

Crossing Boundaries: A Qualitative Exploration of Relational Leadership in Three Full-Service Community Schools

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Background/Context: *Full-service community schools provide comprehensive and coordinated resources and supports to meet the complex needs of children and families in low-income communities. Given their intentional focus on expanded networks of school, family, and community stakeholders, full-service community schools are particularly useful contexts for studying leadership strategies that facilitate cross-boundary collaboration.*

Focus of Study: *Drawing from the literature on three interrelated concepts—cross-boundary leadership, relational leadership, and relational trust—this study examines principal leadership practices in three full-service community schools.*

Setting: *The study took place in an urban school district in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States and included three full-service community schools—one elementary school and two secondary schools. The three full-service community schools were purposefully selected to provide both a range and depth of insights.*

Research Design: *Consistent with a constructivist perspective, this qualitative, multiple case study was designed to understand conditions influencing the effectiveness of full-service community schools from the perspectives of those involved in their development, implementation, and use.*

Data Collection and Analysis: *Data collection included semistructured interviews, school observations, and document review. Triangulation of data sources and methods helped to generate a more nuanced account of the principals' leadership practices. Data analysis was an iterative process, including both inductive and deductive strategies.*

Findings: *The focal principals, to varying degrees, used three relational leadership strategies—active engagement with diverse stakeholders, facilitation of stakeholder interaction, and purposive selection of faculty and staff—to build and maintain collaborative school cultures; attract partnerships that provided services and supports to students, families, teachers, and community members; and garner political support and funding for continued implementation of the full-service community school model in the district. At each school, the principals were also called on to address conflicts that threatened the collaborative environments they sought to create. Their success in doing so influenced both stability and trust within the case schools.*

Conclusions/Recommendations: *This study underscores the need for a continued focus on relational practices in school leadership programs and research, specifically on strategies to build the interpersonal relationships and organizational conditions that are critical for cross-boundary collaboration and to effectively manage interactor conflicts.*

The interest in full-service community schools stems from a belief among educators and other human service professionals that in order for children to perform and excel in schools, their basic needs must be met (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Sanders & Hembrick-Roberts, 2013). Accordingly, full-service community schools provide comprehensive and coordinated services that meet the complex needs of children and families in low-income communities (Dryfoos, 1994, 2005). Although site specific, these services can include after-school and summer programming, food and housing assistance, on-site dental and medical care, and other services that promote the well-being of children and families (Blank, Melville, & Shah, 2003). Full-service community schools are also conceptualized as sites that facilitate community cohesion and sustainability (Dryfoos, Quinn, & Barkin, 2005) and offer broader and more culturally relevant community-based opportunities for learning (Cummings, Dyson, & Todd, 2011; Richardson, 2009). As such, full-service community schools seek to ameliorate educational inequities experienced by historically underserved populations (Adams, 2010; Sanders, 2016).

Given their intentional focus on expanded networks of school, family, and community stakeholders, full-service community schools are particularly useful contexts for studying leadership strategies that facilitate cross-boundary collaboration. Findings from such research have implications not only for leaders of full-service community schools but also for leaders in traditional schools that seek to create more equitable learning environments through school, family, and community partnerships (see Epstein, 2010). Accordingly, this study draws from the literature on three inter-related concepts—cross-boundary leadership, relational leadership, and relational trust—to examine principal leadership practices in three full-service community schools.

LEADERSHIP AND FULL-SERVICE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

When defining full-service community schools, Joy Dryfoos (2005) stated,

Community schools are those that have been intentionally transformed into neighborhood hubs and that are open all the time to children and their families. In these buildings, a range of support services is provided by community agencies to help overcome the many barriers that schools face in producing successful students.

(p. 7)

Full-service community schools, then, require leaders with the skills to overcome traditional school norms of isolation in order to build bridges between and among key stakeholders within and outside the school walls (Smrekar & Mawhinney, 1999; Valli, Stefanski, & Jacobson, 2014). Without such leadership, conventional school structures, roles, and patterns of interaction are likely to prevail, resulting in parallel rather than integrated and overlapping programming among service providers and other school actors (Crowson & Boyd, 1996). Although parallel programming may be more comfortable for service providers and school personnel because it preserves traditional professional boundaries (Smylie, Crowson, Chou, & Levin, 1996), it fails to achieve the transformative goals of full-service community schools. To realize these goals, full-service community schools must change how they operate as well as how school leaders and personnel view and enact their professional roles and responsibilities (Dodge, Keenan, & Lattanzi, 2002; Weist, Goldstein, Morris, & Bryant, 2003). School leaders—in particular, principals—must establish expectations, structures, and processes that allow for authentic collaboration among service providers, families, community members, and school personnel (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000). Blank, Berg and Melaville (2006) described such individuals as cross-boundary leaders.

CROSS-BOUNDARY LEADERSHIP

According to Blank and colleagues (2006), cross-boundary leaders understand that schools prepared to meet the needs of historically underserved students require “networks of responsibility” rather than “traditional models of isolated leadership” (p. 1). Thus, these leaders achieve organizational goals by bringing together individuals from different groups, including professional educators at the school and district levels; community partners spanning a variety of fields and areas of expertise; and families (Jean-Marie, Ruffin, Burr, & Horsford, 2010). However, each of these groups has belief systems, norms of engagement, as well as social identities that may create conflict rather than consensus around the best ways to advance students’ learning and well-being (Lau & Murnighan, 2005). To achieve mutually shared goals, cross-boundary leaders, who are also bound by professional and social norms and experiences, must identify and implement strategies to bridge divisions and manage conflicts that may arise between and among diverse individuals and groups (Ernst & Yip, 2009). Through an in-depth analysis of a variety of international organizations, Ernst and Yip (2009) identified four such practices—suspending, reframing,

nesting, and weaving. According to the authors, “By suspending intergroup differences, reframing a shared and inclusive identity, nesting diverse groups within a larger organizational goal, and through weaving organizational and social identities, boundary spanning leaders can generate effective intergroup contact in service of a larger organizational mission, vision, or goal” (p. 98).

Full-service community schools, in particular, require cross-boundary school leaders prepared to carry out such practices because the social capital on which these schools depend and seek to generate is only possible through expanded relationships (Valli et al., 2014). That is, the essence of full-service community schools is more extensive resources for children’s learning and well-being that result from horizontal and vertical ties among school administrators, teachers and staff, families, and community partners. Capturing this dynamic within successful full-service community schools, Adams (2010) observed, “Relationships function as resources when social bonds within role groups and social bridges between role groups are strong” (p. 9).

Several studies have found that principals play a unique and essential role in facilitating cross-boundary collaboration and these schools’ success (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Valli et al., 2014). For example, using qualitative methods, Jean-Marie and colleagues (2010) found that principals in effective full-service community schools are critical in creating the structures and norms that make boundary spanning relationships possible and, in turn, use these relationships to diffuse reform principles. Evidence from a longitudinal evaluation of full-service community schools with the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative suggests that diffusion of reform principles allows full-service community schools to achieve improved academic outcomes for historically underserved students (Adams, 2010). Thus, cross-boundary leadership is conceptually and practically linked to relational leadership and, by extension, relational trust.

RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND RELATIONAL TRUST

RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Although different approaches to relational leadership exist in the literature, they share a common focus on human interactions within the process of organizational development, management, and progress (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Defined as a social process through which individuals accomplish mutually valued organizational goals (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998; Murrell, 1997), relational leadership requires knowledge of and

engagement with the complex interpersonal relations through which organizational meaning and identity are constructed, and organizational growth and efficacy are achieved (Dyer, 2001).

Moreover, relational leaders are viewed as embedded within contexts in which actors, both internal and external to the organization, shape and influence the type of relationships that are formed and thus how the organization evolves (Howell & Shamir, 2005; Rost, 1995). As described by Rost (1995), “In the new paradigm, followers and leaders do leadership. They are in the leadership relationship together. They are the ones that intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes” (p. 192). Thus, within a relational leadership framework, “leaders” in the formal sense cannot independently enact the tasks of organizational change and transformation but can enable conditions that facilitate such change. Their success relies on their capacity to inspire collaborative action among others (Jean-Marie et al., 2010).

Far from a simplistic approach to leadership, the current literature focuses on the complex characteristics and responsibilities of relational leaders. Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011), for example, described how relational leaders must be reflexive practitioners, encourage open dialogue, and establish processes that respect and address different perspectives within the organization. To do so, however, they must first establish relational trust between themselves and key stakeholders, as well as among the stakeholders themselves. Within this process, leaders and stakeholders assess each other’s trustworthiness through professional interactions and relationship “tests” (Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000, p. 235). For relational leaders to be effective, they must pass these tests and demonstrate their competence and integrity to key actors working in and with the organization.

RELATIONAL TRUST

Research showing the significance of trust in organizational leadership spans four decades (Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Within organizations, generally, trust in leadership is positively associated with employees’ retention, job satisfaction, job performance, and organizational commitment (Burke et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Within schools, high levels of relational trust are associated with effectiveness. Bryk and Schneider (2003), for example, found that schools with high levels of relational trust are more successful at implementing reform practices that improve student outcomes than schools characterized by low levels of relational trust. They described relational trust as developing over time and resting on four considerations—respect,

personal regard, competence in core role responsibilities, and personal integrity (also see Maak & Pless, 2006). Each dimension contributes to a collaborative school environment in which individuals feel valued, safe, and part of a greater mission. Within high-trust environments, key stakeholders are more likely to invest time and energy in the often challenging work of bringing reform strategies to scale.

Principals have been found to play a key role in establishing relational trust among the diverse actors involved in the work of schooling (Sebring & Bryk, 2000). In a qualitative study on professional learning communities, for instance, Cranston (2011) found that relational trust between principals and faculty members was a prerequisite for trusting relationships among other groups (i.e., students, parents, teachers, and community partners) in the building. Through transparency, open communication, consistency between words and actions, and supportive behaviors, principals in the study were able to create effective learning communities in which key stakeholders worked collaboratively to improve students' educational experiences and outcomes. Similarly, Adams and Forsyth (2007) found that principals can build relational trust between schools and families by creating inclusive environments where parents have meaningful roles in school decision making and where students have a strong sense of belonging. Recognizing its importance, Sergiovanni (2005) described trust as one of the four virtues of leadership. He observed, "[H]ope, trust, piety, and civility. When these four are at the core of leadership practice the leverage needed for improving even the most challenging schools can be discovered" (p. 112).

Thus, cross-boundary leadership, relational leadership, and relational trust are interwoven concepts of particular relevance for understanding the role of principals in full-service community schools. If principals are to build the "networks of responsibilities" (Blank et al., 2006, p. 1) required to realize the transformative objectives of full-service community schools, they must have the capacity to develop trusting relationships with individuals and groups across diverse social identities and professional boundaries. They must also be able to promote interactor collaboration and manage conflict in a manner that is viewed as ethical and consistent with the school's policies, missions, and goals (Cranston, 2011). Yet, to date, little is known about how principals in full-service community schools carry out these leadership activities and the benefits and challenges of doing so. This study seeks to fill this gap. Specifically, it describes how principals at three full-service community schools enacted relational leadership strategies. It further describes conflicts that presented challenges for these principals and the collaborative communities they sought to develop.

METHODS

RESEARCH DESIGN

This article draws from data collected at three schools that participated in a multiple case study on the implementation and leadership of full-service community schools. Consistent with a constructivist perspective, the study was designed to understand conditions influencing the effectiveness of full-service community schools from the perspectives of those involved in their development, implementation, and use. The three full-service community schools were purposefully selected to provide both a range and depth of insights (Lichtman, 2006). The schools shared a common coordinating agency, had principals considered highly effective within the school district, and served ethnically and racially diverse students in low-income communities. However, they differed in size, length of time implementing the full-service community school model, grade levels served, and ethnic composition of their student populations. Although they introduced limitations to the study's findings, as discussed later in the article, these similarities and differences provided a basis for comparative analysis of conditions influencing the schools' functions and outcomes.

SETTING

The study took place in an urban school district in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States and included three full-service community schools. School A is an elementary school serving approximately 200 students in Grades K–5. Most of these students are poor, with 90% qualifying for free and reduced meals. Slightly over one half are English learners (EL), and nearly one fourth receive special education services. The majority of the students (71%) have Hispanic/Latino origins, while 13% are White, 11% are African American, and 5% are Native American and Asian. The school has been a community school since 2006¹ and was the site selected for the most intensive data collection based on the breadth, quality, and duration of its integrated services program. Data collection at School A began in July 2011 and continued through December 2012. The school received an honorarium of \$1500 for its participation.

School B is a high school serving approximately 300 low-income (81% FARMs [Free and Reduced Price Meals]) racially and ethnically diverse students (57% African American, 33% White, and 10% Hispanic/Latino). Formerly a junior high school, School B was at risk of closure because of low performance. Instead, the school, which had recently begun to establish stronger connections with community-based service providers, was

converted to a “turnaround” full-service community high school in 2010. Data collection at School B began in April 2012 and continued through December 2012, providing the researcher with opportunities to compare and contrast findings across the two sites. School B received an honorarium of \$1,000 for its participation.

School C is a specialized high school focused on the visual arts. It serves 500 mostly low-income (76% FARM) African American (96%) students. Since 2010, School C has been a citywide “turnaround” full-service community school. Targeted data collection, consisting of limited observations and semistructured interviews with school leaders, faculty, staff, and community partners, occurred in School C during May and June 2012, providing the researcher with a final opportunity to confirm and disconfirm themes emerging from the study. School C received an honorarium of \$500 for its participation. Differences in honoraria reflected differences in the length and intensity of data collection at each school. See Table 1 for additional descriptive data for the case schools.

Table 1. Descriptive Data for Community Schools, 2011

	School A	School B	School C
# of students	191	298	517
% African American	11	57	96
% Hispanic American	71	10	<1
% White American	13	33	4
% Native American	3	<1	<1
% Asian American	2	<1	<1
% FARM (Free and Reduced Price Meals)	90	81	76
% ELL (English language learners)	52	<1	<1
% Special education	15	30	20
% Mobility	24	45	55
% Daily average attendance	>95	75	78
% of classes <i>not</i> taught by highly qualified teachers	27	38	44

As full-service community schools, the case schools were characterized by collaborative leadership structures and staff, including school–family councils and community school coordinators. They also offered a variety of programs and services through school–community partnerships. Specifically, the Community School Coordinating Agency (CSCA), which was affiliated with the school of social work at a local university and helped to guide and oversee the work of the three case schools,

provided on-site mental health and counseling services at each school. The case schools also served students three meals a day—in the morning, afternoon, and early evening—and operated food pantries for families and community members.

In addition to these common services, each school offered unique programs and activities. For example, School A collaborated with 23 community partners to offer a summer learning program; an after-school program offering tutoring and homework help staffed by teachers and community partners; site-based dental screenings, education, and referrals; a physical education program, Playworks; a string instruments program; and adult Spanish literacy and English classes led by CSCA interns. These activities and services helped to remove barriers to teaching and learning, address family needs, and provide extended learning opportunities for students.

In collaboration with 60 community partners, School B also offered extended services and supports. In addition to its after-school program, School B had several community partners that provided students with extension classes in animation, environmental science, and financial literacy, as well as job shadowing opportunities and internships. These partnerships provided students with community-based and real-world learning experiences that are a traditional feature of full-service community schools (Richardson, 2009). Community partners were also instrumental in organizing students, families, and other community residents to collectively address critical environmental issues in the immediate vicinity. The environmental focus was directly linked to improving health outcomes in the area, which had one of the highest infant mortality and cancer rates in the city.

School C had the fewest number of community partners (12) and the fewest number of enrichment activities. However, there were significant partnerships that provided health and social services to students and families. For example, the school housed an on-site health clinic with a medical lab, which it shared with the adjacent school. It also offered an after-school program; a wrap-around intervention for first-time offenders implemented by a local university; and Katherine's Kloset, which provided clothing and household supplies for adults, children, and infants. Moreover, through a partnership with a local art institute, the school converted a large room that was used for storage into an art gallery. The gallery was used to showcase students' artwork and also served as a venue for community meetings and family engagement activities (see Table 2 for a full description of community partnerships at the case schools).

Table 2. Community Partnerships at the Case Schools

School	Partnership Description	# of Participants Served, 2011–12
School A (23 community partners)	Mental health/counseling services	50 students
	Summer learning program	90 students
	After-school program	85 students
	Site-based dental services/referrals	160 students
	Recreational program, “Playworks”	95 students
	String instrument program	35 students
	Adult literacy classes (Spanish and English)	30 parents
	Christmas gift giveaway sponsored by community org.	130 students/families
	Food pantry	150 students/families
School B (60 community partners)	Mental health/counseling services	125 students
	Extended learning opportunities in animation, environmental science, and financial literacy	250 students
	After-school program	35 students
	Job-shadowing, internships, service-learning projects	250 students
	Neighborhood health advocacy group	15 parents/community members
	Food pantry	120 students/families
School C (12 community partners)	Christmas gift giveaway sponsored by local church	250 students
	Mental health/counseling services	40–50 students/month
	On-site health clinic with lab	55–70 students/month
	Afterschool programs	120 students
	Wrap-around intervention for juvenile offenders	30 students
	Food pantry	60 families/month
	Thanksgiving baskets	80 families
	Katherine’s Kloset, clothing thrift store/household supplies	20–40 students and school volunteers/month
	After-school supper program	45–60 students/week
Neighborhood advocacy group	Successfully campaigned for street lights	

Since becoming full-service community schools, each site had seen improvements in its outcomes for students and parents. These included improved student attendance, academic achievement, and behavior, and higher levels of family engagement in school activities. These improvements were not even across schools, nor had any of the schools fully realized their goals for students' learning. However, at the conclusion of the study, School A had become a showcase in the district as a result of its positive student outcomes (see Table 3 for a summary of community school outcomes).

Table 3. Community School Outcomes, 2010–2012

School	Outcomes	SY2010–11	SY2011–12	
School A	Student Attendance	>95%	>95%	
	% of students absent 5 days or less	48%	53%	
	Overall mobility (withdrawals)	24% (9%)	14% (6%)	
	State Assessment			
	Reading/Math (Proficient or Advanced)			
	Grade 3	67%/88%	83%/75%	
	Grade 4	91%/87%	81%/86%	
	Grade 5	81%/63%	>95%/91%	
	# of parents in PTO/PTA**	45	45	
	# of parents at school activities focused on student learning	35	70	
	# of parents on leadership committees	6	7	
	School B	Student Attendance	—	75%
		% of students absent 5 days or less	—	13%
Overall mobility (withdrawals)		—	60% (22%)	
# of suspensions		—	24	
State Assessment				
(Proficient and Advanced)		—	71%	
Algebra		—	59%	
English				
# of parents in PTO/PTA		—	*	
# of parents at school activities focused on student learning		—	16	
# of parents on leadership committees	—	17		

School	Outcomes	SY2010–11	SY2011–12
School C	Student Attendance	75%	78%
	% of students absent 5 days or less	15.2%	15.3%
	# of suspensions	71	59
	State Assessment (Proficient and Advanced)		
	Algebra	44%	44%
	English	48%	42%
	# of parents in PTO/PTA**		
		15	30
	# of parents at school activities focused on student learning	4	10
	# of parents on leadership committees	3	5

*No reliable data available

**PTO/PTA – Parent Teacher Organization/Parent Teacher Association

No comparative data available; 2011–12 is baseline year

DATA COLLECTION

Multiple data sources and methods were used to increase the study’s descriptive and interpretative validity (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2013). Data collection included interviews, school observations, and document review. Interview data included semistructured interviews with school principals and assistant principals; community school coordinators; directors of the community schools’ coordinating agency (CSCA); community partners and service providers; teachers; and parent and community leaders. A total of 53 formal school-based interviews were conducted during the course of the study (see Table 4 for a description of interview respondents).

The majority of the interviews (44) were conducted in English by the author. Nine interviews were conducted in Spanish with parents at School A by a researcher who is fluent in Spanish and English. Protocols were developed to guide the semistructured interviews and to ensure that comparable data were collected for similar respondents across schools (see the interview protocols in the appendix). However, data specific to each school were also collected through conversations that occurred naturally during school visits. Multiple school visits and interviews with key participants provided opportunities for informal member checking throughout the data collection period.

Table 4. Formal Interviews by Role and School (*n* = 53)

	School A	School B	School C
Principal	2*	1	1
Assistant Principal	N/A	—	1
Community School Coordinator	3*	2*	2*
Director of Extended Learning	1	N/A	N/A
Additional Staff Member	1	1	2
Teachers	5	3	1
Parents	14	2	1
Community Partners	2	4	3
Student Focus Group	—	1	—
Total	28	14	11

* Number of times interviewed

N/A: Position did not exist at the school

— Position existed but individual(s) not interviewed

At the start of data collection, community school coordinators provided a guided tour of the schools, including the venues for integrated services (e.g., counseling suites, on-site clinics, community gardens, food pantries). School observations were conducted thereafter to supplement the interviews and to gain a better sense of how students, teachers, parents, and community partners interacted without disrupting the regular school schedule. Notes were taken during these formal observations to (1) capture general impressions of stakeholder exchanges and interactions and (2) document specific examples that reflected these impressions. At School A, observations of kindergarten, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), third-grade science, and physical education classes were conducted. In addition, observations of after-school and summer program activities, breakfast and lunch periods, morning meetings, community-school council meetings, and the end-of-year spring festival were also conducted. At School B, observations of counseling suite activities, the school’s first graduation ceremony, and its community appreciation celebration were conducted. At School C, observations of counseling suite activities, food pantry activities, and a community forum were conducted. These formal observations were supplemented with informal observations during regular visits to the schools. Informal observations of student and staff interactions; students’ behaviors in the hallways, cafeterias, and libraries; and family and staff interactions deepened the researcher’s understanding of the schools’ climates.

Document review was a third data collection method. Documents that were collected and reviewed included school mission and policy statements, communications to families and community members (e.g., activity calendars and event flyers), newsletters, website postings, handouts from school meetings and activities, and coordinating agency brochures and newsletters. Triangulation of data sources and methods over time helped to generate a richer and more nuanced account of the schools' practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was an iterative process that began with data collection. After each school interview and observation, initial thoughts and impressions were recorded, and areas for further inquiry were identified. These recordings were later typed into Word files and imported as memos into Ethnograph 6.0, a qualitative data analysis software package. Observation notes were similarly converted to Word files and imported into Ethnograph 6.0 for coding and analysis. All formal interviews were recorded and, with the support of undergraduate and graduate research assistants, transcribed into Word files, which were also imported for analysis.

Once imported into Ethnograph 6.0, the transcribed interviews, typed observations and memos, and documents collected for review were coded. Coding proceeded using first deductive and then inductive strategies (see Hatch, 2002). Some codes, such as "principal leadership," "community school services," "community coordinator responsibilities," and "parent engagement," were created prior to the categorizing stage of data analysis based on the relevant literature and the study's primary research foci. Other codes, such as "strategic planning," "professional development," and "city council" emerged from the process of reading and rereading the transcribed interviews and the relevant literature. A total of 64 codes were generated for the study. These codes were then organized into 11 primary codes and 53 secondary codes. Principal characteristics emerged as a primary code with four related secondary codes (background, philosophy, activities, and leadership).

For this article, the author reread the interview, observation, document, and memo data for the case schools, with a particular focus on data coded under principal characteristics and its secondary codes. Exploration of the literature on full-service community schools and principal leadership further informed the analysis process as the researcher examined existing theories and concepts that provided an organizing narrative for the data. Results from this iterative process are reported next.

FINDINGS

RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE

It's all about relationships. It's all about making connections, whether it's making the connection to kids or to partners of the school or to teachers or to anybody else if you want to get some place. For a while you can do it by positional authority, "I am going to make you do this because I am the boss," but eventually and sometimes much sooner than other times, principals realize they have a minuscule amount of power. I can't make anybody do anything. . . . So, then, the power and the depth of relationships come into play (Principal School A).

As illustrated in this interview excerpt, principals at the case schools viewed relationships as central to achieving the mission and objectives of full-service community schools. Accordingly, they carried out several strategies to build and sustain collaborative cultures and strong, positive relationships across the different role groups affiliated with the schools (i.e., teachers, staff, students, families, and community partners). Varying in quality across schools, these strategies were (1) active engagement with diverse stakeholders; (2) facilitation of stakeholder interaction; and (3) purposive selection of faculty and staff.

Active Engagement With Diverse Stakeholders

Each leader was male and between 35 and 55 years old, with several years of experience in education; two were European American and one was African American. They were generally described in glowing terms and enthusiastically interacted with school-based and community-based stakeholders, although to varying degrees. For example, when describing the principal at School A, a parent observed, "He seems like he likes children. He's not just here for a paycheck. He engages in a lot of the activities here and all that kind of stuff." Parents also described the principal as caring and "always willing to help us with whatever he can, and listen to us." While acknowledging his busy schedule, teachers and staff generally shared these sentiments.

Similarly, a parent at School B described the principal as accessible and committed to the school and students. She explained, "He is always there when they have anything at the school, like the PTSO meetings. . . . He is a really good guy." He was also viewed as caring toward and supportive of faculty, staff, and students, creating a positive climate of collaboration at the school. According to one staff member,

He is loved by the kids. He really is. He is loved and adored. He's open to new ideas, he's very enthusiastic about programming and things that we come up with, and while he has his hand in the pot, he is good at letting everybody be their own chefs.

New to the district, the principal at School C was described by one teacher as a “great guy,” by community partners as receptive and helpful, and by the community school coordinator as “very open” and competent. However, unlike principals at the other case schools, he was also considered “a bit hands-off” and conflict avoidant, delegating too much of the discipline and “people management” to the community school coordinator and assistant principals in the building (Teacher interview, School C). Because one of the assistant principals was viewed quite negatively, the climate at School C was the least collaborative of the three schools despite the principal's friendly demeanor.

Principals' engagement with community partners was critical to the quality of collaboration at the three sites. For example, a key community partner at School A described the principal as the reason for the organization's deep involvement with the school. She observed,

[A] lot of principals were very territorial and didn't want a lot of people from the neighborhoods snooping around or you know, getting in their business. But [School A principal] has been a very open and embracing principal, not only with the children here—and you can see he has a very good relationship with them—but with the community as well.

Likewise, the school-to-work coordinator at School B attributed the school's growing network of community partners to the “familylike” climate that the principal had been instrumental in creating. She explained,

Last year, I was able to get 50 internships for the students, and this year I have up to 120 placements for the students. So, I am really proud of that . . . I think that it is because we have really good relationships with our partners, and we include them in many of the school functions, so that they become part of the family.

To ensure sufficient district funding to sustain the schools' efforts, the focal principals had to go beyond the school walls to build bridges with other principals as well as district and city leaders. This boundary-crossing task was especially critical in 2012, when district and city officials threatened to cut the supplemental funds used to cover the salaries of full-service community school personnel. Principal A, who had the most extensive experience with community schools, served as chair of a citywide council

of community school advocates (the CCC). The CCC sought to convince district and city officials that full-service community schools, in addition to being rich learning environments, ultimately resulted in “stronger families, neighborhoods, and a stronger city” (Principal Interview, School A). Among its advocacy activities, the CCC organized educators, families, and community members to provide testimony at city council hearings and other government forums in the state. According to the community school coordinator at School A,

He has become the spokesperson that the city has used as its ‘principal.’ So he has gotten more and more involved in advocacy. He became more of a force on the Citywide Coordinating Council and making sure that it was a real entity with some independence. The CCC’s advocacy and work have saved us.

Thus, principals’ engagement with diverse stakeholders was one strategy they employed to build the cross-boundary relationships on which their schools relied.

Facilitation of Stakeholder Interaction

The principals also created rituals, structures, and processes within their schools that facilitated stakeholder interaction. At School A, for example, the principal initiated morning meetings as a daily opportunity for students, families, faculty, and staff to engage with one another, to share information, and to reinforce the school’s norms, expectations, and goals. These morning meetings (conducted in English and Spanish) were universally described as helping to create a unified direction for the school. According to one teacher, “It’s just good face-time. I think that’s one of the main purposes—to see parents, teachers, and kids all kind of mingling.”

At School C, the principal created opportunities for school staff and community partners and leaders to introduce themselves and share information at regular professional development meetings. One community partner explained,

He invited us to all the teacher PD [professional development] meetings. Those are the meetings that teachers are required to go to. We could tell them about our program, tell them who we are, how to contact us, what students are involved, what the protocol should be. And that was really helpful to, one, get our name out there, but also to kind of talk about what’s working for teachers, what’s not working for teachers, to try to have open discourse about it.

The schools also had active school–family councils that included administrators, teachers, and family and community partners, which were responsible for developing and monitoring their schoolwide improvement plans. These structures, which were cochaired by the school principals, further facilitated stakeholder interactions across social and professional boundaries. When describing the value of serving on the school–family council, a teacher at School B said, “I got to know some of those folks [community partners] and I would talk to them during those meetings as far as, you know, about the kids, like, “Who comes to you on Fridays [for extended learning opportunities]? What’s happening with them? What successes have you seen and what can we do to support that?” Thus, principals sought to build and nurture relational school cultures by providing spaces and opportunities for regular stakeholder interaction.

Purposive Selection of Faculty and Staff

To facilitate cross-boundary collaboration, the focal principals also hired and retained faculty and staff members who, as one principal described, had “relational capacity.” They also provided professional development to enhance teachers’ relational skills. In particular, the principal at School B felt that relational capacity rather than teaching experience was the key to building an effective faculty. He explained that key to “being able to build a team around a vision for what you want to be able to do” is identifying the right people. He continued,

I hired everyone based on relational capacity . . . I believe that if we put the right things in place we can teach you how to teach. . . , but I’ve got to see your relational capacity. . . . How are you going to relate to kids? How are you going to relate to other adults? And if you build a team that way, then everything else becomes a lot simpler and a lot easier. . . . Then my whole job becomes “What do you need to do what it is that you do?”

Additionally, the principals at Schools B and C provided funding for faculty to attend a national professional development conference on strategies to build stronger relationships. The Principal at School C explained,

We will be participating in a program that builds on relationships—teacher-to-teacher relationships first and then teacher–student relationships, and professional development during the year to keep the relationships fostered because we want to know what the kids’ stories are. In that way you can best intervene and teach the child.

The high school principals hoped that as the relational cultures of their schools improved, they would be able to build more stable teaching staff who would gain experience and improve student outcomes over time.

The relational leadership strategies previously described were present in all the case schools, although they were most pronounced at Schools A and B. In summing up the effects of the strategies, the principals at these schools described the trust that made collaborative action around school goals possible. The Principal at School A explained,

We have built huge relationships with our parents. They trust us to the point where we have to vet everything that comes through us because if we say, “Hey, there’s this program.” That is like the pope saying, “We place our blessing upon this.” People listen to us. So, that relationship, that trust, is huge. And so the families, when I call them and say, “Will you come in? We have to talk about what Juan is doing.” It’s not an adversarial relationship. . .

Likewise, the Principal at School B observed, “Teachers . . . they see us as a family. . . . If they see that, then they’re willing to give back, and they’re therefore ready to build that long-range team.” Yet, despite the principals’ practices and resulting cross-boundary partnerships, conflicts occurred between and among key stakeholders that threatened relationships and the case schools’ effectiveness.

INTERACTOR CONFLICT

In carrying out their roles and responsibilities, the focal principals faced challenges experienced by many school leaders, such as limited time and resources. However, the focal principals, even those most adept at relational leadership practices, identified “managing people” as the most pronounced and difficult challenge they faced. This is not surprising. The challenge of managing people and interpersonal conflicts, although present at all schools, is arguably greater in full-service community schools because of these schools’ dependence on relationships between and among multiple stakeholders to achieve their objectives. This challenge is further intensified because of the vulnerable student populations that full-service community schools serve, and diverse perspectives among key stakeholders on how to address their complex needs. The following vignettes illustrate conflicts that arose in the case schools, threatening the relational climates that principals worked hard to develop.

School A—Conflict Over Students’ Learning

Part of the mission of full-service community schools is to expand learning opportunities and improve achievement outcomes for historically underserved students. School A had achieved significant success in these areas. Despite this success, student learning was at the center of several conflicts within the school. Among these was disagreement about the school’s curriculum. Some teachers fully supported the school’s scripted curriculum, believing that it was appropriately rigorous and provided opportunities for adaptation as needed. Others, however, believed that although the curriculum helped students to achieve “proficient” or “advanced” on state assessments and was useful at the lower grades, it was not sufficiently rigorous to prepare students for the academic standards and expectations of middle and high school. One teacher shared,

The reading program that we teach is based very much on memorizing facts and literal comprehension, and the stories are not really literature and they’re not really fiction. I would like to see something a little more authentic in what they’re reading in terms of what you would be seeing in life.

Although obvious tensions existed in the building regarding the curriculum’s efficacy, there was little open dissent. One veteran teacher believed that this was due to a particularly “influential” school partner who supported the curriculum and the fear among her colleagues of committing “career suicide” by opposing it. She thus became the sole voice of open opposition to the curriculum, which she found frustrating and disappointing. She explained,

When you talk with the staff and teachers privately, there is a lot of dissent and tension around . . . [the curriculum]. . . . When you go to happy hour, you hear one thing, and in the lunch room you hear one thing, and then when you go to the staff meetings, it’s another. So I had to deal with feeling betrayed by some of my colleagues.

The principal at School A was an ardent supporter of the curriculum, which was linked to the school’s charter status. The principal believed that the vocal faculty member’s objections to the curriculum had created a rift in the school community—between teachers, leaders, and the community partner—that was undermining its collaborative culture. The teacher explained,

I was actually brought into his office and he told me that I was one of the more outspoken and at that point was one of the senior teachers there, and that my support was appreciated. I hadn't given my support and really hadn't intended to but the message was really clear.

When her support was not forthcoming, the principal encouraged her to request a transfer, which she did. Although the principal acknowledged that he had lost one of his best and most experienced “anchor” teachers, he thought the sacrifice was necessary because she had become a “detractor from helping the whole school; she had become one of the barriers that I felt it was time to remove.” He explained his perspective on school staffing as follows:

Prior to vision and mission is an openness and listening and flexibility so that you can get to a vision and mission that have a common appeal to broader people. And there is the recognition that at any given moment that somebody might not fit into that mix . . . [and] will say that I think that my time here is done and I need to go do something else. . . . I encourage that because people need to find the right place. . . . I only want people here who are excited about being a part of that mix to figure out what we are going to become each year.

The principal did not explain, however, how he weighed, balanced, and prioritized the opinions and perspectives of the school's diverse stakeholders in pursuit of its vision and mission.

School B—Conflict Over Student Discipline

The principal at School B risked his professional reputation and relationships with district-level leaders, school staff, and community partners when he suspended 24 students in the first two months of his first year as principal. He did so in the face of a directive from the district office for schools to lower their suspension rates, and concerns among some school staff and community partners about the use of exclusionary disciplinary policies in schools serving low-income youth of color. However, the principal felt that students needed to be held accountable for challenging the norms of respect and caring that he was attempting to develop within the school. One example is when he suspended a student who refused to give his name when asked. He explained,

I had a kid that didn't give me his name, and I suspended him from school. If I ran the school based on what . . . [the district] would say, I wouldn't have done that. . . . but I can't run a school if I ask you your name and you can't tell me. There is a culture that says. . . . "We don't want our suspension numbers to be high; so we're going to do this and we're going to do that." What that tells kids is—you can speak a certain way; you can curse this way; you can just walk out of class, you can do those things. Suspension doesn't solve anything. It just sets the tone.

The concerns of some of the school's stakeholders were noted in interviews. For example, one community partner who had been volunteering at the school before the principal's arrival feared that he was "flexing his muscle" with students to demonstrate his authority. Yet, concerns about the principal's disciplinary approach never created rifts in the larger community. This appeared to be largely due to his relational practices, specifically the open channels of communication he had developed. One staff member described the administration as unusual in this respect, elaborating, "Because you know, most places they are not as open, or open to ideas. Here . . . you can go to them and they are open to sitting down and talking to you and hashing it out. And they care!" Moreover, his actions were viewed within the larger disciplinary context of the school, where students, families, and teachers were provided a variety of support services through partnerships with counselors and mental health providers.

Because the balance between punitive and supportive disciplinary practices improved the school's climate within the principal's first year, parents, teachers, staff members, and community partners came to accept the efficacy of his approach. In fact, fewer fights, more respectful interactions, and lower suspension rates helped to strengthen relationships and trust between and among the school's principal and multiple stakeholders. The principal noted,

If you take a look at the suspensions . . . you won't find many kids on suspension more than once. . . . [O]ver the year we set a tone . . . and we're not perfect, because we still have kids who leave class and think they can and stuff like that—but widespread; it's not there.

Others interviewed for the study agreed and favorably viewed the principal's efforts. Observing that the principal had "softened" over time, one community partner shared, "My perception of him has really changed—in a good way."

School C—Conflict Over Student Rights

At School C, however, tensions around the treatment of at-risk students in the school were not as easily resolved and ultimately fractured relationships and trust among building administrators, teachers, staff, and community partners providing intensive case management and supports to students involved in the Department of Juvenile Services. These tensions were perhaps most evident when the community partner sided with a student and parent against the school regarding a disciplinary incident. She referred the student, who had a documented disability, and his mother to the state's disability law center and the district education office when she felt the school was attempting to unlawfully suspend him. She explained,

So, I referred the family to [the state] disability law center, and it's a little tricky because I'm trying to advocate for the student, but I'm also trying to be on the same team as the school. But, there are things that I can't buy into, you know? Just like, blatant disregard for the law is not okay. So, the school was very angry with me.

Her actions were perceived as a betrayal of trust by school administrators and staff, who believed that the issue could have been resolved without bringing in external agencies. The community school coordinator described the principal's surprise at learning that the disability law center and the district had been called without his knowledge. She explained, "He called me at 11:00 in the night. 'What had I heard; and so-and-so says.' I was like, 'I really apologize . . . I was not aware of that.'"

The community school coordinator felt that the issue escalated because neither the assistant principal, who had suspended the student, nor the community partner respected the role of the other. She felt that they were "both wrong" and was disappointed that the community partner had not discussed the issue with her or the principal before referring the parent and student to the disability law center and district office. The community partner, on the other hand, believed that the lack of a common vision for students, consistent application of school rules and policies, and open communication between stakeholders left her with no alternative. Regarding the lack of open communication, a teacher agreed, stating, "The school is a place of dialogue for me because I will talk to anybody, but it is not systemic." Although a resolution was mediated where the student was not suspended but was home schooled for the remainder of the quarter, the issue threatened the continuation of the

school–community partnership despite the two organizations’ shared goals for students’ learning and educational success. Implications of the study’s findings for practice and future research are discussed in the next section.

DISCUSSION

This study describes three relational leadership practices that focal principals used to advance the missions and goals of the full-service community case schools, as well as conflicts that threatened the collaborative cultures they sought to develop. The relational leadership practices were direct engagement with key stakeholders; facilitation of stakeholder interaction to promote communication and collaborative practice; and purposive selection of and professional development for faculty to ensure that they had the capacity to build positive relationships. These strategies, which varied in quality across the case schools, helped to create new norms and expectations for stakeholder interaction, as well as the necessary time, space, and structures to meet them.

They also required the principals’ presence, both practically and symbolically. Although each principal had school-based personnel to help manage the school’s collaborative activities, including community school coordinators and, in the high schools, assistant principals, these actors could not supplant the principals as key representatives, spokespersons, and mediators within and outside the school walls. The principals at Schools A and B were particularly effective in this regard. Family members, faculty and staff, and community partners valued their presence at school events, which strengthened stakeholder ties. Although generally liked, the principal at School C was considered more distant, less accessible, and less relationally competent. These perceptions diminished his effectiveness as a cross-boundary leader.

The relational leadership practices also required that focal principals recognize the significance of the reciprocal exchange between leaders and followers (see Howell & Shamir, 2005; Rost, 1995). This recognition was most visible in their faculty hiring and retention practices. Specifically, focal principals sought to hire and retain faculty with the skills and dispositions needed to build positive relationships with students, colleagues, families, and community partners. The high school principals also provided faculty with professional development to enhance their relational skills. This support, however, was most beneficial in the case schools where principals’ own relational skills were highly evolved.

To the extent that focal principals engaged in the relational leadership practices described, they facilitated cross-boundary collaboration

among professional educators, community partners, and families to provide students with after-school and extended learning opportunities; health and counseling services; and nutritional and housing assistance. These services and supports were valued by all stakeholders and clearly linked to behavioral and academic improvements achieved at the case schools. The study's findings thus contribute to the growing body of literature emphasizing the importance of principals in promoting cross-boundary collaboration and improved student outcomes in full-service community schools (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Jean-Marie et al., 2010; Valli et al., 2014).

Yet, despite the principals' relational leadership practices, interactor conflicts emerged, threatening their efforts and the schools' effectiveness. In School A, for example, the principal lost one of his most experienced teachers over a curricular issue that involved a key community stakeholder. Differences in approaches to student discipline created tensions in School B and threatened a community partnership in School C. Principals thus struggled to maintain the network of relationships on which their schools relied. In fact, the principals described "managing people" as the "hardest" and "most complex" aspect of their jobs.

Differences in how conflicts at the case schools were resolved, however, provide insights into leadership practices that may generate higher levels of trust and diminish the negative impact of interactor conflict in multistakeholder environments like full-service community schools. Of note, School B experienced the least disruptive interactor conflicts of those observed in the case schools. Although disagreements existed over the principal's suspension of students during his first months in the position, these disagreements never reached a level that threatened the "familylike" atmosphere that the principal strived to create. Interviews with faculty, staff, parents, and community partners at the case school suggest that this was due to the principal's open accessibility and communication style; balanced and inclusive decision-making processes; caring demeanor; and consistent support for student-focused practice. These features created an environment of trust among stakeholders, and even those who disagreed with the principal allowed him time and space to exercise his authority over student discipline to promote a respectful school environment. The resulting improvement in school climate and decline in suspensions deepened this trust. This study thus supports previous research that views trust as a central element of relational leadership and as a developmental process that is strengthened through "relational tests" (see Brower et al., 2000). When these tests are passed, leader-stakeholder ties deepen, and school outcomes improve over time.

At Schools A and C, on the other hand, conflicts were exacerbated by the perception of one or more stakeholders that communication and decision-making processes were insufficiently open and transparent. Rather than serving as catalysts for discussion, consensus building, and growth, as described by Meadows (1990), differences in opinion resulted in silenced voices and severed ties in School A and deep factionalism in School C. This study thus underscores the importance of inclusive, transparent decision-making processes and open channels of communication, in addition to norms and expectations, for successful collaboration within multistakeholder organizations such as full-service community schools. Although both have been shown to promote positive relationships among diverse groups and individuals (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Cranston, 2011; Ernst & Yip, 2009), this study suggests that formal processes and structures may be more important than normative expectations for managing interactor conflicts that threaten these relationships. This study thus adds to our understanding of how relational leaders in full-service community schools can effectively manage conflicts that are certain to arise in these reform contexts, given their designs, missions, and student populations.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

While generating confirmatory and new knowledge on leadership practices in full-service community schools, this study is not without limitations. First, although the case schools shared a common community school coordinating agency and approach to the implementation of full-service community schools, they differed in significant ways, including size, grade levels, student populations, charter status, and years implementing the reform. While the schools were intentionally chosen to provide opportunities for comparative analysis, their differences nevertheless introduced alternative explanations for variations in principals' leadership practices and interactor conflict other than those explored in the article. Therefore, these findings should be viewed as exploratory and tentative, generating new directions for future research, rather than definitive.

Second, although interviews with key stakeholder groups were conducted at each site, it was beyond the capacity of the researcher and the scope of the study to observe all principal leadership activities or interview all community partners and volunteers, family participants, school staff, and students. Consequently, significant aspects of principal leadership and interactor conflict may not have been captured. Although the author employed several strategies to generate credible findings, they

are nonetheless limited in their generalizability by the research design and methods employed.

Finally, it is important to note that of the three focal principals, one was African American, two were European American, and all were men. The study's findings, therefore, are clearly limited by gender and race/ethnicity. This is a significant limitation given that prior research suggests that female leaders, leaders of color, and especially female leaders of color have different leadership experiences and greater challenges to their authority than European American and male leaders (Eagly, 2005; Santamaría, & Jean-Marie, 2014). Consequently, if and how the study's findings apply to female and racially/ethnically diverse leaders in full-service community schools can only be addressed through further research.

CONCLUSION

As described in the emerging literature, relational leadership is a strategy that is inclusive, purposeful, empowering, and ethical (Komives et al., 1998). It requires that leaders be able to forge trusting relationships with and among diverse organizational actors, as well as actors external to the organization but critical to the realization of its goals and objectives. Relational leadership is thus inherently suitable for the administration of full-service community schools, which rely on the development and expansion of cross-boundary networks to provide equitable educational opportunities for low-income and historically underserved children and youth.

This study highlights how the focal principals, to varying degrees, used three relational leadership strategies—active engagement with diverse stakeholders, facilitation of stakeholder interaction, and purposive selection of faculty and staff—to achieve several objectives at their full-service community schools. In general, these strategies helped the principals to build and maintain collaborative school cultures; attract partnerships that provided services and supports to students, families, teachers, and community members; and garner political support and funding for continued implementation of the full-service community school model in the district. The study thus underscores the need for a continued focus on relational practices in school leadership programs (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, LaPointe, & Orr, 2009). The professional development provided to prospective and practicing principals should include strategies on how to build the interpersonal relationships and organizational conditions that are critical for cross-boundary collaboration.

At each school, the principals were also called on to address conflicts that threatened the collaborative environments they sought to create. Their success in doing so influenced both stability and trust within these full-service community schools. Thus, principals of full-service community schools, or those in traditional schools seeking to improve student outcomes through school, family, and community partnerships, must be prepared to manage conflicts around issues such as school curriculum and student discipline. Within the present study, such conflicts often resulted in strained or severed relationships. However, as noted by Meadows (1990), “Although more people are comfortable with harmony rather than conflict, managed conflict can be a positive force. . . . If there is no opportunity to air conflict, destructive adversarial relationships may result” (p. 548). This study suggests that principals are better able to manage conflict if they have created processes and structures that facilitate open communication, inclusive decision making, and ethical and consistent application of school rules and policies—all of which are foundational elements of relational trust.

To further advance understanding of relational leadership in full-service community schools, more research examining how principals respect difference and open dialogue while also maintaining cohesion, collaboration, and common purpose among diverse stakeholders is needed. Research in this area would facilitate deeper understanding of the requirements of relational and cross-boundary leadership within full-service community schools, as well as traditional schools implementing school, family, and community partnerships as a reform strategy. Deeper understanding, in turn, will bolster these schools’ sustained implementation and effectiveness for all students, particularly low-income and historically underserved populations.

NOTES

1. School A was also a public charter school. The principal explained that he applied for and was granted public charter school status in 2007, one year after adopting the full-service community school model. He stated that he did so to maintain the literacy curriculum that had helped the school reach state standards for students’ learning the previous year. Thus, he described the school’s public charter status as a means to maintain curricular stability and school effectiveness.

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APPENDIX

Interview Protocols

Principal/Coordinator Interview Protocol

1. How long have you been at the present school and in what capacity? How did you come to this position?
2. How would you define a community school? Do you believe that this school fits the description? Explain.
3. If you had to create a job description for your current position, what critical activities would you include? What skills, knowledge, and dispositions would the successful candidate possess?
4. What professional accomplishments are you most proud of? What professional goals, if any, do you have for yourself? What goals do you have for the school? What supports do you need to achieve these goals? What obstacles, if any, may prevent you from achieving these goals?
5. What is the toughest part of your job? What is the easiest part of your job?
6. What would you like the following people to know about your school: Parents? Students? Service providers? Surrounding community? Local leaders? State and national leaders?
7. What specific things could the following people do to help make your school more effective: Parents? Students? Service providers? Surrounding community? Local leaders? State and national leaders?
8. Is there anything more that you would like to share about your school or position?

Thank you.

Teacher/Instructional Support Staff Interview Protocol

1. How long have you been teaching? In what area are you certified? From what institution(s) did you graduate? In what area, if any, did you work prior to teaching?
2. How long have you been at the current school? Why did you choose this school? How is it similar to other schools where you have taught? How is different from other schools where you have taught?
3. How would you describe the students at the school? The parents? The support staff? The principal and administrative team? The service coordinator? The surrounding community?
4. How do you describe your role as a teacher here? Has your understanding of your role changed since you have been here? Do you believe you were prepared for your role prior to coming to the school? What experiences and/or professional development have helped or are helping you to be prepared? What knowledge, skill, and dispositions does a teacher need in order to be effective at this school?
5. What do you like best about teaching at this school? If you could change anything about this school, what would it be?
6. Is there anything more that you would like to share about the school?

Thank you.

Parent/Family Interview Protocol

1. How many children do you have at the school and in what grades?
2. How long have they been involved with the school?
3. How would you describe this school to a parent interested in enrolling his/her child? What are its strengths? Areas for improvement?
4. How would you describe the teachers? How does your child describe the teachers? Is it different from the previous schools that your child has attended or that you have worked with?
5. How would you describe the principal? Is s/he accessible to you and other parents? Does s/he respond to your concerns? Can you provide an example to illustrate your response?
6. Have you or your family benefited personally from services provided at the school? Please explain.
7. Do you think others in the community know what is occurring in the school? Explain. Does the school provide any direct services to the larger community? Are community resources used to support students' learning and development?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share about the school?

Thank you.

Community Partner/Service Provider Interview Protocol

1. How long have you been providing services at the [name of case school]?
2. How did you first become involved with the school?
3. What type of services do you provide? When and where are these services provided?
4. What populations (e.g., students, parents, community members) receive these services? Are there any restrictions or requirements to receive these services?
5. Approximately how many individuals do you serve a year?
6. Are there costs associated with these services? How are they paid and by whom?
7. What are the goals for your organization? How are the services you provide at the case school linked to these goals?
8. How do you measure your success? Do you believe that you have been successful at the case school? Explain.
9. What have you achieved since coming to the school that you are really proud of? What factors or individuals have facilitated these successes?
10. What, if any, obstacles have you faced? How did you address or how are you addressing these obstacles?
11. What do you hope to achieve over the next year? Next five years?
12. What would have to happen in the school/community/district/state/nation for you to achieve these objectives?
13. What advice would you give to other schools that would like to offer integrated services?
14. What advice would you give to service providers that would like to link with schools?
15. Would you like to share any additional information?

Thank you.

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