

**HOW SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS USE STRATEGY-AS-PRACTICE TO ACHIEVE
ORGANIZATIONAL COHERENCE**

by

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Jeffrey Daniel Hartmann, Ed.D.

University of Pittsburgh, 2013

As public education continues to grapple with private marketplace pressures, including depleting resources, it must contend with questions of organizational identity and direction, a dilemma emerging from increased competition. The accountability movement has ensured that instructional elements like academic standards, assessments, and curricula, “cohere.” Little attention has been paid to how institutional elements like collective bargaining agreements, budgets, and strategic plans “cohere” to support instruction. In the private sector, competitive companies must skillfully distribute resources and mitigate inefficient practices while pursuing their common goals.

To understand this changing context, a case study was designed to determine how school administrators supported district goals or reconciled local institutional constraints while supporting the district’s instructional goals. The case study was in a rural public school district in Pennsylvania. Using Strategy-as-Practice (SAP) methodology, the researcher closely examined the practices school administrators engaged in on a day-to-day basis over a two-month period. They were classified as supporting goals or reconciling constraints. Descriptive data was collected and nine school administrators and the school board president were both observed and interviewed. The study yielded 60 specific practices participants used to support the organization’s goals and 58 to reconcile constraints.

Analysis of these data revealed that newcomers and locals were distinguishable by their choices of practices, with newcomers being more goals supportive and locals more focused on reconciling constraints. This resulted in internal tensions that made effective communication across newcomers and locals difficult. Each saw the other’s activities as interfering with their work. Newcomers tended to find their efforts repeatedly constrained, despite their instructional successes. Locals tended to focus on the need for more respect for the local community.

This resulted in two conclusions. First, while institutional elements of goal support and local constraint reconciliation brought stability to the organization, the pursuit of instructional reform proved to be temporarily destabilizing. Second, the district tended to resolve this instability by supporting local constraint reconciliation even at the expense of goal support for improved student achievement.

This suggests that newcomers who focus on student achievement goals may need to be better informed about local constraints, independently of job interview rhetoric.

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PREFACE

Sapere aude

“Dare to know”

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There have been many people that assisted me with this level of education during my years as a graduate student. Aside from my family, only Dr. Maureen McClure, Dr. Sean Hughes, and Dr. Charlene Trovato have known me for the entirety of my time at the University of Pittsburgh. They have watched me grow, struggle, and grow yet again throughout my time with them. I leave my graduate education more confident, more knowledgeable, more strategic, and more scholarly than when I had entered.

I must take a moment to acknowledge the professional and personal bias that may appear to the reader when reading this study. I conducted a case study of a public school district in rural Pennsylvania using a Strategy-as-Practice (SAP) approach. I was embedded as a participant-observer which allowed me to gather rich, detailed, qualitative data. During the course of this research however, a significant amount of political turmoil consumed the case study district. This presented an interesting opportunity to study SAP since such turmoil is seldom accounted for in the school leadership field. I attempted to construct a context that was rich in observed and documented data but such richness may seem to obfuscate the foundation of this study. SAP methodology takes in to account such a context and, while difficult to generalize this one case study, similar political tumults may not be rare for school systems. As such, I attempted to use SAP to explain how school administrators responded in such an environment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, public schools are forced from a monopolistic position to one of competition. This pressure, coupled with the impact of unfunded state and Federal mandates compounds the problem. As a result, districts must understand how the actions of decision makers fit into overall strategic framework. A classic view of strategy creation has the strategic plan at the center, focusing on the overall actions of the organization (Jarzabkowski & Wilson, 2002). A more recent view of strategy creation has people at the center, focusing on their collective activities in support of the larger organization (Jarzabkowski, 2003). Understanding how school districts engage with strategy creation can not only help the district run more smoothly, can mitigate inefficient organizational activities, and better position the district's competitive advantage in this newly established public education marketplace. While school districts must complete strategic plans, an attempt has not been made to examine the individual practices of school administrators as the core of strategic decision-making.

1.1 CONCEPTIONS OF COHERENCE

In this chapter, I will focus on the lack of connectivity among the various uses of coherence across fields. For instance, I will demonstrate that while coherence was discussed within the

education field, such discussion has focused upon instructional coherence among academic standards, assessments, and curricula. Business literature has discussed coherence as a source of institutional sustainability by linking strategic planning with budgeting to increase firm profits. There has been little connectivity among these two important uses of coherence between the fields.

1.1.1 Instructional Coherence

Used as a structural framework, instructional coherence can improve student achievement by attempting to link all aspects of pedagogy. It emphasizes connectivity among standards, curricula, assessments and lesson planning (Boning, 2007; Chrispeels, Burke, Johnson, & Daly, 2008; Furhman, 1993; Many & King, 2008). In this way, instructional coherence has the sole purpose of enhancing “specific goals for student learning” (Buchmann & Floden, 1992; Furhman, 1993, p. 1). David Cayla (2006) sees this type of coherence as *ex ante coherence*. In this manner, coherence is “the compatibility of collective behavior with the system objective” which is predefined with no contributions by those within the organization (p. 322). According to Cayla (2006), maintaining this coherence occurs by people following the structure of rules set in place.

1.1.2 The Focus of the Accountability Movement

Federal and state mandated programs reinforced the theoretical notions of coherence as a structural framework by setting compliance with legal requirements as the mechanism to improve student achievement. Indeed, these mandates have become the emphasis of the accountability movement. Francis Eberle (2008) sees benefit in this type of coherence as a necessary step for improving teachers' instructional repertoire so teachers can assist students in making "connections among ideas." Further, she states that such connections will guard against, "fragmented, disconnected and incoherent learning experiences by students (Eberle, 2008, p. 104). Sandra Finley and the Southwest Educational Development Lab (2000) emphasized this point when she states, "when curriculum, instructional materials, and assessments are all focused on the same goals, the prospects of educational improvement are enhanced" (p. 3). Interestingly, a host of authors have suggested that the use of coherence in this manner had deleterious impact upon instructional quality for teachers and students (Buchmann & Floden, 1992; Finley, 2000; Grossman, Hammerness, McDonald, & Ronfeldt, 2008; Hoing & Hartch, 2004; Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001). The accountability movement often focuses upon the content of teaching by linking standards, assessments, and curricula but often ignores the local context and conditions in which children are taught. Further, instructional coherence does not connect with the institutional elements needed for sustainability. For instance, an organization's instructional coherence may be high, it may lack institutional coherence, which could have a harmful impact on the resources needed to sustain the institution.

1.1.3 Institutional Coherence

Institutional coherence goes beyond the pedagogical elements of instructional coherence by focusing upon the cultural, strategic, financial, and contractual relationships that serve as the foundation of instructional coherence.

1.1.3.1 Organizational Performance Enhancement

In examining coherence, researchers in both education and organizational dynamics have provided a series of rationales with the goal of ensuring system sustainment. For Linda Darling-Hammond (2006), coherence is important because it has potential to reinforce and reiterate the organization's core ideas and theoretical frameworks for individuals. This, in turn, allows for the commitment of resources that are in line with the organization's culture. The Harvard Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) states that organizational coherence is necessary for all aspects of the school system to operate in support of improved teaching and learning (Childress, Elmore, Grossman, & Johnson, 2007). Pam Grossman et. al. (2008) sees coherence as mirroring praxis in that it could bridge classroom theory with practical experiences. Kenneth Strike (2004) sees coherence as an important element in creating a sense of community in schools. Lassack and Roos (2001) posit that coherence is important if an organization wishes to become a more productive and competitive entity. It is the sustainability of this enhanced productivity and competitiveness that could assist school districts as they enter a new and less monopolistic marketplace.

1.1.3.2 Potential for Lasting Change

In addition to the sustainability of teaching and learning efforts, Johnson and Ratcliff (2004) state that the *act* of searching for institutional coherence itself serves as a centripetal force that creates relationships among all aspects of the organization (Childress, Elmore, Grossman, & Kin, 2006; Fuhman, 1993). Haack (2004) also suggests that coherence is an organizing tendency for people. Further, Michael Lassack and Johan Roos (2001) specify, “What makes actions coherent is that the sets of people who take part in them react with ‘that makes sense’ and do not react with surprise or angst” (p. 61). It is this relationship-creating aspect of coherence that could assist in understanding how people relate to both their colleagues and the institutional elements of their organization.

1.1.3.3 Linkages Among Local Institutional Policy Elements for Sustainability

While instructional coherence focuses exclusively upon improving the relationships between pedagogical elements, institutional coherence must focus upon three critical sets of policy documents needed to support sustained efforts for pedagogical improvement. For school districts, the collective bargaining agreements for teachers, support staff, and administrators serve as one set, the budget serves as another set, and the strategic plan serves as the final set. These documents reveal the local economy, polity, and culture, which instructional coherence avoids. They also serve to provide details about how a local school district views its past and future. Because these documents commit a large amount of a school district’s scarce resources, it is important that they exhibit a high degree of coherence so that such commitments are highly efficient.

1.1.4 Research Questions

1. What conceptual debates exist for instructional and institutional coherence? How has education applied those debates to institutional sustainability within school districts?
2. What does the research suggest as the best methodology for mapping institutional coherence in a K-12 public school district?
3. How can the management research field of 'strategy as practice' help inform more integrated local decision-making?

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The accountability movement emphasized the connectivity among academic standards, state testing, and local curricula to provide a sense of direction and common enterprise (Strike, 2004). While the accountability movement focused on enhancing academic connections to improve student achievement, little discussion examined the institutions where student achievement would take place. This omission peaked my curiosity, and I began to look for other models of coherence. This search led me to discover some interesting and valuable aspects of the concept of coherence, its uses inside and outside education, and some recommended methods to study such a concept. Expanding my review of the coherence literature to beyond that of the education field has revealed the possibility of coherence to encourage change in the educational process.

2.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF EDUCATION REFORM LITERATURE IN THE LAST SIXTY YEARS

The Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik in 1957 sparked the quest for improvement in the nation's education program.. This event prompted an emphasis on enhanced math and science education in the United States via the National Defense Education Act as a means to improve the country's position in the space race (Finley, 2000; National defense education act 1958). In the next

decade, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, whose subsequent reauthorizations have led to the No Child Left Behind Act (Elementary and secondary education act 1965; No Child Left Behind Act, 2002). In 1983, the National Commission on Educational Excellence published *A Nation at Risk*, which highlighted the potential economic damage America's poor school system could inflict and urged strong action for improvement (Gordon, 2003; *A nation at risk*, 1983). *A Nation at Risk* provided the impetus for the introduction of standards-based education, which led to the eventual use of accountability via high-stakes testing to improve our nation's schools (Nichols & Berliner, 2007). When Fred Newmann, BesAnn Smith, Elaine Allensworth, and Anthony Bryk (2001) stated "The idea of coherence often surfaces when educational researchers confront practices, programs, or policies found to be poorly conceived and coordinated or at odds with other practices, programs, and policies" the myriad of public education policy comes into focus (p. 298). These authors express that the efforts to improve education have left educators searching for something that "makes sense" to them and has a true possibility of making a positive difference for schools.

Each program, initiative, and policy introduced since *A Nation at Risk* has aimed to improve student achievement and has created, to reference an earlier quote, "more education policies...than the whole prior history of schooling back to ancient Greeks" (Loveless, 1998, p. 283). Woods (2002) provides a more recent historical account of this discourse when he mentions that education has, "Engaged frequently in a variety of unrelated activities at their school sites intended to help raise student achievement...only to result in little or no impact in student learning" (p. 32). Moreover, low income schools tend to have even more "reform" programs haphazardly arranged on top of each other (U.S. Department of Education as cited in Woods, 2002). Since *A Nation at Risk*, American schools experienced pushes for "systemic"

school reform, standards-based education, outcomes-based education, and data-driven instruction (Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Finley, 2000; Fox, 2007; Gordon, 2003; Newmann, et al., 2001; Nichols & Berliner, 2007).

2.2 ENTER COHERENCE

Allusions to coherence have occurred since 1990 when specific programmatic efforts for improvement failed to be sustained (Allington & Johnson, 1989; Cohen & Ball, 1996; Elmore, 1996; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Smylie, Bilcer, Kochanek, Sconzert, Shipps, & Swyers, 1998 as cited in Newmann, et al., 2001). To improve, coherence was introduced by name as a means to improve the relationship between state standards, assessments, school policy and curricula (Hoing & Hartch, 2004; Newmann, et al., 2001). By the turn of the twenty-first century, coherence had moved from standards, assessment, and curricula, to teacher's pedagogy and sense making in the classroom (Finley, 2000; D. K. Johnson & Ratcliff, 2004; Newmann, et al., 2001; Slavin, 2003).

In the classroom, coherence was applied as a method to improve the quality of instruction. Richard Bybee (2003) highlighted the need for coherence in science education when he stated that curricula is “based on a mix-and-match array of activities...[and] lack conceptual coherence” (p. 349). In examining tertiary education, coherence was discussed from improving general education curricula to specific teacher education programs (Boning, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2006; D. K. Johnson & Ratcliff, 2004). The New American Schools Development Corporation first applied coherence in 1991 and, more recently, the Harvard PELP used

coherence as a means for school district reform (Childress, Elmore, Grossman, & Johnson, 2007; Newmann, et al., 2001).

2.3 SITUATING COHERENCE WITHIN THE LARGER LITERATURE

To provide a fuller context of coherence, we must review the historical and current definitions of coherence as well as where coherence is situated in the larger bodies of literature. Coherence lies at an interesting crossroads of educational reform, organizational dynamics, business, psychology, and sociology disciplines. In the educational reform literature, coherence was mentioned in policy, standards and assessment alignment, teacher agency and empowerment, pedagogical improvement, teacher sensemaking, and tertiary education (Bybee, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Hoing & Hartch, 2004). In the organizational dynamics and business fields, coherence was addressed for aligning organizational values, enhancing business output, and improving competitive advantage (Cayla, 2006; Centerbar, Clore, Schnall, & Garvin, 2008; Childre & Cryer, 1999). In the psychology and sociology fields, coherence was understood to be a critical factor in developing coping mechanisms and resiliency (Birkeland Nielsen, Berge Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2008).

Clearly coherence has a broad range of meanings and applications. However, throughout this review of literature, two broad uses of the term have emerged. First, is coherence in structural form. This form is primarily for compliance and positions itself exogenously to the organization. Coherence of this type is applied via the accountability movement in an attempt to

improve instruction. Second, coherence in conceptual form. Here, coherence is a coordination tool and is positioned endogenously to the organization. Coherence of this type is needed for institutional sustainability to ensure that a school district's strategy and goals are coherently coordinated such that its scarce resources are committed efficiently. Before moving to the specifics of instructional and institutional coherence, we need to examine the term's origins and definitions.

2.4 DEFINING COHERENCE

Used in a variety of contexts, the term coherence has a variety of meanings. The importance of the term is seen in the current, apparently ubiquitous use (Allen, 2004). For instance, one stream of authors has emphasized an “actor-based” nature of coherence that assists with bridging classroom theory with practical experiences, as well as creating a sense of community in schools¹ (Grossman, et al., 2008; Lissack & Roos, 2001; Sloan, 2006; Strike, 2004). Alternatively, another stream of authors constructs coherence as alignment, aligning the programmatic and curricular aspects of schools to achieve consistency (Buchmann & Floden, 1992; Finley, 2000; Hoing & Hartch, 2004; Newmann, et al., 2001). These definitions of coherence come from the organizational dynamics, business, higher education, psychology and sociology disciplines. Definitions of coherence range from the very concrete to abstract and can

¹ Lissick and Roos (2001) provide a broad definition of “actors” identifying them as individuals whose, “Collective action is regulated through the constraints of the [organizational] environment...structure and...culture” (p. 60).

describe applications to policy, assessment, and alignment as well as conceptual frameworks and idea-creation (Allen, 2004; Boning, 2007; Merriam-Webster, 2008). Allen (2004) provides an interesting explanation for the variety of definitions of coherence when he states, “New, perhaps more complex ways of making sense become hostages to onesided, formalistic, logocentric, economic, scholastic, or ideological structures on what counts as ‘coherent’” (p. 260). Like power, it seems we know what coherence is until someone asks (Wall, 1999).

2.4.1. Conceptual Formations as Applied to Education.

Mapping coherence begins with Barry Allen’s (2004) assertion that “Coherence cannot be delimited by analytically necessary and eternally sufficient conditions because such descriptions define a determinate concept while coherence is what Kant called an indeterminate concept, the concept of a concept.” (p. 266). This description provides one boundary for coherence as an abstract concept. This definition could also suggest why Kenneth Boning (2007) contends that “coherence is often discussed in the literature but rarely formally defined” (p. 92). Opposite the abstract boundary for coherence lays structural, tangible applications. For example, Straut (1998) highlights opposing uses of coherence as either focusing on the tangible parts of the organization or upon the cogeneration of learning that occurs between people.

2.4.2. Coherence for Alignment.

In structural terms coherence is a method for standardization and compliance. Structural coherence focuses more upon leveraging elements within the organization as a means for compliance. For instance, one of David Cayla's (2006) definitions of coherence is focused on the systemic elements of the organization. He states that coherence in this manner is when organizational "components, by their positions, their functions, and/or their actions, are all carrying out the objectives of this system" (p. 327). For Cayla (2006), when individual actions are in opposition to the organizational goals yet the organizational goals are achieved, structural coherence is realized. Further, in *Understanding Corporate Coherence*, David Teece and Richard Rumelt (1994) state that coherence occurs when the activities of the organization as a whole are related to one another.

As applied to education, structural coherence emphasizes connectivity among standards, curricula, assessments, and lesson planning for instructional improvement (Boning, 2007; Chrispeels, et al., 2008; Fuhman, 1993; Many & King, 2008). Interestingly, a host of authors have suggested that the use of coherence in this manner had deleterious impact upon instructional quality for teachers and students (Buchmann & Floden, 1992; Finley, 2000; Grossman, et al., 2008; Hoing & Hartch, 2004; Newmann, et al., 2001). Applications of coherence in structural terms can treat people as, "Passive agents whose teaching behaviors are leveraged (negatively or positively) in seemingly predetermined ways" (Sloan, 2006, p. 121). Sloan's quote dovetails with David Cayla's (2006) definition of *ex ante coherence*. In this manner, coherence is predefined with no contributions by those within the organization other than "the compatibility of collective behavior with the system objective" (p. 322). Coherence is

then maintained, according to Cayla (2006), by people following the structure of rules in place. Barry Allen (2004) terms this type of mechanistic process as *technical coherence*. Karen Hammerness (2006) and Maria Tatto (1996) utilize the terms *structural* and *program norm* coherence respectively to describe similar uses of coherence. This type of coherence is a pre-set structure, usually exogenous to the organization. This type of coherence typifies contemporary accountability movements since it focuses on improving the structures of instructional coherence.

2.4.3. Coherence for Coordination.

The view of coherence as a coordinating concept contrasts with the structural notions of coherence. Lissack and Roos (2001) view coherence in this manner as, “not a ridged state but rather is a process that reflects the ongoing alignment of identity, purpose and values” (p. 63). David Cayla (2006) stated that this type of coherence is positioned endogenously to the organization since it comes from those working within. He defines this type of coherence as *ex post coherence*. This view engages Allen’s (2004) concept of aesthesis as questions about values, attitudes, and ideas become examined and refined (Eberle, 2008; Ekstrom, 1993). Allen (2004) believes that coherence cannot be defined but “felt” in that coherence is experiential; a feeling one gets when one puts things together. This feeling “belongs to the dimension of aesthesis, that is, felt, sensuous, perceptual consciousness” (Allen, 2004, p. 262). David B. Centerbar, Gerald L. Clore, Simone Schnall, and Erika D. Garvin (2008, p. 561) describe coherence in this manner as an experience that:

Would produce a subjective sense of fluency that would allow a person to infer that “all is well,” whereas an experience of disfluency would motivate efforts aimed at inconsistency resolution, which should hamper performance on other cognitive tasks.

Stacey Childress, Richard Elmore, Allen Grossman, Susan Johnson and Caroline Kin (2007; 2006) utilized this feeling of logical integration as the basis for the Harvard PELP Coherence Framework when holistically improving urban districts. Recall that the PELP is an attempt to bring the contextual aspects of urban school systems into meaningful relationships with one another.

Francis Eberle (2008) states that coherence is not ensuring that ideas are connected but merely ideas “that are related to each other” (p. 103). In higher education, Kenneth Boning (2007) states, in his work *Coherence in General Education*, that “A coherent general education program can be defined as one where students are able to make connections and integrate their knowledge, rather than one that merely provides them with isolated pieces of information” (p. 1). Johnson and Ratcliff (2004) mention that coherence happens when students make connections among ideas and apply those connections to their own situations. Margaret Buchmann and Robert Floden (1992) state that coherence is an inclusive term that “allows for many kinds of connectedness, encompassing logic, but also associations of ideas and feelings, intimations of resemblance, conflicts, and tensions, previsions and imaginative leaps” (p. 4). As ideas, values and attitudes culminate, an organizational identity begins to form that, in turn, provides a sense of direction and common enterprise (Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Strike, 2004). Maria Tatto (1996) and Karen Hammerness (2006) term this *professional norm coherence* and *conceptual coherence* respectively.

Simon Sinek's (2009) book *Start with Why* explains in detail the importance of organizational identity formation. He compares their corporate identity formation and profitability, citing that organizations with a clear sense of purpose are able to remain nimble and responsive to changing market conditions. He provides examples of Southwest Airlines, Apple, U2, and Harley Davidson. He contrasts those corporations with ones unable to respond to market forces because they lacked a clear sense of identity. These examples include Dell's attempt to sell mp3 players to compete with iPods and Gateway's attempt to sell flat-screen TVs.

This dynamic, ongoing coordination of purpose, identity, and values is important because it influences "the way in which one's principles are held, not only how one may act given these principles, but also how one may be motivated in acting on them (Maak, 2008, p. 359 as cited in McFall, 1987, p. 8). It is this enactment process that Doc Childre and Don Cryer (1999) provide a framework for understanding if organizations are coherent; it is when actions and intentions match. Similarly, Maria Totto (1996) states that when colleagues share and logistically support personal visions, coherence is operationalized. Lissak and Roos (2001) also describe the enactment process as the coordination of "the actions taken, the viewpoints adopted, and assertions of identity as individuals [and] groups" (p. 61).

2.4.4. Bridging Institutional and Instructional Coherence.

Sharon Feinam-Nemser (1990) went beyond the alignment aspects of coherence while looking at teacher education programs. She created a more holistic model that balanced both structural and

conceptual framing. Karen Hammerness (2006, p. 1242) later expanded upon these differences by stating:

The lines between the two often blur. For instance, conceptual coherence might include entwining theory and practice purposefully and deliberately (Kessels, Koster, Lagerwerf, Wubbels, & Korthagen, 2001), developing a shared conception of teaching that undergirds and pervades the program (Tatto; Tom, 1997). Structural aspects of coherence might include organizing and aligning courses...around a particular conception of teaching and learning.

Likewise, Barry Allen (2004, p. 266) believed that coherence is “felt,” but also divided his definition of coherence into aesthetic or technical forms:

These two modes of coherence (technical and aesthetic) are different and may occur separately. A work may have notable technical coherence yet be perceptually anaesthetic, offering no sensible coherence we can linger over in imagination; for example, a well-designed system of drains in a refinery or hospital. The technical coherence of a well-engineered system may be notable, but there is no presence, no address, no corporeal, material, sensuous coherence of unity and difference to feel your way into aesthetically (except perhaps in the diagrams).

Together, Feinam-Nemser, Hammerness, and Allen illustrate the duality of the use of coherence. On the one hand, coherence as an alignment tool to ensure that specific elements connect with one another, while on the other hand, coherence serves as a touchstone of decision making to ensure that elements coordinate with one another. Similarly, David Cayla (2006) provided for dual illustrations of coherence in his definitions as *ex ante* and *ex post* coordination of coherence. The *ex ante* definition of coherence is predefined, the *ex post* definition of coherence is that which becomes defined from the organization. This emphasis upon the use of stakeholders crafting coherence introduces the use of coherence in conceptual terms (Bybee,

2003; Finley, 2000; Fuhman, 1993; Livingston & Robertson, 2001; Many & King, 2008; Shwartz, Weizman, Fortus, Krajcik, & Reiser, 2008; Strike, 2004).

While coherence may be viewed through any number of lenses, some important connections emerge that go beyond describing the structural and conceptual elements of coherence and attempt to bridge the two. For instance, William Firestone (2009) illustrated the need to have an “accountability culture” in schools, stressing the alignment of curriculum and assessments before shared beliefs and coordination of efforts are prevalent in a “student achievement culture.” The description of the “instructional core” from the Harvard PELP Coherence Framework (Childress, et al., 2006) and the “technical core” illustrated by James Spillane (2010) also provided connectivity between these concepts. Further, the seminal work that Weick (1976) conducted on organizational coupling provided yet another bridge. In this manner, Weick (1976) advocated for a “tight” coupling of schools where strong shared ideas and conceptions of the work with schools. This “tight coupling” happens, he says, with tangible aspects of schools like the bus schedule and payment of personnel, but rarely happens with teaching and learning. Weick’s (1976) advocacy for a “tight coupling” of teaching and learning connects with the ideas of “internal accountability” illustrated by Richard Elmore (2003) where “strong collective views of what they stand for, and well developed organization process that bring those beliefs into action” (p. 196). As our understanding of coherence continues to grow, so, too, will the applications of this concept to many areas of education organizations.

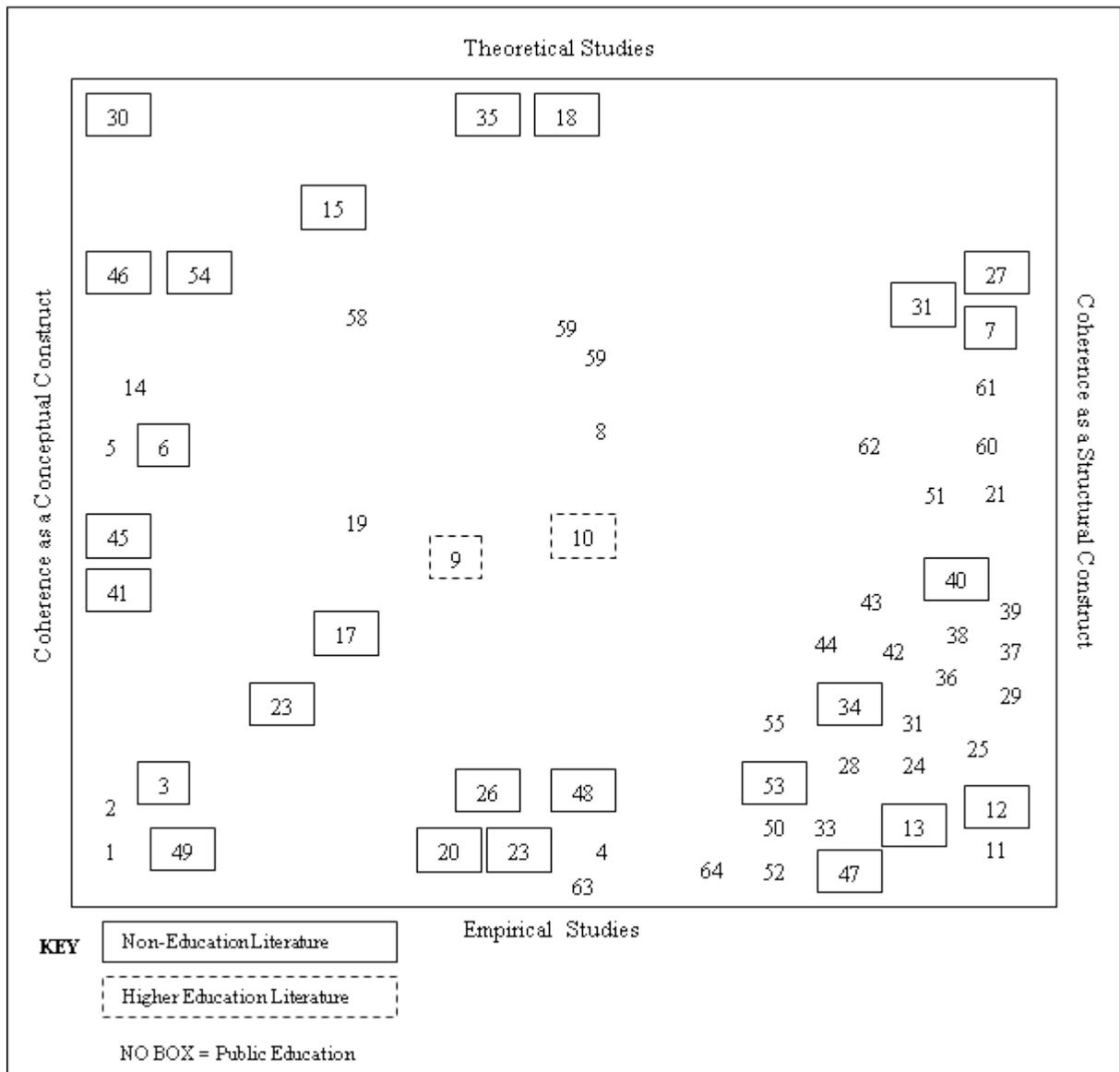


Figure 1. Literature Map

Author	Major Precept
1. Johnson & Ratcliff	Students make connections
2. Boning	Integrated knowledge
3. Lassack and Roos	Interpersonal experience
4. Darling-Hammond	Reinforce frameworks
5. Strike	Sense of common enterprise
6. Buchmann	Varying forms of personal connectedness
7. Merriam-Webster	Logically integrated
8. Grossman	Central ideas shared b/w faculty and staff with programmatic support
9. Tatto	Shared ideas with conceptual and logistical support
10. Hammerness	Conceptual and structural coherence
11. Newmann	Instructional programs
12. Teece and Rumelt	Relation of organizational activities
13. Cayla	Organizational components working together
14. Eberle	Ideas related
15. Allen	Sensemaking, feeling
16. Finley	Not alignment
17. Childress	Feeling of logical integration by people

Author	Major Precept
33. Furhman	Alignment of standards, curriculum and assessment
34. Goff	Organizational coordination
35. Haack	Something more than consistency
36. Halsall	Curricular alignment
37. Hoing	Fit between school's goals and external demands
38. Kedro	Program coherence
39. Livingston	Alignment of professional development structures for Scottish teachers
40. Maak	Relationship between corporate ethics and actions
41. McFall	Agent's internal (morals) and external (actions) coherence
42. Madda	Instructional program coherence
43. Many	Professional development model alignment with goals
44. Miles	Relationship between textbooks and truth
45. Millgram, et. al.	"Seat of the pants feeling"
46. Milligram 2, et. al.	Assistive in decision making
47. Nath	Connection of strategic choices and strategic plans
48. Nesta	Firm's collective knowledge and performance
49. Riches	How organization members create meaning

18. Kant in Allen	Concept of a concept	50. Roach	Alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessments
19. Applebee	Sense of direction	51. Schmidt	Curriculum coherence with standards
20. Birkeland	Antonovsky's Sense of Coherence theory	52. Schwartz	Designing a science curriculum
21. Bybee	Alignment of curriculum	53. Thagard	Relationship between one's ethics and actions
22. Centerbar	Antonovsky's Sense of Coherence theory	54. Turner	Curricular alignment with standards
23. Childre	Actions and intentions match; emotions are focused	55. Desimone	Incorporating teacher goals, alignment with standards, assessments, encouraging professional communication
24. Chrispeels	Aligning mental models	56. Webb	Alignment of expectations and assessments at the state level; coherent system
25. Copeland	Relationship of system components	57. Cicchinelli	Alignment of the evaluation process
26. Crawford	Antonovsky's Sense of Coherence theory	58. Stein Coburn	Alignment by engagement of the workers not policy
27. Oxford English Dictionary	Logical integration	59. Firestone-2	Student achievement and accountability cultures in schools
28. Dottin	Relationships between organization elements	60. Jerald	Use of HR alignment to drive teacher compensation reform
29. Education Commission of the States	Policy alignment	61. Heneman & Milinowski	Vertical and horizontal alignment of HR practices in education
30. Ekstrom	Attitudes, values, preferences that are mutually supportive	62. Garet, et.al.	Traditional teacher professional development as incoherent; sets of disconnected activities
31. Firestone-1	Focus, time, type of professional development	63. Luschei & Christensen	Loose coupling and internal accountability as coherence
32. Friedman	Alignment	64. Bang-Knudsen	Centralization v. decentralization of resources

Figure 2. Coherence Literature Reviewed

A trend emerges in the public education literature, focused on the structural elements of pedagogy for instructional improvement. Articles reviewed outside of public education literature demonstrated a more conceptual focus. This could be a result of the accountability movement's pressure upon public primary and secondary education institutions to improve student achievement.

2.5 APPLICATIONS OF COHERENCE WITHIN EDUCATION

In recent years, education reform and policies have increasingly relied upon programmatic and policy structures to ensure compliance. Coherence in this manner applied to primary and secondary education with the goal of enhancing “specific goals for student learning” (Buchmann & Floden, 1992; Furhman, 1993, p. 1). Coherence was also used to align policy, curricula, and pedagogical technique to improve the student experience (American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1998; Dottin, 2001; Goertz & et al., 1996; Roach, Niebling, & Kurz, 2008). Buchmann and Floden (1992) contend that coherence of this type is nothing more than consistency.

2.5.1 Coherence as an Alignment Tool for Instruction.

The predominate usage of the coherence within the field of education falls along models of alignment and structural leverage. It emphasizes connectivity among standards, curricula, assessments and lesson planning (Boning, 2007; Chrispeels, et al., 2008; Furhman, 1993; Many & King, 2008). Fred Newmann's, et.al. (2001) definition of coherence related to the "instructional program coherence as a set of interrelated programs for students and staff that are guided by a common framework for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and learning climate" (p. 297). Proponents of this idea of alignment and standardization of instruction hope that the instructional process will become more transparent and easier to monitor (Spillane, et al., 2010)

Applications of coherence using an alignment perspective can treat people as structures, as "Passive agents whose teaching behaviors are leveraged (negatively or positively) in seemingly predetermined ways" (Sloan, 2006, p. 121). Karen Hammerness (2006) and Maria Tatto (1996) utilize the terms *structural* and *program norm* coherence respectively to describe similar uses of coherence. This type of coherence is a preset structure, usually exogenous to the organization. Interestingly, a host of authors have suggested that the use of coherence in this manner has had deleterious impact upon instructional quality for teachers and students (Buchmann & Floden, 1992; Finley, 2000; Grossman, et al., 2008; Hoing & Hartch, 2004; Newmann, et al., 2001). American education has experienced alignment-type coherence cyclically, alternating between periods of integration and fragmentation throughout our history (Boning, 2007). Interestingly, Sandra Finley (2000) opines that coherence is much more than a simple process of alignment. James Spillane, Leigh Parise and Jennifer Sherer (2010), suggest that engaging in this kind of alignment ensures conformity but forces people to avoid "any close

internal coordination of instruction” (p. 6). This exemplifies the difference between schools who espouse, as William Firestone (2009) states, an “accountability culture” or a “student learning culture.” In an accountability culture, control comes from the top, whereas a student achievement culture requires joint problem solving and coordination of efforts for educational improvement.

2.5.2 Coherence as a Coordination Tool for School Culture.

Developing coordination-type coherence requires a specific leadership style since it cannot be produced through mandate or dictum but only through encouragement (Lissack & Roos, 2001). This, combined with the central role people have in creating coherence, is similar to some research on teacher agency and teacher leadership (Kimber, Pillay, & Richards, 2002; Sloan, 2006; Strodl, 1992; Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). The Harvard PELP has recently broadened the use of coherence beyond the pedagogical stakeholder group by introducing coherence as a means for holistic improvement in urban school systems (Childress, et al., 2007). This is a new application of coherence that seeks to address multiple stakeholder groups and competing interests (Furhman, 1993; Holt & Murphy, 1993; Lissack & Roos, 2001). In *Creating Coherence, the Unfinished Agenda*, Kent Johnson and James Ratcliff (2004) suggest that “coherence serves as a centripetal force” that could act to bring competing groups and interests into a meaningful relationship with one another (p. 88).

2.5.3 Coherence and the Institutional Elements for Sustainability.

It is this lack of meaningful relationships among organizational elements that suggested the critical failure of education reform. For instance, Stein and Coburn (2008) stated that the weak coherence among, “elements of the system (e.g., state standards, district policy, and the design of professional development) and call for remedies aimed at strengthening...these elements (e.g., more consistent, specific, authoritative, powerful, and stable policies [Porter 1994])” (p. 000). Other authors have provided suggestions for improving coherence among the attendant aspects of schools Stein and Coburn (2008) mentioned. Craig Jerald (2009), Herbert Heneman and Anthony Milinowski (2007) hinted at the relationship between coherence and the attendant

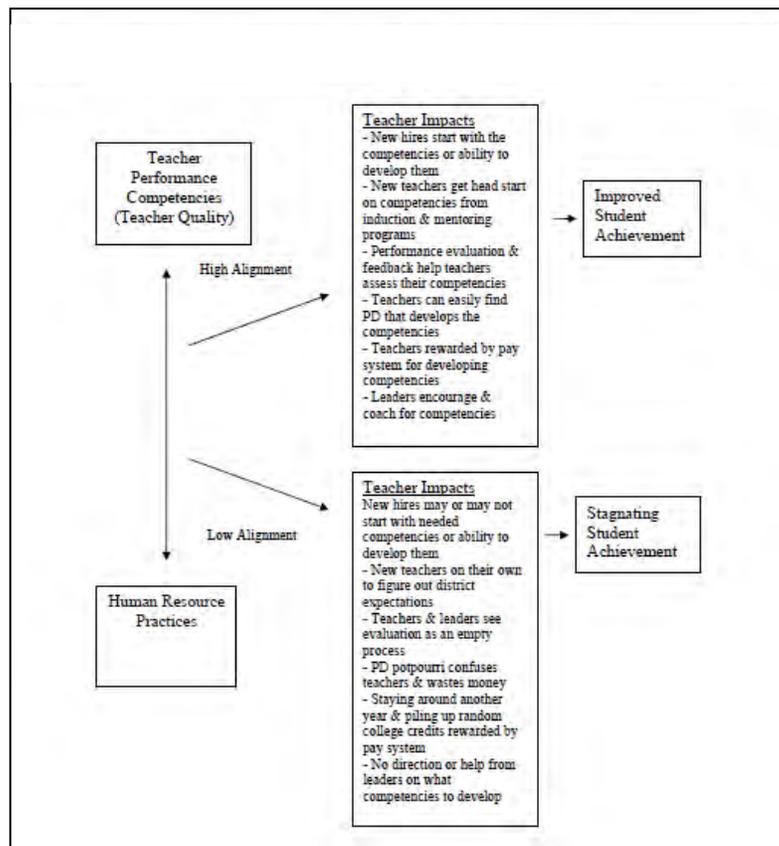


Figure 3. Example of HRA from Heneman and Milinowski (2007)

aspects of schools when they explained “vertical” and “horizontal” alignment. Using human resource practices and policies as an example, Craig Jerald (2009) stated that “Vertical alignment referred to the fit between a particular human resources practice, such as employee compensation, and the school system’s overall goals and improvement plan” (p. 5). “Horizontal alignment” Jerald (2009) stated, “refers to the extent to which one human resources policy reinforces and supports another human resources policy” (p. 5). The application of coherence as an alignment tool was one method to improve the specific attendant elements of school districts. These included human resource activities as listed in Figure 3 that included hiring, teacher evaluation, and professional development whereas district financial activities included budgeting and collective bargaining and district strategic planning.

2.5.4 Coherence and Human Resource Activities.

Human resources (HR) have occupied a primarily administrative, procedural aspect in organizations. Generally, little interaction occurred between HR and teachers, much less discussion on how HR practices could influence student achievement (Heneman & Milanowski, 2007). Specifically, Livingstone and Robertson (2001) indicated that a coherent human resources framework should have a positive impact upon retention rates of teachers. Heneman and Milinowski (2007) go on to illustrate such a coherent HR framework in their concept of Human Resource Alignment (HRA). HRA provided a guide to ensure that an organization’s practices should work together to promote the key performance competencies employees must exhibit for the organization to succeed. This is illustrated in Figure 3. By working from a model

that mutually supported organizational goals, HRA should “influence teacher performance competencies and thus student achievement” (Heneman & Milanowski, 2007, p. 1). Jerald (2009) provided an example to determine if a district has good horizontal alignment by ensuring that policies and practices in human resources supported policies and practices in other human resource areas. Further, he used professional development to illustrate good vertical alignment where teachers identified specific strategies needed to support a school’s student achievement goals (Jerald, 2009). The concept of HRA drew attention to the earlier notion that coherence could serve as a centripetal force that drew meaningful relationships among disparate aspects of an organization (D. K. Johnson & Ratcliff, 2004).

2.5.4.1 Coherence and Professional Development.

Because of the intensity of school reform over the last half century, teacher professional development has garnered attention as one of the critical elements for systemic reform (Corcoran, 1995; Corcoran, Shields, & Zucker, 1998 as cited in Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). In many cases, education reform is synonymous with teacher’s professional development (Sykes, 1996 as cited in L. M. Desimone, 2009). However, teachers frequently criticized the traditional model of professional development as a series of disconnected activities that “do not form part of a coherent program of teacher learning and development” (Garet, et al., 2001, p. 927). To break from the traditional model, Garet, et al., (2001), provided three assessments for professional development coherence:

1. How professional development built on what teachers have already learned.

2. How content and pedagogy were aligned with national, state and local standards, frameworks, and assessments.
3. Teacher support in developing sustained, ongoing professional communication with other teachers who are trying to change their teaching in similar ways.

Note the use of horizontal and vertical alignment in an effort to bring coherence to professional development programs. Other authors have examined coherence as the extent to which teacher learning is consistent with teachers' knowledge and beliefs (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 1998; Elmore & Burney, 1997 as stated in L. M. Desimone, 2009, p. 184). William Firestone, et al., (2005) suggests that professional development is most coherent in student learning districts where teachers see it as "job-embedded, focused, coordinated with the curriculum and guided by data" (p. 674).

2.5.4.2 Coherence and Budgeting.

One of the most critical aspects of public school districts is the budget. Required in Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth's school districts enter into mandatory budget making and managing processes each fiscal year. Taken together, school budgets are referred to as the form PDE-2028, where budget categories each have a corresponding budget code. It is from this document that districts begin the annual spectacle of budget formulation, vetting, and ultimate adoption (Pennsylvania Public School Code as Amended 1949; Sample, 1993). As Guthrie (2007) keenly observed however, "the school district budget has been viewed as an instrument of control rather than a strategic tool for optimizing educational outcomes for all students" (p. 230). While coherence research has yet to enter into the realm of school budgeting specifically, the

PDE-2028 form and associated budget practices illustrate the general lack of applied structural or conceptual coherence.

2.5.4.3 Coherence, Budget and the Strategic Plan.

Minzberg (1994) highlights the lack of congruence between budgets and strategic plans when he states, “Enter the great divide of planning: how to cross from performance controls on one side to action plans on the other – how to link...budgets to tangible strategies and/or programs” (p. 80). An attempt to bridge the gap was the goal of the “planning, programming, budgeting and system” or PPBS process by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. In this manner, McNamara attempted to link strategic thinking with the mission’s resources (Henry Mintzberg, 1994). In school districts, the budget-making process had little connectivity to the goals of the strategic plan. For instance, the PDE-2028 form has no line item structure that allows for articulation of the financial resources needed to fulfill the goals contained in the strategic plan. Additionally, the strategic plans run on a six-year cycle and budgeting is an annual occurrence. These weak or nonexistent linkages position school districts to engage in a series of incoherent activities that may or may not influence student achievement. Yavitz and Newman as cited in Mintzberg (1994, p. 128) indicate the mutual importance and reinforcement the strategic plan and budget have when they note:

Triggered by a need related to existing activities, few [expenditures] deviate very much from the status quo. Some of these bottom-up proposals are for necessary projects-replacement of a faltering elevator for instance. Others propose better ways to perform present activities. Still others may deal with natural expansion. If the business-unit wishes to pursue its existing strategy, such proposals are quite appropriate.

The current budgeting and line-item scheme provides for existing strategies and yearly operation. It does little to encourage a critical examination of district operations and appropriate strategic correction to improve student achievement however. Those activities reside in the strategic planning process that each school district must engage in every three to six years.

2.5.4.4 Coherence and the Strategic Planning Process.

Kenneth Strike's (2004) quote operationalized and defined coherence, "When we lack coherence, a sense of common enterprise, we tend to rely on procedures and lines of legitimate authority to make decisions, and we abandon dialogue and collegiality" (p. 227). The development of that "sense of common enterprise" should stem from an ongoing alignment of identity, purpose, and values manifested during the strategic planning process (Lissack & Roos, 2001). As districts come to develop their own mission and vision statements as part of a strategic plan, they enter into the existential arena by examining why they exist and what wishes they have for the future of the organization (Pennsylvania Department of Education [PDE] *eStrategic planning*, 2007; Henry Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel, 1998). In Pennsylvania, strategic planning is a state requirement and must be developed every six years to fulfill a variety of state and national reporting requirements (PDE, *eStrategic planning*, 2007). This process, while inclusive in preparation and participation, does not address the fundamental operational components of school districts, that of finance and collective bargaining. The Pennsylvania Department of Education strategic framework focused upon planning itself, leaving unanswered questions of both sustainability and comprehensiveness needed for successful implementation. For instance, asking districts to estimate potential expenses six years in advance treats revenue streams and expenditures in the abstract.

While the PDE strategic planning framework addressed issues of access by its inclusivity, the linkages to issues of sustainability and comprehensiveness seem to lack. Understanding these linkages are important since “Competitive advantage frequently derives from linkages among activities just as it does from the individual activities themselves” (Porter, 1985, p. 48). One of the critical linkages lacking is the relationship between the strategic plan and the various negotiated agreements of personnel that will ultimately operationalize the plan. Of the various collective bargaining units within schools, the largest single group is that of teachers. Given the critical position this collective bargaining unit has upon district financial operations at a strategic level, it is appropriate then to examine how coherence and collective bargaining relate.

2.5.4.5 Coherence and Collective Bargaining.

Whereas the twentieth century saw education place emphasis upon “creating an endless stream of nearly identical items, the new vision is of groups of workers coming together around unique problems, solving them together and moving on” (Charles T. Kerchner, 1997, p. 39). This interaction with the globalized world means a movement from the traditional modes of behaviorism and control to cognitivism and cooperation (Cormier, 1997; Charles T. Kerchner, 1997). The groundwork for such cooperation was laid with the Teacher Union Reform Network (TURN) which was “dedicated to moving beyond the adversarial, industrial, in the text bread-and-butter approach that dominates teacher union politics” (Hutchison, 2007, p. 36). Further, Rob Chase, NEA president in 1997, stated that, “These industrial-style, adversarial tactics simply are not suited to the next stage of reform” (Hutchison, 2007, p. 36). For teacher unions, this means broadening the scope of negotiated items beyond wages and conditions but also including political economy, the community, and the broader contextual environment (Hyman as cited in

Givan, 2007). Further, the knowledge era environment that Kerchner, Koppich, and Weeres (1997) described requires flexibility and innovation, which threaten the union's power, built upon specialized technical skills, which is an inherently inflexible structure. Kerchner et.al. (1997) goes on to state that "Under the terms of most teachers' contracts, flexibility is discouraged and support for innovation is tepid at best" (p. 104).

The large majority of contracts that teachers operate under are products of the classic power-based negotiations process, with each side attempting to gain concessions from the other for their own benefit (Black, 2008; Hess and Kelley in Hannaway & Rotheran, 2008). Alternative bargaining modes are structured after the "integrative bargaining" process articulated by Walton and McKersie in 1965 (Fiorito, 2007). The year 1986 saw the first application of the alternative bargaining techniques in public education and has since assumed a variety of names including strategic bargaining, progressive bargaining, win-win bargaining, mutual gains bargaining, principled negotiations, interest-based bargaining and interest-based approach (Quinn, 2003; Straut, 1998; Wall, 1999). The collaborative process available to boards of education and teachers' unions allowed both sides to focus on "Increased communication, flexibility, joint problem solving, and identifying common ground" (Hess and Kelley in Hannaway & Rotheran, 2008, p. 57). This collaborative process removes the contention that fills traditional bargaining sessions since both sides intended to work together for the betterment of the organization rather than their "sides." Additionally, substantial gains from the use of collaborative bargaining techniques can be and was used as a starting point for further problem solving in a variety of districts (Ezarik, 2005; Interest-based bargaining: evidence from Quebec, 2003; Wall, 1999).

2.5.4.6 Coherence, Collective Bargaining and Common Ground.

The aesthetic forces that are most responsible for developing coherence, such as treatment, culture, and decision making, come under tremendous stress as the us/them divide of contemporary negotiations begins (Allen, 2004; Straut, 1998). Coherence places importance on teamwork, flexibility, emotions, and people (Haack, 2004; Millgram, 2000; Straut, 1998). Collective bargaining places importance upon wages, benefits, equity, and rigidity (Givan, 2007; Charles Taylor Kerchner & Caufman, 1995; Koppich, 2005; Rayfield, 2000; Rubin & Rubin, 2006; Wall, 1999). During the contract negotiations process, coherence becomes threatened and even decimated within the organization. Power-based negotiations processes and work stoppages are powerful fragmenting forces and significant barriers to building and maintaining coherence. The tension between coherence and collective bargaining was seen in Centerbar et.al.'s (2008, p. 561) quote describing coherence as a phenomena that:

Would produce a...sense of fluency that would allow a person to infer that "all is well," whereas an experience of disfluency would motivate efforts aimed at inconsistency resolution, which should hamper performance on other cognitive tasks.

The sense of disfluency pointed directly to the fragmenting and centrifugal forces that public education has codified through the collective bargaining process. This positions collaborative bargaining as a viable negotiations method to support and enhance organizational coherence that becomes threatened during power-based negotiation process.

2.6 RESEARCH METHODS IN STUDYING COHERENCE

Research into the action of becoming coherent has little empirical foundation. The lens for this came from Karen Hammerness' (2006) statement, "The current work on coherent programs either reports that programs 'have it' or they do not. As yet, no one has examined the process of becoming coherent or maintaining coherence" (p. 1243). Within education, coherence was applied to those instructional structures with which teachers interact: lesson plans, curricula and standards, as well as accountability measures and policy (Boning, 2007; Buchmann & Floden, 1992; Bybee, 2003; Copeland, Finley, Ferguson, Aldarette, & Southwest Educational Development Lab, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006; L. Desimone, 2002).

2.6.1. Theoretical Research.

Attempts to couple the benefits of instructional coherence with achievement suggested that a more aligned lesson, curriculum, or assessment would result in improved performance. Outside of education, particularly in business, research on institutional coherence has more of a focus on resource allocation, vision and mission, and values such that a firm's activities and strategic choices can be better understood. In this regard, the research had more of a theoretical rather than an empirical base with studies focused more upon the institution's conceptual understandings rather than upon its structural leverage through alignment.

2.6.2. Empirical Research.

Of the empirical studies on coherence in both education and business, most studies placed greater emphasis on qualitative than upon quantitative methods. These methods included open interviews, non-statistical surveys, observations, as well as document and artifact analysis. It is through these studies that researchers captured many factors related to coherence. These factors included the sense of curricular coherence among teachers, the perceived impact of school leadership and data teams, the perceived influence of content standards on pedagogy, the influence of professional development models and professional learning communities, the senses of improved performance in teacher education programs to include improved field experiences, and the integration of ideas of social justice into attending to the needs of diverse students (Applebee, 1994; Chrispeels, et al., 2008; Eberle, 2008; Firestone, et al., 2005; Hammerness, 2006; Mada, Halverson, & Gomez, 2007; Many & King, 2008; McDonald, 2005; Tatto, 1996).

2.7 GAP IN THE COHERENCE LITERATURE

From the review of literature, some gaps require our attention. First, limited research on institutional coherence exists in education literature. The literature map identified a specific pattern of structural coherence among research focused on primary and secondary education. A defined pattern of coordination coherence emerged from outside the public education literature.

This gap is significant because the research from the business field can assist public education in becoming a more competitive entity.

The business field operates in a context of scarcity and competition. Increasingly, public education is being forced into this environment. Because public education has operated in a monopolistic environment for so long, little research addresses understanding how to become an institution that is internally coherent to ensure sustainability.

While the monopolistic environment in which public education has operated is experiencing political and societal changes, they remain government entities. As a result, they have their own implicit policy elements that serve to enhance or impede their development as a competitive organization.

Finally, we need a methodology that answers the problem statement of how schools engage in developing reconciling the tension between these two bodies of literature. Understanding this process requires a simultaneous look at multiple levels of the organization as well as individual member's activity as a strategy practitioner. Of interest for this study is this collective examination of practitioner's *strategic activity* of achieving organizational coherence.

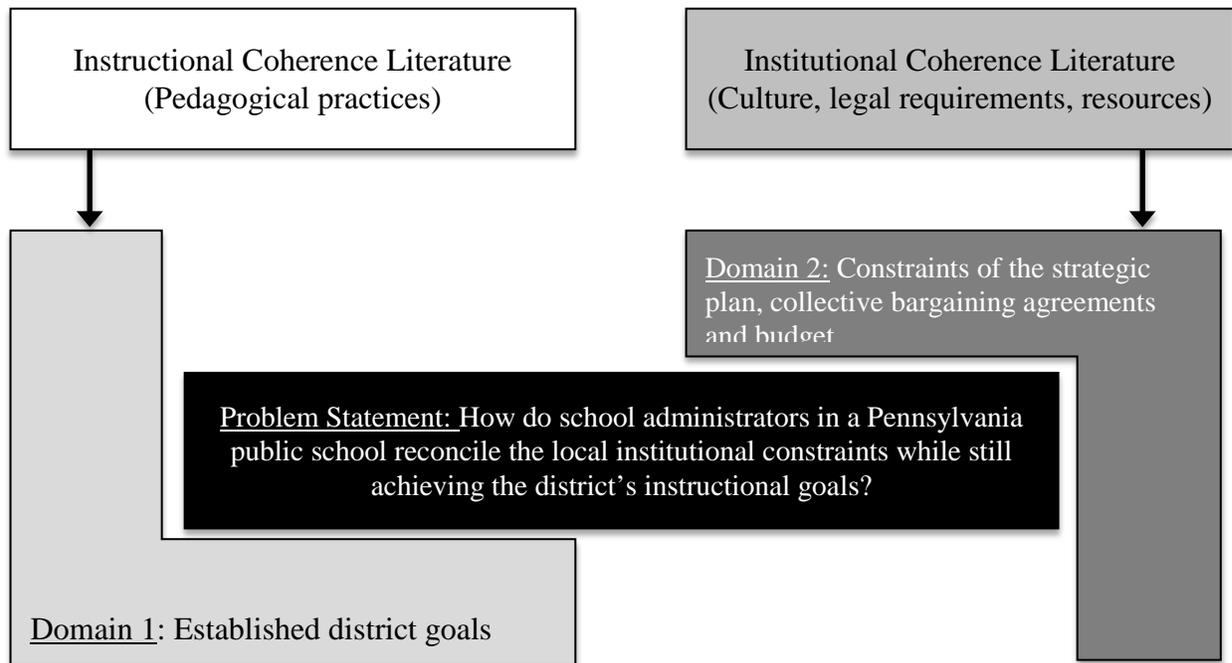


Figure 4. Concept Map of this Dissertation

Figure 4 provides a concept map of this dissertation, divided into three parts. First, the manifestations of institutional coherence in public schools lie in the collective bargaining agreements, budget, and strategic plan. Second, the manifestations of instructional coherence lie in the established district goals. Third, and the focus of this dissertation, is the gap between these two areas or what I term as the “instructional domain” and the “institutional domain.”

2.8 STRATEGY-AS-PRACTICE

A new Strategy-as-Practice (SAP) perspective allowed for such a simultaneous framework. Developed in the business community and articulated by Paula Jarzabkowski, et. al. (2003) and Gerry Johnson, et. al. (2007), SAP seeks to explain what *people* as actors do to influence strategic outcomes rather than organizations as a whole. As a result, SAP allows for multiple levels of meaning creation because of its focus on actor plurality. Johnson (2007) states that, “Emergent processes of strategy development involve multiple organizational actors across levels in the organization and from outside the organization” (p. 13). For instance, the first phase of SAP attends to the personal or micro-level interactions between actors. These include the one-to-one or one-to-many conversations of daily life in an organization. The second phase studies the impact such interactions have on either mid-level (meso) or large-scale (macro) levels of organizations. While SAP can adequately identify strategic practices, it also provides “explanations of activity and its consequences that evoke recognition and reflection,” which organizations can leverage for improved strategy creation and deployment (Raelin, 2007; Schon, 1983, as cited in Jarzabkowski & Whittington, 2008, p. 283). The focus upon the linkages and dynamism between actors, activities, and context is a departure from the conventional view of strategy.

From the literature review, it seems that the application of SAP to the field of public education in the United States has not occurred. The use of SAP occurred from 1996 to 2010 by the organizational dynamics, business, and strategy fields (Jarzabkowski, 2003; G. Johnson, Langley, Melin, & Whittington, 2007). Because of the restriction of SAP to these fields, coupled

with its focus on the strategic activities or organizations, SAP will be the research methodology selected for this dissertation.

2.9 BRIEF HISTORY OF STRATEGY-AS-PRACTICE

Whereas conventional strategy research sees *strategy* as something organizations have, *strategy-as-practice* takes a more dynamic view of strategy as something created by people (Gavetti, 2005; Feldman & Rafaeli, 2002 as cited in G. Johnson, et al., 2007) This view of strategy making departs from the traditional multivariate analyses and fills the void such research leaves by examining human actors within the firm (G. Johnson, et al., 2007). For Johnson (2007), the primary question for SAP is “what do the people engaged in strategizing actually do and how do they influence strategic outcomes?” (p. 3).

2.9.1 Focus Upon Practice.

The interest in SAP also coincides with an increasing interest in micro strategy, which focuses upon practice (Cook and Brown, 1999, as cited in Jarzabkowski, 2003). This focus is, in large part, a reaction to the large amount of strategy research focusing on the firm. Research that marginalized people and their activities to the sidelines of strategy creation. Further, it also illustrates the fact that strategies are not generally the result of “one off” decisions, but happen over a period of time and through complex processes (G. Johnson, et al., 2007). For some time, strategy theory has called for gestalt approaches that catch the micro interactions to illustrate a

more holistic view of strategy creation (Hamel, 2001; Mintzberg, 1979; Mintzberg et. al., 1998; Pettigrew, 1990, as cited in Jarzabkowski, 2003). Schendel and Hofer (1979, as cited in G. Johnson, et al., 2007) stated that “in seeking to meet the challenge of rigor posed in the late 1970s, scholars have very largely drawn on theoretical positions unsuited to the understanding of the role of human action” (p. 7).

2.9.2 Seminal Works of the SAP Literature.

The phrase “strategy-as-practice” itself originated with Richard Whittington in his 1996 article titled, *Strategy as Practice*. In 2002, Paula Jarzabkowski’s article, *Top Teams and Strategy in a UK University*, further illustrated SAP as she provided a case study of three universities in the United Kingdom. A 2003 article titled *Micro Strategy and Strategizing: Towards an Activity-Based View*, by Johnson, Melin, and Whittington further advocated and framed the discourse for SAP within strategy research. These articles are buttressed by both Gerry Johnson’s book, Strategy as Practice: Research Directions and Resources and Jarzabkowski’s book, Strategy as Practice: An Activity-Based Approach. These works provide a deeper examination of the theoretical frameworks for SAP as well as present a more articulated argument for SAP within the overall strategy field.

2.9.3 Theoretical Frameworks for Strategy-as-Practice.

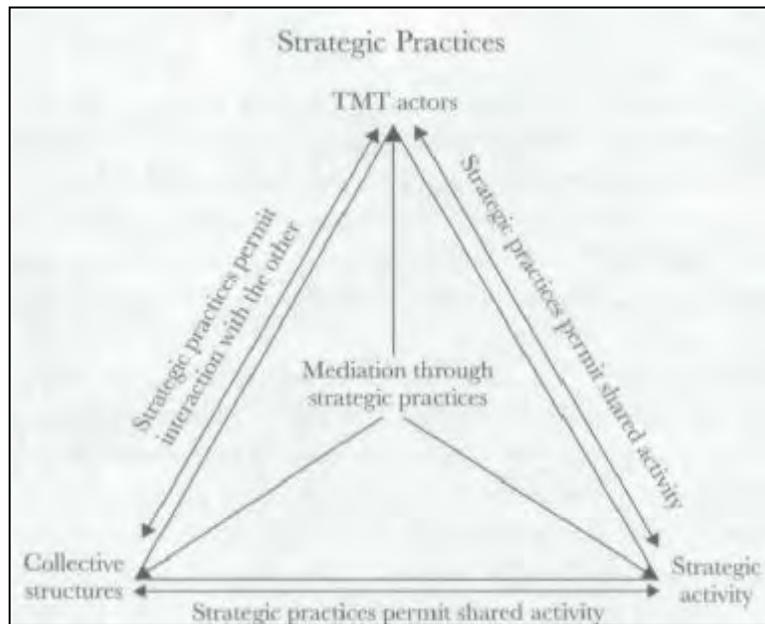


Figure 5. Activity Theory Framework as cited by Jarzabkowski (2003)

Strategy-as-practice has its roots in a variety of research foci. Researchers have targeted strategy processes, strategy tools, the interactions of people, actor sense making of strategy, and discourse of managers (Maitlis and Lawrence, 2003; Regner, 2003; Jarzabkowski, 2004; Mantere, 2005; Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Samra-Fredricks, 2003 as cited in G. Johnson, et al., 2007). Both Jarzabkowski and Johnson presented differing theoretical orientations of SAP. While some originated from constructivist paradigms, others found their base in the pragmatist paradigms. The number of theoretical frameworks in discussion is itself interesting, yet no single point of reference exists.

One example of a significant contributor to the SAP field is Gerry Johnson et al. (2007) who also drew upon a number of theories that provide theoretical grounding. For instance, he

identified institutionalist theories (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), actor-network theory (Law & Callon, 1988), Carnegie Tradition of sense making and routines (March, 1958) and situated learning (Lave, 1991) that contributed to the orientation and understanding of SAP, as seen in Figure 5 (2007).

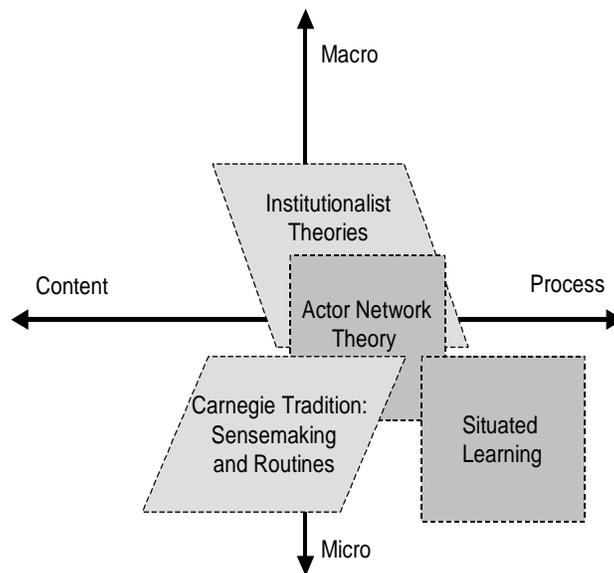


Figure 6. Theoretical SAP Research from Johnson, et. al, (2007)

Jarzabkowski (2003) drew upon a number of theories to explain SAP. In her 2003 study, *Strategic Practices: An Activity Perspective on Continuity and Change*, she used *activity theory* as the basis for SAP as seen in Figure 6. For her, activity theory explained social interaction which, in turn, provides an interpretive framework for individuals to understand their own and other’s interactions. (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Jarzabkowski, 2003). Engestrom, in Wells, et. al. (2002) and as cited in Jarzabkowski (2003) indicated that this kind “shared activity” has a

practical use whereby individuals keep the end in mind throughout their interactions. Engestrom (2002) defined that the context in which this kind of activity takes place as the *activity system*. Blackler (1993) provided an expanded definition of an activity system as one that has actors, collective special structures and practical activities as seen in Figure 4 from Jarzabkowski's 2003 article. In a 2008 article, however, Jarzabkowski and Whittington moved from activity theory to sociological theories. They suggested that "the sociological theories of practice that underpin strategy-as-practice research might help to bridge this false dichotomy between theory and practice" (p. 283).

Figures 7 and 8 on the following pages are taken from Jarzabkowski et.al.'s (2009) most recent work *Strategy-as-practice: A review and future directions for the field* and summarized the most recent methodologies and methods utilized to examine SAP.

Author	Typology	Study	Overview	Practice	Outcome*
Ambrosini <i>et al.</i> (2007)	E	Empirical	Resource-based view	Inter-team coordination practices	Group outcomes Organizational outcomes
Balogun and Johnson (2004, 2005)	D, E	Empirical	Sense-making across divisions drawing upon middle managers	Discursive practices at the group level	Group outcomes Strategizing process outcomes
Beech and Johnson (2005)	A	Empirical	Sense-making and identity	Discursive practices at the individual level	Personal outcomes
Bourque and Johnson (2008)	A	Theoretical/ Empirical	Workshops as rituals	Ritual practices	
Campbell-Hunt (2007)	I	Theoretical	Strategy praxis as complex adaptive system		
Chia and Holt (2007)		Theoretical	Social theory on the inter-relation of agency, action and practice	Embodied practices Embedded cultural and historical practices	
Chia and MacKay (2007)		Theoretical	Social theory on the interplay between agency and structure	Embodied practices Embedded cultural and historical practices	
Hendry (2000)	I	Theoretical	Social theory on strategic decision-making	Strategy as social practice Embedded decision-making practices	
Hendry and Seidl (2003)		Theoretical	Social systems theory on strategic episodes	Episodic practices	
Hodgkinson and Clarke (2007)	A	Theoretical	Cognition	Cognitive practices	
Hodgkinson <i>et al.</i> (2006)	F	Empirical	Institutionalization and diffusion of strategy workshops	Episodic practices Management practices	
Hoon (2007)	E	Empirical	Role of committees during an implementation initiative	Episodic practices	Group outcomes Strategizing process outcomes
Jarzabkowski (2003, 2005); Jarzabkowski and Wilson (2002)	E	Empirical	Strategy process theories; Activity theory	Administrative practices	Strategizing process outcomes
Jarzabkowski (2004)	I	Theoretical	Social theory on management practices	Recursive and adaptive practices Management practices	
Jarzabkowski and Wilson (2006)	I	Theoretical	Use of strategy knowledge	Management practices	
Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008)	E	Empirical	Strategy meetings	Episodic practices	Strategizing process outcomes
Jarzabkowski <i>et al.</i> (forthcoming)	H	Empirical	Pluralistic institutions	Group interaction practices	Strategizing process outcomes
Laine and Vaara (2007)	D, E	Empirical	Sense-making drawing upon discourse analysis	Discursive practices at the group level	Group outcomes Strategizing process outcomes
Lounsbury and Crumley (2007)	I	Empirical	Institutional theory and practice theory		Institutional outcomes
Mantere (2005)	A	Empirical	Sense-making; Structuration theory	Strategy formation practices Recursive and adaptive practices	Personal outcomes

Figure 7. Summary of theoretical and empirical articles in the strategy-as-practice field from Jarzabkowski and Spee (2009)

Author	Typology	Study	Overview	Practice	Outcome*
Mantere (2008)	A	Empirical	Social theories on role and agency	Discursive practices at the individual level	Personal outcome
Maitlis and Lawrence (2003)	B	Empirical	Discourse theory; Theories of power and politics	Discursive practices at the individual level Episodic practices	Personal outcomes Strategizing process outcomes Organizational outcomes
Melin and Nordqvist (2007)	F, I	Theoretical	Institutionalization of family businesses	Institutional practices	
Molloy and Whittington (2005)	D, E	Empirical	Social practice theory on organizing	Episodic practices	Group outcomes
Palmer and O'Kane (2007)	F, I	Theoretical	Social practice perspective on corporate governance		
Paroutis and Pettigrew (2007)	E	Empirical	Strategy process theory on strategy teams	Corporate and peripheral practices	Group outcomes Strategizing process outcomes
Regnér (2003)	E	Empirical	Strategy process theory on strategy evolution	Corporate and peripheral practices	Strategizing process outcomes Organizational outcomes
Rouleau (2005)	B	Empirical	Sense-making	Discursive practices	Strategizing process outcomes
Salvato (2003)	E	Empirical	Dynamic capabilities	Organizational practices	Strategizing process outcomes
Samra-Fredricks (2003, 2005)	A	Empirical	Conversation analysis on strategy talk	Discursive practices at the individual level	Personal outcomes
Seidl (2007)	I	Theoretical	Systematic-discursive perspective on the field of strategy	Management practices	
Sillince and Mueller (2007)	D, E	Empirical	Middle managers' responsibility and accountability during an implementation initiative	Discursive practices at the group level Episodic practices	Group outcomes Strategizing process outcomes
Sminia (2005)	E	Empirical	Social theory of practice; Strategy process theory on strategic emergence	Episodic practices Discursive practices	Strategizing process outcomes
Stensaker and Falkenberg (2007)	B, E	Empirical	Sense-making; Linking an organization's response to a change initiative with individuals' responses	Corporate and peripheral practices Discursive practices at the individual and group level	Personal outcomes Group outcomes
Vaara <i>et al.</i> (2004)	C	Empirical	Critical discourse analysis on strategy talk	Discursive practices at the individual level	Strategizing process outcomes Organizational outcomes
Whittington (2006a)		Theoretical	Social theory on strategy	Practices occur at multiple levels spanning micro and macro Episodic practices	Institutional outcomes Strategizing process outcomes
Whittington <i>et al.</i> (2006)	D	Empirical	Social practice theory on organizing and strategizing	Organizational practices	
Whittington (2007)	I	Theoretical	Strategy as socially embedded institution		

*Only outcomes based on empirical research are included in this section.

Figure 8. Summary of theoretical and empirical articles in the strategy-as-practice field from Jarzabkowski and Spee (2009)

2.9.4 Strategy-as-Practice and Coherence.

The SAP framework presented a structure that could best capture the complexities associated with how school districts engage in policy coherence. Of the many organizational elements SAP focuses upon, we must attend to the elements of *praxis*, *practitioners* and *practices* in the district under study. Jarzabkowski and Whittington (2008) identified the *strategy practitioners* as those who do the work of strategy; *strategy practices* as the social, symbolic and material tools utilized; and *praxis*, as the flow of activities such as meetings, conversations, presentations, etc.

Jarzabkowski et.al. (2008) goes on to describe SAP as closely examining:

The actual doing of strategy; the material artifacts to hand, the language that is used, the physical positioning in strategy episodes, the laughter, frustration, anger, excitement, anticipation, boredom, repetition, and political maneuvering that are brought together in strategy work.

SAP is conceptually equipped, according to Johnson et.al. (2007), to more fully understand organizational behavior because it examines the individual contributing components. For these reasons, SAP is positioned as the best methodological framework from which to examine how a school district constructs coherence.

2.10 A MODEL STUDY OF SAP

Paula Jarzabkowski's article, *Strategic Practices: An Activity Theory Perspective on Continuity and Change*, provided an appealing model from which to study how a school district constructs coherence. Jarzabkowski examined the formal and informal discussions that took place during and surrounding the administrative strategy making sessions on continuity and change at three major universities in the United Kingdom. She paid primary attention to members of the top management team (TMT) because, "While not the only strategic actors, the top team, for reasons of formal position and access to power and resources, are important to strategic action."

She conducted 49 open-ended interviews with current management, utilizing uniform prompts to ensure consistency in addition to observations, documents, archival, and ethnographic information collected. These sources were designed to counteract single-source bias. There were 49 interviews with current management that lasted 90 minutes. Of the 49 interviews, audio recordings of 44 took place with an additional five reconstructed from notes. Over a one-year time period, serial observations allowed the researcher to observe patterns of activity and practices associated with established patterns. Researchers gathered context information from meeting minutes and informal discussions. While not intended for this dissertation, the Jarzabkowski study utilized ethnographic data to sensitize the researchers to local practices and routines. Researchers shadowed two members of the TMT, which allowed for familiarity with local processes. After trust was established, researchers gathered data through discussion, eavesdropping and other forms of observation. Documents and archival data were collected through minute books kept of each meeting over the seven-year time period. The minute books supported the annual reports, accounts, databases, strategic plans, audit documents and calendars.

Through a thematic analysis of the qualitative data, the researchers identified broad categories and then more articulated themes and constructs. The use of a coding tree revealed four areas:

1. Strategy actions were considered strategic because of importance to the whole institution.
2. Identifying top team members and their involvement in strategic actions.
3. Practices of direction setting, resource allocation, monitoring and control.
4. Identifying specific practices involved in the strategy-creation processes.

Researchers used Nud*ist software to analyze and code mass qualitative data. The use of two graduate students unfamiliar with the study also assisted in intercoder reliability. Participants received interview transcripts for confirmation and accuracy.

The level of detail within her three case studies provided a robust model to study how school districts achieve policy coherence. While her research focused upon the strategic activity of how actors adapted to continuity and change, this dissertation examined the strategic activity of policy coherence. Her research also focused on members of the top management team (TMT), which could be analogous to members of a school district's administrative staff. In total, Jarzabkowski's article presents a case study that simultaneously reveals a high degree of detail at each of the multiple levels of an organization. A framework that exhibits a high degree of detail and doing so at multiple organizational levels is a valuable model from which to answer the research questions of this dissertation. As such, this study could serve as an appealing foundation for a novice researcher.

2.11 RECOMMENDED DISSERTATION FRAMEWORK

A qualitative case study built on the Jarzabkowski model will best understand the complex interactions of how school administrators use strategy-as-practice to mitigate the influences of the collective bargaining agreements, the strategic plan, and the budget (Crotty, 1998; Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009; Yin, 1994). The level of detail needed for this case study will utilize at least two data sources, document analysis and semi-structured interviews, which Jarzabkowski used in her study. For instance, to limit single source bias, the use of interviews, participant-observer observations, document analysis, and archival data will furnish an extensive as well as holistic picture of these phenomena. Interviews with open-ended questions will be provided with the use of uniform prompts to ensure question consistency. Observations of personal interactions will follow the Jarzabkowski study protocols.

The open-interview format will provide participants the ability to “engage in a stream of consciousness” (Giora & Thomas, 1996, p. 374 as cited in Jarzabkowski, 2003). To assist in the consistency of interpretations, participants will receive transcripts of their responses. Serial observation of meetings during the data collection period will assist in establishing patterns of behavior from which other participants may derive meaning. To provide a more complete picture of the case study, I will examine document analysis data in the form of strategic plans, meeting minutes, electronic mail correspondence, calendars, and notes as well as other artifacts that may occur during the course of the study. Further, archival data will better familiarize the researcher with the locally meaningful processes and routines that occur informally (Van Maaren, 1979 as cited in Jarzabkowski, 2003). Unlike the Jarzabkowski article, the level of detail needed for this research will make it difficult to construct a comparative case study.

2.12 SUMMARY

In this chapter I reviewed two bodies of literature, that of coherence and that of Strategy-as-Practice or SAP. In the coherence literature, I revealed that two-distinct phenomena occurred. Most of the literature related to public education focused on an alignment across standards, assessment, and curricula. Most of the literature related to business and higher education focused on a coordination method of coherence where different institutional elements of the organization work cooperatively to achieve common goals. I termed these two elements “domains” and fashioned “Domain 1” for instructional coherence and “Domain 2” for institutional coherence. Further, also I surveyed the literature to determine the best method to examine how school administrators deal with these two differing aspects, that of instructional and institutional coherence. I arrived at SAP as a framework to understand how the actions of school administrators can influence the dynamic between these two domains.

3.0 METHODOLOGICAL BASES

Case studies include a range of methodological frameworks, which include constructivist and pragmatist views for consideration in this dissertation. Examining a constructivist methodology is helpful because it views actors as working together to “construct” meaning. They treat “all knowledge and...reality [as] contingent upon human practices being constructed in an out of interaction between human beings” (Crotty, 1998, p. 42; Williamson, 2006). This constructivist view is the key difference between traditional strategy creation and Strategy-as-Practice.

Similarly, a pragmatist view is another viable framework. Gerry Johnson et. al. (2007) stated, “Pragmatism is...not an intellectual search for absolute truths but was discovered in practical activity; its value was not established against abstract standards, but derived from its usefulness in guiding subsequent activity” (p. 32). Constructivism is a theoretical standard of truth based on the abstract standard of knowledge and reality as conditional. Pragmatism also veers from traditional correspondence theories of truth to value the empirical. For example, rather than discuss the meaning of truth, pragmatism values evidence coming from empirical studies of this concept. These two perspectives are critical in shaping the methodological framework for use in this dissertation because they directly support the proposed case study method.

On the one hand, constructivism supports the idea of sense-making, in which the idea of cognition is shaped by action, especially the action amid individuals (Weick, 1995, as cited in G.

Johnson, et al., 2007). The interaction among individuals is of primary importance to this study. This research will focus on individual research subject's relationship among his/her fellow research subjects, as well as his/her relationship with the policy documents identified in the document analysis. Analyzing those relationships could assist in clarifying job descriptions, eliminate responsibility gaps and overlaps, and enhance the overall ability of a district of efficiently construct organizational coherence.

On the other hand, pragmatism values the "truth" that emanates from the shared activity of meaning-making. This also supports the proposed case study because the study requires a high level of detail to document and analyze the local patterns of interaction, interpretation, habits, artifacts, and socially-defined modes of acting against which shared meaning is derived for this locale. Identifying those aspects could better position school districts to understand their own contexts, which, in turn, will add clarity to their own decision-making processes.

Both of these methodological frameworks assisted in the creation of the research questions because both constructivism and pragmatism are activity-based frameworks. Each research question below is grounded in an activity-based theory. For instance, the first research question, "What conceptual debates exist for instructional and institutional coherence? How has education applied those debates to institutional sustainability within school districts?" examines conceptual debates and application activities. The second research question, "What does the research suggest as the best methodology for mapping institutional coherence in a K-12 public school district?" looks at a mapping activity for institutional coherence. Finally, the third research question, "How can the management research field of 'strategy as practice' help inform more integrated local decision-making?" speaks of an information sharing process for local decision making.

3.1 RECOMMENDED RESEARCH METHOD

To examine how school administrators use SAP to reconcile the constraints of the budget, collective bargaining agreements, and the strategic plan while meeting district goals requires a descriptive case study with a high level of depth, detail and nuance at the micro and meso-level between the individual research subjects (Dyer and Wilkins, 1991, as cited in G. Johnson, et al., 2007). Specifically, this case study investigates SAP practices that administrators take to 1) enact their perception of the most important goals of the school district and 2) reconcile the tensions created between enacting the goals and the boundaries of the strategic plan, budget and collective bargaining agreements. Together, these two domains will illustrate the level of organizational coherence within the district. *Practice* is defined as those patterns of interaction and interpretation involved in the strategic activity (i.e., creating organizational coherence) and *practices* are those habits, artifacts, and socially-defined modes of acting through which strategic activity is constructed (Jarzabkowski, 2003). Figure 9 provides a conceptual map of this dissertation. The focus of this case study is the black box below in Figure 9.

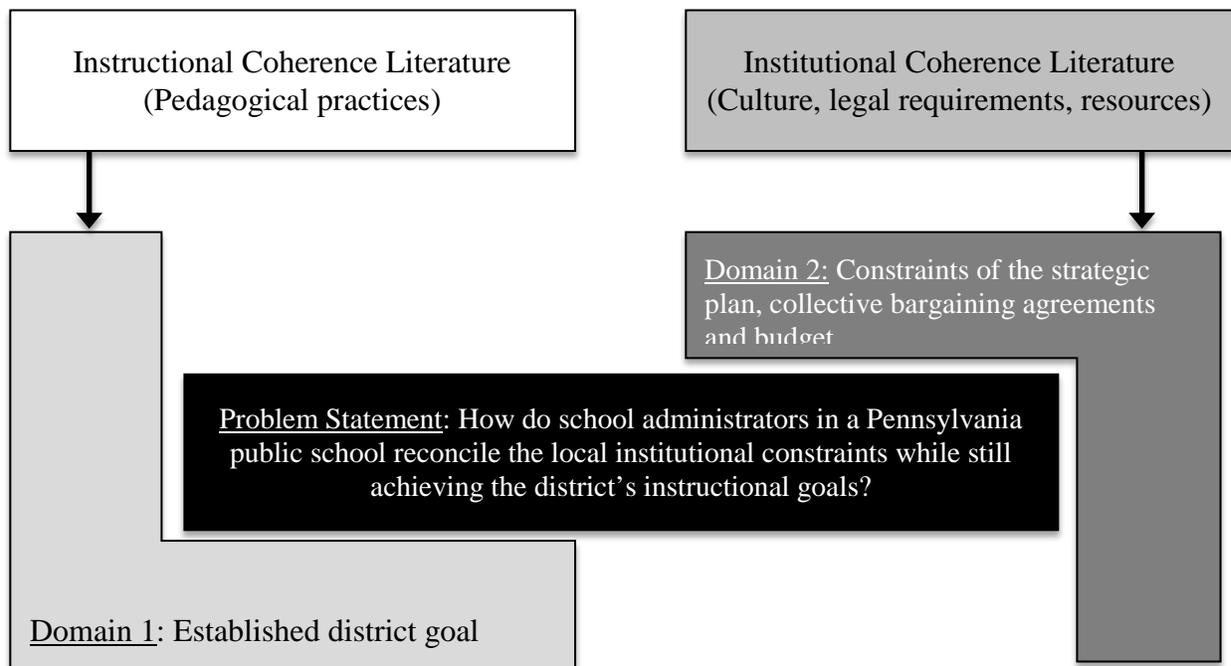


Figure 9. Concept Map of this Dissertation

According to Johnson et.al. (2007), SAP is more conceptually equipped to better understand organizational behavior because it examines individual's contributing components. Further, SAP presents a structure that could best capture the complexities associated with how individuals in school districts engage in organizational coherence because of SAP's simultaneous look at *praxis*, *practitioners* and *practices*. SAP also reflects that strategic practices are not generally the result of "one off" decisions, but happen over a period of time and through complex processes (G. Johnson, et al., 2007).

The first domain of the research will ascertain the *mental models* participants use by gauging their perception of the most important goals of the district with the specific sets of practice to achieve the perceived goals. This will take place through a series of semi-structured

interviews of individuals listed in Attachment 2. The individuals in Attachment 2 are most responsible for implementing the organizational goals. This domain will identify the clarity of the participant's mental models of the organizational goals and their supporting actions. If participants have a clear understanding of the organizational goals, then take steps to support that goals, the overall coherence of the organization is sustained. The loss of organizational coherence occurs when participants are unclear or the organizational goals and/or engages in practice contrary to the overall goals.

The second domain of this study will examine specific *practice elements* the participants use to reconcile the tensions that occur from the institutional constraints in the form of the collective bargaining agreements, budgets and strategic plans and to achieve the district's goals. This will take place through a series of semi-structured interviews of individuals listed in this chapter because those positions have the most direct contact with the collective bargaining agreements, strategic plan and budget. The positions listed in this chapter constitute the personnel who create, implement, manage, and interpret the policy documents for the larger organization. Some positions interact more deeply with certain policy documents than others. For instance, the Finance Director will interact more intimately with the budget than the Human Resource Director. Some positions must be knowledgeable, to some level, of each policy document. For instance, school principals must know about the specific contract stipulations for the personnel in their buildings, different budget codes for purchases and the specific obligations for their building that are listed in the strategic plan. Similar to the mental models domain, if each participant utilizes only effective strategies, then the organizational coherence is enhanced.

Conversely, if each participant is utilizing a set of strategies that include effective and ineffective actions, then organizational coherence will be reduced.

The interview process itself will serve two distinct functions. First, the interviews will provide a rich contextual background from which to ascertain the aforementioned practice and practices under study. Second, the interviews will gather a range of perceptual data that 1) identifies the research subject's perceptions on the goals of the organization; 2) clarifies his/her own sets of practice to enact the goals and; 3) clarifies his/her own sets of practice to reconcile the tensions created by institutional elements. These perceptions will be measured via the instruments listed in Attachment 2. I will conduct pilot interviews using the instruments in Appendix A to ensure that respondents understand the questions. Two pilot interviews will involve individuals from outside the selected case study district to aid in data analysis.

3.2 FORESEEABLE RESEARCH METHOD CONCERNS

A number of concerns emanate from the focus of this study on a school district where the researcher is an employee. These may include political and power concerns that could influence researcher bias. The concerns are warranted. The design of this study includes the following elements to mitigate such bias. First, the researcher personally recognizes that such bias may exist and will strive to keep the emic, or participant's voice, separate from the etic, or researcher's voice, as much as possible. Second, the researcher will audio record and transcribe the interview participants responses to the data gathering questions. This will ensure that the researcher is not serving as the primary filter through which these responses are recorded. Third,

transcripts of the interviews are provided to the participants to ensure accuracy. Fourth, the focus of this research involved describing and mapping the complex interactions of instructional and institutional coherence processes within the district. For instance, this study asks participants to help identify and locate technical processes and their interactions. However, an assumption must be made that different roles in schools may result in different viewpoints. Development of a map of each of these viewpoints will allow each participant to see the other's positions, as these differences constitute the principal substance of the mapping. Taken together, these elements provide a framework that may reduce the probabilities of bias and increase opportunities for collaboration.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The data gathered from the semi-structured interviews will reveal two levels of information. First, the *mental models* domain identifies the clarity with which the participant understands the organizational goals. These perceptions will be compared to other participant's perceptions to ascertain the level of organizational coherence. Second, the *practice elements* domain for participants identifies the specific practice and practices to reconcile the tensions put in place by the collective bargaining agreements, budget, and strategic plan. The degree of organizational coherence will become evident as research participants describe their understandings of the organization's most important goals, the specific actions they take to enact those goals, and the specific action they take to reconcile the tensions created by policy document constraints.

It is intended that the interview process will reveal the practice and practices used by participants. The practice and practices that are engaged in by the case study district may facilitate or impede achieving organizational coherence and identifying specific strategies that mitigate the constraints within the collective bargaining agreements, strategic plan and budget. Figure 10 illustrates the possible results of this study. The results of this study will provide other school districts with a framework to understand which strategies could facilitate or impede organizational coherence. In turn, school districts can then mitigate those activities that lead to internal contradictions, ensuring that the commitment of scarce resources occurs in the most efficient manner possible.

		Domain 1: Mental Models	
		Has a <u>clear</u> sense of the goals	Has an <u>unclear</u> sense of the goals
Domain 2: Practice Elements	Specific actions to reconcile tensions are <u>clearly</u> identified	Organizational Coherence	Moderate Organizational Incoherence
	Specific actions to reconcile tensions are <u>not clearly</u> identified	Moderate Organizational Incoherence	Severe Organizational Incoherence

Figure 10. Possible Outcomes

Research Questions	Data Collection Method	Documents or Respondents	Data Types	Information	Analysis	Tensions
1. What conceptual debates exist for instructional and institutional coherence? How has education applied those debates to institutional sustainability within school districts?	Review of the business and education literature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical Studies • Empirical Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The education literature, coherence is synonymous with alignment and compliance with state and federal mandates • The business literature, coherence is synonymous with the firm's culture, interpersonal experiences, firm's collective knowledge and performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of coherence as a structural tool for organizations where constituent parts must be aligned with a set structure. Compliance is the foundation for improvement. • Use of coherence as a coordination tool for organizations where constituent parts work in concert with one another. Sensemaking is the foundation for improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal and state mandates emphasize compliance as the key to improve the quality of public education. • Compliance is antithetical to the private sector marketplace where agility and flexibility are valued. • Public education cannot compete in a marketplace that values flexibility with such ridged compliance measures in place.
2. What does the research suggest as the best methodology for mapping institutional coherence in a K-12 public school district?	Interview selected district and building leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board President • Superintendent • Director of Finance • Director of Human Resources • Director of Student Services • Two (2) Elementary Principals • One (1) Intermediate Principal • One (1) Junior High Principal • One (1) High School Assistant Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do school district leaders perceive the most important goals of the school district? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific sets of practice and practices exhibited by the subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do school leaders have a clear sense of the most important goals of the district? • Are their actions to enact the goals aligned with the stated goals?
3. How can the management research field of 'strategy as practice' help inform more integrated local decision-making?	Interview selected district and building leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board President • Superintendent • Director of Finance • Director of Human Resources • Director of Student Services • Two (2) Elementary Principals • One (1) Intermediate Principal • One (1) Junior High Principal • One (1) High School Assistant Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews • Participant observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities do school leaders engage in to reconcile the tensions between the collective bargaining agreement, strategic plan and the budget? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying specific sets of practice and practices exhibited by the subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the activities that school leaders engage in enhance or inhibit organizational coherence?

Figure 11. Summary of data collection and analysis strategies

3.4 PERSONNEL TO BE INTERVIEWED

The following personnel are selected because those positions have the most direct contact with the institutional and instructional elements under study in this dissertation. They create, implement, manage, and interpret both the instructional goals and institutional elements for the larger organization. As mentioned earlier, some positions interact more deeply with certain policy documents than others. For instance, the Finance Director will interact more intimately with the budget than the Human Resource Director. Some positions must be knowledgeable, to some level, of each policy document. For instance, school principals must know about the specific contract stipulations for the personnel in their buildings, different budget codes for purchases and the specific obligations for their building that are listed in the strategic plan.

3.4.1. School Board President

The president is an elected school board member in the case study district and undergoes another election by fellow board members to lead the school board. His/her duties include:

1. Organizing other board members for the purposes of enacting local policy.
2. Ensuring that meetings are held in an orderly manner.
3. Voting on budgets recommended from the superintendent.
4. Voting on expenditures recommended from the superintendent.

5. Voting on personnel actions recommended by the superintendent.
6. Voting on collective bargaining agreements.

3.4.2. Superintendent

The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the organization and supervises the overall operations of the case study school district. His/her duties include:

1. Presenting a budget to the school board recommended by the finance director.
2. Presenting a strategic plan to the school board.
3. Presenting personnel actions to the school board recommended by the HR director.
4. Overseeing all academic programming of the district.

3.4.3. Human Resources Director

The human resource director is responsible for the day-to-day management of personnel actions within the case study district. These include:

1. Providing recommendations to the superintendent for personnel hiring and dismissal.
2. Managing personnel grievances related to the collective bargaining agreements.
3. Administration of salary and benefits.

3.4.4. Finance Director

The finance director is the financial specialist within the case study district. his/her duties include:

1. Formulating and recommending the district budget to the superintendent for board approval.
2. Working in collaboration with the superintendent and school principals to allocate funds for next year's operations.

3.4.5. Director of Student Services

The director of student services oversees special education, nursing and counseling services in the district. His/her duties include:

1. Ensuring that all elements of special education services are fulfilled.
2. Ensuring that health and counseling services are accessible and of quality to students.

3.4.6. Two (2) Elementary Principals

These individuals oversee the day-to-day operations of elementary level schools (Grades K-4) within the case study district. They ensure:

1. That policies are followed.
2. The strategic plan is implemented.

3. That academic programming changes to the superintendent.
4. That funding expenditures are given to the finance director and superintendent.
5. That hiring and dismissal proceedings are recommended to the superintendent and the HR director.
6. Those low-level contract grievances are facilitated.

3.4.7. One (1) Intermediate School Principal

This individual oversees the day-to-day operations of an intermediate -level school (Grades 5 & 6) within the case study district. He/she ensures:

1. That policies are followed.
2. The strategic plan is implemented.
3. That academic programming changes to the superintendent.
4. That funding expenditures are given to the finance director and superintendent.
5. That hiring and dismissal proceedings are recommended to the superintendent and the HR director.
6. Those low-level contract grievances are facilitated.

3.4.8. One (1) Junior High School Principal

This individual oversees the day-to-day operations of a junior high school (Grades 7 & 8) within the case study district. He/she ensures:

1. That policies are followed.
2. The strategic plan is implemented.
3. That academic programming changes to the superintendent.
4. That funding expenditures are given to the finance director and superintendent.
5. That hiring and dismissal proceedings are recommended to the superintendent and the HR director.
6. Those low-level contract grievances are facilitated.

3.4.9. One (1) High School Assistant Principal

In collaboration with the High School Principal, this individual oversees the day-to-day operations of a senior high school (Grades 9-12) within the case study district. He/she ensures that:

1. That policies are followed.
2. The strategic plan is implemented.
3. That academic programming changes to the superintendent.

4. That funding expenditures are given to the finance director and superintendent.
5. That hiring and dismissal proceedings are recommended to the superintendent and the HR director.
6. Those low-level contract grievances are facilitated.

3.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter I examined the methodological bases to study the problem statement, drawing upon constructivist and pragmatist theories. I selected Strategy-as-Practice as the specific methodology by which to examine the problem statement because it is better equipped to understand organizational behavior via individual actions (G. Johnson, et al., 2007). SAP can examine the everyday practices school administrators use to reconcile the tension between these “domains” as well as viewing the impact those practices have the micro, meso, and macro levels of the organization. This will be critical when answering the following research questions:

1. What conceptual debates exist for instructional and institutional coherence? How has education applied those debates to institutional sustainability within school districts?
2. What does the research suggest as the best methodology for mapping institutional coherence in a K-12 public school district?
3. How can the management research field of ‘strategy as practice’ help inform more integrated local decision-making?

The research will include an interview of eleven participants, ten school administrators and one school board president, because these individuals work closest with the strategic plan,

budget and collective bargaining agreement and are in charge of achieving the district's goals. A series of interviews will be conducted and responses from those interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. The use of NVivo software will assist in the analysis of the qualitative data generated.

4.0 DATA GATHERING & ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study identified specific practices exhibited by administrators to reconcile local institutional constraints while still achieving the district's instructional goals. Understanding how school districts engage with strategy creation helps the district run smoothly plus mitigates inefficient organizational activities. This better positions the district's competitive advantage in the emerging public education marketplace (Porter, 1985). Pennsylvania requires its school districts to complete strategic plans. There has not been an attempt, however, to examine the individual practices of school administrators as strategy practitioners. These individuals are at the core of district decision-making policies and implementation. Jarazebkowski and Whittington (2008, p. 282) consider:

- *Practitioners* as those people who do the work of strategy, which goes beyond the school district central office to include principals, teachers, secretaries, paraprofessionals and other support staff as well as influential external actors such as consultants, analysts and regulators;
- *Practices* as social, symbolic, and material tools through which strategy work is done. These practices include those theoretically and practically derived tools that have become part of the everyday lexicon and activity of strategy, decision modeling and budget systems, and material artifacts such as meeting minutes and email correspondence.

This chapter captured those activities, interactions, and interpretations that form their lives. A discussion of each research question and a report on the themes will follow.

4.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The literature review of coherence reviewed two distinct sets of texts. First was the focus on instructional coherence in the form of standards, assessments, and curricula. The second was on institutional coherence in the form of operational elements like contracts, budgets, and strategic planning. Public school districts have both instructional and institutional elements in the organization but the literature revealed little attempt at examining how these two domains coexist within public education organizations. In further attempting to understand these two domains in the literature, I searched for a methodology to fill in this gap. This methodology had to assist in me to better understand how these two uses of coherence manifested themselves in public school districts. This search led me to the Strategy-as-Practice (SAP) literature, which became the third body of literature I reviewed.

SAP was selected to use in this dissertation because of the conceptual dynamism that the theory holds, the focus on individual actors, and the simultaneous view of strategy creation at many different organizational levels. The SAP framework is critical to answer the research questions because each question is activity-based; how conceptual debates have been applied to education, the mapping coherence, or integrating more local decision-making. As such, the problem statement for this dissertation is:

How do school administrators in a Pennsylvania public school reconcile the local institutional constraints while still achieving the district's instructional goals?

4.2.1 Research Questions

1. What conceptual debates exist for instructional and institutional coherence? How has education applied those debates to institutional sustainability within school districts?
2. What does the research suggest as the best methodology for mapping institutional coherence in a K-12 public school district?
3. How can the management research field of ‘strategy as practice’ help inform more integrated local decision-making?

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

To address my problem statement, I adapted Paula Jarzabkowski’s (2003) model to identify the specific practices exhibited by administrators to reconcile local institutional constraints while still achieving the district’s instructional goals. I used a case study approach with mixed methods.

I contacted the case study district after receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board and my committee. To answer the research questions, I needed a district where I could gather rich, detailed, observable data to clearly identify the specific practices the participants utilized in their everyday lives. The Jarzabkowski (2003) study upon which this dissertation is modeled embedded researchers to gather data from serial observations in addition to interviews. Because of my embedded status within the organization, I was able to observe “how practices are

culturally embedded” as well as the numerous contexts in which the practices take place (Jarzabkowski, 2003, p. 46; Jarzabkowski & Wilson, 2002).

After the case study district granted approval to conduct my research, I contacted the positions who needed to be interviewed. These included the School Board President, the Superintendent, the Finance Director, the Human Resource Director, the Student Service Director, two elementary principals, the Upper Elementary Principal, the Junior High Principal, and the Senior High Assistant Principal. I chose these positions because they have the most direct contact with institutional elements like the collective bargaining agreements, strategic plan and budget. These positions constitute the main parties that create, implement, manage and interpret the districts strategy. Some positions interact more deeply with certain strategic areas than others. For instance, the Finance Director will interact more intimately with the budget than the Human Resource Director. Some positions must be knowledgeable, to some level, of these documents. For instance, school principals must know about the specific contract stipulations for the personnel in their building, different budget codes for purchases and the specific obligations for their building that are listed in the strategic plan.

Participants received hard copy mail letter and email correspondence soliciting their participation. All consented to participate. Between February and March 2012, I scheduled appointments with the participants to conduct the interviews. The function of the interviews was to, first, provide a rich contextual background from which to ascertain the aforementioned practice and practices under study. Second, the interviews gathered a range of perceptual data that:

1. Identified the research subject’s perceptions on the goals of the organization

2. Clarified his/her own sets of practice to enact the goals and
3. Clarified his/her sets of practice to reconcile the tensions created as a result of the collective bargaining agreements, budget and/or strategic plan.

The interview questions listed below measured these perceptions.

The interview questions consisted of ten total questions divided into two areas. I termed these areas “domains.” Domain 1 centered on the Identification and Support of District Goals, herein referred to as “Goal Support.” Domain 2 centered on Reconciling Local Institutional Constraints in the form of the collective bargaining agreement, strategic plan, and budget, herein referred to as “Constraint Reconciliation.” The structure of the interview questions supported a specific domain. For instance, Questions 1, 2, 3, 4 gauged Goal Support and Questions 5, 5a, 6, 6a, 7, 7a determined Constraint Reconciliation, as seen in Figure 12. All questions had a direct relationship with SAP.

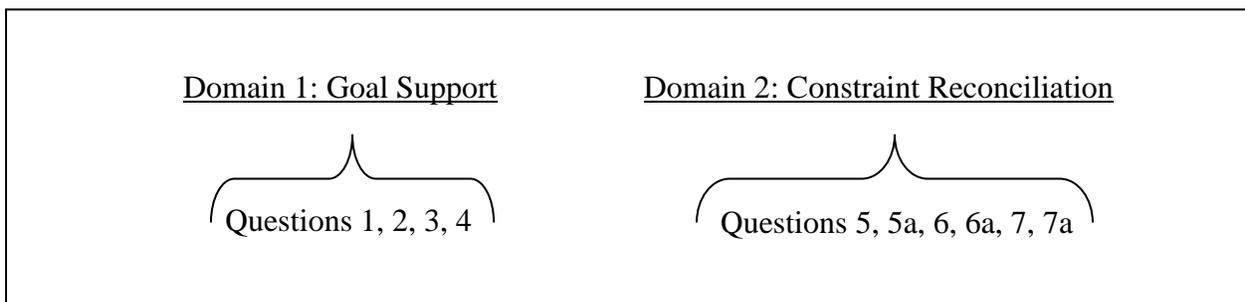


Figure 12. Relationship of Interview Questions with Domains

Interview Question 1: What do you believe to be the most important goals of the school district?

This question gauged the participant’s interpretation and level of understanding of the organizational strategies (Johnson, Langley, Melin, Whittington, 2007). Organizational

strategies were revealed by understanding how district goals were identified, who was responsible for the identification, and how those goals were articulated.

Interview Question 2: What actions do you take that are in support of these goals?

This question determined the specific practices the participant chose to use. These are, as Jarzabkowski, et. al (2007), stated, the “cognitive, behavioral, procedural, discursive, motivational, and physical practices that are combined, coordinated and adapted to construct practice” (p. 60). In the case study district, these included, but are not limited to, the nonverbal interactions between administrators during administrative team meetings, the mental models administrators have articulated verbally and in written form, the discourse that takes place between administrators formally and informally and the patterns of behavior I observed.

Interview Question 3: How do you know if your actions are effective?

This question determined the consequential direction of a participant’s particular practice or set of practices. Answering this question also revealed if the practice is effective and the mechanisms gauging its effectiveness (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009). For instance, school administrators may perceive certain verbal and/or nonverbal cues from colleagues, community members, teachers, students and support staff that may indicate effectiveness. Further, the actions cited by school administrators may or may not be connected with the overall, established, district goals.

Interview Question 4: What do you do if your actions are ineffective?

This question determined the corrective practices participants utilized when observable practices do not support the overall strategic outcome for the organization. For example, a principal found that a specific email to faculty did not support the overall district goals. Upon reflection, this principal then decided to convene a faculty meeting to clarify the meaning of the email message. This directly connects with Jarzabkowski and Whittington (2008) insofar as promoting recognition and reflection may help improve the participant's practice.

Interview Questions 5: How has the strategic plan influenced your ability to achieve the goals you mentioned?

This question determined what specific practices participants engaged when confronted with realities presented in the strategic plan. For example, is the strategic plan aligned with contract or budget? Is it a document that is referenced easily and readily? Does it guide everyday practices? Was the strategic plan created in support of or reaction to, the district goals?

Interview Questions 6: How has the contract influenced your ability to achieve the goals you mentioned?

This question determined what specific practices participants engaged in when confronted with limitations presented in the contract. What specific contractual barriers are most encountered by school administrators when attempting to support the district goals? Are those real or perceived barriers? Are there differences between building and/or grade levels?

Interview Questions 7: How has the budget influenced your ability to achieve the goals you mentioned?

This question determined what specific practices participants engaged in when confronted with limitations presented in the budget. Were certain programs and supplies eliminated? What buildings and grade levels received more funding, which ones less? What programs were supported? Were those programs supporting the district goals? Who made the decision to allocate funding?

Interview Question 5a: What strategies did you use to reconcile those conflicts [with the strategic plan]?

In this question, the word “strategies” is synonymous with “practices.” These questions examined the specifics of “the actual doing: the material artifacts at hand, the physical positioning in strategy episodes” and the context against which this took place such as “the laughter, frustration, anger, excitement, anticipation, boredom, repetition and political manoeuvring [sic] that are brought together as a bundle of strategy practices” (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009, p. 84). For instance, a specific program must be implemented according to the strategic plan but that same program does not further the district’s goals.

Interview Question 6a: What strategies did you use to reconcile those conflicts [with the contract]?

In this question, the word “strategies” is synonymous with “practices.” These questions examined the specifics of “the actual doing: the material artifacts at hand, the physical positioning in strategy episodes” and the context against which this took place such as “the laughter, frustration, anger, excitement, anticipation, boredom, repetition and political manoeuvring [sic] that are brought together as a bundle of strategy practices” (Jarzabkowski &

Spee, 2009, p. 84). For example, the district's goals require teacher collaboration, but the contract sets very strict controls on how time is used during the school day.

Interview Question 7a: What strategies did you use to reconcile those conflicts [with the budget]?

In this question, the word “strategies” is synonymous with “practices.” These questions examined the specifics of “the actual doing: the material artifacts at hand, the physical positioning in strategy episodes” and the context against which this took place such as “the laughter, frustration, anger, excitement, anticipation, boredom, repetition and political manoeuvring [sic] that are brought together as a bundle of strategy practices” (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009, p. 84). For instance, a specific program must be implemented according to the strategic plan, but that same program does not further the district's goals. For example, a piloted curricular program is supporting the district's goals but is cost-prohibitive to implement district-wide.

4.3.1 Interview Sessions

Each interview session utilized the interview questions above. Only follow up or clarifying questions were added to the interview. For instance, I asked what cues a participant might notice that could indicate a particular practice is ineffective. Similarly, I asked participants to describe what a particular corrective practice looked like. Corrective practices are those that the participants used when they realized the original practice was not effective. All interviews took place in an office or conference room which provided a private, quiet space in which to conduct

the interview. Only the participant and I were present during the interview which provided a sense of safety for the participant. All participants participated in the interview process.

Interviews ranged from a low of 9 minutes, 56 seconds to 72 minutes, 10 seconds with the average interview time being 24 minutes, 56 seconds. The average interview time for building principals was 16 minutes, 13 seconds. The average interview time for central office staff was 33 minutes. Some participants had scheduled meetings after the interview in the case of the 9 minute interview. This may have led to the shortened interview time. Other participants had nothing scheduled, which may have led to the extended interview time, in the case of the 72-minute interview.

4.3.2 Interview Data

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed using Amazon's Mechanical Turk service. This was an affordable, accurate and timely transcription service. I received the transcriptions within 36 hours. After I received the transcripts, I checked them for accuracy against the audio recording. Participants then received their transcripts to check for accuracy as well. Three participants provided corrective feedback. I verified the participants request for changes against the audio recording. Their corrections were accurate and entered on the transcripts.

Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) in the form of Nvivo 9 software assisted in analyses of the interview transcripts. I selected Nvivo software because it was used in the original Jarzebowski study upon which this case study is modeled. Nvivo 9

calls qualitative coding groups “nodes.” Figures 24 and 25 on page 116 and 117 show a complete listing of the coding tree including the parent and child nodes.

After I loaded the transcripts into the Nvivo 9 software, a content analysis began (Kvale, 2008). Like-responses were grouped together after auto coding took place. For example, auto-coding allowed me to group together all participant responses to Question 1. I then analyzed transcripts for practices and practice sets. I considered practices as those actions taken by a participant in response to an interview question. For instance, one participant listed “time to get together as teams” as an individual action he took to support the district’s goals. Sets of practices then emerged as I identified individual practices. I termed these groupings “practice sets.” For instance, two participants used “book summaries” and “organize for professional development” which I then grouped into the practice set “professional development.”

To fully understand the participant’s responses also requires an understanding of the practitioner’s context, including statistical and demographic data (Carter et al. 2008, Chia 2004 as cited in Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009).

4.4 SCHOOL DISTRICT PROFILE

This section provides an examination of the school district statistical and demographic datum. This included administrator experiences, state test performance, Advanced Placement offerings and performance, free and reduced meal participation by students and district financial data. Second, community context datum provides an illustration of the community’s economic growth, political climate, and social environment. Data also came from the decennial census and from

the 2009 American Community Survey and several Internet-based statistical websites for employment and enrollment data.

4.4.1 School District Statistical and Demographic Data

As stated on its website:

The Happy Trails School District is located in Pennsylvania. It is comprised of approximately 1,900 students and 300 employees in two K-4 elementary schools, a 5-6 intermediate-level school, a 7-8 Junior High School and a 9-12 Senior High School.

Happy Trails is committed to helping all students achieve at the highest levels. Teachers use inquiry-based instruction, an effective, researched-based teaching strategy, and work collaboratively to prepare students to become outstanding citizens.

Students can earn college credits during high school through enrollment partnerships with community colleges and surrounding universities. In 2009-10, the district implemented *Everyday Mathematics*, one of the nation's leading elementary math programs, in grades K-6. The Junior High School and Senior High School use the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project curriculum. In 2011-12, Happy Trails implemented SpringBoard, a pre-AP program by the College Board, in its secondary English courses. In addition to dual enrollment, the Senior High offers a range of AP courses and more than doubled its enrollment in those courses in a year's time.

Happy Trails uses a team approach to help all children succeed. Every cycle, the district holds meetings with all teachers of each grade, the principal and the guidance counselor. At these meetings, the success levels of all students within each grade are discussed. Teachers decide which instructional interventions are needed to support students, and each child's progress is closely monitored. Teachers discuss using additional interventions, if necessary, and may call on the advice of additional district professionals, such as the school psychologist, reading specialist and special education teacher. Child Study Group, comprised of school counselors in all schools, the school psychologist and superintendent, may also offer recommendations.

The elementary and Junior High Schools use the research-based Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. The district has a K-12 Student Assistance Program.

All Junior High students participate in one of four academic teams. Teachers in science, math, English and social studies are assigned to teams and have common planning time to discuss strategies and individual student needs. Grades 9 and 10 also have two academic teams - the Red Team and Black Team - for each grade level.

All students in K-6 participate in an Integrated Arts program in which students receive additional instruction in art, music, library and physical education. All students are expected to learn the arts through a daily rotation, or mini 5-minute lessons -- in these special areas, designed to build students' skills.

From the demographic data in Appendix D, the HTSD has a higher unemployment and poverty rate than the state average. Correlatively, it has a lower high school diploma rate, college graduate rate, median household income and property value than the state average. Combined, this data illustrate a community in both economic and educational poverty. For instance, almost half the students in the district qualify for free or reduced lunch status, which is a common barometer of economic conditions within a school district. Each year for the last five years, the HTSD has been above the state average in free and reduced lunch participation as illustrated in Appendix D, Table 30.

In addition, there is an increased adjudication of adults and juveniles. The HTSD has one community with a local police department but otherwise relies upon State Police presence. As such, community policing is minimal. The community that comprises the HTSD has seen an increase in drug distribution, use and abuse. Specifically, there was a spike in synthetic drug use and distributions by both adults and students. For instance, the Juvenile Probation Officer for the HTSD, indicated, "In the [HTSD] area there are over 500 adults on probation supervision which based on population is a significant number for the size of this community" (Officer, 2012).

The district has remained financially stable for six years. In 2006, financial mismanagement resulted in approximately 43 furloughed staff out of 340 that included 28 out of 160 teachers. The district currently employs 276 people, down from 363 during 05-06 school year, when the furloughs took place. Since the financial crisis, the district has not furloughed any staff and has reduced positions through attrition. Currently, the district generates \$120,000 from

a mill in property taxes. There was a 204% increase in in charter school tuition payments from \$236,546.00 in 2005-2006 to \$719,814.89 in 2011-2012.

Even though the district's overall faculty and staff have decreased, district performance on state exams has remained stable. The district's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) was consistent from 2005-2007 when the targets for AYP performance increased. Table 33 in Appendix D provides the PSSA Reading and Math Targets for a school to meet AYP and Table 34 in Appendix D provides an overview of each building's AYP status since 2005.

This district has struggled to achieve high levels of student performance for some time and has not moved past 72% on Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) test results since the introduction of this test. Figures 22 and 23 in Appendix D illustrate the comparison between cohorts on the PSSA at the district level since 2005, as well as state AYP targets and state performance averages. Using the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS), the district has seen significant growth in student achievement, even though PSSA scores have remained stable. Figures 24 through 27 in Appendix D show the district's growth in student achievement from PVAAS data.

From 1955, the year College Board developed Advanced Placement (AP) courses, until 1995 the Happy Trails High School (HTHS) offered no AP courses. In 1996, the HTHS began to offer AP courses to selected students, exceeding no more than ten students per year, out of a student population of 600. In 2011, HTHS embarked on a massive change in its approach to offering AP courses and provided access to these courses for any student wishing to experience the challenge. From the 2010-2011 the school witnessed growth in AP student enrollments from five to 230 in 2012-2013 school year as seen in Figure 28 in Appendix D. During the 2011-2012 school year the district paid for AP examinations for students enrolled in AP courses. In May of

2012, an article from the Huffington Post cited the use of expanded AP courses as a tool for improving the quality of high school rigor (Pope, 2012).

The HTSD falls below the state averages in four-year college participation, but is significantly higher in two-year technical and vocational school participation as can be seen in Table 35 in Appendix D. The HTHS did not have an articulated career and college readiness program for ninth through twelfth grades until the 2012-2013 school year. This program emphasizes student exploration of at least three careers, the economic outlook of those careers including earning potential, job shadowing in one of the selected careers, mock interviewing, and resume and college entrance writing.

4.5 CASE STUDY CONTEXT

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) stated “doing case study research means identifying a topic that lends itself to in-depth analysis in a natural context” (p. 16). In addition, Yin (1994), Stake (1994), Bassey (1999) and Gerring (2007) supported case studies to gather data to guide decision making. Because of the embedded nature of this case study and the use of an SAP methodology, Carter, Klegg & Kornberger (2008) and Jarzabkowski & Spee (2009) state the importance of having a deep understanding of how interactions between practitioners both shape and are shaped by their contexts (Carter et al. 2008, Chia 2004 as cited in Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009). Understanding this context allows for a more complete analysis when examining the specific practices of each subject. As such, we must go beyond building the traditional demographic and statistical data presented earlier in this chapter. This includes a deep understanding of the community context in which the case study district and its practitioners are situated. This section

provides a rich context in which these practitioners function. This context, then, allows for a more complete analysis when examining the specific practices and the “interconnection between what people are doing, their interactions, and what is going on in their context.” (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009, p. 78).

4.5.1 Practitioner’s Community Context

The community of Happy Trails School District (HTSD) was founded in 1958. The two main communities, the town of “Happy” and the town of “Trails,” voluntarily merged in 1958 to form the current district. As with most mergers occurring at that time in state history, the newly formed district had a dual name representing the two communities. The older generation, however, currently in the town of Trails that participated in the merger continues to allege that the town of Happy is marginalizing them. Both towns have an elementary school. Happy also has the upper elementary, junior high and high schools. Trails was home to the junior high school before it was renovated and converted into an elementary school. The HTSD community has always maintained an “underdog” culture, not wishing to be compared to its neighboring district, the Happy Valley School District, which is home to Happy Valley University. This mentality may be a result of the region’s topography illustrated in Figure 30 in Appendix F. This map shows the mountain range that cuts through the county. In referring to the county seat in Olympus, Joe Smith, a longtime resident of the town of Happy, stated, “One of the founders of Happy actually said, ‘We should cut the top of the mountain off so the people in Olympus can see us over here’” (Personal Communication, 2012). Also of note is the interstate highway and airports that surround the community of Happy Valley whereas similar such infrastructure is not located around the town of Happy.

The topography and community history is important given the rise in economic development in rural Pennsylvania since 2009. There has been a rapid growth in gas and oil mining in the Marcellus Shale underneath Pennsylvania and New York. This kind of economic development in the region may have a positive influence on the HTSD poverty rate, which is 3.5% above the state average. For instance, Bradford County has the largest number of gas wells (1,094) and had the 4th lowest unemployment rate in the state (6.3%) in June, 2012 (Coalition, 2012). However, the communities in the HTSD actively inhibit the growth of this industry. The largest township in the district, Hurry Township, sought to impede Marcellus Shale companies from entering the area. The township voted approving a moratorium on drilling and held community meetings to stop any shale oil company from entering the area (2, 2011; 3, 2011).

We cannot underestimate the importance of the community context. Jarzabkowski and Wilson (2002) indicated that the “main elements of...strategy result from an interplay of localized routines and patterns of action within an organizational context, which both produces and is a product of such actions” (p. 355). Because of the importance of this interplay, it was necessary to provide a rich community context to assist the reader so he/she can better understand the background against which practitioners engage in strategy creation.

4.5.2 Practitioner Background and Experience

In April, 2006, the district discovered a massive budget shortfall, which resulted in the furloughing of 46 employees, including 28 teachers. In May, 2006, the existing superintendent, assistant superintendent, and business manager resigned as a result of the crisis. Lyndon Berk, the existing high school principal, became the superintendent. From August, 2006, until

February, 2007, the district actively searched for an assistant superintendent. In March, 2007, Peter Griffin became the assistant superintendent. Peter and Lyndon worked together for a little over two years until Lyndon's medical leave and subsequent resignation in June, 2009. Peter became the acting superintendent from June, 2009, until his appointment as superintendent in September, 2009. His current contract expires in June, 2013, and has not been renewed.

Until 2007, all administrators lived in or close to the HTSD. This changed in 2007 with the hiring of Peter Griffin as superintendent. At the time of this case study, three of the nine administrators lived an hour away from the district. Peter lives in a community three hours away and has a local apartment. Bonnie Swanson has been the Trails Elementary School principal since 2008. She lives in the nearby community of Happy Valley. In 2011, I became the high school principal and live an hour away with no local apartment.

The participants within this study had a range of educational and experiential differences. Some have attended traditional administrator preparation programs through state teacher's colleges while one attended a prestigious private institution. Some have worked for the district their entire careers, while others have spent only a year or two with the district. Table 1 provides an overview of the participant's experiences and the higher education institutions they attended. They types of institutions are listed by Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2010) to further protect anonymity of the participants in this study. For example, the superintendent received his doctorate from a private institution in Pennsylvania classified as RU/VH or "Research University (very high research activity)." Bonnie Swanson, the Trails Elementary School principal, has a Master's degree from a public RU/VH institution in California. As the high school principal, John Doe has a Master's degree from a public RU/VH institution in Pennsylvania. Meg Bose has a degree from a private Masters S institution in

Pennsylvania and Joe Smith has a Master’s degree from a public DRU institution in Pennsylvania.

Table 1. Experience of Participants

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Years in District</u>	<u>Years in Current Position</u>	<u>Institution Type</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Age Span</u>
Chris Rise	School Board President	4	1	Pennsylvania Public RU/VH	M.Ed.	30’s
Peter Griffin	Superintendent	7	3	Pennsylvania Private RU/VH	Ed.D.	50’s
Meg Bose	Human Resource Director	10	4	Pennsylvania Private Master’s S	B.S.	40’s
Glen Adams	Finance Director	7	7	Pennsylvania Private Master’s L	M.B.A.	50’s
Brian Yao	Student Services Director	5	3	Pennsylvania Public RU/VH	M.Ed.	40’s
Lois Grant	Elementary Principal	1	1	Pennsylvania Private Master’s L	M.Ed.	50’s
Joe Smith	Elementary Principal	27	9	Pennsylvania Public DRU	M.Ed.	50’s
Stewart Fredrick	Junior High Principal	36	4	Pennsylvania Private Master’s L	M.Ed.	50’s
Michael Brown	High School Assistant Principal	25	2	Pennsylvania Private Master’s L	M.Ed.	50’s
Bonnie Swanson	Elementary Principal	5	5	California Public RU/VH	M.Ed.	60’s
John Doe	High School Principal	1.5	1.5	Pennsylvania Public RU/VH	M.Ed.	30’s

RU/VH – Research University (very high research activity)

DRU – Doctoral/Research University

Masters L – Large, Masters granting institution

Masters S – Small, Masters granting institution

Since 2007, a large amount of administrative turnover has occurred, as illustrated in Table 2 below. Patrick Red, the Upper Elementary Principal in 2008-2009, resigned to take a position with a private education company and John Black, the Upper Elementary Principal from

2010-2011, resigned for family reasons. Both Richard Johns and Howard Green resigned to take positions in other districts.

Table 2. Administrative Turnover since 2007

<u>School</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Administrator</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
Upper Elementary *Reorganization in 2011-2012 2006-2011 (K-6) 2011-2012 (5-6)	2006-2008 2008-2009 2009-2010 2010-2011 2011-2012	Joe Smith Patrick Red Stewart Fredrick John Black Lois Grant	Transferred Resigned Transferred Resigned Current
Trails Elementary *Reorganization in 2011-2012 2006-2011 (K-6) 2011-2012 (K-4)	2006-2008 2008-2012	Maxwell Foote Bonnie Swanson	Retired Current
Happy Elementary *Reorganization in 2011-2012 2006-2011 (K-6) 2011-2012 (K-4)	2006-2008 2008-2012	Maxwell Foote Joe Smith	Retired Current
Junior High School (7-8)	2006-2010 2010-2012	Richard Johns Stewart Fredrick	Resigned Transferred
High School (9-12)	1999-2006 2007-2011 2011-2012	Lyndon Berk William Brown John Doe	To superintendent Retired Current
High School Assistant Principal	2004-2006 2006-2010 2010-2012	William Brown Howard Green Michael Brown	To principal Resigned Current
Student Services *There was no position prior to Brian Yao. The position absorbed the Director of Special Education.	2010-2012	Brian Yao	From counselor & current

Human Resource Director *There was no position prior to Brian Yao. The Human Resource Director consolidated some duties of the Director of Special Education.	2009-2012	Meg Bose	From administrative assistant & current
Finance Director	2002-2006 2006-2012	Kimberly Blue Glen Adams	Contact not renewed; budget incident External hire & current
Assistant Superintendent	1998-2004 2004-2006 2007-2009	Elizabeth Gray Suzanne Winter Peter Griffin	To Superintendent Resigned; budget incident To acting superintendent then to superintendent
Superintendent	2004-2006 2006-2009 2009-2012	Elizabeth Gray Lyndon Berk Peter Griffin	Resigned; budget incident Resigned Current

4.6 INDIVIDUAL PRACTITIONERS

Jarzabkowski & Spee (2009) indicated that three categories of practitioners exist, *internal individual* practitioners, *internal aggregate* practitioners, and *external aggregate* actors.

Individual practitioners are those individuals whose practices are closely examined and from which data researchers generate data. In this study, I considered the internal individual practitioners as the ten participants. Internal aggregate practitioners are considered internal groups like “top management” or “the board.” For the purposes of this case study, I referred to “the board” as an internal aggregate practitioner. An effort was made to identify external actors in this study. External actors include chambers of commerce, consultants, or regulators.

Because of the relative isolation of the district and community and given the data collection time period, no external actors of significance emerged from the data. As such, this study does not include referenced to external actors.

To provide more depth to the individual practitioners, I present a summary of each participant in this section. Chia & MacKay (2007) suggested that the “study of practice demands a perspective which situates the practitioner, right from the start, in the context of an active engagement with the constituents of his or her surroundings” (p. 233). Thus, these summaries provide an examination of the specific skills and career patterns of these practitioners, drawing from historically and culturally shaped tendencies and predispositions (Hendry & Seidl, 2003, as cited in Chia & MacKay, 2007, p. 235).

The following map illustrates the various relationships of the practitioners in this study, anchoring the map around the fiscal crisis that took place in 2006.

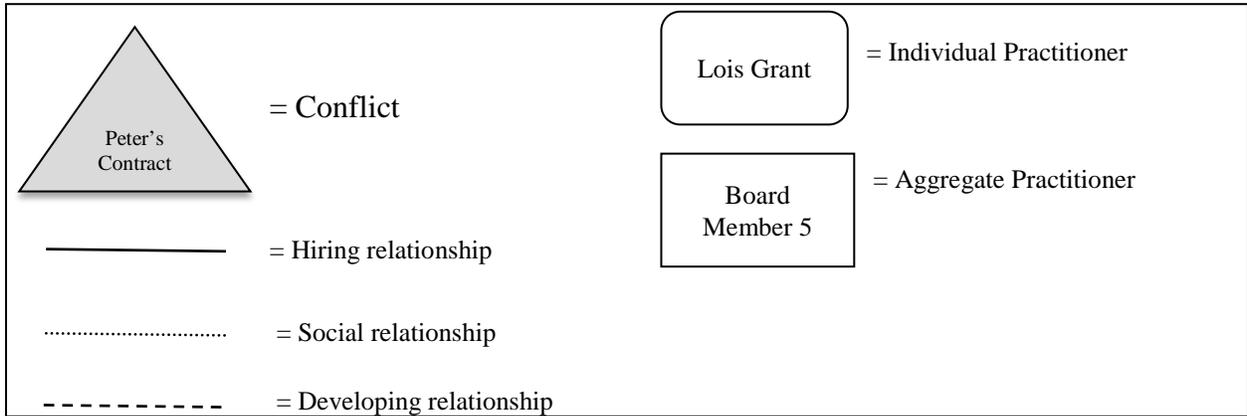


Figure 13. Individual Practitioner Map Key

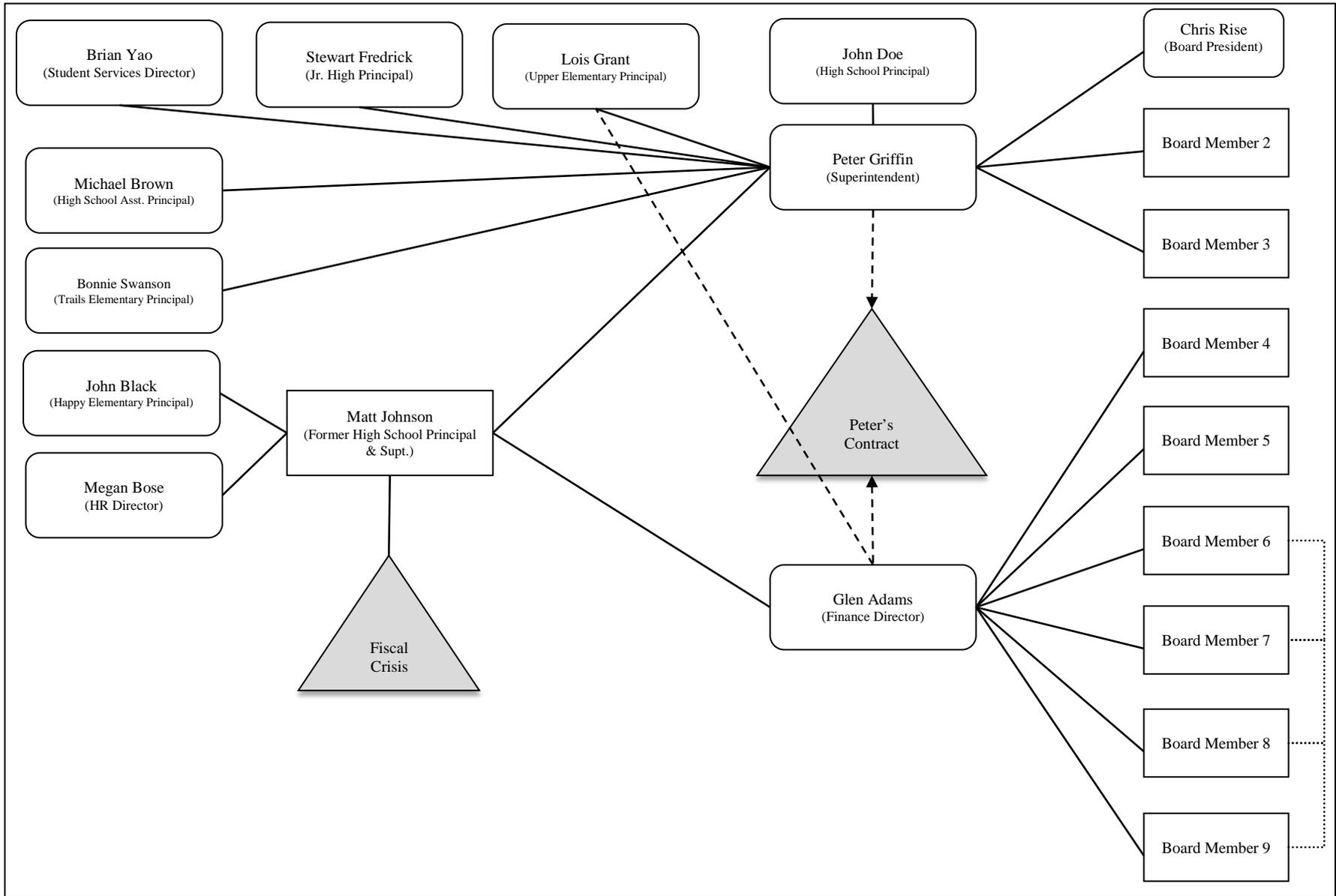


Figure 14. Practitioner Relationships as of March 2012

4.6.1 Individual Practitioners

Peter Griffin: Current superintendent has worked with the HTSD since 2007. He is a former music teacher and performing arts supervisor for an urban school system in south central Pennsylvania. Peter is originally from New England and has a hint of a New England accent that automatically identifies him as an outsider. He received his undergraduate degree from a Massachusetts Special Focus Institution according to Carnegie Classification. He also received a Master's degree from a public Florida institution classified as a "Research University/Very High Research Activity" (RU/VH). His doctorate is from a private Pennsylvania RU/VH university. He is not related to anyone employed by the district. He has worked as assistant superintendent and now superintendent in the district. Peter's vision for the district has been "high student achievement" since his arrival. His detractors say that he is intimidating and has poor "people skills," yet Peter considers himself to be a deeply caring individual. I have observed him to be respectful and a listener who likes to use storytelling as an instructional method. Peter and Glen, his finance director, have had difficulty communicating throughout Peter's tenure as superintendent.

Peter makes the highest salary in the district. Peter also encourages his administrators to examine the "value added" that vacant positions have toward the district. To model this practice, Peter agreed to combine the duties of superintendent and assistant superintendent into one office once he was hired as superintendent. I have observed Peter modeling practice on a variety of occasions, including the concepts of peer observations, professional development and teaming as techniques to achieve the district's goals. While not an overt supporter of charter schools, he

sees them as a necessary force to motivate the public education system to dramatically change its practices and improve student achievement.

Table 3. Peter Griffin Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	No
Goal Support Practices:	15	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	14

Chris Rise: Former school board president and board member for four years. Chris is a music teacher in a neighboring district and has four students attending HTSD. He is not related to any employees within the district. Chris and Board Member 2 and Board Member 3 resigned in late September and early October, 2012, because of the evaluation of the superintendent and the board dynamic involving Board Members 6, 7, 8, and 9. Chris wants the best education for students and has repeatedly said he believes in the vision of the superintendent. On November 13, 2012, Chris presented a charter school application to the school board for its approval.

Table 4. Chris Rise Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	Yes
Goal Support Practices:	4	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	8

Megan Bose: Serves as the current Human Resources Director and has worked for the district since 2002. She worked as a classroom aide until 2004 when she became the Administrative Assistant for Human Resources. In 2009, she became an Act 93 position as the Director of Human Resources. The support staff union grieved this transfer because Megan’s now vacant support staff position was eliminated. An arbiter supported the transfer and the elimination of the support staff position.

She received her undergraduate degree from an institution classified as a small Master’s granting institution (Masters S). She lives in the district and has one son attending the HTSD, and her husband works at a state prison in a neighboring town. Meg consistently urges principals to rate teacher performance fairly and challenges principals when they object to personnel transfers when there is little or no evaluative documentation to prevent the transfer. She believes that principals are too nice in their evaluations of teachers. She is related to a cafeteria employee in the high school.

Table 5. Megan Bose Data Table

Related to District Employees:	Yes	Lives Locally:	Yes
Goal Support Practices:	3	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	8

Brian Yao: Brian began work with the district in 2008 as a school counselor at Trails Elementary School and was hired by Bonnie. In 2010, Peter hired Brian as the Student Services Director. Figure 13 above illustrates this most recent hiring relationship for Brian. He assumed duties from the former assistant superintendent’s office and the director of special education

position. Brian received his master’s degree from a public Pennsylvania RU/VH institution. He formerly worked in a large urban school system in south central Pennsylvania (different from Peter’s) and moved to the area when his wife transferred to a large local state prison. Brian is a doctoral student at the neighboring Happy Valley University. Brian’s children attend school in Olympus, a neighboring community. Brian believes in the vision of the superintendent and is not related to any district employees.

Table 6. Brian Yao Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	No
Goal Support Practices:	5	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	4

Glen Adams: Glen has served as the finance director since 2006. He received his MBA from a Pennsylvania private Master’s L institution and is originally from Eastern Pennsylvania. Glen lives in the district and has one daughter who attend the high school. Glen sees himself as providing the resources necessary for the district to function and rarely interfaces with the rest of the administrative team. Glen makes the second highest salary in the district. He is not related to any district employees.

Table 7. Glen Adam Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	Yes
Goal Support Practices:	0	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	10

Michael Brown: Michael has been a long time member of the HTSD. He served as a math teacher for 20 years, union president and member of the negotiating committee. His wife is a science teacher at the high school, and they both are natives of the community. He and his wife were ardent critics of both Peter Griffin and Bonnie Swanson. As communication grew between Michael and Peter, this criticism waned. Peter actively encouraged Michael to apply for the high school assistant principal position in 2009. He received his master’s degree from a private Pennsylvania Master’s L institution. Similarly, his wife has transitioned from a critic of Peter to a supporter, becoming an active, positive teacher-leader in the high school. She is the defacto English department head at the high school and led the curricular transition from a traditional, tracked program to one that includes a number of Advanced Placement classes and equal access to those classes for all students. Michael has four children who graduated from HTSD, with the youngest graduating in June, 2012. He believes in the vision of the superintendent. Having known the community culture and building climate, Michael has been instrumental in assisting with my transition as high school principal.

Table 8. Michael Brown Data Table

Related to District Employees:	Yes	Lives Locally:	Yes
Goal Support Practices:	3	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	2

Stewart Fredrick: Stewart has spent her career in the HTSD. She started as a physical education teacher at the high school and moved into being a high school dean of students, then Upper Elementary School Principal before becoming the junior high school principal. Stewart lives in a neighboring community and has a daughter who works as a teacher in the Fredrick

County Public School System in Maryland. She received her master’s degree from a private Master’s L institution in Pennsylvania. Stewart will merge with the upper elementary school in the 2013-2014 school year to create a 5-8 middle school where she will serve as co-principal with Lois Grant. She is not related to any district employees.

Table 9. Stewart Fredrick Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	No
Goal Support Practices:	6	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	6

Lois Grant: Lois is an Upper Elementary School Principal in her second year with the district. She is a former English teacher and a high school assistant principal from Eastern Pennsylvania. She received her master’s degree from a private Master’s L institution in Pennsylvania. She lives an hour away from the district. Lois is heading the Upper Elementary School that is under renovation for the 5th – 8th grade middle school. She and Stewart Fredrick will become co-principals of the middle school. She believes in deferring to her teachers. She is not related to any district employees.

Table 10. Lois Grant Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	No
Goal Support Practices:	2	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	2

Joe Smith: Joe is the principal of Happy Elementary School, a K-4 building. Joe has also spent his career in the HTSD, serving as a kindergarten teacher, Title 1 Reading Teacher and

elementary principal. He began his administrative career at the Upper Elementary School, which, at the time was a K-6 building. In the 2010-2011 school year, the district rearranged its elementary structure and created two K-4 buildings (Happy and Trails Elementary) and one 5-6 building (the Upper Elementary). Joe received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from a Pennsylvania public institution classified as a “Doctoral Research University.” He lives in the community and his children graduated from the HTSD. At the urging of Meg, Joe issued his first unsatisfactory evaluation in his 9 years as an administrator. Joe makes the third highest salary in the district. Joe believes in the vision of the superintendent but seems reluctant to take action in a manner that supports that vision. He is not related to any district employees.

Table 11. Joe Smith Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	Yes
Goal Support Practices:	7	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	5

Bonnie Swanson: Bonnie is the principal of Trails Elementary. She received an undergraduate and a master’s degree from a public California RU/VH university. Bonnie worked with a local intermediate unit as a curricular specialist before becoming an assistant principal at a local charter school. She was hired in 2008 as the principal of Trails Elementary. She has been frequently under fire from critics in the community for her support of instructional goals of the district. Bonnie genuinely wants her students to achieve at high levels. She debates with Meg Bose over issues of contract language and procedure, especially when those rules get in the way of Bonnie’s vision for the school. Bonnie lives in the nearby town of Happy Valley and her husband works as the head of Happy Valley University’s Online Campus. Bonnie

believes in the vision of the superintendent and has taken action to support that view. She is not related to district employees.

Table 12. Bonnie Swanson Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	No
Goal Support Practices:	8	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	5

John Doe: John is the principal of Happy Trails High School. This is his fourth job since his entry into education in 2002. He received his bachelor’s degree from a Pennsylvania public Master’s L and his Master’s degree from a Pennsylvania public RU/VH institution. He taught in Western Maryland and Eastern Pennsylvania before becoming an high school assistant principal in Central Pennsylvania. In 2011 John was hired as the Happy Trails High School principal. He did not live in the community at the time of this case study and is not related to any district employees. John believes in the vision of the superintendent and takes action to support that vision. He was instrumental in increasing the number of Advanced Placement (AP) student enrollment and the researcher has observed him consistently challenging the traditional notions of teaching and learning. For instance, John has introduced the concept of “no zeros” from the researchers Doug Reeves whereby teachers are to get work from students rather than entering a “zero” in the gradebook. Similarly, John has also introduced the concept of “redos” to the faculty where students may redo assignments to produce a better product. This differs from the traditional “deadline” approach of grading and assessment where students may not turn in assignments past a specific deadline.

Table 13. John Does Data Table

Related to District Employees:	No	Lives Locally:	No
Goal Support Practices:	7	Constraint Reconciliation Practices:	5

Table 14. Aggregate Participant List Sorted by District Residency

<u>Participant</u>	<u>District Resident?</u>	<u>Related to District Employees?</u>
Bonnie Swanson	No	No
Brian Yao	No	No
John Doe	No	No
Lois Grant	No	No
Peter Griffin	No	No
Stewart Fredrick	No	No
Chris Rise	Yes	No
Glen Adams	Yes	No
Joe Smith	Yes	No
Meg Bose	Yes	Yes
Michael Brown	Yes	Yes

4.7 PRACITITONER INTERVIEW ANAYLSIS

Using NVivo, I was identified 118 individual practices from the interview analysis. These individual practices emerged when reviewing the transcripts of the participants and their responses to specific questions. For instance, when asked, “What action do you take to support

this goal?” participants Michael Brown and Chris Rise stated, “relationships we build with students” and “offer our advice” respectively, which were coded as “positive relationships.”

Further analyses revealed that 60 individual practices derived from Goal Support questions (questions 1-4) and 58 individual practices from Constraint Reconciliation questions (questions 5, 5a, 6, 6a, 7, 7a). In total, 21 practice sets were identified from the analysis with 9 supporting district goals and 12 supporting constraint reconciliation. I provide the complete coding tree in Appendix C. From the interview, it seemed that participants associated Goal Support with more technical references while Constraint Reconciliation was referenced with more political underpinnings. For instance, all but two participants referred “high student achievement” as the district’s goal and all but two gave specific, technical suggestions for supporting that goal (i.e. instructional rounds, teaming, FOCUS lessons, etc.). In contrast, participants referenced constraint reconciliation with political overtones (i.e., contract protecting jobs, teacher attendance, seniority versus competency for positions, etc.).

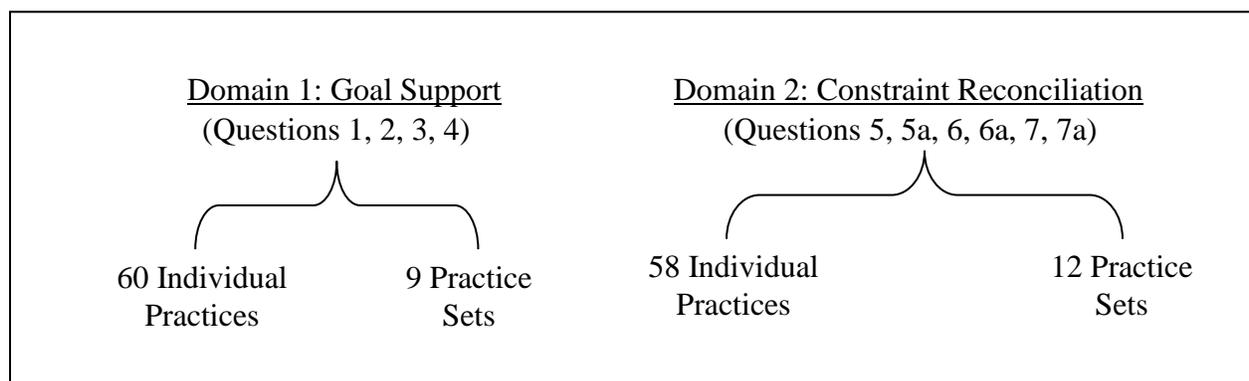


Figure 15. Relationship of Interview Questions with Domains

From the coding tree, nine distinct practice sets were for Goal Support as listed in Table 15, such as “positive relationships,” “teaming,” and “professional and curricular development.” From the analysis, I identified 60 specific practices the participants used during my analysis of Goal Support questions. I then identified twenty-six specific corrective practices for Goal Support. Corrective practices were those techniques participants used when their original strategies were not successful. For instance, participants referenced, “a reply to an email,” feedback on “what did or didn’t work,” and convening a “grade-level team meeting” as corrective actions which coded together as the “clarification” practice set. I grouped these 26 practices into four distinct practice sets as identified in Table 16.

Table 15. Practice Sets for Goal Support

Specific practices that each of the participants used were grouped into like sets of practice. This figure identifies the practice sets that emerged as supporting the district’s goals.

Communication	Evaluative Observations	Peer Observations	Positive Relationships	Reviewing Student Work
Trust	Teaming	Professional & Curricular Development	Resources	

Table 16. Corrective Practice Sets for Goal Support

These practice sets were used by participants when it was clear that their initial practice sets were not effective.

Clarification	Peer Reflection	Redo	Self-Reflection
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Also from the analysis, 12 practice sets emerged from the data. Fifty-eight specific practices support constraint reconciliation. Tables 17, 18, and 19 illustrate the grouping of practice sets from the individual practices I identified:

Table 17. Practice Sets Reconciling the Constraints of the Strategic Plan

These sets of practice were used by participants to reconcile the constraints of the strategic plan.

Structured Communication (Scheduled meetings, presentations)	Unstructured Communication (Impromptu discussions)
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Table 18. Practice Sets Reconciling the Constraints of the Collective Bargaining Agreement

These sets of practice were used by participants to reconcile the constraints of the collective bargaining agreement.

Changing the Contract or Processes	Seeking Common Ground	Communication	Leveraging Relationships	Sticking to the Contract
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Table 19. Practice Sets Reconciling the Constraints of the Budget

These sets of practice were used by participants to reconcile the constraints of the district budget.

Communication	Despondent	New Cost Saving Procedures	Minimal Functionality	Raising Taxes
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I then analyzed the practice sets between the Goal Support responses and the Constraint Reconciliation responses to see if similar practice sets appeared in both areas. In this case “communication” was the only shared practice set. This “communication” node emerged because participants provided both direct and indirect communication strategies to the interview questions. Table 20 illustrates the comparison between the responses from participants:

Table 20. Communication Practice Set Comparison

<u>Goal Support Responses</u>	<u>Constraint Reconciliation Responses</u>
“...email...”	“We met with the union leaders on a pretty regular basis.”

<p>“When I send an email out to them I send it to all administration.”</p> <p>“...more than willing to stop in and meet with them on a face to face basis.”</p> <p>“I meet with teachers once a week to talk about student achievement.”</p> <p>“I open it up to the teachers, if there are any hot spots that we need to talk about, specific kids.”</p> <p>“We get reports back every two weeks ahead of teachers reporting back on, uh, how the students are doing with the interventions.”</p> <p>“The opportunity for discussion with my colleagues.”</p> <p>“...share ideas...”</p> <p>“...constantly in contact whether it's through a meeting or email.”</p> <p>“...write...”</p> <p>“Administration meets weekly on Wednesday afternoons.”</p> <p>“...meets monthly on a full day on a Friday.”</p>	<p>“We shared with them the data that we had collected.”</p> <p>“Having those meetings really helped.”</p> <p>“It can be a simple conversation. It can be an email. It can be recognition at faculty meeting. Obviously recognition at board meetings of things that are happening when you have the opportunity to present showcasing teacher and student work.”</p> <p>“Relay those things to people.”</p> <p>“Constant conversation.”</p> <p>“...communicate with their colleagues.”</p> <p>“First I discuss it with the superintendent.”</p> <p>“Again any actions I take would be in consultation with the superintendent.”</p> <p>“Discussion is an important part of the budget process. Yes. I also favor a lot of discussion with the other administrators to get their viewpoints.”</p> <p>“When I first came here I scheduled meetings with certain groups of administrators at a time</p>
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<p>“So, we need a goal for this day.”</p> <p>“...summaries of books to people.”</p> <p>“Try to tell people step back a little. Using the Heifetz metaphor, get up in the balcony and see what’s going on.”</p> <p>“I am a story teller.”</p> <p>“... encouraging my teams to do the same thing.”</p>	<p>to discuss their needs and get their input.”</p>
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4.7.1 Interview Analysis Summary

In this section, I analyzed the interview data to determine which practices and sets of practice emerged. From the analysis I identified 118 individual practices; 60 of which from Goals Support and 58 from Constraint Reconciliation. Further examination of the data also revealed 21 practice sets; 9 from Goals Support data and 12 from Constraint Reconciliation data. I also identified the “communication” practice set as shared between Goals Support and Constraint Reconciliation data. This data goes toward answering Research Question 1 in this study. Research Question 1 asks, “How do school administrators make sense of the conflicting forces in public education (e.g., high stakes testing, career preparation, legal mandates, competition from charter schools, declining enrollment and funding) as they undertake their daily routines?” The identified practices and practice sets provide a partial response to this question.

4.8 SUMMARY

This chapter reviews the interview process, data collection, and analysis. At the same time, I presented a rationale for my research questions and data analysis techniques. I modeled this study after Jarzabkowski's (2003) examination of strategy creation at universities in the United Kingdom. Similar to her study, this dissertation sought to examine the practices school administrators' engaged in on a daily basis to achieve district goals and how they reconciled the constraints of the collective bargaining agreement, budget and strategic plan when achieving those goals. This required an examination of participant's daily routines, social and community context as well as school and district-level data. Jarzabkowski reminded us of the importance of context in understanding of how interactions between practitioners both shape and are shaped by their contexts (Carter et al. 2008, Chia 2004 as cited in Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009). Jarzabkowski urged us to examine "how practices are culturally embedded" as well as the numerous contexts in which the practices took place in order to gain a deeper understanding of the context in which these practices and practice sets developed (Jarzabkowski, 2003, p. 46; Jarzabkowski & Wilson, 2002).

I identified emerging practice sets and practices from the interview and supporting data that I gathered. Of the 118 individual practices identified, 60 came from Goals Support and 58 from Constraint Reconciliation. Similar practices were grouped together into "practice sets" of which 21 were identified in this study; 9 from Goals Support data and 12 from Constraint Reconciliation data. The "communication" practice set spanned both Goals Support and Constraint Reconciliation data.

5.0 FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study identified specific practices exhibited by administrators to reconcile local institutional constraints while still achieving the district's instructional goals. Understanding how school districts engage with strategy creation to reconcile these two domains may help the district run smoothly and mitigates inefficient organizational activities. This, in turn, better positions the district's competitive advantage in the emerging public education marketplace (Porter, 1985). However, there has not been an attempt to examine how school administrators act as strategy practitioners in the manner Strategy-as-Practice suggests. This includes an embedded examination of everyday activities of administrators that may or may not contribute to an overall organization strategy to reconcile this tension between the institutional and instructional domains.

5.2 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

While neither generalizable nor statistically significant, the first finding from this case study revealed that those who live outside the district seem to have more practices for Goal Support than Constraint Reconciliation. Second, participants that supported improvement in the instructional domain were seen as destabilizing the organization and experienced different forms by which the institution maintained stability. Third, participants that supported institutional stability found difficulty in achieving instructional success.

This case study illustrated that administrators have a choice how they spend their time. They can choose to attend to the institutional “rules” of institutional elements or they can place more emphasis on realizing the instructional goals and attending to the “rules” as needed. This case study demonstrates that administrators who are supportive of instructional elements have a greater impact in student achievement but risk an organizational response to ensure stability.

5.2.1 Major Finding 1

Those who live within the district boundaries, or seen to live within the district boundaries (as in the case of Stewart Fredrick), support constraint reconciliation. Those who lived outside of the district have more emphasis on Goal Support. Table 21 illustrates a comparison of the participants. In the case of Stewart Fredrick, the researcher has witness a number of occasions where Stewart was referred to as a “local” presumably given her number of years within the district. While Joe Smith has a high number of Goal Support practices, his status as a local

resident may suggest that the effectiveness of those practices could be influenced by residency status. Similarly, Glen’s status as a local resident may also influence the effectiveness of his Goal Support practices. However, Glen was also one of two participants that provided a different answer to the most important goal of the district. While eight of the participants stated “student achievement” as the most important goal, Glen stated “financial stability.” Similarly, Lois Grant provided the answer “education of students” in response to the most important district goal.

Table 21. Aggregate Participant Residency and Dominate Practice Types

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Related to District Employees?</u>	<u>Lives within the District?</u>	<u>Goal Support References</u>	<u>Constraint Reconciliation References</u>
Peter Griffin	No	No	15	13
Bonnie Swanson	No	No	8	5
John Doe	No	No	8	4
Joe Smith	No	Yes	7	5
Glen Adams***	No	Yes	6	4
Stewart Fredrick**	No	No	6	6
Brian Yao	No	No	5	4
Chris Rise	No	Yes	4	8
Meg Bose	Yes	Yes	3	8
Michael Brown	Yes	Yes	3	2
Lois Grant*	No	No	2	2

* Lois’s answer to the most important goals of the district was “education of children.” Except for Glen, all other participants stated “student achievement” as the most important goal.

** The researcher has witnessed Stewart referred to as a “local” due to the number of years she has worked within the district.

*** Glen’s answer to the most important goals of the district was “financial stability.” Except for Lois, all other participants stated “student achievement” as the most important goal.

5.2.2 Major Finding 2

A second major finding was those whose practices were supportive of the district goals were seen as destabilizing the organization. For instance, Peter Griffin, Bonnie Swanson, and John Doe had the highest number of Goal Support references but experienced different methods by which the organization attempted to maintain institutional stability. The similarities of Bonnie and Peter’s techniques can be seen in Table 22. Bonnie and Peter were the only administrators interviewed that shared “peer observations,” “professional development,” and “teaming” for Goal Support and they also had the highest number of individual practices for Goal Support (8 and 13 respectively).

Table 22. Comparison of the Individual Practices Related to Goal Support as Cited by Bonnie and Peter

<u>Bonnie</u>	<u>Peter</u>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Peer Observations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Observe them during rounds.” • “...rounds...” • “Teachers observe each other.” 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Peer Observations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...rounds...”

<p><i>Teams</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Time to get together as teams.” 	<p><i>Teams</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...teams...” • “Those teams...” • “Every team.” • “We have K to 10 teams.” • “I have spent more time with some principals and more teams on trying to get them to understand, OK. why do we meet? Well it’s because of high student achievement.” • “Meets monthly on a full day on a Friday.” • “Administration meets weekly on Wednesday afternoons.”
<p><i>Professional Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Organize professional development for teachers. 	<p><i>Professional Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...collectively read several books.” • “...summaries of books to people.”
<p><i>Other Practices Supporting Domain 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Developed focus lessons.” • “...focus lessons.” • “We analyze our observations and hopefully change our perceptions of what instruction should look like.” 	<p><i>Other Practices Supporting Domain 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “So, we need a goal for this day.” • “Try to tell people step back a little. Using the Heifetz metaphor, get up in the balcony and see what’s going on.” • “I am a story teller.” • “...write...” • “...student work...”

This data provides an interesting context in which Peter, Bonnie, and John operate since they have both the strongest implementation of practices for Goal Support as well as documented evidence of improving student achievement in the case study district. We will examine each of these individuals in detail.

5.2.2.1 Peter Griffin’s Experience

Peter has been employed with the HTSD since 2007. Prior to the Peter’s arrival in February, 2007, the case study district had only four Advanced Placement courses at the high school that

included five out of 600 students in the building. No articulated K-12 math or English sequencing existed, nor any sort of teaming structure in place. To illustrate the persistence of this achievement struggle, the Pennsylvania Department of Education labeled one of the schools of the case study district a “persistently underperforming school” in July, 2012, based on 2010-2011 student achievement data. Below is an excerpt from an email the superintendent sent to the school board and administrative team in July, 2012 that illustrates the organizational context (Griffin, 2012b):

When I came to (this district) eight years ago, after observing every classroom in the district, I did several board presentations to highlight the fact that without significant changes to programs and instruction the district would absolutely fail once the AYP requirements rose to the 2011 levels. By contrast, I also said that if we decided to have one of the highest achieving districts in the state, that was possible. However, success required significant transformational action, failure required maintaining the status quo.

Peter then embarked on a period of radical philosophical change within the district. He observed each teacher’s classroom and began the process of data analysis and presentations to the board and other administrators. To allow for collaboration and improving professional practice, he proposed and received an amended schedule where students were released two hours early every Wednesday for three years. The district faculty met at the high school and with district administrators to discuss professional practice, curricula, lesson planning and strategies. Peter’s email continues:

We put teams in every grade level K-10. Every teacher read pertinent chapters from *DataWise* and learned to identify learner-centered-problems and to address them by improving problems-of-practice. Every teacher read pertinent chapters in *Focus* and was expected to develop and implement focused lessons guided by essential questions. Book study groups met and discussed best practices. We implemented a new math program and

provided significantly more professional development than any other district. We met every Wednesday afternoon for three years to objectively observe student work for the purpose of raising expectations and improving instructional practices. We studied and then implemented rounds and walk-through observations to support teachers working on best practices. Every action has been purposeful, part of a vision for attaining high student achievement. We know it works because it is working in (this district) with every teacher who embraces the practices.

As stated in his email, the superintendent asked all professional staff to read the following texts:

- Schmoker's (2011) Focus,
- City's et.al. (2005) Data Wise

He also asked all professional staff to read two other texts that are not cited in the email above:

- Carol Dweck's (2007) Mindset
- Instructional Rounds by City et. al. (2009)

From my participant-observational experiences, each text has a specific link to the others. For instance, Focus suggests that teachers emphasize a few discrete instructional practices to “focus” on and become an expert. Data Wise suggests that teachers work together to identify specific data sets to gauge student performance, thereby identifying better interventions to improve student achievement. Mindset encourages readers to identify and understand their mindset type (fixed or growth). The implication for teachers is that having a “fixed mindset” will impede improvements in professional practice, whereas a “growth mindset” welcomes such improvements (Dweck, 2007). Finally, the concept of “instructional rounds” to promote growth and professional collaboration connects directly to the other three texts. Observing another's practice and focusing on specific instructional elements will provide for a deeper analysis and

discussion. Similarly, working collaboratively as data teams allows specific instructional practices to be grounded in data to determine effectiveness. Underpinning each of these is the teacher's mindset through which the individual and his or her colleagues can better understand the interpersonal elements that often influence the ultimate success in an endeavor.

Peter's efforts to improve professional practice have become inculturated into the organization. The various grade level and district level teams, the focus on student work, the use of data to guide instruction, the K-12 articulation of math and English curricula, and the increase in Advanced Placement course enrollment from five to 230 have become "what we do around here" from this participant-observer's perspective.

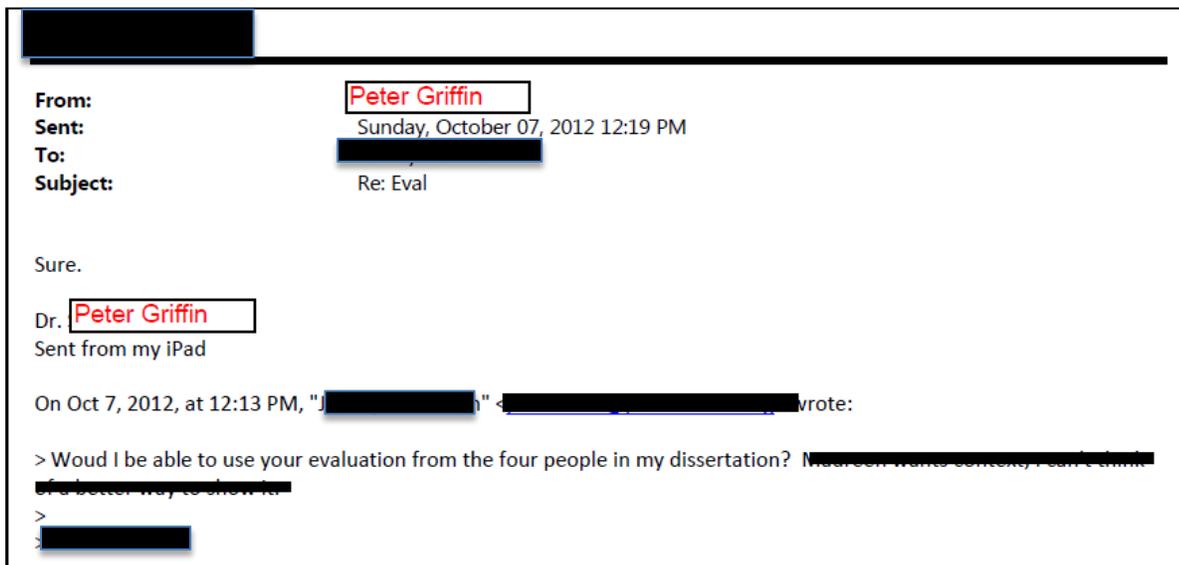
Peter's has also made a strong effort to improve the culture of the district through hiring of new professional staff. Since Peter's arrival in 2007, there have been 55 teachers hired in a teaching staff of 156. Peter also personally conducts all new teacher induction for new faculty members, which means he has influenced a full third of the faculty members. Other veteran faculty have been "converts" to Peter's ideas. Michael Brown, the high school assistant principal, is a prime example of this change in thinking. As I have heard from many newly hired teachers in the district, professional growth, the use of data, articulated curricula, teaming and collaboration are routinely "how we do things."

Institutional Responses Experienced by Peter

The context in which Peter operated is a critical part of this case study, since SAP explains that practices are often shaped by and between the practitioner and practitioner's context. In Peter's

case, he engaged in practices to support and improve instructional domains but was seen as purposely destabilizing the organization by the community. Consequently, the community context of the district responded by trying to improve stability. This interplay can be best captured by the relationship of Peter with the board beginning in December, 2011.

Figure 16. Permission to Use Peter's Evaluations



At that time, there was a shift in the district's board of school directors. Four people left the board and four new members were elected. The makeup of the school board can be seen in Table 8. Further, some board members are, were, or are related to teachers. For instance, Chris Rise and Board Member 5 are teachers in neighboring school districts and Board Member 5 was a teacher in the district before she was furloughed. Board Members 2 and 6 are spouses of teachers. Board Member 6 is the mother of a teacher who has consistently low student growth

rates and Board Member 9 is the uncle of another teacher who has consistently low student achievement. Board Members 7 and 8 are retired teachers of the HTSD. This provides an important context in which Peter had to operate. Peter's contract as superintendent was due for a vote between September 2012 and January 2013. Prior to the vote, some board members decided to evaluate Peter, presumably to lay the foundation for not renewing his contract. The evaluations became illustrative of the tensions experienced by a goal-oriented, community "outsider." Peter's evaluations, obtained with his permission in Figure 16, can be viewed overall in Appendix F. A local paper, the Centre Times Daily (5, 2012) received a copy of Peter's evaluations from an anonymous source and wrote an editorial titled "Our View | Childish display by the HT board" which captures the essence of Peter's evaluations:

All four [Board Members] disregarded the evaluation form that started with a 1 for minimal performance, adding a 0 column that [Board Member 9] identified as "not acceptable." Board Member 6, Board Member 9 and Board Member 7 gave Griffin 0's in every category, from questions about educational and administrative functions to those as mundane as dressing appropriately. They had to scrawl their own columns, since the forms were on a 1 to 5 scale. The trashing extended to "high standards of ethics, honesty and integrity" and "expresses a genuine concern for and interest in the welfare of the students." It also covered "suitably attired and well groomed." Another board member...charitably sprinkled in a 1 here and there. Their comments took the attacks even lower. Board Member 9 alleged Griffin has "no ethics" and "is not honest." Board Member 8 called Griffin "disgusting" and "despicable," and then added a memorable rhetorical flourish. Morale in the district, she wrote, was "lower than whale vomit." None of the evaluations backed their accusations with specific incidents. And, really, whale vomit? Which bathroom stall did that one come from? "Mr. Griffin is petrified of students. He wants absolutely nothing to do with them. They are dirt under his feet!" Board member 8 wrote. That's not a job evaluation. It's character assassination. Griffin, Board Member 9 said earlier this year, "probably was a brainiac nerdy kid who was bullied by the jocks and the cool kids. And the same with (board President) Chris Rise ... Now they've got themselves in a position of authority, and they are the bullies." That's rich given the personal bashing he and his cohorts dished out. What an example they set as the district spreads anti-bullying messages. But Board Member 9, who unapologetically says residents voted him on the board to oust Griffin, is hardly a role model. In an astonishing view for an education leader, he once accused the superintendent of focusing too much on college preparation instead of vocational classes

and technical training. “This guy wants to teach solely to the upper crust,” Board Member 9 said. “We have more average and below students than average and above.” Some local parents were insulted.

Ultimately, Peter’s contract was not renewed. However, Board Member 9 stated “he and other board members aren’t finished yet. ‘There’s some more cleaning to be done,’ he said, refusing to name any targeted district administrators.”

After the vote to not renew Peter’s contract, Chris Rise and two other board members resigned. As a result, two retired teachers of the HTSD filled vacant board seats. Another individual filled the third seat, who has no personal relationship with district employees. This brought the total board members who are retired HTSD teachers to four of nine members. This number increases in six of nine board members that have at least one family connection with an HTSD teacher are included.

5.2.2.2 Bonnie Swanson’s Experience

Similar to Peter, Bonnie was more focused on Goal Support in her school. Bonnie used practices consistent with Goal Support and had the building with the highest growth of student achievement when compared with the other K-4 building in the district. Bonnie’s counterpart at the other district elementary school, Joe, did not have the strongest implementation of practices for Goal Support and did not have the same degree of student achievement as Bonnie’s building, even though they both had equal references to Constraint Reconciling strategies. Bonnie had eight references to specific practices for reconciling constraints while Joe had four references.

Bonnie, the Trails elementary principal, specifically cited “peer observations,” “professional and curricular development,” and “teaming” to achieve the stated district goal of

“high student achievement.” From personal communication with the superintendent, the most important goals of the district, as he has stated since 2007, has been “high student achievement” (Personal Communication, Griffin, 2012a). The superintendent has asked administrators to utilize three distinct tools to improve student achievement:

1. “Focus lessons” from the book Focus by Mike Schmoker (2011).
2. Grade-level teams to analyze data according to the “data wise” process as illustrated in the book Data Wise by Kathryn Boudett, Elizabeth City and Richard Murnae (2005).
3. “Instructional rounds” from the book Instructional Rounds in Education: A Network Approach to Improving Teaching and Learning, by Elizabeth City, Richard Elmore, Sarah Fiarman and Lee Teitel (2009).

Bonnie not only implemented these three practices but did so with the highest degree of frequency among her colleagues. For instance, she had four references to peer observations when she stated, “...observe them [the teachers] during rounds,” “Teachers observe each other,” “We analyze our observations and hopefully change our perceptions of what instruction should look like” and simply “...rounds....” She also had three references to professional and curricular development when she stated, “Organize professional development for teachers,” “Developed focus lessons...” and then mentioned “...focus lessons...” a third time. Finally, Bonnie referenced teaming when she said “...get together as teams.” From an open letter to the school community, Bonnie (Personal Communication, 2012b) shared the results of her efforts:

(Our school) *exceeded* the state target of 78% of students expected to be proficient or advanced in math: 81.9% of our 3rd and 4th graders combined achieved that goal. That’s never happened before. It was wonderful to be able to report such great news and recognize publicly the success of teachers and students.

Fourth grade scores in reading missed the new 81% target by just over 4%, but rose dramatically from the previous year, and what's even better? *Every* 4th grade student scored at least Basic in reading, the category just below Proficient. Not one student was Below Basic, the lowest category. That too, has never happened before. On top of that, almost a quarter of the fourth grade class was Advanced in reading.

In contrast, Joe, the Happy Elementary Principal, did not have the same level of student achievement, as seen in Tables 23 and 24, and its administrator did not cite the specific combination of practices for Goal Support as Bonnie had. The practices Joe identified as Goal Support were grouped into the practice sets “communication,” “positive relationships,” “providing resources,” and “teaming.” In communication, Joe had three references: “...meet with teachers once a week to talk about student achievement,” “Open it up to the teachers, if there are any hotspots [students needing academic interventions] that we need to talk about, specific kids,” and “...get reports back every two weeks ahead of teachers reporting back on, uh, how the students are doing with the interventions.” Joe specifically stated the following for positive relationships, “So, as the instructional leader of the building, that’s my job to remind them [the teachers], okay, this is what we’re supposed to be doing here.” The practice set “resources” emerged from an analysis of Joe’s responses with his references to “Schedule things [time to collaborate] in the building” and “Getting the schedule so that teachers have a common

Table 23. 2012 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Data for Bonnie’s School

2011-2012 AYP Status	This School met 9 target(s) out of 12.
	Warning

Mathematics				
	Participation Goal = 95%	Met Participation Target	Performance Goal = 78%	Met Performance Target
All Students	100.0	Yes	81.9	Yes
White non-Hispanic	100.0	Yes	82.7	Yes
Economically Disadvantaged	100.0	Yes	75.0	Yes-CI

Reading				
	Participation Goal = 95%	Met Participation Target	Performance Goal = 81%	Met Performance Target
All Students	100.0	Yes	67.6	No
White non-Hispanic	100.0	Yes	68.3	No
Economically Disadvantaged	100.0	Yes	66.7	No

Table 24. 2012 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Data for Joe’s School

2011-2012 AYP Status	This School met 8 target(s) out of 12.
	Warning

Mathematics				
	Participation Goal = 95%	Met Participation Target	Performance Goal = 78%	Met Performance Target
All Students	100.0	Yes	80.0	Yes
White non-Hispanic	100.0	Yes	80.0	Yes
Economically Disadvantaged	100.0	Yes	67.1	No

Reading				
	Participation Goal = 95%	Met Participation Target	Performance Goal = 81%	Met Performance Target
All Students	100.0	Yes	66.4	No
White non-Hispanic	100.0	Yes	65.9	No
Economically Disadvantaged	100.0	Yes	50.6	No

planning time so we have time to meet.” He was the only administrator that considered “time” as a resource.

Consistent with Bonnie’s responses, Joe stated that “teaming” was his fourth practice for Goal Support. In this case, Joe stated that he encouraged his teams to “look at student work”

which follows the established district practice as set by the superintendent. While neither Bonnie nor Joe's schools met AYP this year, of interest is the student's performance in both math and reading, as illustrated in Tables 18 and 19. This is the first time in the history of the case study district where Bonnie's school outperformed Joe's school.

From this analysis, Bonnie's actions contributed to her school's increase in student achievement. While she paid attention to the legal requirements presented in the strategic plan, collective bargaining agreement and budget, she spent more time engaged in Goals Support. She took steps to ensure that her teachers knew the direction of the school such that their individual actions would be guided by her vision. Bonnie spent the entire 2011-2012 school year consistently supporting and referencing "rounds," "peer observations," "professional and curricular development," and "teaming" to achieve her school's growth.

Institutional Responses Experienced by Bonnie

Bonnie joins Peter and John as having the highest amount of practices for Goal Support. Like Peter, Bonnie choose a more technical approach referring instructional rounds, teaming and FOCUS lessons to improve the instructional domain. Her support of the instructional domain was seen as destabilizing the institutional domain however.

Bonnie arrived as Trails Elementary Principal in 2007. In her first year as principal, Bonnie issued three unsatisfactory rating for teachers for performance. At the end of her third year, eight teachers left her building through resignation, retirement, or transfer. One teacher retires and becomes a HTSD school board member in December 2011. Further supporting the

instructional domain, Bonnie established an expectation for the use of SmartBoards at least once a week (Personal Communication Swanson, 2012a). When interviewed, Bonnie referenced a grievance that was filed in September, 2011, when she started the instructional rounds process:

[I] was named in a grievance over the whole process related to rounds and whether or not the information that came from rounds was actually observation or was it evaluation. So we had to talk our way through that. People weren't trusting that it was strictly observation for their benefit to analyze their data and see whether their perceptions were changing.

This grievance was presumably an institutional response, via the contract, to efforts at improving the instructional domain.

Other institutional responses were also referenced by Bonnie. For instance, the use of school board executive sessions were leveraged in January, 2013. At a board meeting, the grandfather of one of Bonnie's former students spoke to the board to allege that Bonnie "locked his grandson in a closet" as part of a behavior plan. Because of the seriousness of this allegation, the board called an immediate executive session to interview Bonnie about the incident. When asked of the environment of the executive session Bonnie stated that she does "not accept being bullied by any of them" (Personal Communication, Swanson, 2012a). Bonnie felt that this was an obvious setup by the board, "though board members all denied it...you should have seen them falling over themselves in their denials."

5.2.2.3 John Doe's Experience

John Doe arrived in HTSD as the high school principal in 2011. Since that time he worked to increase AP classes offered at the high school, increased AP enrollment, introduced a blended learning environment with students taking virtual courses in Chinese, Latin, German and Japanese, as well as introduced a number of pedagogical and assessment changes for the school. For the first time in the history of the district, freshmen students were able to take an AP course. He revised the graduation project to include a college and career readiness focus that included career research, resume building, mock interviews and job shadowing. He also realigned the Student Assistance Team to improve delivery of services to students and families and introduced the Expect Respect program for students to build healthy relationships.

Because of these changes, instructional improvement has occurred, as evidenced by the first Keystone Exam results HTHS received in March 2013. The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments that take the place of the PSSA. The high school closely matched, or exceeded, the state average in all categories as evidenced below:

Table 25. 2013 Keystone Exam Results

<u>Content Area</u>	<u>State Average</u>	<u>High School Average</u>
Algebra	53.1%	54.0%
Biology	41.5%	62.2%
Literature	66.8%	66.2%

Institutional Responses Experienced by John

Similar to both Bonnie and Peter, John's also began to address improving instructional domains. Like Bonnie and Peter, his efforts were seen as destabilizing the organization. As a result, many institutional elements were leveraged to maintain organizational stability.

In John's first year as principal, he issued five unsatisfactory ratings to teachers for performance or conduct reasons. Below illustrate just a few of the incidents John addressed:

- A teacher twice left students unattended
- A teacher was shouting profanities in the main office
- A teacher was shouting at a colleague in front of students
- A teacher hung up on a parent
- A teacher provided no positive feedback to student during a 42 minute class period
- A teacher lied about attending a parent meeting
- A teacher referred to students as "retards"
- A teacher refused to comply with principal directives

The organization responded by leveraging the public comments portion of board meetings.

When interviewed, John mentioned that two of the five teachers had family members speak on their behalf about the unfairness of the rating. John mentions that one of the speakers "actively lobbied to fire me because Peter and I were targeting the 'good' teachers in the school."

Another way the organization attempted to maintain stability was through the superintendent search process. One of the community members that spoke in defense of the unsatisfactory teachers became the chairperson of the superintendent steering committee November, 2012.

Similar to Bonnie, John also experienced the use of grievances as a way to leverage institutional stability. Each teacher rated unsatisfactory filed a grievance. Four returned to the

classroom the following year and one teacher retired. John mentioned that the board overturned the unsatisfactory rating in January 2013, citing “personality conflicts” between he and the teacher.

Like Bonnie and Peter, the institution used the board to leverage stability. The use of the board took three forms with John. In the first form, the board members acted individually toward John. In the second form, the board used executive sessions, as was done with Bonnie. The third form was appropriation of teacher hiring practices. In the first form, John mentioned that he twice called the board vice president in February 2012 to invite her to lunch and she hung up the phone on him both times. Another incident took place in the fall of 2012 when a board member and a board member’s husband threatened John. Below is an excerpt from an email John sent to Peter:

Good Evening.

I want to inform you of an incident involving [a board member] and me at the Senior High School this afternoon.

Returning to school from a meeting at approximately 3:30, I saw a white Lincoln Towncar parked in the handicapped space outside the athletic entrance. I checked to see if it had a "handicapped" or "permanently disabled" license plate or a placard hanging from the rearview mirror. There was nothing indicating a handicap. Entering the gym lobby, I met [the board member] and asked him if it was his car. He stated, "Yes."

I asked if he had a handicapped placard. He stated, "No." I asked if he would please move his vehicle from the space since it is illegal to park there without a placard. [The board member] stepped to within inches of my nose and stated, "I don't see what the big deal is, there aren't any handicapped people around."

I said, "I understand that but it is still illegal to park there." Again, I asked if he would move his vehicle and he did.

Leaving the building a short time later, I saw a blue Chevy truck parked in the other handicapped spot. [The board member] was speaking with the driver. I drove over to the

driver of the blue truck and asked the driver if he had a handicapped placard. He stated, "No and I'm not moving."

At that time the student the driver was waiting for arrived and the driver said that he and [the board member] had concluded their conversation. I took a step back and [the board member] stated, "Take a few steps further and do us all a favor," pointing to the front of the truck.

I asked, "Is that a threat?"

He stated "No."

I asked him to leave school grounds as his comments were not setting a good example for other students.

He stated, "You're not setting a good example." He got in his car and left.

I then contacted the superintendent to inform him of this incident.

A third incident took place in the winter of 2013 and two board members and a community member (the chair of the superintendent search committee) confronted John and Peter. All three men used the phrase "or else" and were letting John "slide" for a comment he made during the public board meeting. In the second form, a board member called an immediate executive session to John fired on the spot because of a statement John made in the community. In the third form, the board declined hiring a teacher John and Michael Brown recommended instead choosing to nominate an individual from the floor who lived locally.

5.2.3 Major Finding 3

The third major finding is that those participants whose practices were supportive of the institutional elements of the organization found success difficult in the instructional domain. For instance, Joe, the Happy Elementary Principal, has responses typical of the overall answers from other building principals, except Bonnie and John. When comparing elementary principals, Bonnie and Joe only had one practice set in common, that of “teaming.” Bonnie shared commonalities with John, the high school principal when describing Goal Supporting practices. Conversely, Joe shared four practice sets with other building administrators. Joe, Stewart, Lois, and Michael used the practice set “communication” and “providing resources.” Joe, Michael, and Stewart used “providing resources” as the second practice set in common. Both Joe and Michael used “providing resources” as the second practice set in common. Both Joe and Michael used “positive relationships” as a third practice set. Finally, Bonnie, Joe, and Stewart used the “teaming” practice for Goal Support. Table 26 illustrates this comparison.

Table 26. Comparison of Practice Sets of Building Administrators

	Communication	Providing Resources	Positive Relationships	Teaming
Bonnie*				✓
Joe	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michael	✓	✓	✓	
Stewart	✓	✓		✓
Lois	✓			
John*				✓

*Found success in the instructional domain. Dominate practice type of Goal Support.

Of the building principals, only Bonnie and John have experienced the types of conflicts mentioned in Major Finding 2. Joe, Michael, and Stewart have not had the level of conflict

experienced by the other building principals. Other than Bonnie and John, no other building principals were mentioned in local newspaper articles.

If we examine this in another way, Peter and Glen demonstrated a similar dynamic as to Bonnie, John, and Joe in their relationship between Goal Support and Constraint Reconciling practices. For instance, Peter had six practice sets for Goal Support whereas Glen only used one practice set. The analysis revealed that Peter used the practice sets of “communication,” “peer observations,” “resources,” “reviewing student work,” “professional and curricular development,” and “teaming” while Glen only used “resources.” Further, Glen said that the most important goals was not “student achievement” but to “maintain financial stability.” He was one of two participants to cite something other than “student achievement.” This comparison is illustrated in Table 27. Ultimately, Glen had his contract renewed by the board but Peter did not.

Table 27. Comparison of Practice Sets Demonstrated by Peter and Glen

	Communication	Peer Observations	Resources	Reviewing Student Work	Teaming
Peter*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Glen			✓		

*Found success in the instructional domain. Dominate practice type of Goal Support.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Addressing the Research Questions

5.3.1.1 First Research Question

What conceptual debates exist for instructional and institutional coherence? How has education applied those debates to institutional sustainability within school districts?

Public schools face a new organizational landscape, one of competition rather than that of a local monopoly. This dynamic, coupled with the impact of unfunded state and Federal mandates, compounds the pressure public schools face. As a result, it is critical that districts understand how the actions of decision makers are fashioned into an overall strategic framework. A classic view of strategy creation has the strategic plan at the center and focuses on the overall actions of the organization. A more recent view of strategy creation has people at the center and focuses on their collective activities in support of the larger organization. Understanding how school districts engage with strategy creation can help the district run more smoothly and mitigate inefficient organizational activities. This, in turn, better positions the district's competitive advantage in the public education marketplace. School districts are routinely required to create strategic plans to guide decision-making. Examining the individual practices of school administrators as the core of the strategic decision-making process has not yet occurred. Figure 17 illustrates the relationship SAP has to understanding how organizational coherence is achieved.

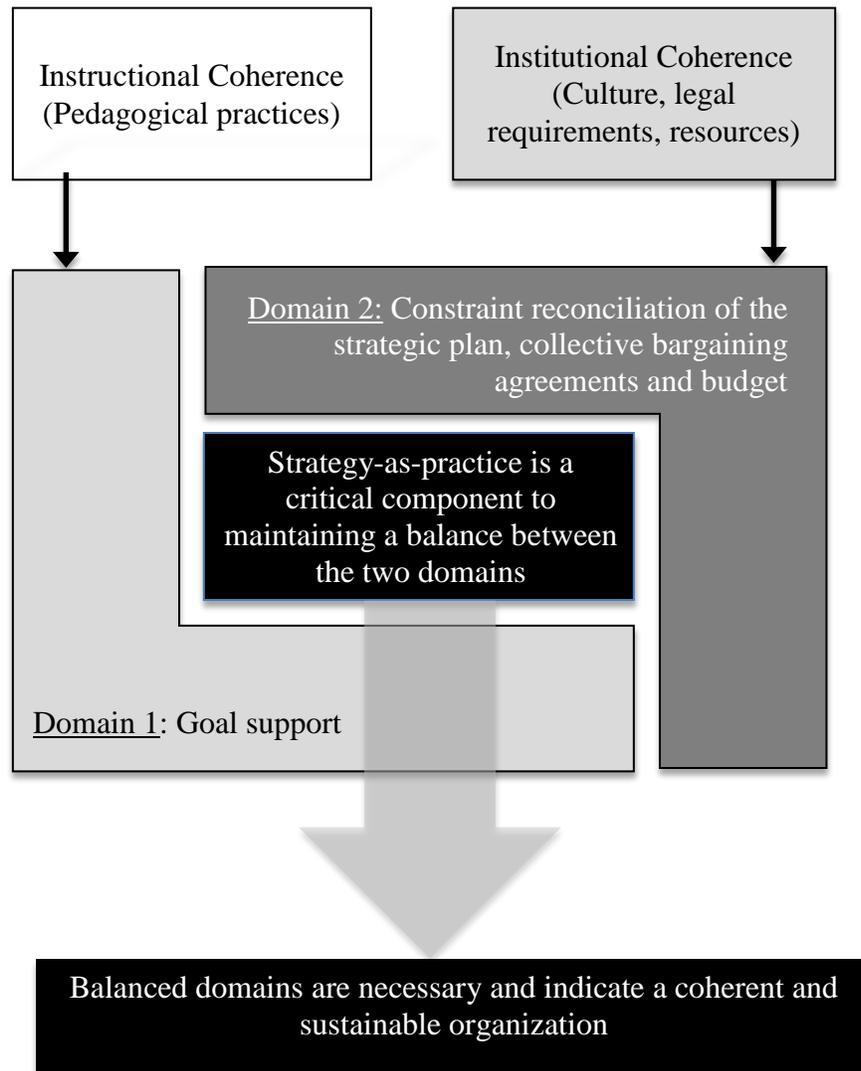


Figure 17. Conceptual map with conclusions

In answering this question using the data from this case study, I found that there was no participant that could be successful in both the instructional and institutional domains. Participants had an “either/or” relationship with the organization. They were either instructionally successful, as in the cases of Peter, Bonnie, and John, and seen as institutionally destabilizing or were seen as institutionally stable at the expense of instructional success.

5.3.1.2 Second Research Question

What does the research suggest as the best methodology for mapping institutional coherence in a K-12 public school district?

To determine the best methodology to map institutional coherence, it must examine: One, how the participants perceived the most important goals of the school district; Two, how participants identified specific practices; Three, if participants had a clear sense of the most important goal of the district and; Four, if the participant's actions to enact the goals aligned with their previously stated goals.

To best answer these questions, a qualitative case study, built on the Jarzabkowski model, examined how school administrators use strategy-as-practice to reconcile the constraints of the collective bargaining agreement, the strategic plan and the budget while achieving the district goals (Crotty, 1998; Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009; Yin, 1994). Further, an open interview format provided participants the ability to “engage in a stream of consciousness” (Giora & Thomas, 1996, p. 374 as cited in Jarzabkowski, 2003). To assist in the validation of the findings, transcripts of participant responses were resubmitted to the participants to check for consistency of interpretations. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, serial participant-observation of meetings assisted in establishing patterns of behavior. Document analysis data in the form of strategic plans, meeting minutes, electronic mail correspondence, calendars, and notes provided a more complete picture of the case study. These aspects allowed the researcher to familiarize himself with the locally meaningful processes and routines that occur informally (Van Maaren, 1979 as cited in Jarzabkowski, 2003).

5.3.1.3 Third Research Question

How can the management research field of ‘strategy as practice’ help inform more integrated local decision-making?

Through this question, both constructivist and pragmatist methodological frameworks are considered. Constructivist methodologies view actors as working together to “construct” meaning. They also treat “all knowledge and...reality [as] contingent upon human practices being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings” (Crotty, 1998, p. 42; Williamson, 2006). A pragmatist view is also a viable framework. Gerry Johnson et. al. (2007) states, “Pragmatism is...not an intellectual search for absolute truths but was discovered in practical activity; its value was not established against abstract standards, but derived from its usefulness in guiding subsequent activity” (p. 32). Both the constructivist and pragmatist frameworks are relevant to this study given that the actor-based nature of SAP emphasizes the organization’s actors and their foci, perceptions, sensemaking, and identity.

This question seeks to find methods that can assist in the study of two levels of understanding and meaning creation. The first is the personal or micro level formed from the interactions of the actors with each other. The second is a study of the impact such interactions have upon either mid-scale (meso) or large-scale (macro) levels of organizations. SAP provides this dual framework as articulated by Paula Jarzabkowski, et. al. (2003) and Gerry Johnson, et. al. (2007).

I crafted the problem statement of, “How do school administrators use strategy-as-practice to reconcile the constraints of the collective bargaining agreements, strategic plan and

budget while achieving district goals” to provide a framework in which to create and conduct this case study. To get at the specific elements of SAP that participants use, this study examined the participant’s identification of the district’s goals and specific strategies they used to support that goals, contrasted against how they reconciled the tension created by the constraints of the collective bargaining agreement, strategic plan, and the budget, while at the same time supporting the district’s goals. Two “domains” of interview questions answered the problem statement; Domain 1, referred to as Goal Support, ascertained the participant’s understanding of the district’s goals and Domain 2, referred to as Constraint Reconciliation, investigated the specific practices participants used to mitigate the constraints of collective bargaining agreements, strategic plan and budget. I entered this study thinking that an “either/or” relationship between Goal Support and Constraint Reconciliation, that a district would use only practices supporting either their goals or reconciling constraints. My understanding changed after analyzing the data. While both domains are necessary for organizational success, I was unaware of the value and prominence of institutional stability. I was also unaware of the formal and informal levers used by the organization to ensure that institutional sustainability remains in place.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

-Proverbs 29:18

The data and analysis from this research suggest a number of conclusions. First, while institutional elements bring stability to the organization, pursuing instructional improvement can be temporarily destabilizing. The goal of the institutional elements like the collective bargaining agreement, strategic plan, and budget are to maintain a sense of stability within the organization. Indeed, Glen, the finance director, states that his “task here from day one has been financial stability” of the district rather than “student achievement.” Prior to Peter’s arrival in 2007, Joe, the Happy Elementary principal, was considered an outstanding elementary administrator (Personal Communication, 2012a). When interviewed, Peter contends that this is because of Joe’s efforts at institutional sustainability. For instance, Joe had two buildings to operate and, by his own admission, did only management tasks rather than providing feedback on instruction. However, when interviewed in March 2012, Joe stated that he was “getting better” by providing instructional leadership to his building. When Joe discussed teacher supervision, as enumerated in the contract, he cited Peter’s leadership:

Interviewer: Any sort of conflicts or tensions you had, do you have a teacher who needs to improve, but then it sounds like there’s a supervision process that doesn’t really lend itself to that, so what do you do as the building principal?

Joe: Again, Peter’s leadership has helped out there. If I need to do it, observe a teacher and it’s not their clinical year to be observed, that’s not a problem.

This exchange suggests that Joe would not have conducted observations outside of the contract's supervision plan without Peter's express support, further illustrating the desire for stability within the organization and the risk goal-oriented individuals expose themselves to when addressing this domain. This dynamic suggests that institutional stability is critical to those who live in the geographical boundaries of the organization because rural school districts are usually the largest employer the region. This is the circumstance in this case study district, which is the third largest employer.

Second, districts that emphasize support of institutional elements rather than address the needs of improving instruction may not remain sustainable in the public education marketplace. In this new context, districts face a choice to support the rules of institutional elements or addressing permanent shortcomings to improve the organization's instructional effectiveness. In this case study, Peter, Bonnie, and John had the highest number of practices supporting the instructional domain. Peter, Bonnie, and John also had documented success in student achievement. For instance, Peter's efforts resulted in a growth of student achievement in the district overall. Bonnie's school had the highest increase in state test scores in the school's history. John's school increased enrollment in AP courses and improved state test results. Despite their academic successes, Peter, Bonnie, and John each experienced varying institutional responses. In contrast, the other participants that had more support of the institutional domain did not experience the same level of institutional responses as Peter, Bonnie, and John. This dynamic seems to suggest the support institutional stability even at the expense of instructional success. This can be examined more closely in Table 28.

Table 28. Comparative Data Table

	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Instructional References</u>	<u>Institutional References</u>	<u>Related to District Employees?</u>	<u>Lives within the District?</u>	<u>Instructional Evidence</u>				<u>Institutional Responses</u>
							<u>% Increase/Decrease in Math Scores</u>	<u>% Increase/Decrease in Reading Scores</u>	<u>% Increase/Decrease in Science Scores</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
<u>Low Instructional (Goal) Support</u>	Lois Grant	Upper Elementary Building	2	2	No	No	+7%	-15.5%	Note 4		None documented or observed
	Meg Bose	District	3	8	Yes	Yes					None documented or observed
	Michael Brown	District	3	2	Yes	Yes					None documented or observed
	Chris Rise	District	4	8	No	Yes					None documented or observed
<u>Medium Instructional (Goal) Support</u>	Brian Yao	District	5	4	No	No					None documented or observed
	Glen Adams	District	6	4	No	Yes					None documented or observed
	Stewart Fredrick	Junior High Building	6	6	No	No	+9.4%	+3.2%	0% ⁴		None documented or observed
	Joe Smith	Happy Elementary Building	7	5	No	Yes	+2.9%	+2.4%	Note 4		None documented or observed

High Instructional (Goal) Support	Bonnie Swanson	Trails Elementary Building	8	5	No	No	+7.3%	+7.1%	Note 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest single-year growth in state test scores. First time Bonnie's school outpaced Joe's school in both math and reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grievances Individual Board Members Board Executive Session
	John Doe	High School Building	8	4	No	No	54% ¹ 53.1% state average	66.2% ² 66.8% state average	62.2% ³ 41.5% state average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 AP students in 2010 to 230 in 2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grievances Individual Board Members Board Public Comment Sessions
	Peter Griffin	District	15	13	No	No				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of professional development sessions, teaming, curricular alignment, teacher contract changes, 55 new teachers hired. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grievances Superintendent Evaluation Superintendent Contract Superintendent Search Process

- 1 – 2012 was the first year for the Algebra Keystone Exam instead of PSSA Math tests.
2 – 2012 was the first year for the Literature Keystone Exam instead of the PSSA Reading test.
3 – 2012 was the first year for the Biology Keystone Exam instead of the PSSA Science test.
4 – State science tests are administered at the 8th grade level.

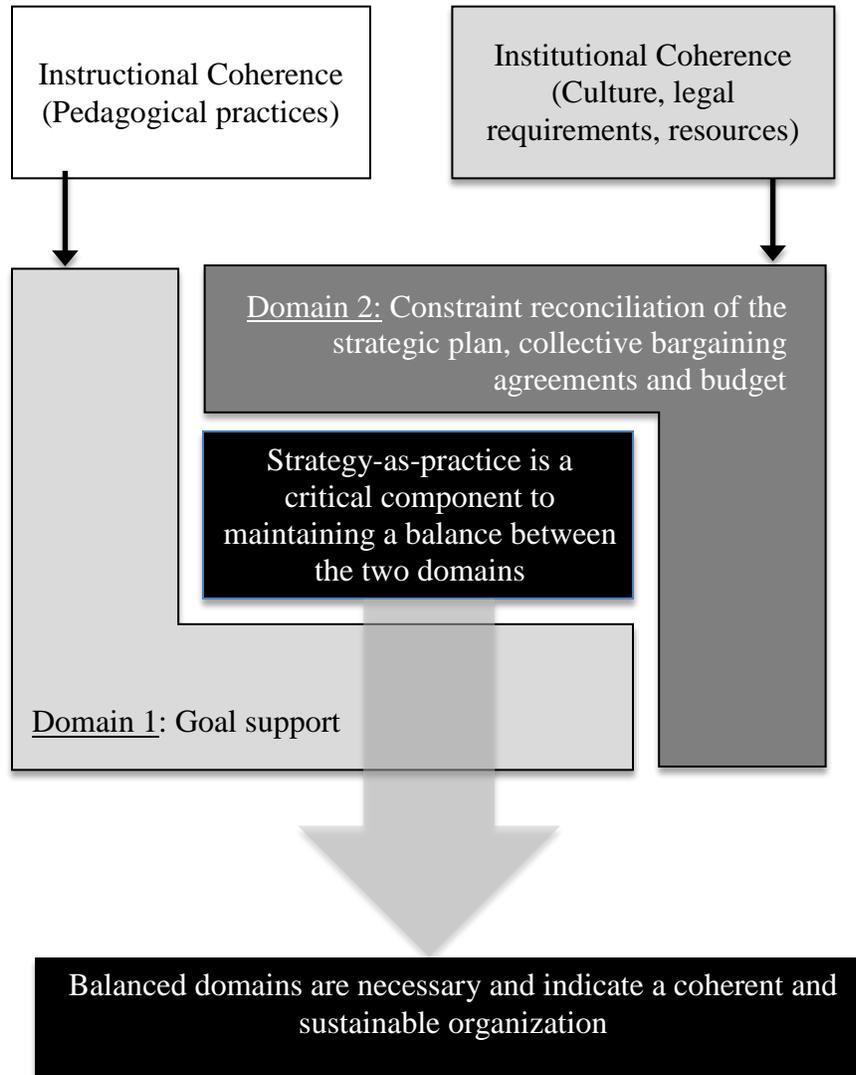


Figure 18. Conceptual map with conclusions

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A number of points for further research are raised at the end of this dissertation. It seems that this was an initial use of Strategy-as-Practice (SAP) to understand the dynamics within a public school district in the United States. Potential areas of new study revealed by this dissertation include:

1. Longitudinal studies of SAP in public education institutions: These could provide further depth and analysis to the specific practices of administrators as applied to a number of foci such as curriculum decisions and implementation, budget formulation, community relations, board relations, etc. This depth would allow a researcher to examine the tendencies of administrators to engage in specific practices and, in turn, examine the impact of both those tendencies and the specific strategies on strategic decision making at the local level.
2. Application of this case study's model to other districts: This could reveal the level of coherence within the organization by identifying the district's goals and the practices of its administrators to support either the district's goals or reconciling constraints of certain legal documents (e.g., collective bargaining agreements, budget, and strategic plans). Replication of this study in multiple districts might yield regional results related to specific trends, gaps, and overlaps in the practices of district administrators.

3. Examining school administrator's SAP and how a district allocates resources:

Research would provide insight into the types of strategic practices administrators utilize and how those practices influence resource allocation.

In addition, a follow-up case study in the selected case study district in this dissertation would provide comparison results that determine if growth or decline occurred between Goal Support and Constraint Reconciliation strategies. Such a comparison study could determine the most effective practices to achieve district goals and reconcile constraints.

Finally, I strongly recommend a unified approach to the institutional elements and instructional elements in school districts. Such an approach would see collective bargaining agreements, strategic plans, budgets linked together in a coherent manner to support improvements in instruction. These documents would coordinate between themselves, allowing school administrators to focus on instructional improvements rather than finding ways to mitigate the often-contradictory rules of these documents. Currently, a coherent organization would be one where practitioners are spending more time supporting the organization's goals rather than supporting the rules of institutional documents. However, allowing practitioners to channel their energies to fully support the organization's goals could have a profound impact on the effectiveness of public school districts.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Table 29. Interview Questions

<u>Positions Responding</u>	<u>Main Interview Questions</u>	<u>Link to Research Questions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board President • Superintendent • Finance Director • HR Director • Student Services Director • Two (2) Elementary Principals • Intermediate Principal • Junior High Principal • High School Assistant Principal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you believe to be the most important goals of the school district? 2. What actions do you take that are in support of these goals? 3. How do you know if your actions are effective? 4. What do you do if your actions are ineffective? 5. How has the strategic plan influenced your ability to achieve the goals you mentioned? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5a. What strategies did you use to reconcile those conflicts? 6. How has the contract influenced your ability to achieve the goals you mentioned? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6a. What strategies did you use to reconcile those conflicts? 7. How has the budget influenced your ability to achieve the goals you mentioned? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7a. What strategies did you use to reconcile those conflicts? 	<p>Research Question 3: How can “Strategy-as-Practice” help inform more effective decision making at the strategic level within K-12 public school districts?</p>

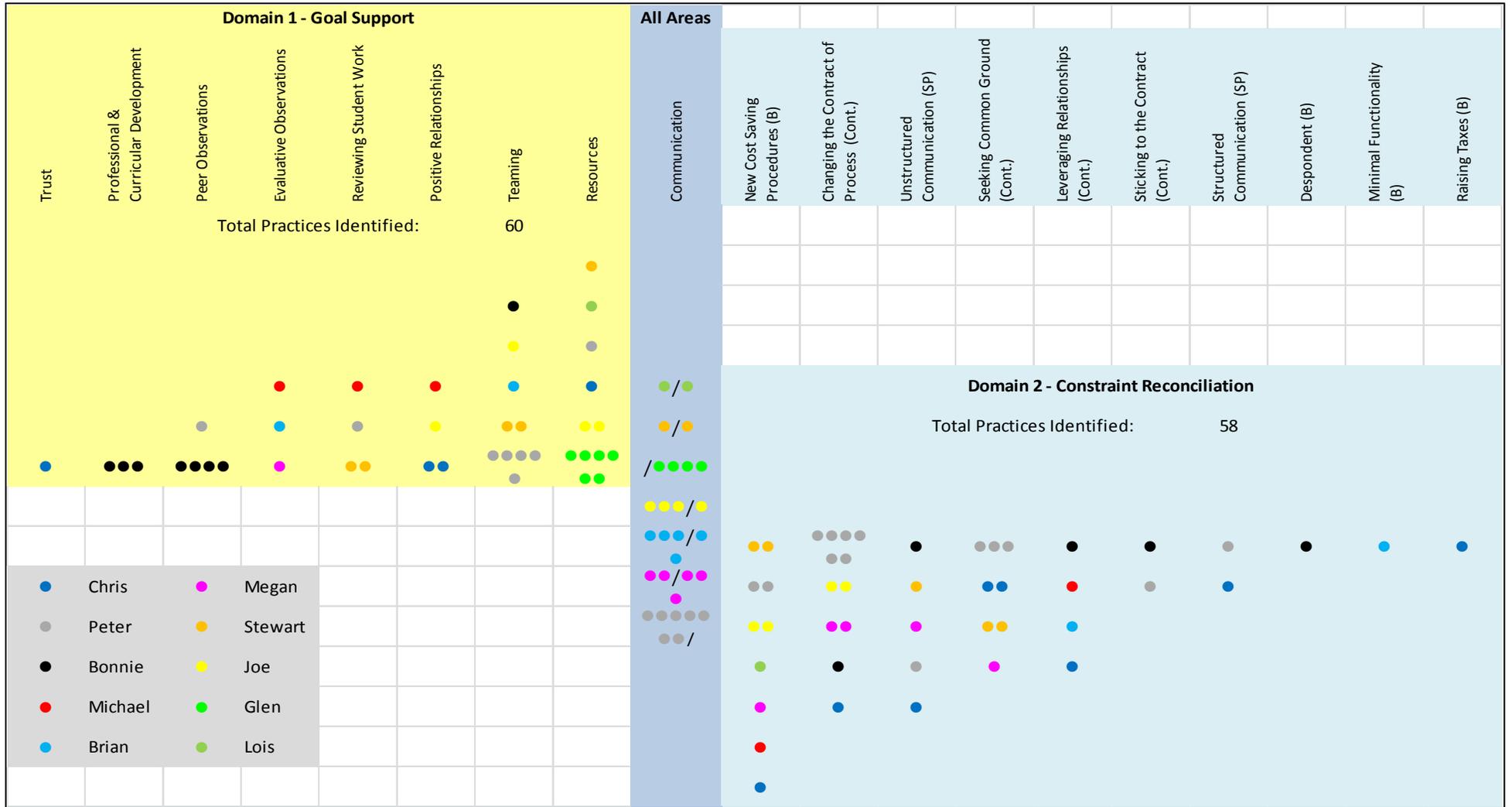
Possible Follow Up Questions

1. What do you think other administrators would say is the most important goals of the school district?
2. What would other administrators say if I asked them about the most important goals of the school district?
3. Is there a difference between the school's goals and the goals of the district?
4. What cues do you pick up that lead you to believe your actions are effective/ineffective?

APPENDIX B

GRAPHIC DEPICTION OF PRACTICE SETS IDENTIFIED BETWEEN DOMAIN 1 AND 2

Table 30. Graphic Depiction of Practice Sets Identified between Goals Support (Domains 1) and Constraint Reconciliation (Domain 2)



APPENDIX C

CODING TREE SCREEN SHOTS

1. Most Important Goal	0	0	6/12/2012 12:32 PM	JDH	6/12/2012 2:08 PM	JDH
Other than Student Achievement	2	2	6/12/2012 12:27 PM	JDH	6/12/2012 12:30 PM	JDH
Student Achievement	8	8	6/12/2012 12:21 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 11:44 AM	JDH
2. Specific Actions Taken	10	67	6/12/2012 12:33 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Communication	6	17	6/21/2012 1:34 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH
Evaluative Observations	3	3	6/21/2012 1:33 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 1:36 PM	JDH
Peer Observations	2	5	6/21/2012 1:26 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 1:27 PM	JDH
Positive Relationships	3	4	6/21/2012 1:34 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH
Professional and Curricular Dev	1	3	6/21/2012 1:32 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 1:33 PM	JDH
Resources	6	12	6/21/2012 1:34 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH
Reviewing Student Work	3	4	6/21/2012 1:28 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 1:31 PM	JDH
Teaming	5	10	6/21/2012 1:28 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH
Trust	1	1	6/21/2012 1:33 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 1:33 PM	JDH
3. Evidence of Effectivness	10	31	6/12/2012 12:36 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Anecdotal	8	19	6/21/2012 1:42 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH
Quantitative	7	11	6/21/2012 1:43 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH
4. Actions Related to Ineffectivness	9	30	6/12/2012 1:55 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Clarification	5	9	6/21/2012 1:49 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH
Peer Reflections	2	2	6/21/2012 1:48 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 1:51 PM	JDH
Re do	4	4	6/21/2012 1:47 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH
Self Reflection	7	11	6/21/2012 1:48 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 AM	JDH

Figure 19. Coding Tree Screen Shot 1 of 2.

5. Strat Plan Impact	10	22	6/12/2012 2:09 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Negative Impact	2	3	6/21/2012 1:55 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 1:55 PM	JDH
No Impact	6	8	6/21/2012 1:53 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 1:56 PM	JDH
Positive Impact	3	4	6/21/2012 1:53 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Unknown	4	7	6/21/2012 1:53 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
5a. Actions to Mitigate the Strat Pla	6	9	6/12/2012 2:09 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 11:46 A	JDH
Strucutred Communication	2	2	6/21/2012 1:59 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:01 PM	JDH
Unstructured Communication	5	5	6/21/2012 2:00 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 11:44 A	JDH
6. Contract Impact	10	26	6/12/2012 2:10 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Interpretation	3	4	6/21/2012 2:02 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:06 PM	JDH
Negative Impact	7	22	6/21/2012 2:02 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
No Impact	1	1	6/21/2012 2:07 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:07 PM	JDH
Positive Impact	2	2	6/21/2012 2:04 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:06 PM	JDH
Unknown	2	2	6/21/2012 2:05 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:07 PM	JDH
6a. Actions to Mitigate the Contract	8	30	6/12/2012 2:10 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Changing the Contract or Proce	5	12	6/21/2012 2:12 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 11:47 A	JDH
Common Ground	5	9	6/21/2012 2:11 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 11:47 A	JDH
Communication	2	4	6/21/2012 2:13 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 11:47 A	JDH
Leverage Relationships	4	4	6/21/2012 2:08 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:11 PM	JDH
Sticking to the Contract	2	2	6/21/2012 2:09 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:15 PM	JDH
7. Budget Impact	10	17	6/12/2012 2:11 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Negative Impact	3	4	6/21/2012 2:22 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:24 PM	JDH
No Impact	6	8	6/21/2012 2:21 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Positive Impact	5	5	6/21/2012 2:23 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
7a Action to Mitigate the Budget	10	19	6/12/2012 2:11 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Communication	4	7	6/21/2012 2:27 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Despondent	1	1	6/21/2012 2:26 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:26 PM	JDH
Introduce New Cost Saving Pro	7	10	6/21/2012 2:27 PM	JDH	6/22/2012 10:45 A	JDH
Minimal Functionality	1	1	6/21/2012 2:26 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:26 PM	JDH
Raise Taxes	1	1	6/21/2012 2:27 PM	JDH	6/21/2012 2:27 PM	JDH

Figure 20. Coding Tree Screen Shot 2 of 2.

APPENDIX D

STATISTICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF THE CASE STUDY DISTRICT

Table 31. District Free and Reduced Meal Data Compared with State Totals (in parentheses)

	Jan '08	Jan '09	Jan '10	Jan'11	Jan '12
Paid	1,147	1,087	1,013	1,007	973
Free	616	610	756	707	712
Reduced	237	272	192	196	161
Total School Population	2,000	1,969	1,961	1,910	1,846
Free or Reduced	42.7% (28.3%)	44.8% (36.5%)	48.4% (31.6%)	47.3% (33.1%)	47.3% (34.3%)

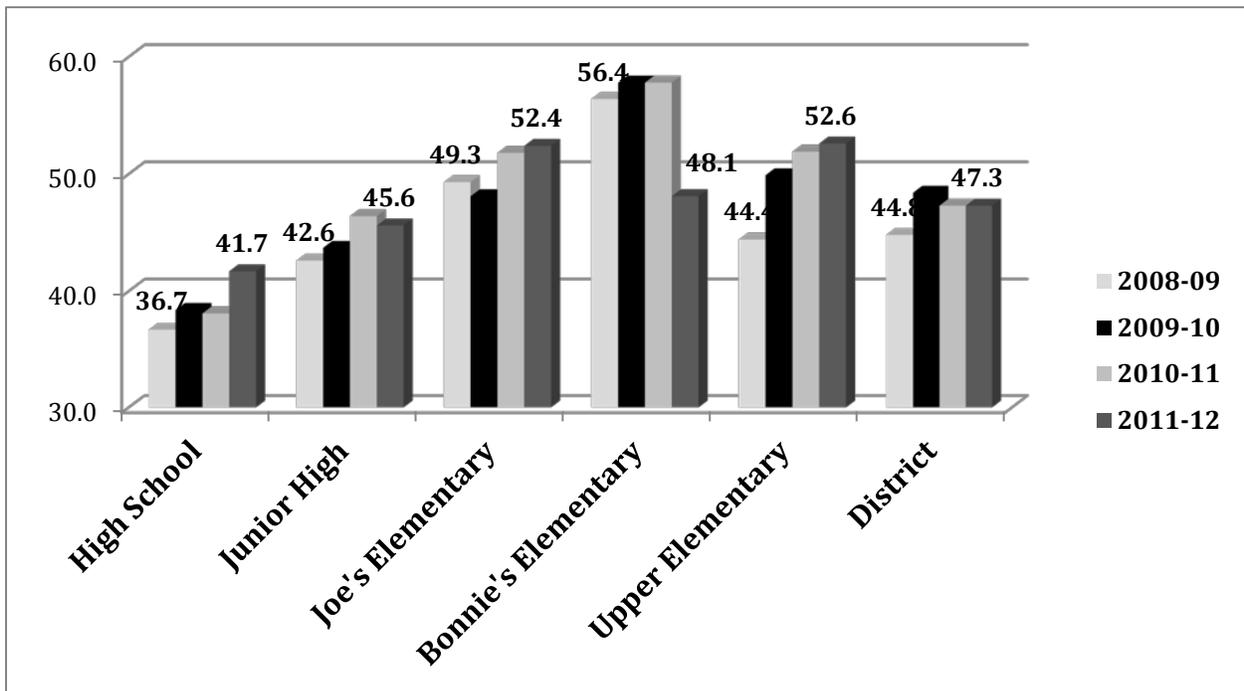


Figure 21. Free and Reduced Meal Percentages by Building

Table 32. Census Data from the 2009 American Community Survey Compared to State Averages (in parentheses)

	%		%		%
Population under 25:	27.7 (32.6)	White:	97.76 (82.3)	Unemployed:	6.3 (5.9)
Population change:	+7.87 (-7.04)	Black:	.32 (10.8)	High school diploma or higher:	84.9 (88.6)
Under 5:	4.54 (5.7)	American Indian:	.14 (0.1)	College graduate or higher:	11.1 (27)
Population 5-17:	13.09 (19)	Asia:	1.32 (2.8)	Median age:	44 (40.3)
Population 65+:	19.93 (15.5)	Hispanic:	.55 (5.9)		

Median household income:	\$36,138 (50,228)	Median family income:	\$47,856 (63,283)
Median household value:	\$80,000 (164,800)	Structures built prior to 1939:	37.5%
Owner occupied:	77.9% (61.5)	Square miles:	223,853
Renter-occupied:	22.1% (27)	Vacant housing units:	12% (9.9)
Poverty rate:	13.1 (9.60)		
Income distribution:			
\$15,000 to \$24,999	17.1% (11.6)	\$35,000 to \$49,999	18.6% (14.1)
\$25,000 to \$34,999	13.8% (10.6)	\$50,000 to \$74,999	17.4% (18.8)
Major industries: (Based on number of employees):		Top three occupation classes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mental health services, 570 employees 2. Public education, 293 employees 3. Manufacturing, unknown employees 4. Private prison, 245 employees 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management, professional 2. Sales and office 3. Production, transportation & material moving 	
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Educational, health and social services (2) Manufacturing (3) Retail trade 	

Crime Data

An undercurrent of the social, political and economic dynamic within the community is the increased adjudication of adults and juveniles. The HTSD has one community with a local police department but otherwise relies upon State Police presence. As such, community policing is minimal. The community that comprises the HTSD has seen an increase in drug distribution, use and abuse. Specifically, there was a spike in synthetic drug use and distributions by both adults and students. For instance, the Juvenile Probation Officer for the HTSD, indicated, “In the [HTSD] area there are over 500 adults on probation supervision which based on population is a significant number for the size of this community” (Officer, 2012). Observing the significant drug use increasing over the past eighteen months, he stated that the last four drug tests he administered resulted in four positive results for synthetic drug use (Juvenile Probation Officer, Personal Communication, 2012).

District Financial Data

The district has remained financially stable for six years. In 2006, financial mismanagement resulted in approximately 43 furloughed staff out of 340 that included 28 out of 160 teachers. The Finance Director at the time had estimated revenue at 100% of eligible taxes collected, whereas most finance directors estimate between 80-85% of eligible taxes collected (Personal Communication, 2012). The district currently employs 276 people, down from 363 during 05-06 school year, when the furloughs took place. Since the financial crisis, the district has not furloughed any staff and has reduced positions through attrition. Currently, the district generates

\$120,000 from a mill in property taxes. Note the 204% increase in in charter school tuition payments from \$236,546.00 in 2005-2006 to \$719,814.89 in 2011-2012.

Table 33. District Financial Data 2005-2012

	Local Revenues:	State and Federal Revenues:	Tuition to Charter and Other School Entities:	Gross Revenues:	Gross Expenditures:
05-06	\$7,836,666.00	\$14,604,354.30	\$236,546.00	\$22,441,020.00	\$26,442,795.00
06-07	\$8,712,677.00	\$14,620,778.72	\$389,734.00	\$23,333,456.00	\$25,068,471.88
07-08	\$9,635,409.00	\$15,472,879.58	\$384,197.13	\$25,108,289.00	\$24,122,192.11
08-09	\$9,936,506.28	\$16,245,561.22	\$339,480.22	\$26,182,068.00	\$24,409,228.52
09-10	\$10,676,192.08	\$16,988,989.50	\$512,971.70	\$27,665,182.00	\$33,333,804.30
10-11	\$11,223,468.32	\$17,970,331.25	\$593,777.21	\$29,193,800.00	\$27,595,051.00
11-12	\$11,305,777.80	\$16,616,232.94	\$719,814.89	\$27,922,011.00	\$27,807,155.88
12-13					

*43 furloughed staff in May 2006

District Academic Performance Data

Even though the district’s overall faculty and staff have decreased, district performance on state exams has remained stable. The district’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) was consistent from 2005-2007 when the targets for AYP performance increased. Table 34 provides the PSSA

Reading and Math Targets for a school to meet AYP and Table 35 provides an overview of each building's AYP status since 2005.

Table 34. Pennsylvania AYP Targets

<u>Reading</u>	<u>Mathematics</u>
02-04 – 45%	02-04 – 35%
05-07 – 54%	05-07 – 45%
08-10 – 63%	08-10 – 56%
10-11 – 72%	10-11 – 67%
11-12 – 81%	11-12 – 78%
12-13 – 91%	12-13 – 89%
13-14 – 100%	13-14 – 100%

Table 35. Adequate Yearly Progress Status of District Schools 2005-2012

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Happy</u>	<u>Trails</u>	<u>Upper</u>	<u>Walls</u>	<u>JHS</u>	<u>HS</u>
05-06	Yes	Yes	Yes	*School was closed at the end of the 2005-2006 SY.	Yes	Yes
06-07	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
07-08	No	Yes	Yes		Yes	No
08-09	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No
09-10	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
10-11	Yes	Yes	Yes		No	No
11-12	No	No	No		Yes	No

This district has struggled to achieve high levels of student performance for some time and has not moved past 72% on Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) test results since the introduction of this test. Figures 22 and 23 illustrate the comparison between cohorts on the PSSA at the district level since 2005, as well as state AYP targets and state performance averages.

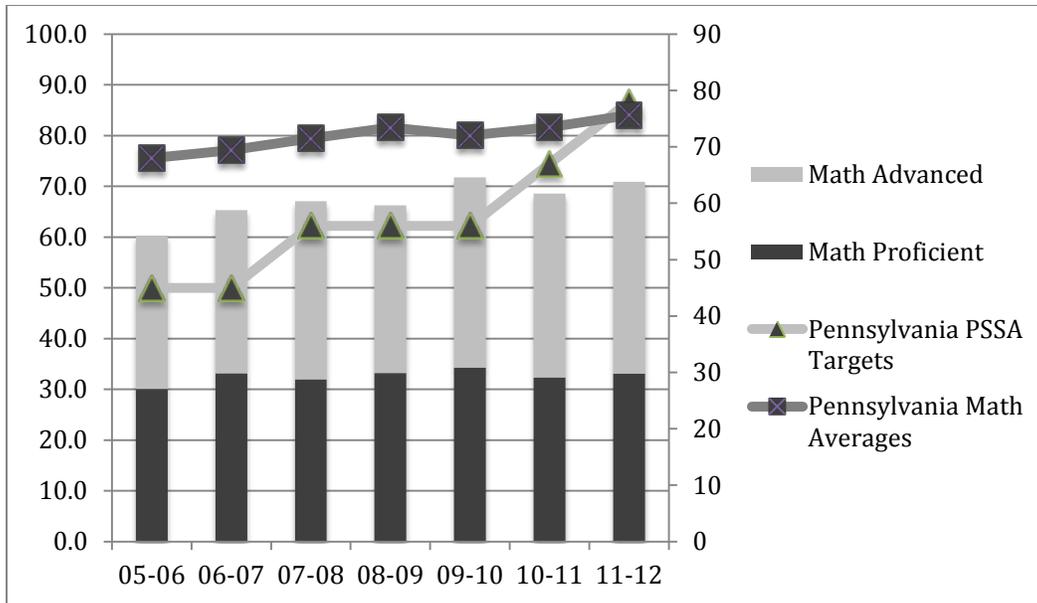


Figure 22. District PSSA Math Results 2005-2012

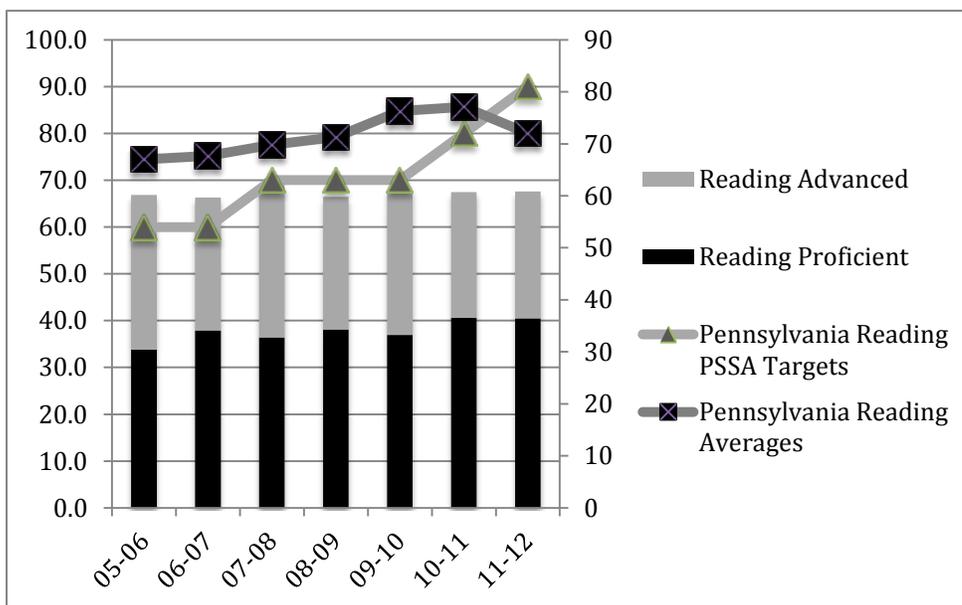


Figure 23. District PSSA Reading Results 2005-2012

Using the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS), the district has seen significant growth in student achievement, even though PSSA scores have remained stable. Figures 24 through 26 show the district’s growth in student achievement from PVAAS data.

From the PVAAS website, the “previous years” row “displays the progress of the last three groups of students (NOT including the most recent year)” of the average of student performance over the last three years. The “B,” “G,” “P” and White” indicate “blue,” green,” “pink” and “white” respectively to assist readers unable to see the charts in color.

<u>Growth (# of Students)</u>		For each subgroup, you will see the Growth, followed by the Number of Students in parentheses									
		Prior-Achievement Quintile Group									
		1 (Lowest)		2		3 (Middle)		4		5 (Highest)	
<u>Grade</u>	<u>Sort by</u>	<u>Prev</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Prev</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Prev</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Prev</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Prev</u>	<u>2012</u>
	<u>Std. for PA Acad. Growth</u>	0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0	
<u>4</u>	<u>2012 Growth</u>	6.6 (24) B		6.2 (29) B		9.5 (16) B		8.7 (21) B		7.3 (15) B	
	<u>Previous Years</u>	3.3 (97) B		2.1 (88) B		5.2 (84) B		2.2 (77) B		4.1 (66) B	
<u>5</u>	<u>2012 Growth</u>	0.4 (31) G		0.3 (31) G		-0.5 (29) G		5.3 (29) B		-1.4 (17) G	
	<u>Previous Years</u>	-3.0 (99) P		-0.8 (84) G		-3.0 (77) P		-4.1 (81) P		-6.6 (70) P	
<u>6</u>	<u>2012 Growth</u>	-0.7 (40) G		2.5 (23) B		0.5 (31) G		0.7 (30) G		5.5 (25) B	
	<u>Previous Years</u>	0.9 (100) G		-0.9 (89) G		1.4 (80) B		3.5 (60) B		7.3 (51) B	
<u>7</u>	<u>2012 Growth</u>	-2.7 (27) P		-3.9 (26) P		-6.3 (19) P		-7.1 (21) P		-8.8 (17) P	
	<u>Previous Years</u>	1.5 (118) B		-0.3 (116) G		-1.5 (88) P		-1.6 (43) G		0.8 (38) G	
<u>8</u>	<u>2012 Growth</u>	-1.3 (41) G		-0.3 (25) G		-3.6 (26) P		-3.5 (18) P		-8.5 (14) P	
	<u>Previous Years</u>	1.4 (133) B		1.5 (104) B		-0.2 (109) G		-1.9 (61) P		-3.2 (32) P	

[View District Performance Diagnostic Summary \(BY GRADE\)](#)

B	Moderate evidence that the group exceeded the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
G	Evidence that the group met the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
P	Moderate evidence that the group did not meet the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
White	There were not enough students to define growth.

Figure 24. Grades 4-8 PVAAS Math Data

Growth (# of Students)		For each subgroup, you will see the Growth, followed by the Number of Students in parentheses									
		Predicted Achievement Quintile Group									
		1 (Lowest)		2		3 (Middle)		4		5 (Highest)	
Grade	Sort by	Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012
11	2012 Growth	2.5	(36) G	-68.0	(20) P	-1.5	(37) G	-51.1	(21) P	-124.9	(14) P
	Previous Years	-43.3	(53) P	-91.0	(55) P	-59.9	(64) P	-39.4	(72) P	-28.1	(48) P

[View District Performance Diagnostic Summary \(BY GRADE\)](#)

B	Moderate evidence that the group exceeded the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
G	Evidence that the group met the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
P	Moderate evidence that the group did not meet the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
White	There were not enough students to define growth.

Figure 25. Grade 11 PVAAS Math Data

Growth (# of Students)		For each subgroup, you will see the Growth, followed by the Number of Students in parentheses									
		Prior-Achievement Quintile Group									
		1 (Lowest)		2		3 (Middle)		4		5 (Highest)	
Grade	Sort by	Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012
	Std. for PA Acad. Growth	0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0	
4	2012 Growth	3.5	(19) B	-3.5	(26) P	0.3	(27) G	0.5	(25) G	-13.5	(7) P
	Previous Years	0.6	(100) G	3.2	(94) B	2.4	(86) B	-0.2	(71) G	2.0	(57) G
5	2012 Growth	0.6	(33) G	-1.5	(30) G	0.2	(35) G	7.2	(21) B	11.0	(15) B
	Previous Years	1.6	(121) B	-1.3	(84) P	-2.2	(83) P	-5.4	(74) P	-5.8	(50) P
6	2012 Growth	0.4	(44) G	1.1	(27) G	1.5	(33) G	2.5	(24) G	14.6	(23) B
	Previous Years	-1.1	(94) G	0.3	(101) G	1.1	(78) G	2.9	(67) B	7.4	(42) B
7	2012 Growth	2.0	(22) G	0.8	(25) G	1.0	(24) G	-6.2	(15) P	-0.9	(22) G
	Previous Years	2.9	(101) B	5.0	(82) B	4.1	(102) B	2.8	(80) B	0.2	(41) G
8	2012 Growth	0.4	(38) G	-2.5	(24) G	0.4	(18) G	-0.4	(27) G	9.2	(16) B
	Previous Years	0.9	(99) G	1.7	(88) B	0.5	(104) G	-0.7	(82) G	-5.9	(66) P

[View District Performance Diagnostic Summary \(BY GRADE\)](#)

B	Moderate evidence that the group exceeded the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
G	Evidence that the group met the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
P	Moderate evidence that the group did not meet the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
White	There were not enough students to define growth.

Figure 26. Grades 4-8 PVAAS Reading Data

Growth (# of Students)		For each subgroup, you will see the Growth, followed by the Number of Students in parentheses									
Grade	Sort by	Predicted Achievement Quintile Group									
		1 (Lowest)		2		3 (Middle)		4		5 (Highest)	
		Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012	Prev	2012
11	2012 Growth	18.8 (34)	G	21.1 (24)	G	26.9 (25)	B	-0.6 (24)	G	-55.5 (22)	P
	Previous Years	-48.8 (49)	P	-1.5 (62)	G	7.5 (62)	G	-22.9 (62)	P	-21.7 (58)	P

[View District Performance Diagnostic Summary \(BY GRADE\)](#)

B	Moderate evidence that the group exceeded the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
G	Evidence that the group met the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
P	Moderate evidence that the group did not meet the Std. for PA Acad. Growth.
White	There were not enough students to define growth.

Figure 27. Grade 11 PVAAS Reading Data

High School Advanced Placement Data

From 1955, the year College Board developed Advanced Placement (AP) courses, until 1995 the Happy Trails High School (HTHS) offered no AP courses. In 1996, the HTHS began to offer AP courses to selected students, exceeding no more than ten students per year, out of a student population of 600. In 2011, HTHS embarked on a massive change in its approach to offering AP courses and provided access to these courses for any student wishing to experience the challenge. From the 2010-2011 the school witnessed growth in AP student enrollments from five to 230 in 2012-2013 school year as seen in Figure 28. During the 2011-2012 school year the district paid for AP examinations for students enrolled in AP courses. In May of 2012, an article from the Huffington Post cited the use of expanded AP courses as a tool for improving the quality of high school rigor (Pope, 2012).

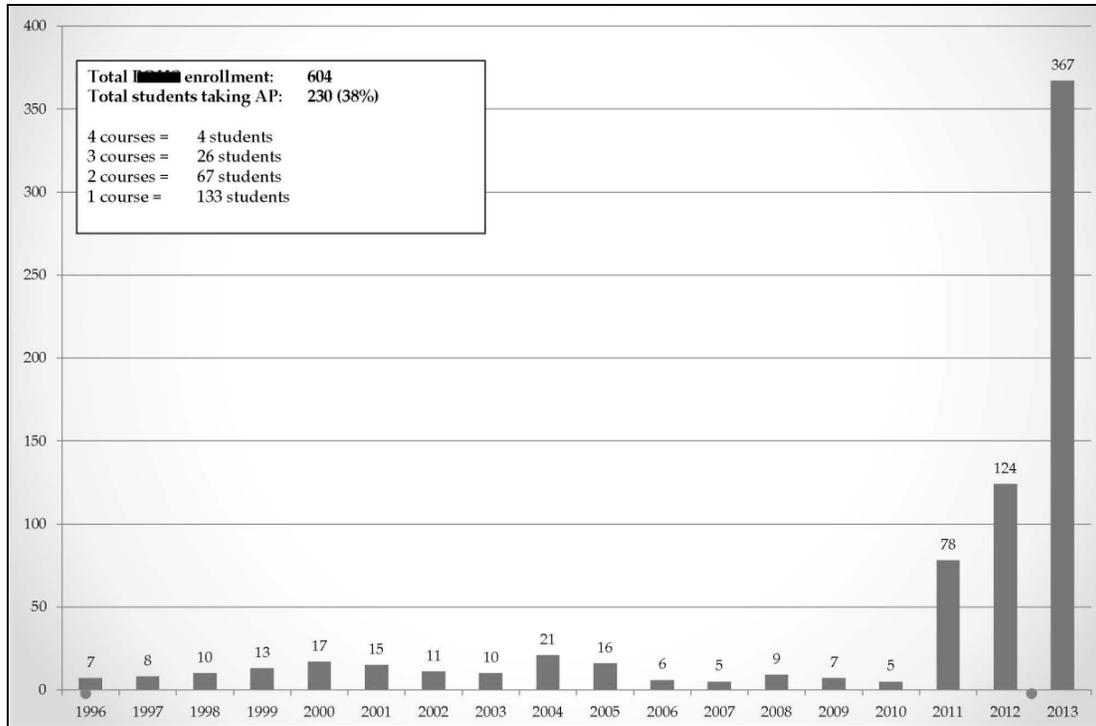


Figure 28. AP Enrollment at HTHS 1996-present

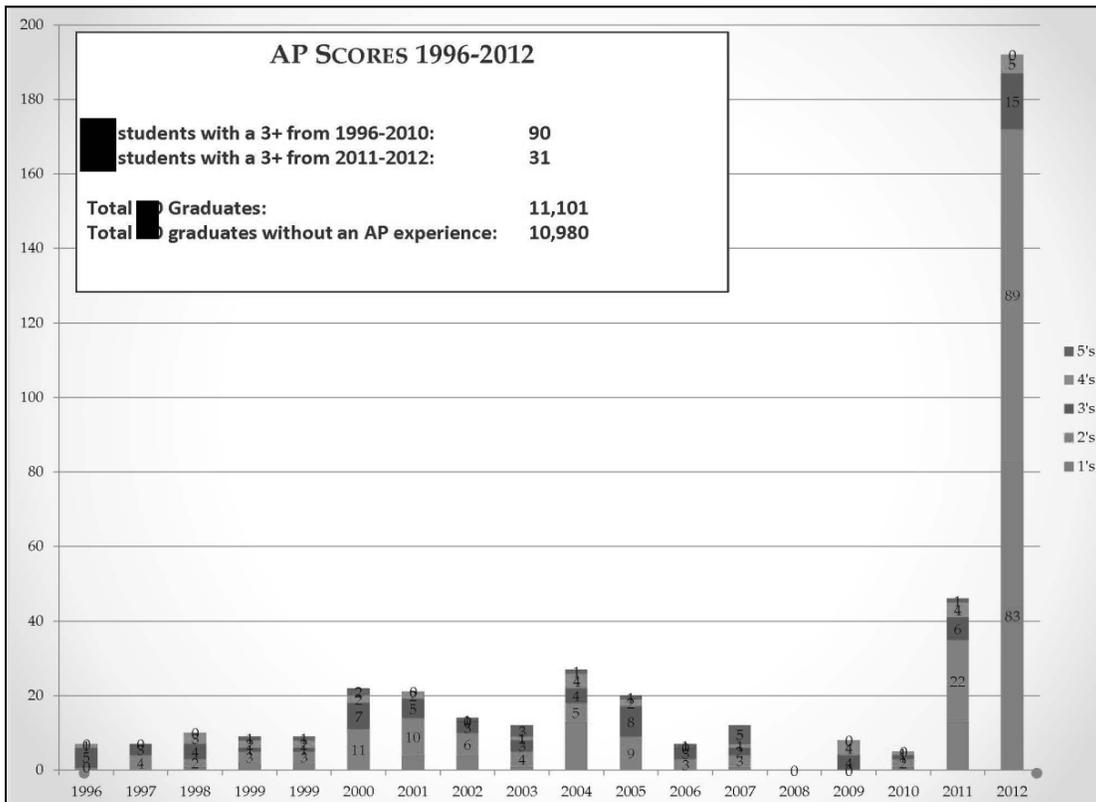


Figure 29. AP Scores Breakdown from 1996-2012

District Postsecondary Student Data

The HTSD falls below the state averages in four-year college participation, but is significantly higher in two-year technical and vocational school participation. The HTHS did not have an articulated career and college readiness program for ninth through twelfth grades until the 2012-2013 school year. This program emphasizes student exploration of at least three careers, the economic outlook of those careers including earning potential, job shadowing in one of the selected careers, mock interviewing, and resume and college entrance writing.

Table 36. Postsecondary Plans for the HTSD Graduating Class of 2012 Compared to State Averages (in parentheses)

<u>4-year College/University</u>	<u>2-year Technical/Vocational School</u>	<u>Total Postsecondary</u>	<u>Joined Military</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
52.23% (73.9%)	20.89% (5.6%)	73.12% (79.50%)	2.98%	20.15%	4.47%

APPENDIX E

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The community of Happy Trails School District (HTSD) was founded in 1958. The two main communities, the town of “Happy” and the town of “Trails,” voluntarily merged in 1958 to form the current district. As with most mergers occurring at that time in state history, the newly formed district had a dual name representing the two communities. The older generation, however, currently in the town of Trails that participated in the merger continues to allege that the town of Happy is marginalizing them. Both towns have an elementary school. Happy also has the upper elementary, junior high and high schools. Trails was home to the junior high school before it was renovated and converted into an elementary school. The HTSD community has always maintained an “underdog” culture, not wishing to be compared to its neighboring district, the Happy Valley School District, which is home to Happy Valley University. This mentality may be a result of the region’s topography.

Illustrated in Figure 30 is a relief map of the case study district and surrounding communities, with road names redacted to ensure confidentiality of the case study community. The case study community is indicated by the circle at the left. The county seat of Olympus is indicated by the triangle to the right. The large community of Happy Valley is located in the

large square. Note the topography of the region and the mountain range that cuts through the county. In referring to the county seat in Olympus, Joe Smith, a longtime resident of the town of Happy, stated, “One of the founders of Happy actually said, ‘We should cut the top of the mountain off so the people in Olympus can see us over here’” (Personal Communication, 2012). Also of note is the interstate highway and airports that surround the community of Happy Valley whereas similar such infrastructure is not located around the town of Happy.

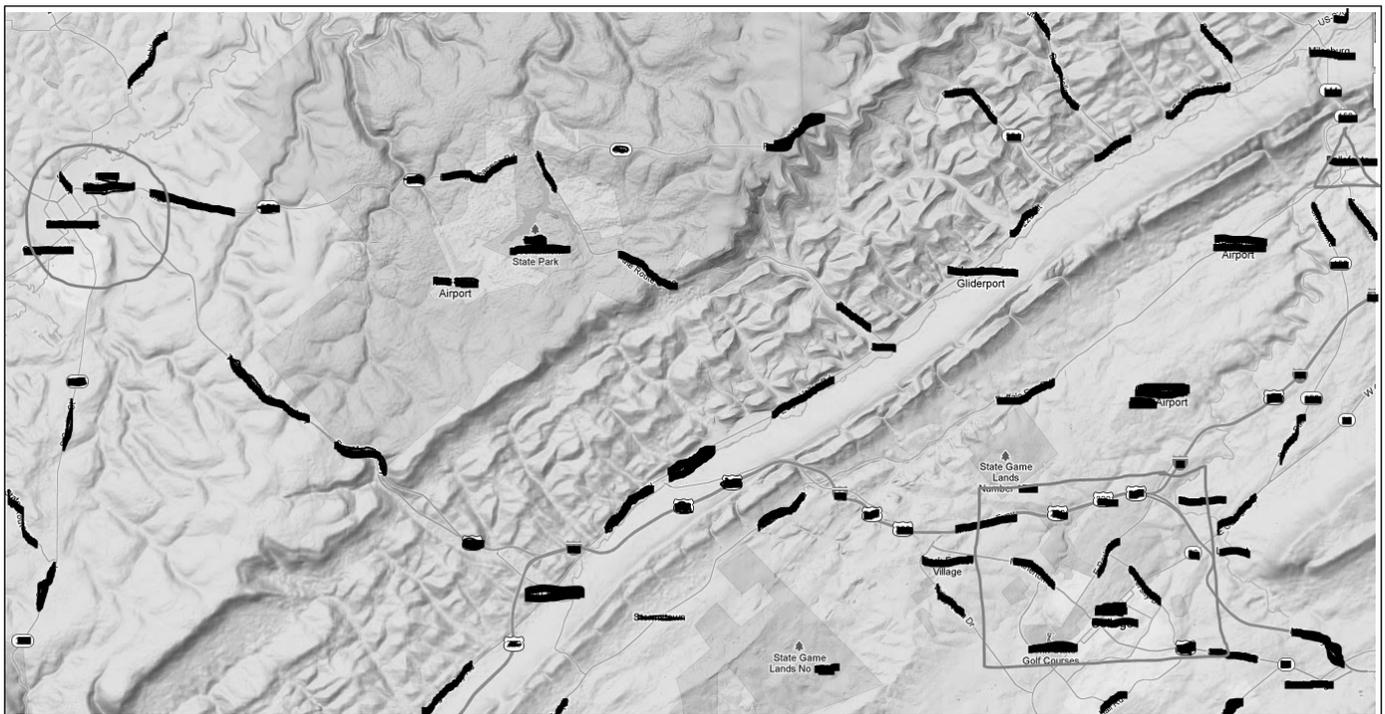


Figure 30. Relief Map of Case Study and Surrounding Communities

The topography of the region is an important aspect in its economic development. Since 2009, Pennsylvania has experienced a rapid growth in gas and oil mining in the Marcellus Shale underneath Pennsylvania and New York. This kind of economic development in the region may have a positive influence on the HTSD poverty rate, which is 3.5% above the state average. For instance, Bradford County has the largest number of gas wells (1,094) and had the 4th lowest unemployment rate in the state (6.3%) in June, 2012 (Coalition, 2012). However, the communities in the HTSD actively inhibit the growth of this industry. The largest township in the district, Hurry Township, sought to impede Marcellus Shale companies from entering the area. The township voted approving a moratorium on drilling and held community meetings to stop any shale oil company from entering the area (2, 2011; 3, 2011). The animosity of the community toward the natural gas industry eventually resulted in Tyrannosaurus Rex Energy opening a facility in the nearby community of Olympus. When asked why Olympus was chosen over the Happy Trails School District, the Happy Trails District Spokeswoman said, “community was one reason cited...there were others, too” (Personal Communication, 2012).

APPENDIX F

COPIES OF PETER GRIFFIN'S EVALUATIONS

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: Please evaluate the Superintendent's performance by numerically scoring each item below. Please provide supporting comments indicating specific examples of Excellent Performance and areas for improvement, particularly those with Minimally Acceptable Performance.

RATING DEFINITIONS:

- 1 = **Minimally Acceptable Performance**
- 2 = **Fair Performance:** accomplishes many things satisfactorily; elements of position may require further improvement
- 3 = **Good Performance:** in the center of a large broad range of good performers; capable showing in most elements expected of the position
- 4 = **Strong Performance:** most - if not all - elements of the position performed in excellent fashion; adding new dimensions to position through capability and desire
- 5 = **Overall Excellent Performance:** all elements of position performed in exemplary fashion; continually "reaching out" for responsibility not expected

NO = Not observed by evaluator

1.0	RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD	1	2	3	4	5	NO
		0					
1.1	Interprets and executes the Intent of Board policy	0					
1.2	Supports Board policy and actions to the public and staff	0					
1.3	Keeps the Board informed on issues, needs and operations of the school system	0					
1.4	Offers professional advice and appropriate recommendations to the Board on items requiring Board action	0					
1.5	Plans along with the Board for the future of the school district	0					
1.6	Provides the Board with sufficient data and appropriate alternatives	0					
1.7	Makes recommendations for employment or promotion of personnel and accepts responsibility for recommendations	0					
1.8	Acts as liaison between the Board and personnel, working toward a high degree of mutual communication, understanding, and respect between the Board and staff	0					
1.9	Relates to the Board in an atmosphere of trust and understanding	0					
1.10	Refrains from criticism of individual or group members of the Board	0					
1.11	Goes immediately and directly to the Board when a difference of opinion arises between the Superintendent and any or all Board members, in an earnest effort to immediately resolve the difference	0					
1.12	Participates in resolving differences of opinion	0					
1.13	Maintains an open and honest relationship with all Board members	0					
1.14	Has a harmonious working relationship with the Board	0					
1.15	Remains impartial toward the Board, treating all members alike	0					
1.16	Seeks and accepts constructive criticism	0					

Comments on RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD: MR. [REDACTED] HAS NO TIME FOR THE BOARD. HE FEELS THAT ITS ONLY PURPOSE IS TO "RUBBER STAMP" ALL OF HIS INSANE IDEAS. HE OPERATES FROM A "BULLY PULPIT" WITH THE OPINION THAT ITS "MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY"!

Figure 31. Evaluation 1; page 1 of 4

2.0	EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP	0	1	2	3	4	5	NO
2.1	Implements the district's educational philosophy and goals	0						
2.2	Spends time in schools observing staff and students	0						
2.3	Understands and remains informed on all aspects of the instructional program	0						
2.4	Inspires others to highest professional standards	0						
2.5	Organizes a planned program for staff evaluation and improvements	0						
2.6	Utilizing the democratic process, seeks input from staff, Board and community in curriculum development and the improvement of instruction	0						
2.7	Plans, organizes and implements an instructional program responsive to community needs	0						
2.8	Provides democratic procedures for curricular work, utilizing the talents and abilities of the staff and the community	0						
2.9	Works with the staff to identify educational objectives	0						
2.10	Supports curricular change necessary to prepare students for successful participation in our changing society	0						

Comments on EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: MR. [REDACTED] HAS A DISDAINE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION. HE IS THE GREAT DIVIDER AS IN "DIVIDE AND CONQUER". HE WANTS TO HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH STUDENTS AND MOST ESPECIALLY THE CITIZENS OF THE COMMUNITY.

3.0	BUSINESS AND FINANCE	0	1	2	3	4	5	NO
3.1	Evaluates educational needs and translates them into financial recommendations	0						
3.2	Stays informed about the physical needs of the school district	0						
3.3	Supervises operations, insisting on competent and efficient performance	0						
3.4	Makes provisions for the wise expenditure of funds and for adequate control and accounting measures	0						
3.5	Evaluates financial needs and makes recommendations for adequate financing	0						
3.6	Is knowledgeable concerning the business operations of the school district	0						
3.7	Monitors budget effectively	0						
3.8	Assists in identifying, planning and implementing capital improvements	0						
3.9	Supervises, recommends and assumes responsibility for presenting the annual budget to the Board	0						

Comments on BUSINESS AND FINANCE: THE BUSINESS MANAGER IS SCARED STIFF DUE TO THE OVERBEARING TACTICS OF MR. [REDACTED]! BY USING A CONSENT AGENDA, MILLIONS OF DOLLARS ARE SPENT WITHOUT THE BOARD BEING ABLE TO QUESTION THESE TRANSACTIONS. IF A BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONS AN ITEM, THE 3'S SHOUT THE MEMBER DOWN FOR "MICROMANAGING"!

Figure 32. Evaluation 1; page 2 of 4

4.0	STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	NO
4.1	Develops and executes sound personnel procedures and practices	0					
4.2	Develops good staff morale and loyalty to the school district	0					
4.3	Treats all personnel fairly, without favoritism or discrimination, while insisting on satisfactory performance of duties	0					
4.4	Is open and receptive to the staff complaints and recommendations	0					
4.5	Recruits and assigns the best available personnel	0					
4.6	Encourages effective two-way communication and staff participation in planning, procedure making, policy interpretation and decision making	0					
4.7	Evaluates performance of staff members, giving commendations for good work as well as constructive suggestions for improvement	0					
4.8	Takes an active role in developing salary schedules for all personnel, and recommends the level which will best serve the interests of the district, within budgetary limitations	0					
4.9	At the direction of the Board, meets and confers with leaders of the teachers' association, representing the interest and will of the Board	0					
4.10	Provides opportunities for staff-self-improvement	0					
4.11	Has the ability to win cooperation, interest and enthusiasm of the staff	0					
4.12	Effectively plans and organizes the activities of others	0					
4.13	Promotes high morale in the staff	0					
4.14	Establishes standards of performance for all staff positions in consultation with them, and works with staff to achieve consistently high standards of performance	0					
4.15	Delegates authority to staff members appropriate for the position each holds	0					
4.16	Evaluates annually all staff with direct reporting responsibility	0					
4.17	Oversees and directs the evaluation process of all district employees	0					

Comments on STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS:

STAFF MORALE IS LOWER THAN WHALE VOMIT.
 MR. [REDACTED] AND HIS GROUP OF "BOBBLE HEADS" HAVE CAUSED GOOD PEOPLE TO RETIRE BEFORE THEIR TIME OR BE FORCED TO LEAVE THE DISTRICT.
 MR. [REDACTED] AND Bonnie Swanson HAVE TAKEN ONE OF OUR BEST SCHOOLS Trails Elementary AND DEGRADED IT INTO ONE OF OUR WORST! I HOPE THE ADMINISTRATORS ARE ALL PROUD OF THE DAMAGE THEY HAVE INFLECTED ON THIS DISTRICT. IT WILL TAKE MANY YEARS TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE.
 A REALLY BIG JOKE IS HAVING COMPLETELY INCOMPETENT STAFF MEMBERS MAKING "ROUNDS" TO EVALUATE TEACHERS. SHAME! SHAME! SHAME!

Figure 33. Evaluation 1; page 3 of 4

5.0	STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES	1	2	3	4	5	NO
5.1	Is visible to the student body	0					
5.2	Expresses a genuine concern for and interest in the welfare of students	0					
5.3	Is receptive to input and communication from representatives of the student body	0					
5.4	Recognizes student success and achievement	0					
5.5	Maintains positive relationship with the student body	0					
5.6	Demonstrates an awareness of students - their ideas, suggestions and feelings	0					
5.7	Keeps students the center of the decision-making process	0					
5.8	Promotes activities which improve the self-image of children	0					
5.9	Attends student activities	0					
5.10	Works to improve student morale	0					

Comments on STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

MR [REDACTED] IS PETRIFIED OF STUDENTS. HE WANTS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM. THEY ARE DIRT UNDER HIS FEET! THIS IS WHY HE GETS BOOED AND JEERED IF HE GETS CAUGHT IN THE HALLS OR CAFETERIA OF THE HIGH SCHOOL!

6.0	COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	NO
6.1	Attends school activities and events	0					
6.2	Works to achieve community understanding of educational goals	0					
6.3	Works effectively with the news media	0					
6.4	Participates in community life and affairs	0					
6.5	Achieves recognition as a community leader in public education	0					
6.6	Works effectively with public and private agencies	0					
6.7	Provides the opportunity for the problems and opinions of individuals or groups to be expressed and understood	0					
6.8	Gains the respect and support of the community on the conduct of the school operation	0					
6.9	Effectively communicates in a positive manner with the public in all areas of the educational program	0					
6.10	Works at appraising the present and future educational needs of the community	0					

Comments on COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS:

MR [REDACTED] HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH OUR COMMUNITY. HE RIDES IN ON MONDAY MORNING AND RIDES OUT ON FRIDAY AS SOON AS HE CAN POSSIBLY GET OUT! IN BETWEEN, HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, AND HE DOESN'T CONTRIBUTE A PENNY TO THE COMMUNITY EXCEPT FOR THE \$5.00 A WEEK AT THE "FLEA BAG" MOTEL.

Figure 34. Evaluation 1; page 3 of 4

7.0	PERSONAL QUALITIES	1	2	3	4	5	NO
7.1	Maintains high standards of ethics, honesty and integrity in all personal and professional matters	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.2	Earns respect and recognition from professional colleagues	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.3	Exercises good judgment in decision making	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.4	Defends principles and convictions in the face of pressure and partisan influence	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.5	Is suitably attired and well groomed	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.6	Writes clearly and concisely	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.7	Speaks well and effectively before groups of all sizes	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.8	Continues professional development by reading, course work, conference attendance, work on professional committees, visiting other districts, and meeting with other superintendents	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.9	Is poised in the face of a crises	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					
7.10	Works and relates well with others	<input checked="" type="radio"/>					

Comments on PERSONAL QUALITIES:

A GOOD ONE WORD CHARACTERIZATION OF MR. [REDACTED] WOULD BE DESPICABLE. HE IS THE EMBODIMENT OF EVERYTHING A SUPERINTENDENT SHOULD NOT BE! DISGUSTING AND STRETCHES THE HELL OUT OF THE TRUTH!

OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING

0	1	2	3	4	5
<input checked="" type="radio"/>					

Date of Evaluation

August 14, 2012

Signature of Evaluator

Board Member 8

Figure 35. Evaluation 1; page 4 of 4

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: Please evaluate the Superintendent's performance by numerically scoring each item below. Please provide supporting comments indicating specific examples of Excellent Performance and areas for improvement, particularly those with Minimally Acceptable Performance.

RATING DEFINITIONS:

0 = *not acceptable*

- 1 = **Minimally Acceptable Performance**
- 2 = **Fair Performance:** accomplishes many things satisfactorily; elements of position may require further improvement
- 3 = **Good Performance:** in the center of a large broad range of good performers; capable showing in most elements expected of the position
- 4 = **Strong Performance:** most - if not all - elements of the position performed in excellent fashion; adding new dimensions to position through capability and desire
- 5 = **Overall Excellent Performance:** all elements of position performed in exemplary fashion; continually "reaching out" for responsibility not expected

NO = Not observed by evaluator

1.0	RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD	1	2	3	4	5	NO
1.1	Interprets and executes the intent of Board policy	0					
1.2	Supports Board policy and actions to the public and staff	0					
1.3	Keeps the Board informed on issues, needs and operations of the school system	0					
1.4	Offers professional advice and appropriate recommendations to the Board on items requiring Board action	0					
1.5	Plans along with the Board for the future of the school district	1					
1.6	Provides the Board with sufficient data and appropriate alternatives	0					
1.7	Makes recommendations for employment or promotion of personnel and accepts responsibility for recommendations	0					
1.8	Acts as liaison between the Board and personnel, working toward a high degree of mutual communication, understanding, and respect between the Board and staff	0					
1.9	Relates to the Board in an atmosphere of trust and understanding	0					
1.10	Refrains from criticism of individual or group members of the Board	0					
1.11	Goes immediately and directly to the Board when a difference of opinion arises between the Superintendent and any or all Board members, in an earnest effort to immediately resolve the difference	0					
1.12	Participates in resolving differences of opinion	1					
1.13	Maintains an open and honest relationship with all Board members	0					
1.14	Has a harmonious working relationship with the Board	0					
1.15	Remains impartial toward the Board, treating all members alike	0					
1.16	Seeks and accepts constructive criticism	0					

Comments on RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD:

Show favorite Board members and hear
Some Board members in the Dials

Figure 36. Evaluation 2; page 1 of 5

2.0	EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP	1	2	3	4	5	NO
2.1	Implements the district's educational philosophy and goals	0					
2.2	Spends time in schools observing staff and students	1					
2.3	Understands and remains informed on all aspects of the instructional program	1					
2.4	Inspires others to highest professional standards	1					
2.5	Organizes a planned program for staff evaluation and improvements	1					
2.6	Utilizing the democratic process, seeks input from staff, Board and community in curriculum development and the improvement of instruction	0					
2.7	Plans, organizes and implements an instructional program responsive to community needs	0					
2.8	Provides democratic procedures for curricular work, utilizing the talents and abilities of the staff and the community	0					
2.9	Works with the staff to identify educational objectives	1					
2.10	Supports curricular change necessary to prepare students for successful participation in our changing society	0					

Comments on EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP:

Program that people will move here because the High Quality of Education. Never happened and I don't believe it ever will. Bad calls in math for test results.

3.0	BUSINESS AND FINANCE	1	2	3	4	5	NO
3.1	Evaluates educational needs and translates them into financial recommendations	0					
3.2	Stays informed about the physical needs of the school district	1					
3.3	Supervises operations, insisting on competent and efficient performance	1					
3.4	Makes provisions for the wise expenditure of funds and for adequate control and accounting measures	0					
3.5	Evaluates financial needs and makes recommendations for adequate financing	0					
3.6	Is knowledgeable concerning the business operations of the school district	1					
3.7	Monitors budget effectively	0					
3.8	Assists in identifying, planning and implementing capital improvements	0					
3.9	Supervises, recommends and assumes responsibility for presenting the annual budget to the Board	0					

Comments on BUSINESS AND FINANCE:

*unable to get along with Business Managers
Very little support for Business Managers
lack of communication*

Figure 37. Evaluation 2; page 2 of 5

4.0	STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	NO
4.1	Develops and executes sound personnel procedures and practices						
4.2	Develops good staff morale and loyalty to the school district						
4.3	Treats all personnel fairly, without favoritism or discrimination, while insisting on satisfactory performance of duties						
4.4	Is open and receptive to the staff complaints and recommendations						
4.5	Recruits and assigns the best available personnel						
4.6	Encourages effective two-way communication and staff participation in planning, procedure making, policy interpretation and decision making						
4.7	Evaluates performance of staff members, giving commendations for good work as well as constructive suggestions for improvement						
4.8	Takes an active role in developing salary schedules for all personnel, and recommends the level which will best serve the interests of the district, within budgetary limitations						
4.9	At the direction of the Board, meets and confers with leaders of the teachers' association, representing the interest and will of the Board						
4.10	Provides opportunities for staff-self-improvement	1					
4.11	Has the ability to win cooperation, interest and enthusiasm of the staff						
4.12	Effectively plans and organizes the activities of others						
4.13	Promotes high morale in the staff						
4.14	Establishes standards of performance for all staff positions in consultation with them, and works with staff to achieve consistently high standards of performance						
4.15	Delegates authority to staff members appropriate for the position each holds	1					
4.16	Evaluates annually all staff with direct reporting responsibility						
4.17	Oversees and directs the evaluation process of all district employees						

Comments on STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS:

Shows favor for some staff.
 See saying - [redacted] way or no way.
 Very poor.

I followed grievance procedure of a staff person when school lost Dr. [redacted] could not let go and provide every way to over turn the decision of the arbitrator. in my view a bad move.

Figure 38. Evaluation 2; page 3 of 5

5.0	STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES	1	2	3	4	5	NO
5.1	Is visible to the student body	1					
5.2	Expresses a genuine concern for and interest in the welfare of students	1					
5.3	Is receptive to input and communication from representatives of the student body	0					
5.4	Recognizes student success and achievement	1					
5.5	Maintains positive relationship with the student body	0					
5.6	Demonstrates an awareness of students - their ideas, suggestions and feelings	0					
5.7	Keeps students the center of the decision-making process	0					
5.8	Promotes activities which improve the self-image of children	1					
5.9	Attends student activities	0					
5.10	Works to improve student morale	0					

Comments on STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

General Concept - students do not seem to like to get along with Dr. [REDACTED]

6.0	COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	NO
6.1	Attends school activities and events	0					
6.2	Works to achieve community understanding of educational goals	0					
6.3	Works effectively with the news media	0					
6.4	Participates in community life and affairs	0					
6.5	Achieves recognition as a community leader in public education	0					
6.6	Works effectively with public and private agencies	0					
6.7	Provides the opportunity for the problems and opinions of individuals or groups to be expressed and understood	0					
6.8	Gains the respect and support of the community on the conduct of the school operation	0					
6.9	Effectively communicates in a positive manner with the public in all areas of the educational program	0					
6.10	Works at appraising the present and future educational needs of the community	0					

Comments on COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS:

I spent a week a day there and near to find someone who like Dr. [REDACTED]. I fail to find one person in our community. Bad!

Figure 39. Evaluation 2; page 4 of 5

7.0	PERSONAL QUALITIES	1	2	3	4	5	NO
7.1	Maintains high standards of ethics, honesty and integrity in all personal and professional matters	1					
7.2	Earns respect and recognition from professional colleagues	0					
7.3	Exercises good judgment in decision making	0					
7.4	Defends principles and convictions in the face of pressure and partisan influence		✓				
7.5	Is suitably attired and well groomed	1					
7.6	Writes clearly and concisely			1			
7.7	Speaks well and effectively before groups of all sizes	1					
7.8	Continues professional development by reading, course work, conference attendance, work on professional committees, visiting other districts, and meeting with other superintendents		1				
7.9	is poised in the face of a crises	1					
7.10	Works and relates well with others	0					

Comments on PERSONAL QUALITIES:

Lives ^{me} one, with a problem to believe him or not to believe him. I think we need to find company -

OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
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Date of Evaluation

7-26-12

Signature of Evaluator

Board Member 6

Figure 40. Evaluation 2; page 5 of 5

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: Please evaluate the Superintendent's performance by numerically scoring each item below. Please provide supporting comments indicating specific examples of Excellent Performance and areas for improvement, particularly those with Minimally Acceptable Performance.

RATING DEFINITIONS:

0 - Not Acceptable Performance.

- 1 = **Minimally Acceptable Performance**
- 2 = **Fair Performance:** accomplishes many things satisfactorily; elements of position may require further improvement
- 3 = **Good Performance:** in the center of a large broad range of good performers; capable showing in most elements expected of the position
- 4 = **Strong Performance:** most - if not all - elements of the position performed in excellent fashion; adding new dimensions to position through capability and desire
- 5 = **Overall Excellent Performance:** all elements of position performed in exemplary fashion; continually "reaching out" for responsibility not expected
- NO = Not observed by evaluator**

1.0	RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD	1	2	3	4	5	NO	
1.1	Interprets and executes the intent of Board policy	W						0
1.2	Supports Board policy and actions to the public and staff	W						0
1.3	Keeps the Board informed on issues, needs and operations of the school system	W						0
1.4	Offers professional advice and appropriate recommendations to the Board on items requiring Board action	W						0
1.5	Plans along with the Board for the future of the school district	W						0
1.6	Provides the Board with sufficient data and appropriate alternatives	W						0
1.7	Makes recommendations for employment or promotion of personnel and accepts responsibility for recommendations	W						0
1.8	Acts as liaison between the Board and personnel, working toward a high degree of mutual communication, understanding, and respect between the Board and staff	W						0
1.9	Relates to the Board in an atmosphere of trust and understanding	W						0
1.10	Refrains from criticism of individual or group members of the Board	W						0
1.11	Goes immediately and directly to the Board when a difference of opinion arises between the Superintendent and any or all Board members, in an earnest effort to immediately resolve the difference	W						0
1.12	Participates in resolving differences of opinion	W						0
1.13	Maintains an open and honest relationship with all Board members	W						0
1.14	Has a harmonious working relationship with the Board	W						0
1.15	Remains impartial toward the Board, treating all members alike	W						0
1.16	Seeks and accepts constructive criticism	W						0

Comments on RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD:



Figure 41. Evaluation 3; page 1 of 6

0 - Not Acceptable

2.0	EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP	1	2	3	4	5	NO
2.1	Implements the district's educational philosophy and goals	0					
2.2	Spends time in schools observing staff and students	0					
2.3	Understands and remains informed on all aspects of the instructional program	0					
2.4	Inspires others to highest professional standards	0					
2.5	Organizes a planned program for staff evaluation and improvements	0					
2.6	Utilizing the democratic process, seeks input from staff, Board and community in curriculum development and the improvement of instruction	0					
2.7	Plans, organizes and implements an instructional program responsive to community needs	0					
2.8	Provides democratic procedures for curricular work, utilizing the talents and abilities of the staff and the community	0					
2.9	Works with the staff to identify educational objectives	0					
2.10	Supports curricular change necessary to prepare students for successful participation in our changing society	0					

Comments on EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP:

0 - Not Acceptable.

3.0	BUSINESS AND FINANCE	1	2	3	4	5	NO
3.1	Evaluates educational needs and translates them into financial recommendations	0					
3.2	Stays informed about the physical needs of the school district	0					
3.3	Supervises operations, insisting on competent and efficient performance	0					
3.4	Makes provisions for the wise expenditure of funds and for adequate control and accounting measures	0					
3.5	Evaluates financial needs and makes recommendations for adequate financing	0					
3.6	Is knowledgeable concerning the business operations of the school district	0					
3.7	Monitors budget effectively	0					
3.8	Assists in identifying, planning and implementing capital improvements	0					
3.9	Supervises, recommends and assumes responsibility for presenting the annual budget to the Board	0					

Comments on BUSINESS AND FINANCE:



Figure 42. Evaluation 3; page 2 of 6

0 - Not Acceptable

4.0	STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	NO	
4.1	Develops and executes sound personnel procedures and practices							0
4.2	Develops good staff morale and loyalty to the school district							0
4.3	Treats all personnel fairly, without favoritism or discrimination, while insisting on satisfactory performance of duties							0
4.4	Is open and receptive to the staff complaints and recommendations							0
4.5	Recruits and assigns the best available personnel							0
4.6	Encourages effective two-way communication and staff participation in planning, procedure making, policy interpretation and decision making							0
4.7	Evaluates performance of staff members, giving commendations for good work as well as constructive suggestions for improvement							0
4.8	Takes an active role in developing salary schedules for all personnel, and recommends the level which will best serve the interests of the district, within budgetary limitations							0
4.9	At the direction of the Board, meets and confers with leaders of the teachers' association, representing the interest and will of the Board							0
4.10	Provides opportunities for staff-self-improvement							0
4.11	Has the ability to win cooperation, interest and enthusiasm of the staff							0
4.12	Effectively plans and organizes the activities of others							0
4.13	Promotes high morale in the staff							0
4.14	Establishes standards of performance for all staff positions in consultation with them, and works with staff to achieve consistently high standards of performance							0
4.15	Delegates authority to staff members appropriate for the position each holds							0
4.16	Evaluates annually all staff with direct reporting responsibility							0
4.17	Oversees and directs the evaluation process of all district employees							0

Comments on STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS:



Figure 43. Evaluation 3; page 3 of 6

0 - Not Acceptable

5.0	STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES	1	2	3	4	5	NO
5.1	Is visible to the student body						
5.2	Expresses a genuine concern for and interest in the welfare of students						
5.3	Is receptive to input and communication from representatives of the student body						
5.4	Recognizes student success and achievement						
5.5	Maintains positive relationship with the student body						
5.6	Demonstrates an awareness of students - their ideas, suggestions and feelings						
5.7	Keeps students the center of the decision-making process						
5.8	Promotes activities which improve the self-image of children						
5.9	Attends student activities						
5.10	Works to improve student morale						

Comments on STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

0 - Not Acceptable.

6.0	COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	NO
6.1	Attends school activities and events						
6.2	Works to achieve community understanding of educational goals						
6.3	Works effectively with the news media						
6.4	Participates in community life and affairs						
6.5	Achieves recognition as a community leader in public education						
6.6	Works effectively with public and private agencies						
6.7	Provides the opportunity for the problems and opinions of individuals or groups to be expressed and understood						
6.8	Gains the respect and support of the community on the conduct of the school operation						
6.9	Effectively communicates in a positive manner with the public in all areas of the educational program						
6.10	Works at appraising the present and future educational needs of the community						

Comments on COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS:



Figure 44. Evaluation 3; page 4 of 6

Rating 0 - Not Acceptable Performance.

7.0	PERSONAL QUALITIES	1	2	3	4	5	
7.1	Maintains high standards of ethics, honesty and integrity in all personal and professional matters						0
7.2	Earns respect and recognition from professional colleagues						0
7.3	Exercises good judgment in decision making						0
7.4	Defends principles and convictions in the face of pressure and partisan influence						0
7.5	Is suitably attired and well groomed						0
7.6	Writes clearly and concisely						0
7.7	Speaks well and effectively before groups of all sizes						0
7.8	Continues professional development by reading, course work, conference attendance, work on professional committees, visiting other districts, and meeting with other superintendents						0
7.9	is poised in the face of a crises						0
7.10	Works and relates well with others						0

Comments on PERSONAL QUALITIES:



OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING

*Below:
Minimally Acceptable.*

1	2	3	4	5
0	0	0	0	0

*Needs To BE
GONE !!*

Date of Evaluation

8/13/12

Signature of Evaluator

Board Member 9

[Handwritten signature]

Figure 45. Evaluation 3; page 5 of 6

- He has no ethics; is not honest.
- He talks over the heads of community; does not really "answer" the community's questions
- He has select board members in his clique
- He does NOT keep ALL board members informed and thinks the board works for him!
- He does NOT understand our community's educational needs; his mindset is aimed at gifted children only
- He spends district monies on and for his personal wants and needs
- He has no people skills
- He targets staff who do NOT agree with him (he says he wants to hear staff's opinions but when they go against his, he finds ways to intimidate those staff members)
- He conducts meetings to intimidate staff
- Does NOT get involved with student body
- Does NOT attend students activities (has even lied about attending)
- Does NOT involve student body with decision-making process
- Student body does not like or respect him
- Does not get involved with community life
- Does not have, nor cares, whether he has community support
- Does not seek community understanding of educational goals
- Tells news media false information (has the newspaper in his pocket)
- Does not participate in community affairs
- He needs to be terminated as our Superintendent/Asst. Superintendent

COMMENTS ON.
Superintendent

Figure 46. Evaluation 3; page 6 of 6

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: Please evaluate the Superintendent's performance by numerically scoring each item below. Please provide supporting comments indicating specific examples of Excellent Performance and areas for improvement, particularly those with Minimally Acceptable Performance.

RATING DEFINITIONS:

- 1 = **Minimally Acceptable Performance**
- 2 = **Fair Performance:** accomplishes many things satisfactorily; elements of position may require further improvement
- 3 = **Good Performance:** in the center of a large broad range of good performers; capable showing in most elements expected of the position
- 4 = **Strong Performance:** most - if not all - elements of the position performed in excellent fashion; adding new dimensions to position through capability and desire
- 5 = **Overall Excellent Performance:** all elements of position performed in exemplary fashion; continually "reaching out" for responsibility not expected

NO = Not observed by evaluator

1.0	RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD	1	2	3	4	5	NO
1.1	Interprets and executes the intent of Board policy	0					
1.2	Supports Board policy and actions to the public and staff	0					
1.3	Keeps the Board informed on issues, needs and operations of the school system	0					
1.4	Offers professional advice and appropriate recommendations to the Board on items requiring Board action	0					
1.5	Plans along with the Board for the future of the school district	0					
1.6	Provides the Board with sufficient data and appropriate alternatives	0					
1.7	Makes recommendations for employment or promotion of personnel and accepts responsibility for recommendations	0					
1.8	Acts as liaison between the Board and personnel, working toward a high degree of mutual communication, understanding, and respect between the Board and staff	0					
1.9	Relates to the Board in an atmosphere of trust and understanding	0					
1.10	Refrains from criticism of individual or group members of the Board	0					
1.11	Goes immediately and directly to the Board when a difference of opinion arises between the Superintendent and any or all Board members, in an earnest effort to immediately resolve the difference	0					
1.12	Participates in resolving differences of opinion	0					
1.13	Maintains an open and honest relationship with all Board members	0					
1.14	Has a harmonious working relationship with the Board	0					
1.15	Remains impartial toward the Board, treating all members alike	0					
1.16	Seeks and accepts constructive criticism	0					

Comments on RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD:



Figure 47. Evaluation 4; page 1 of 5

2.0	EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP	1	2	3	4	5	NO
2.1	Implements the district's educational philosophy and goals	0					
2.2	Spends time in schools observing staff and students	0					
2.3	Understands and remains informed on all aspects of the instructional program	0					
2.4	Inspires others to highest professional standards	0					
2.5	Organizes a planned program for staff evaluation and improvements	0					
2.6	Utilizing the democratic process, seeks input from staff, Board and community in curriculum development and the improvement of instruction	0					
2.7	Plans, organizes and implements an instructional program responsive to community needs	0					
2.8	Provides democratic procedures for curricular work, utilizing the talents and abilities of the staff and the community	0					
2.9	Works with the staff to identify educational objectives	0					
2.10	Supports curricular change necessary to prepare students for successful participation in our changing society	0					

Comments on EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP:



3.0	BUSINESS AND FINANCE	1	2	3	4	5	NO
3.1	Evaluates educational needs and translates them into financial recommendations	0					
3.2	Stays informed about the physical needs of the school district	0					
3.3	Supervises operations, insisting on competent and efficient performance	0					
3.4	Makes provisions for the wise expenditure of funds and for adequate control and accounting measures	0					
3.5	Evaluates financial needs and makes recommendations for adequate financing	0					
3.6	Is knowledgeable concerning the business operations of the school district	0					
3.7	Monitors budget effectively	0					
3.8	Assists in identifying, planning and implementing capital improvements	0					
3.9	Supervises, recommends and assumes responsibility for presenting the annual budget to the Board	0					

Comments on BUSINESS AND FINANCE:



Figure 48. Evaluation 4; page 2 of 5

4.0	STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	NO
4.1	Develops and executes sound personnel procedures and practices	0					
4.2	Develops good staff morale and loyalty to the school district	0					
4.3	Treats all personnel fairly, without favoritism or discrimination, while insisting on satisfactory performance of duties	0					
4.4	Is open and receptive to the staff complaints and recommendations	0					
4.5	Recruits and assigns the best available personnel	0					
4.6	Encourages effective two-way communication and staff participation in planning, procedure making, policy interpretation and decision making	0					
4.7	Evaluates performance of staff members, giving commendations for good work as well as constructive suggestions for improvement	0					
4.8	Takes an active role in developing salary schedules for all personnel, and recommends the level which will best serve the interests of the district, within budgetary limitations	0					
4.9	At the direction of the Board, meets and confers with leaders of the teachers' association, representing the interest and will of the Board	0					
4.10	Provides opportunities for staff-self-improvement	0					
4.11	Has the ability to win cooperation, interest and enthusiasm of the staff	0					
4.12	Effectively plans and organizes the activities of others	0					
4.13	Promotes high morale in the staff	0					
4.14	Establishes standards of performance for all staff positions in consultation with them, and works with staff to achieve consistently high standards of performance	0					
4.15	Delegates authority to staff members appropriate for the position each holds	0					
4.16	Evaluates annually all staff with direct reporting responsibility	0					
4.17	Oversees and directs the evaluation process of all district employees	0					

Comments on STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS:

Figure 49. Evaluation 4; page 3 of 5

5.0	STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES	1	2	3	4	5	NO
5.1	is visible to the student body	0					
5.2	Expresses a genuine concern for and interest in the welfare of students	0					
5.3	Is receptive to input and communication from representatives of the student body	0					
5.4	Recognizes student success and achievement	0					
5.5	Maintains positive relationship with the student body	0					
5.6	Demonstrates an awareness of students - their ideas, suggestions and feelings	0					
5.7	Keeps students the center of the decision-making process	0					
5.8	Promotes activities which improve the self-image of children	0					
5.9	Attends student activities	0					
5.10	Works to improve student morale	0					

Comments on STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

?

6.0	COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	NO
6.1	Attends school activities and events	0					
6.2	Works to achieve community understanding of educational goals	0					
6.3	Works effectively with the news media	0					
6.4	Participates in community life and affairs	0					
6.5	Achieves recognition as a community leader in public education	0					
6.6	Works effectively with public and private agencies	0					
6.7	Provides the opportunity for the problems and opinions of individuals or groups to be expressed and understood	0					
6.8	Gains the respect and support of the community on the conduct of the school operation	0					
6.9	Effectively communicates in a positive manner with the public in all areas of the educational program	0					
6.10	Works at appraising the present and future educational needs of the community	0					

Comments on COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS:

Figure 50. Evaluation 4; page 4 of 5

7.0	PERSONAL QUALITIES	1	2	3	4	5	NO
7.1	Maintains high standards of ethics, honesty and integrity in all personal and professional matters						
7.2	Earns respect and recognition from professional colleagues						
7.3	Exercises good judgment in decision making						
7.4	Defends principles and convictions in the face of pressure and partisan influence						
7.5	Is suitably attired and well groomed						
7.6	Writes clearly and concisely						
7.7	Speaks well and effectively before groups of all sizes						
7.8	Continues professional development by reading, course work, conference attendance, work on professional committees, visiting other districts, and meeting with other superintendents						
7.9	is poised in the face of a crises						
7.10	Works and relates well with others						

Comments on PERSONAL QUALITIES:

↓

OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING

①

1	2	3	4	5

Date of Evaluation

7-8-5-12

Signature of Evaluator

Board Member 7

Figure 51. Evaluation 4; page 5 of 5

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