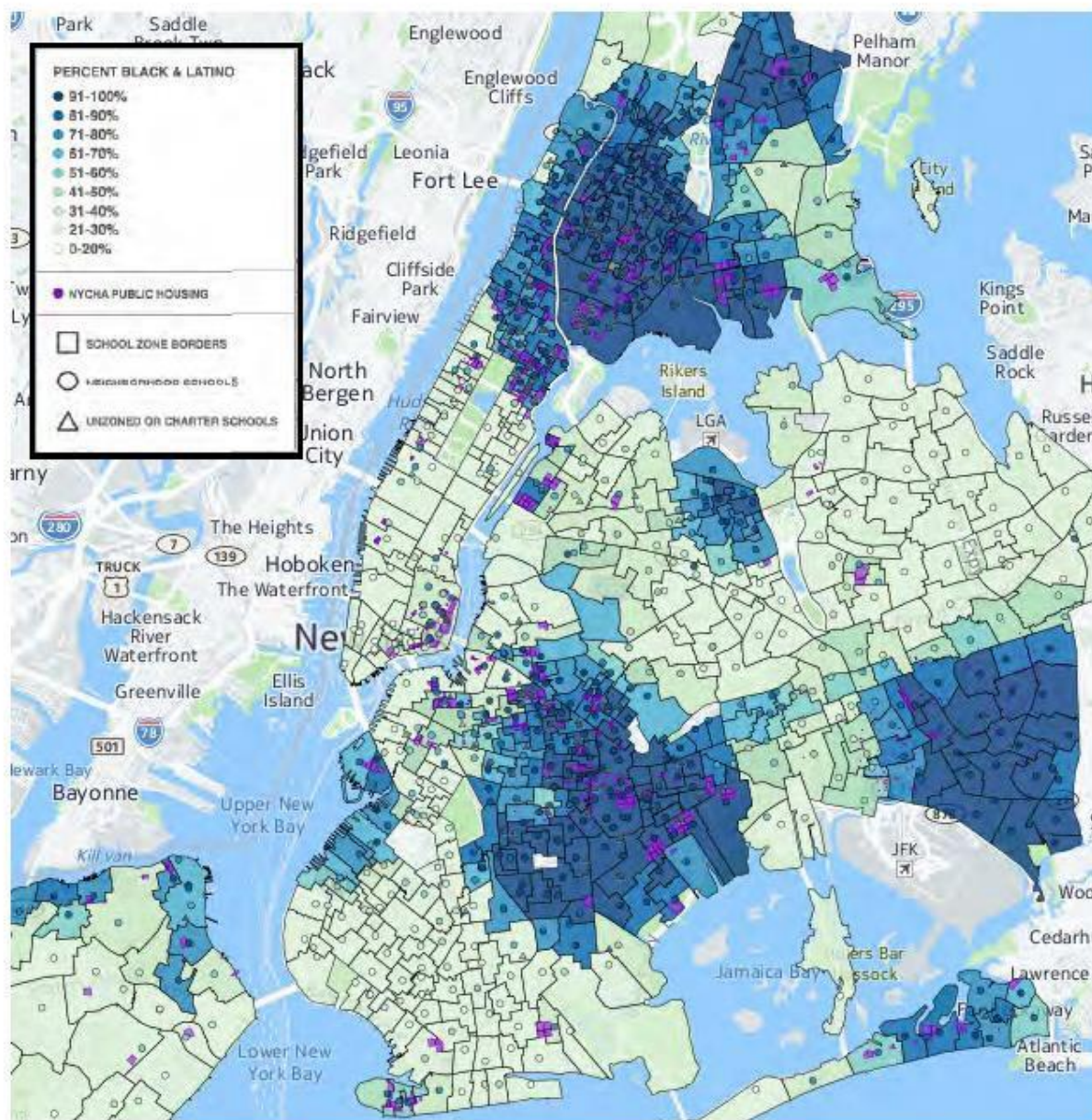
See Appendix 1 for detail images of each borough, or access the interactive version of this map at [centernyc.org/segregatedschools](http://centernyc.org/segregatedschools). There you can click any school to view more information about its students and zone, or link to its [insideschools.org](http://insideschools.org) profile.

Hemphill, C. and Mader, N. (2016).

## Appendix 6B

### The Racial Makeup of NYC Students and Zones

**Figure 2: Racial Makeup of NYC Students and Zones**

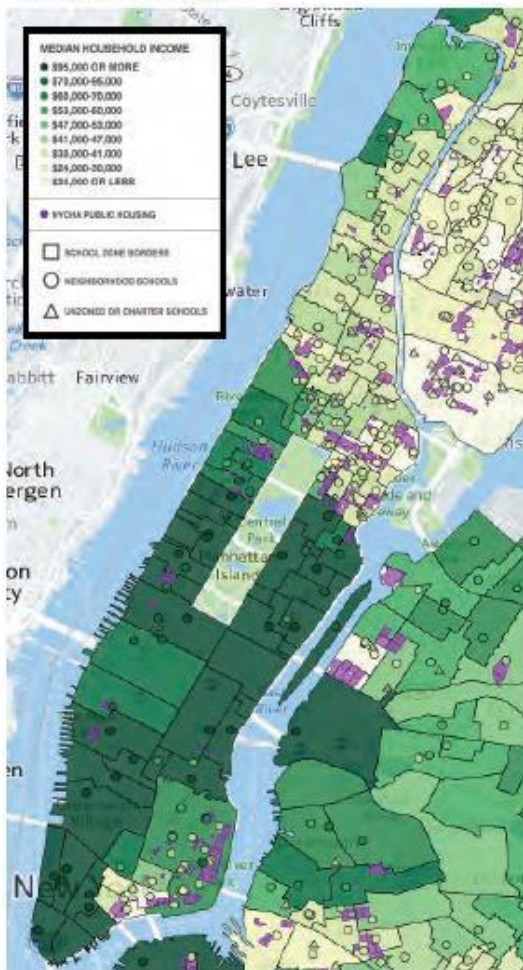


See Appendix 1 for detail images of each borough, or access the interactive version of this map at [centernyc.org/segregatedschools](http://centernyc.org/segregatedschools). There you can click any school to view more information about its students and zone, or link to its [insideschools.org](http://insideschools.org) profile.

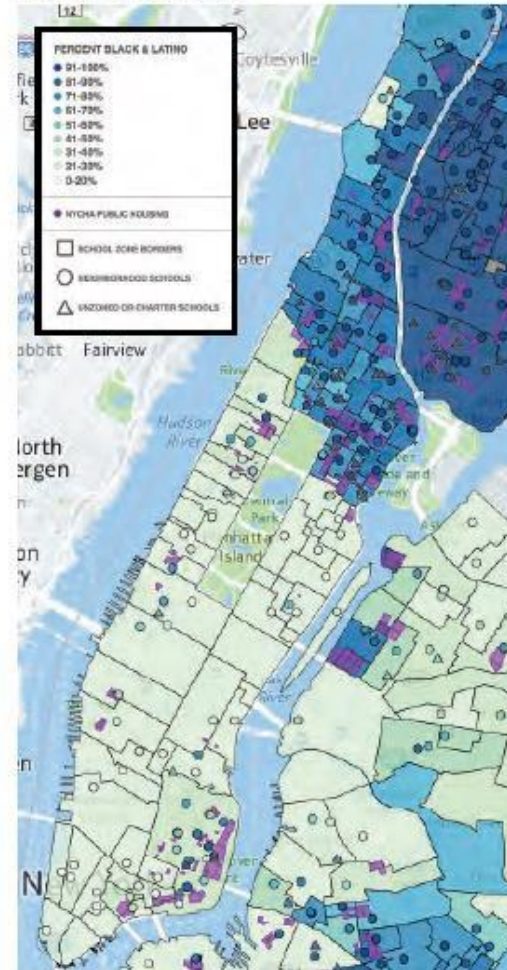
### Appendix 6C

#### The Estimated Income of Manhattan Students and Zones and the Racial Makeup of Manhattan Students and Zones

**Figure 3: Estimated Income of Manhattan Students and Zones**



**Figure 4: Racial Makeup of Manhattan Students and Zones**



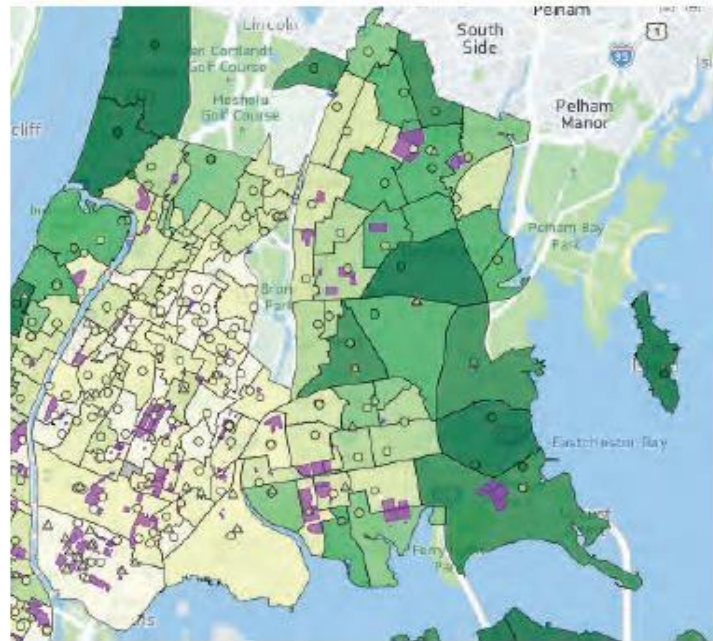
Manhattan is home to several of the wealthiest and whitest school zones in the city, yet a surprisingly large of its schools remain predominately low-income, black and Latino. In District 3 on the Upper West Side, for example, the estimated household income of children enrolled at PS 191 is barely half that of all households in the school zone. PS 191's pupils are 80 percent black and Latino; the zone, just 21 percent. Similarly, in District 5 in Harlem, the estimated household income of children enrolled at PS 125 is barely half that of all the households in the school zone. PS 125's pupils are 84 percent black and Latino; the zone is just 37 percent.

Hemphill, C. and Mader, N. (2016).

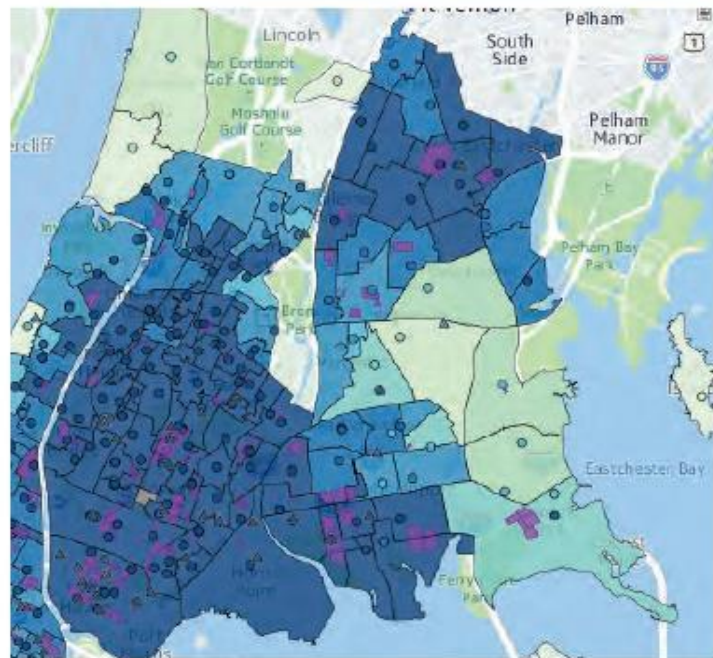
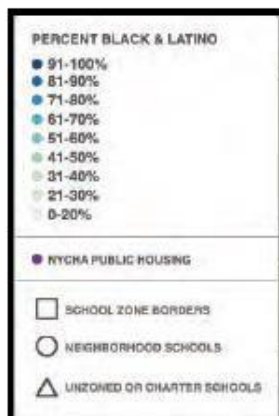
## Appendix 6D

### The Estimated Income of Bronx Students and Zones and the Racial Makeup of Bronx Students and Zones

**Figure 5: Estimated Income of Bronx Students and Zones**



**Figure 6: Racial Makeup of Bronx Students and Zones**



More than three-quarters of the Bronx's elementary schools have more than 90% black and Latino students, all of which have estimated school incomes below the citywide median household income. Even in the higher-income neighborhoods in the northern parts of the Bronx, the schools have more students who are black and Latino and from lower-income census tracts than the zones in which they are located.

## Appendix 6E

The Estimated Income of Queens Students and Zones  
and the Racial Makeup of Queens Students and Zones

Figure 7: Estimated Income of  
Queens Students and Zones

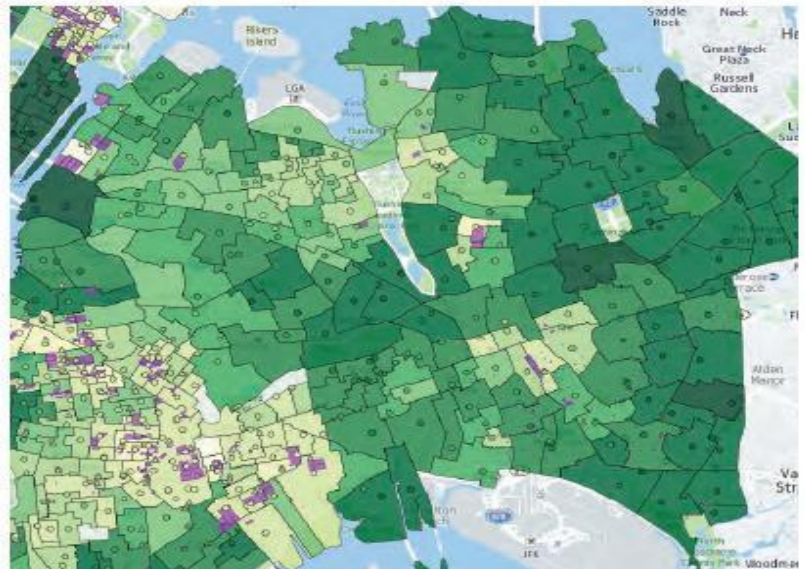
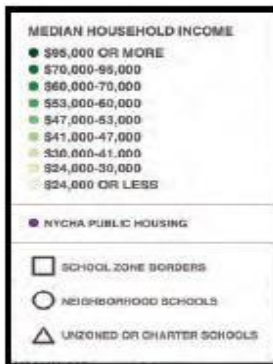
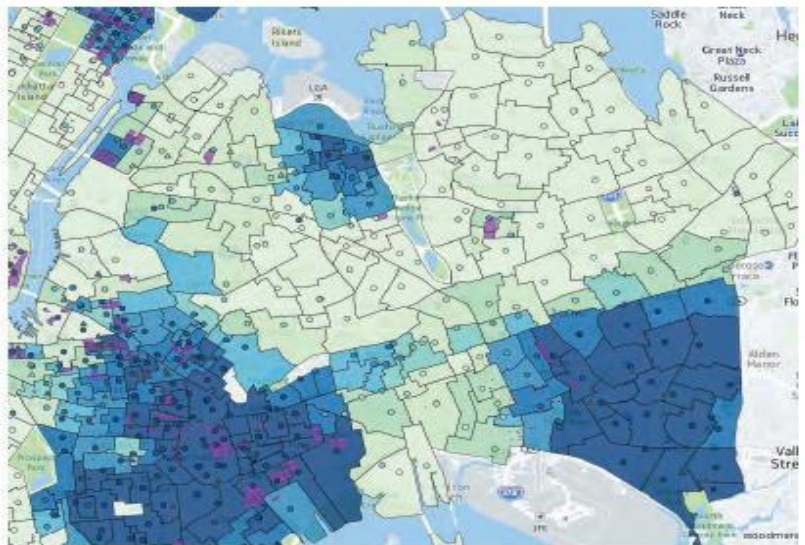
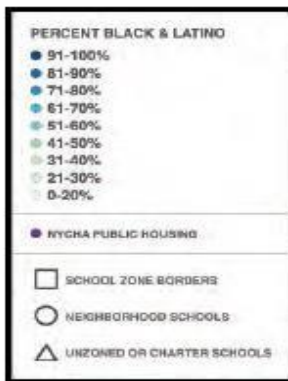


Figure 8: Racial Makeup of  
Queens Students and Zones



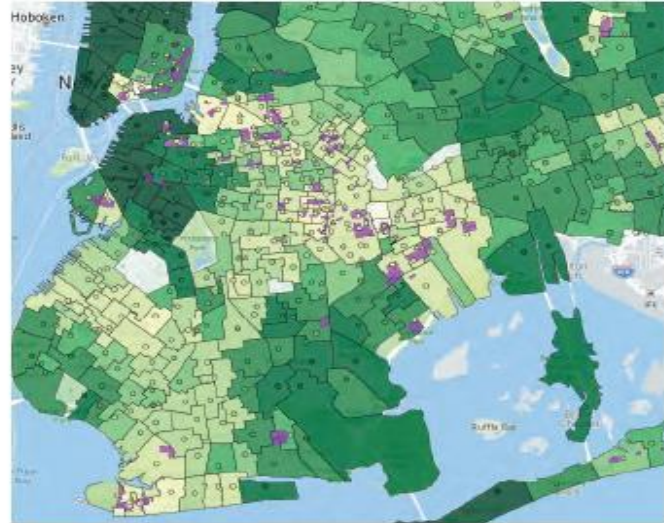
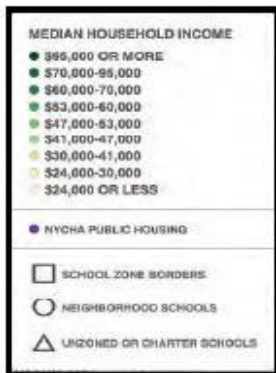
Queens is known as the most ethnically diverse county in the entire country. Although these maps paint that rich diversity with a broad brush, they also indicate that school segregation by race in Queens is largely a factor of residential segregation. With the exception of a few schools like the Elm Tree School in Elmhurst, which is 94% black and Latino in a zone that is 51%, most of the schools match the income estimates and demographics of their zones

Hemphill, C. and Mader, N. (2016).

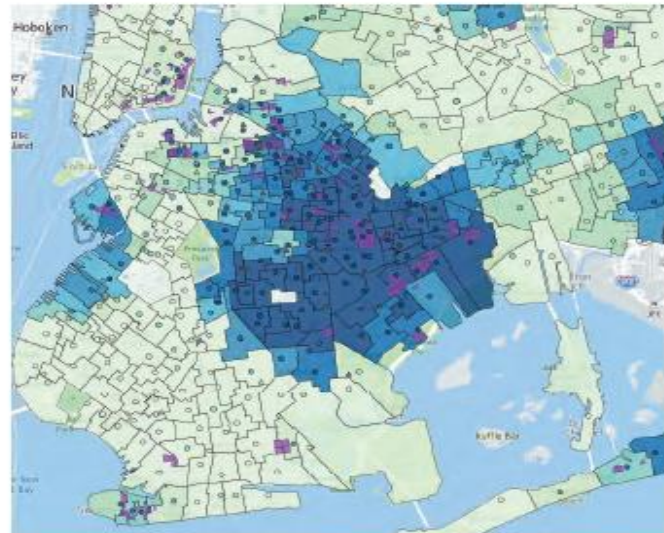
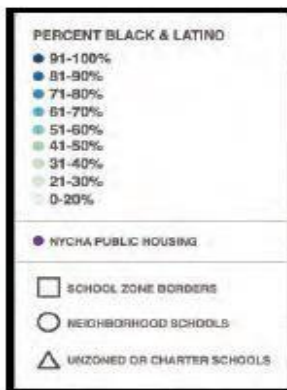
## Appendix 6F

### The Estimated Income of Brooklyn Students and Zones and Racial Makeup of Brooklyn Students and Zones

**Figure 9: Estimated Income of Brooklyn Students and Zones**



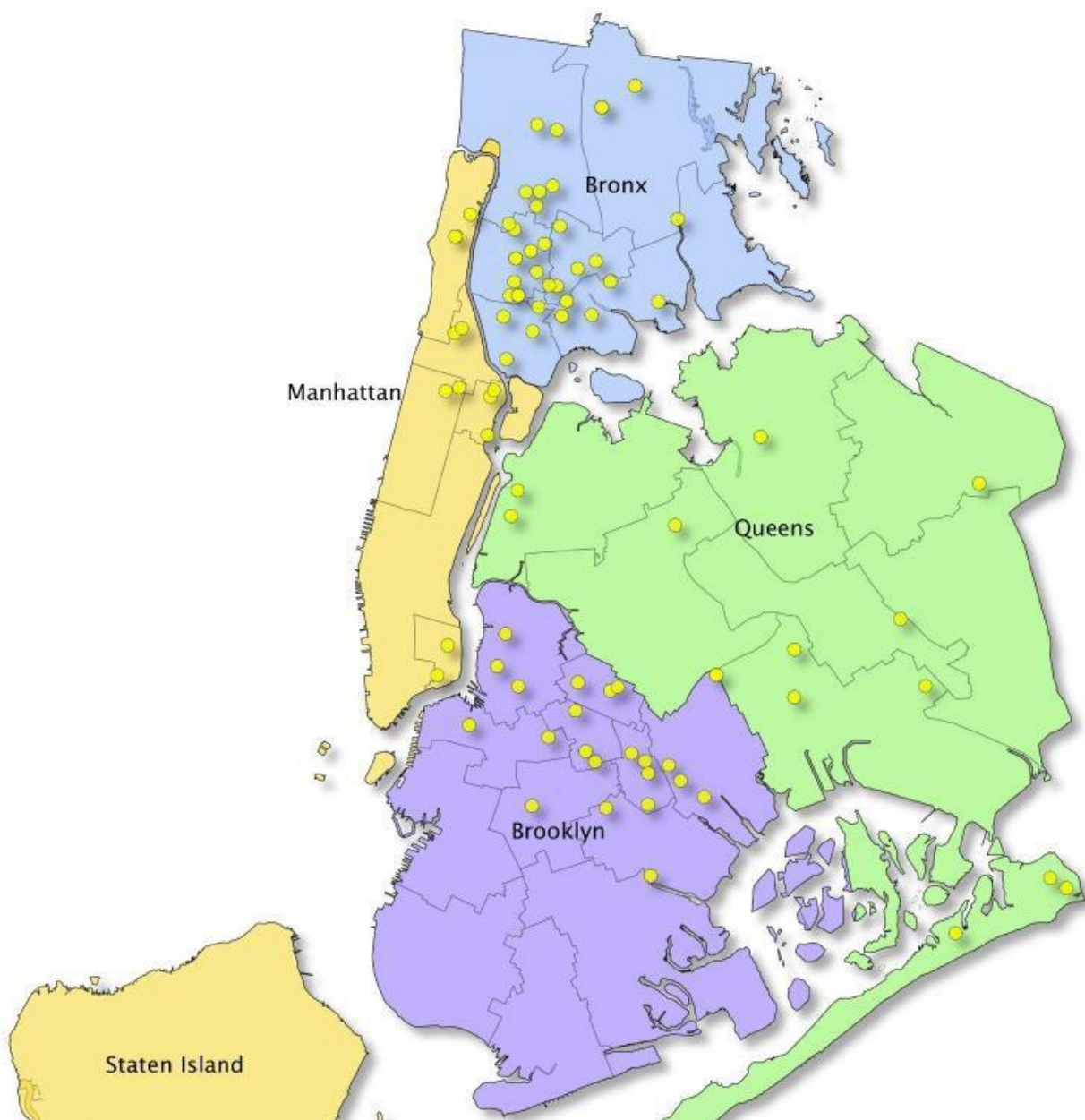
**Figure 10: Racial Makeup of Brooklyn Students and Zones**



A borough experiencing rapid neighborhood change, Brooklyn is also home to some of the highest contrasts between zones and schools in the city. In District 13 in downtown Brooklyn the estimated household income of children enrolled at PS 287 is less than half that of all households in the school zone. The school enrollment is 89 percent black and Latino; the zone is just 43 percent black and Latino. PS 282, also in District 13 in the heart of Park Slope, is 85% black and Latino in a zone that is only 30%.

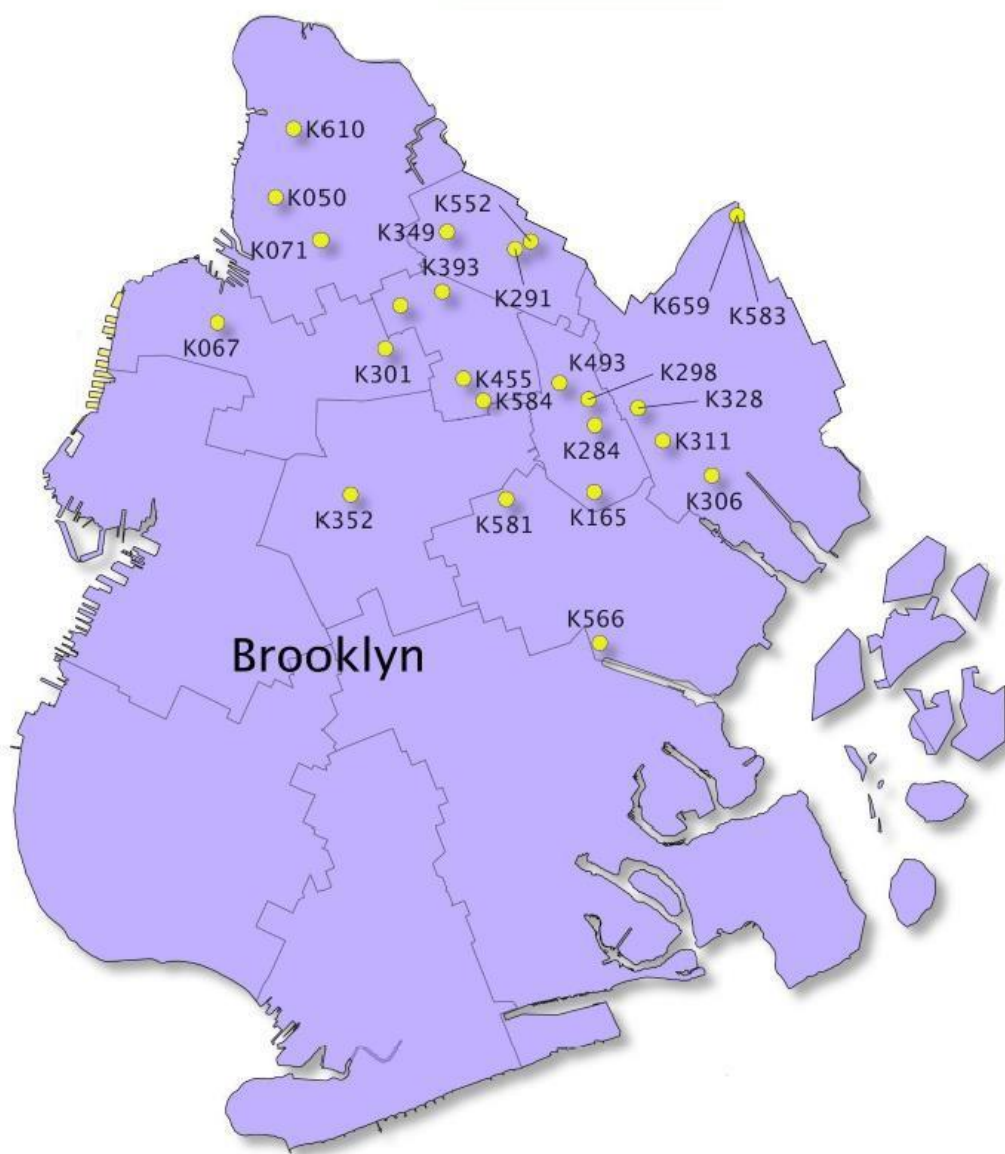
Appendix 7A  
Renewal Schools in New York City

## Renewal schools across the city



\*The yellow circles represent the location of Renewal Schools.

## Appendix 7B

**Renewal Schools in Brooklyn**

\*The yellow circles represent the location of Renewal Schools.

Appendix 7C  
**Renewal Schools in Manhattan**



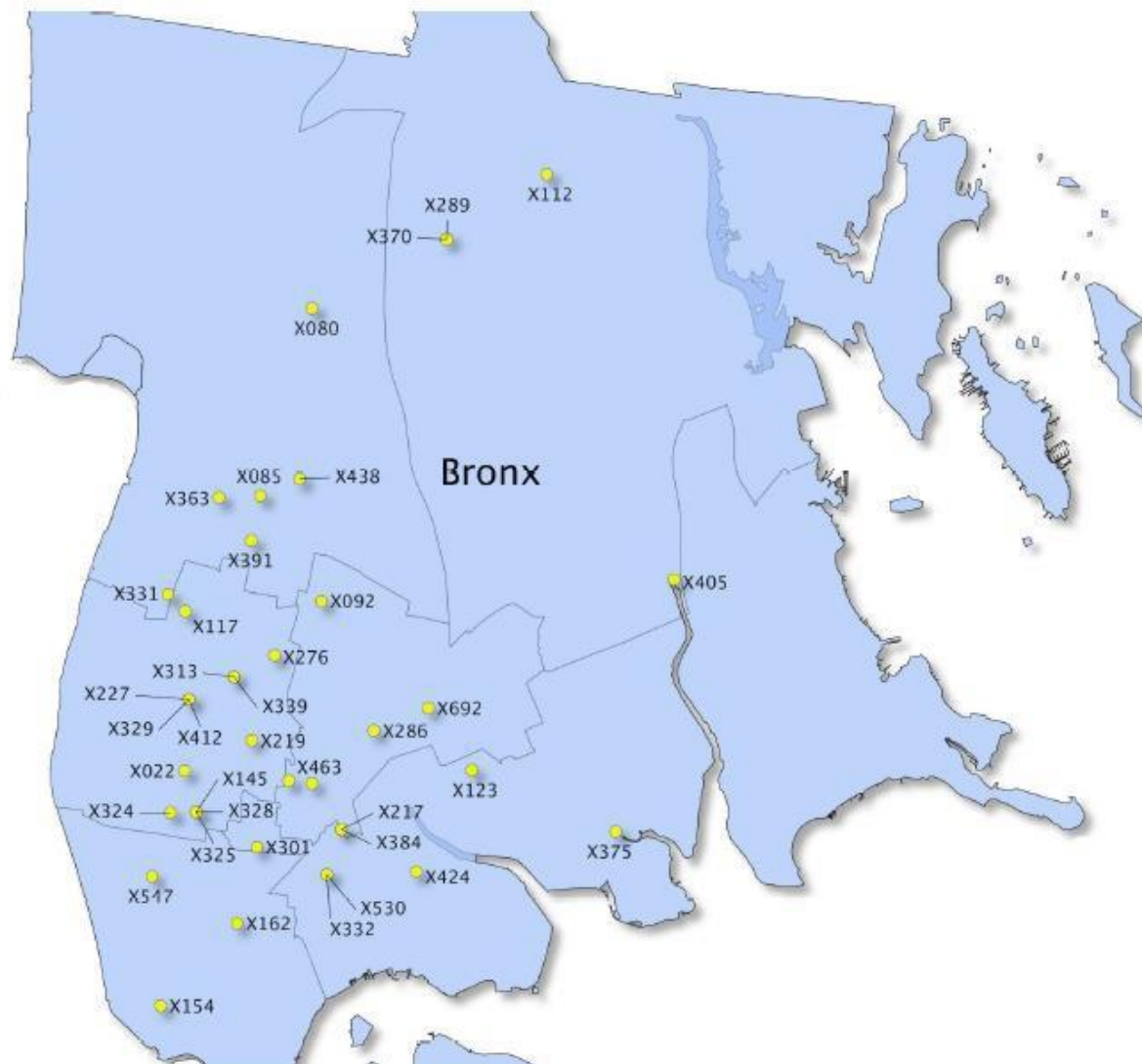
\*The yellow circles represent the location of Renewal Schools.

## Appendix 7D

**Renewal Schools in Queens**

\*The yellow circles represent the location of Renewal Schools.

## Appendix 7E

**Renewal Schools in The Bronx**

\*The yellow circles represent the location of Renewal Schools.

## Appendix 8

## Framework for Great Schools



## Appendix 9

### Interview Questions

1. As a Principal (Superintendent) what do you believe are the leadership qualities that are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools?
2. How do you measure your success as a Renewal school leader in the NYCDOE?
3. How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success?
4. What model(s) of professional development is most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success?
5. How do you measure the “success” impact of Renewal school leader professional development on your practice as a Renewal school leader in the NYCDOE?
6. Are you a former participant in any of NYCDOE’s principal or superintendent pipeline structures? How has this experience prepared you for the principal/leadership experience in a Renewal School?
7. What are the key pipeline development structures or leadership development experiences that enable success in the NYCDOE Renewal School model?
8. As a Renewal School leader, what are three aspects of leadership that consistently reoccur? How do you manage it?
9. What support is required for Renewal School principals to be successful? What does this support look like in action?
10. Are Renewal School principals set up for success in the NYCDOE? What evidence supports your answer?

## Appendix 10

De Govia Assessment Tool of Desirability and Capacity for Turnaround School Leaders  
(DADC)

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

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ Hiring Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Please interview the candidate by reading the statements below. Upon completion of the response and review of the evidence, assign a score for each statement. The scale is below.

0= strongly disagree      0-disagree      1=agree      2=strongly disagree

1. I possess strong organizational management skills and am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_ Score (C)
2. My professional experience demonstrates my desire to work in turnaround schools and I am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_ Score (D)
3. I am emotionally intelligent as a leader and I am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_ Score (C)
4. I possess an expansive vision for schools in turnaround situations that I am able to express and demonstrate this claim via evidence and artifacts. \_\_\_\_\_ Score (D)
5. I am a resilient leader who excels at managing difficult situations and I am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_ Score (C)

6. I possess a strong desire to deliver and receive professional development that incorporates instructional leadership to foster school turnaround. I am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_Score (D)
7. I am an effective communicator and creator of systems of communication. I am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_Score (C)
8. I possess a strong desire to engage in and deliver professional development that focuses on data-driven decision making, the use and implementation of accountability tools, and the organization of schools around data demands. I am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_Score (D)
9. I possess strong instructional leadership skills as a result of extensive training and/or my work experience that I feel comfortable transferring to others. I am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_Score (C)
10. As s turnaround school leader, I am receptive and willing to receive and deliver feedback that is timely, actionable, specific, and transformative. I am able to demonstrate evidence of this claim. \_\_\_\_\_Score (D)

November 29, 2016

Appendix 11  
Recruitment Letter

Mauriciere de Govia  
2037 East 41<sup>st</sup> Street  
Brooklyn, New York 11234

Laura Feijoo, Senior Supervising Superintendent  
Office of Superintendents, Room 208  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, New York 10003

Dear Senior Supervising Superintendent Feijoo,

I am a doctoral candidate conducting an investigation of leadership practices that yield success in Renewal Schools. I am writing to request permission from you and your office to reach out and recruit Renewal School Superintendents for this study. This request describes the research methodology for this study.

The purpose of this research is to investigate leadership practices among principals that successfully address the New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Renewal School model. Renewal Schools are the 86 lowest performing schools in New York City. In 2014, Mayor Bill de Blasio introduced the Renewal School model as a part of his *Equity and Excellence* initiative for New York City Schools. Unlike his predecessor, Mayor Michael Bloomberg (who closed schools when they were failing), Mayor de Blasio introduced a plan to allocate resources that supported and helped re-brand and re-direct struggling schools from academic failure to academic success.

This study will seek to answer three core research questions: (1) what are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools? (2) How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success? (3) What model(s) of professional development is most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success?

Participants in this study have the opportunity to influence solutions that will help policy makers in the New York City Department of Education address the challenge of accurately placing competent and able principals into Renewal Schools. The intended outcome of this research is to provide the NYCDOE, the United States' largest school system, with a roadmap to the appropriate leadership preparation model for struggling schools that will build a sustainable leadership pipeline that possesses a new understanding of the role of the principal, and how it must be managed to lead and transform the most fragile schools in New York City.

This is a qualitative case study that will use interviewing as its method to collect data from the subjects. During the interview, the researcher will use an audio recorder to collect and record the information that the participants share. Also, the researcher will take descriptive notes to ensure that information has been comprehensively captured. Please note that there are no expected risks to participating in this study. The researcher will safeguard participants' privacy via the use of pseudonyms such as Principal 001, 002, 003, etc. Furthermore, participant confidentiality will be maintained at all times as the study is anonymous. All information provided by participants will be maintained in a secure location. In the event that there is a breach of confidentiality, the researcher would reach out to the appropriate persons and alert the participants. The researcher would also ensure that the appropriate counseling would be provided to the participants if needed. It is important to note that the interview questions are not personal or highly sensitive in regards to the participants' personal or professional well-being, therefore the negative consequences of participating in this study are unlikely.

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 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Troy, New York 12180  
518-244-2326  
healdd@sage.edu

I can be reached at [mdegovia@gmail.com](mailto:mdegovia@gmail.com) or at 718-490-5800 for further questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

**Mauricière de Govia**

Mauriciere de Govia

Appendix 12  
Informed Consent

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

To: \_\_\_\_\_ (Participant)

- You are being asked to participate in a research project entitled: *An Investigation of Successful Leadership Practices in Renewal Schools*
- This research is being conducted by : Mauricière de Govia, Doctoral Candidate from The Sage Colleges

The purpose of this research is to investigate leadership practices among principals that successfully address the New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Renewal School model. Renewal Schools are the 86 lowest performing schools in New York City. In 2014, Mayor Bill de Blasio introduced the Renewal School model as a part of his *Equity and Excellence* initiative for New York City Schools. Unlike his predecessor, Mayor Michael Bloomberg (who closed schools when they were failing), Mayor de Blasio introduced a plan to allocate resources that supported and helped re-brand and re-direct struggling schools from academic failure to academic success.

This study will seek to answer three core research questions: (1) what are the leadership qualities that principals and superintendents believe are critical to successfully lead Renewal Schools? (2) How does the systemic and structural organization of the Renewal School model in the New York City Department of Education facilitate principal success? (3) What model(s) of professional development is most effective in nurturing Renewal School leaders towards success?

As a participant in this study, you have the opportunity to influence solutions that will help policy makers in the New York City Department of Education address the challenge of accurately placing competent and able principals into Renewal Schools. The intended outcome of this research is to provide the NYCDOE, the United States' largest school system, with a roadmap to the appropriate leadership preparation model for struggling schools that will build a sustainable leadership pipeline that possesses a new understanding of the role of the principal, and how it must be managed to lead and transform the most fragile schools in New York City.

This is a qualitative case study that will use interviewing as its method to collect data from the subjects. During the interview, the researcher will use an audio recorder to collect and record the information that the participants share. Also, the researcher will take descriptive notes to ensure that information has been comprehensively captured. Please note that there are no expected risks to participating in this study. The researcher will safeguard participants' privacy via the use of pseudonyms such as Principal 001, 002, 003, etc. Furthermore, participant confidentiality will be maintained at all times as the study is anonymous. All information provided by participants will be maintained in a secure location. In the event that there is a breach of confidentiality, the researcher would reach out to the appropriate persons and alert the participants. The researcher would also ensure that the appropriate counseling would be provided to the participants if needed. It is important to note that the interview questions are not personal or highly sensitive in regards to the participants' personal or professional well-being, therefore the negative

consequences of participating in this study are unlikely. Lastly, if the participant withdraws from the study, their data will be destroyed.

The researcher will use an audio recording device to capture the interview. Following the interview the researcher will use the recording to code, organize findings, and identify trends. The audio recording will only be used to conduct a data analysis and will not be played for an audience beyond the researcher.

- *I give permission to the researcher to record the interview and use it for data analysis. Put your initials here to indicate your permission.\_\_\_\_\_.*
- *Participation is voluntary, 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  
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