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AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER PERCEPTION OF
COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT AT THEIR SCHOOL AND
STUDENT RATES OF ATTENDANCE, GRADUATION, AND ACADEMIC
PROFICIENCY

By

Sandra Hamer Smith

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Major: Leadership and Policy Studies

The University of Memphis

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships between educators' perceptions of the quality of community support and involvement at their high schools and five longitudinally measured indices of school effectiveness. Given a sample of 248 Tennessee high schools, secondary data derived from the "Community Support and Involvement" subsection of the *Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Questionnaire* Survey administered in 2013 were merged with concurrent student attendance, student graduation, and student achievement outcomes archived and made publically available on the Tennessee Department of Education website.

After controlling for the impact of student and faculty demographic variables, hierarchical multiple regression analyses indicated the perceived influence of parent and community support and involvement to be both systematically statistically significant and uniformly positive with respect to the study's five outcomes of interest, all of which were averaged over three years. More specifically, perceived levels of community support and involvement were observed to explain some 3.5% of the variance in schools' attendance rate ($\beta = 0.22, t = 3.65, p < .001$) and about 1.8% of the variance in schools' graduation rate ($\beta = 0.15, t = 2.78, p = .006$). As regards student achievement, perceived levels of community support and involvement were observed to explain 2.0% of the variance in schools' ACT Composite scores ($\beta = 0.16, t = 4.67, p < .001$); 5.2% of the variance in schools' percentage of students proficient in Algebra I ($\beta = 0.21, t = 3.62, p < .001$); and 1.5% of the variance in English II ($\beta = 0.14, t = 4.19, p < .000$). After conducting this research, it is evident that strong community support can reverse the destiny of low performing schools.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Many school districts are seeking meaningful ways to engage parents while boosting student academic achievement. When parents get involved in their schools, students do better in classes, attendance improves, good behavior enhances, and teacher efficacy improves (Lawson, 2003). Teacher self- efficacy is best defined as “individuals perceived capabilities” (Zee & Koomen, 2016, pg. 983). In order for schools to become successful, it takes school leaders, teachers, parents and community members. Students are a product of the total community. Proponents of school reform initiatives view schools as part of a larger collaborative of neighborhoods, community organizations and families (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2003). It is apparent that the resources of these entities are vital to the total success of a school.

Research indicates, “minority and more experienced educators have higher positive perceptions of students, their work environment, and the school community” (Miller, Kuykendall & Thomas, 2013, pg. 148). Teachers with advanced degrees and those who teach higher grades perceive the above areas negatively. These same researchers uncovered those teachers who are more educated “have lower perceptions of their role in the school and the community (Miller et al., 2013, pg. 149). Teachers of ethnic backgrounds have higher positive perceptions of their communication with parents. Perceptions of parent-teacher relations were low in schools performing well in math. Those teachers in schools where more of their peers had advanced degrees and

students performed better on literacy tests had more positive perceptions of their abilities and the outcomes for their students (Miller et al., 2013).

It is important how school leaders and teachers view or perceive community support and involvement at their school in order for a particular school to be successful. Many times, it is up to teachers to reach out to parents because they are on the front lines in teaching students. It is important for teachers to have specific communication skills in reaching out to parents and developing a working relationship with them. Some teacher preparation programs have a schools and community course for teachers. This may not always be the case with every program.

Some researchers are investigating how urban teachers should be prepared to collaborate with parents and school communities (Warren, Nofle, Ganley & Quintanar, 2011). Researchers reveal a particular need to work with families of color and families in low socio-economic areas of the inner city. When schools work with families, it becomes a win-win situation (Warren et al., 2011). Previous research findings revealed the need to strengthen teacher and principal training on reaching parents. Teachers and administrators alike need to be proactive in reaching out to families. Researchers believe that teacher preparation programs should focus on school, family, and community partnerships (Epstein & Sanders, 2006).

Warren et al. (2011) investigated the benefits of a graduate course to help teachers communicate with parents and community members. The goal of the course was to prepare teacher candidates with knowledge and skills to interact with student's family and community members. The course would also help them identify available resources

for establishing partnerships and equipping them with skills to build relationships in the community.

Some researchers have even looked at teacher perceptions in non-traditional subjects like music education. Some music teachers may even avoid schools with high percentages of low socio-economic families (Droe, 2014). These students are perceived as having less motivation and lower self-confidence than their counterparts have. Music teachers in the elementary school setting with lower socio economic status and higher minority population don't feel as supported by parents, have fewer student teachers, and report a lack in fundraising. High school teachers in schools with similar demographics also report a lack in fund raising efforts and a lack of support from parents.

Background of the Study

African-Americans and Latinos are graduating from high school at a lower rate than the rest of America. Eighty-three percent of Americans graduated in four years. African-Americans and Hispanics still struggle graduating 75 and 78 percent respectively in the 2014-15 school year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). American Indian/Alaska natives graduated at a rate of 72 percent while Asian/Pacific Islanders graduated at rate of 90 percent followed by Whites at 88 percent. These graduation rates are calculated using the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate or ACGR (NCES, 2018). This is the percentage of students who graduate with their original 9th grade class in four years. It is adjusted for students who transfer in or out of that cohort. Seven percent of United States students do not receive a high school diploma or a General Equivalency Development (GED) test by age 24. Azzam (2007) lists the top five reasons for students

not completing school as: boredom, poor attendance, wrong crowd, too much freedom, and failure in school.

School factors have an influence on whether incoming freshmen will graduate from high school or fall off the track. Teacher support and how well students felt that others wanted them to succeed play a major role in students staying in school (Balfanz et al., 2007). Academic pressure and parental involvement are also important when it comes to students staying in school.

As schools put together school improvement plans, committees want to see others than school faculty involved in the process. They want student, parent and community representatives involved in the process. Researchers say schools can improve attendance in elementary school with specific community involved events (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Increasing student attendance is a goal of many school districts, but in order to be successful this will require parental input.

Researchers have uncovered that several family, school and community partnerships practices have seen an increase in attendance (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Schools may be able to improve student attendance in elementary school by implementing specific activities. Poor attendance can identify who will drop out of school and potential for involvement in other negative activity. One Baltimore high school increased its attendance when the school implemented smaller academics with higher teacher interactions.

Not all parental involvement activities are associated with increased attendance. Parents checking homework and reading with their child is associated with improving grades and higher test scores (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Specific activities such as

parental monitoring, parent-child discussion, parent participation at school and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) membership are linked to improved attendance.

Most teachers realize the importance of parental involvement in helping students to achieve academically (Griffith, 1996). Griffith (1996) discovered that parental involvement and high stakes tests had low to moderate affiliations. Teachers' perception of parental involvement had the highest influence on student academics. The research shows that when parents intervene and limit the amount of television watching students achieve higher grades.

Researchers have uncovered that parental involvement is an important element in academic achievement (Griffith, 1996). When parents are involved, student achievement tests increase. Even when other factors like school level resources and student populations showed variance, parental involvement was key to student achievement. Empowerment was another variable that contributed to student academic success (Griffith, 1996). Parental empowerment also showed great effects on tests scores. Parents feel empowered when their input is welcomed in school activities and leadership. Schools that arrange functions to fit parents' schedules and inform parents about meetings promote empowerment. Seeking parents input in day-to-day operations is an example of empowerment (Griffith, 1996).

Griffith (1996) offers advice on increasing parental involvement. Schools can coordinate with PTA to provide transportation and day care services during school events. School staff and parent volunteers can follow up with parents to see why they missed events. There are also implications for other researchers. Parental attitudes

towards the educational process should be investigated. Parental involvement might be closely linked to teaching styles (Griffith, 1996).

Parent expectations for their children play a significant role in their completing high school (Ross, 2016). Parent involvement is also a positive predictor of high school graduation and college enrollment. Research also shows a steady decline of parental involvement when children enter middle and high school years. There is a need to find challenging ways to keep parents involved during these years especially since the research shows parental involvement is very effective. Students who have less academic support and parental supervision are 34% more likely to drop out of schools than other students (Ross, 2016).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the relationship between teacher perception of community support and involvement at their school and student rates of attendance, graduation, ACT achievement, Algebra I, and English II proficiency. Research shows that parental involvement improves attendance, graduation rates and academic proficiency (Ross, 2016). As students transition to middle and high school schools, parents must find different means of keeping youth engaged. Research suggests that parents should supplement their high expectations for their children with help in planning for college (Ross, 2016). Schools can assist in providing parents these resources.

The researcher hopes that by exploring these topics administrators can leverage their community resources in improving student achievement. Research shows that schools can communicate better with parents about how they can best assist in school

functions (Griffith, 1996). When schools empower parents, it is a win-win situation for students academically. Not only will students academics improve, but also attendance and behavior (Lawson, 2003). Parents and teachers must have similar perceptions of what parental involvement entails.

Statement of the Problem

African-Americans and Latinos still lag behind the rest of America with high school completion. Seventy-five percent of African-Americans graduated with a high school diploma in 2014-2015 while 78 percent of Hispanics graduated (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Instructional leaders have it within their power to change the educational landscape. These graduation rates can turn into success stories if at-risk students are caught early enough.

According to the United States Census, 3.3 million people were labeled as high school dropouts in 2006. It is very difficult for a person to earn a meaningful living without a high school diploma (Neild, Balfanz, & Herzog, 2007). Data reveals that one-third to one-half of minorities do not graduate from high school. Researchers say there are social, psychological, and financial consequences associated with school dropouts (White & Kelly, 2010).

Improving high school graduation rates is a national priority (Robertson, Smith & Rinka, 2016). The relationship between dropping out of school and low socio-economic status has been documented in literature. Seven years ago, the annual yearly income of a high school dropout was \$19,540 compared to \$27,380 for a high school graduate (Robertson et al., 2016). The same differences lie in unemployment rates. In 2012, those without a high school diploma had an unemployment rate of 13.1% compared to high

school graduates at 8.4%. The researcher plans to uncover how parental involvement in schools can lead to higher graduation rates, better attendance and improved academic proficiency.

Research Questions

These questions will drive the research of this study.

- 1) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student attendance rates, averaged over three years?
- 2) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student graduation rates, averaged over three years?
- 3) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and students' ACT Composite scores, averaged over three years?
- 4) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in Algebra I, averaged over three years?
- 5) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and

involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in English II, averaged over three years?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is far reaching because it expands the body of knowledge in the area of teacher perceptions of community support and involvement at their school. There is research to support the effects of parental and community involvement in the school. However, there is room for improvement in the area of teacher perceptions. Teacher perceptions are most important since they interact with parents on a regular basis. Educators in rural, urban and suburban areas should feel the same way when viewing and seeking parental and community support (Lin, Isernhagen, Scherz, & Denner, 2014).

This study will provide insight to school leaders who need to continue to educate their staff on the importance of connecting with and reaching out to parents regardless of ethnic persuasion or socio-economic status. Also, the study is of benefit to school district leaders who can collaborate on how best to support principals and teachers at the school level in parental and community involvement initiatives. For higher education, the study will reveal the importance of including a parent and community involvement course in teacher and leadership preparation programs. The benefits of the study continues on at the state and national level as lawmakers and educational leaders can provide funding and assistance to school districts to improve in these areas.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework or concept under which the researcher plans to move forward is that of the Social Systems Theory. School leaders can help tackle this problem

by viewing the school as a whole under the Social System Theory (Green, 2005). Leaders must take into consideration the parts that make up the whole. The internal and external environments affect each other (Green, 2010). In a Social Systems Theory, there is a set of interrelated elements that function in a particular manner (Green, 2010). This theory best explains what happens to dropouts since students drop out over a period of time. Researchers have pinpointed some factors that can determine if a child is off track. As early as grade six, poor attendance, poor behavior, and a failing grade in Math or English can determine if a child will drop out of school (Garriott, 2007). Researchers also discovered that when whole school reforms were implemented, students' chances of graduating on-time increased.

A lot of the strategies that are being implemented to bring about effective change in the school culture have to deal with the Social Systems Theory. Collaboration and professional learning communities all deal with faculty working together. As schools put together school improvement plans, committees want to see others than school faculty involved in the process. They want student, parent and community representatives involved in the process.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited because its findings are restricted to the school districts being surveyed in the Southeastern region of the United States. Additionally, the results of this study are based on perceived teacher experiences as documented on the *Tennessee Empowering, Leading, and Learning Conditions (TELL) Questionnaire*. The secondary data analysis method is used in this study. The study is also limited because the researcher is reviewing teacher perceptions.

Definition of Terms

Academic proficiency – Academic achievement in school tested subjects (Kim & Sunderman, 2005).

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) – Defined by the State and describes the yearly progress that a Title One school or district is expected to make in order to help low achieving students meet high performance standards expected for all children (U. S. Department of Education, 2017).

ACT achievement – The ACT test is the leading achievement test for college entrance in the United States (ACT, 2017)

Attendance – School attendance is the regular attendance at a certified institution of learning (OECD, 2017).

Community Involvement – This is schools connections with individuals, businesses and agencies (Sanders & Lewis, 2005).

Family involvement - is defined as the parents' or caregivers investment in the education of their children (Larocque, Kleiman & Darling, 2011).

Graduation rates – Graduation rates are compiled by schools and districts representing students who have completed three grade-to-grade transitions and the ultimate high school graduation event (Swanson, 2004).

Parental Involvement – “Parental involvement has been defined in practice as representing many different parental behaviors and parenting practices, such as parental aspirations for their children’s academic achievement and their conveyance of such aspirations to their children” (Fan & Chen, 2001, p. 3).

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)- A meeting of parents and teachers to discuss issues of importance for students.

Self-efficacy – Teacher’s perceived capabilities (Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Teacher expectations – Refers to inferences made by educators with respect to student’s potential to achieve based on the teacher’s current knowledge about these students Timmermans, de Boer & van der Werf (2016).

Teacher perception – Perceptive value placement on the children they teach that is drawn from their own characteristics and the neighborhoods in which they teach (Miller, Kuykendall & Thomas, 2013).

TELL Tennessee Questionnaire- The *Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning Questionnaire* is valid and reliable. It assesses eight research-based teaching and learning conditions. Some of the components included in the areas addressed in the survey include: Community Support and Involvement, Managing Student Conduct, Teacher Leadership, School Leadership, Professional Development and Instructional Practices and Support. (TELL Tennessee, 2013).

Title I school – Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides resources to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high percentages of children from low income families to assist them in meeting academic standards (U. S. Department of Education, 2017).

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one includes an introduction to the study, background information, a statement of the problem, significance of the study, purpose of the study, research questions, definitions, limitations, and a summary.

Chapter two consists of an extensive review of literature. The literature review addresses the following topics: teacher perceptions, community support and involvement, attendance, graduation, and academic proficiency. Chapter three includes the methodology used to conduct this study. This section includes a review of the purpose and research questions, general methodology, instrumentation, a description of the population and sample, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter four consists of a detailed analysis of data and findings of the study. Chapter five includes a discussion of the findings, the relationship of the study to previous research and implications of the study for future research and practice and a conclusion to the study.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

In order to conduct this study, the researcher will review literature pertaining to teacher perceptions regarding community support and involvement at their school. The researcher will review literature in order to determine the connection between teacher perceptions of community support and involvement at their school and attendance, graduation rates, and academic proficiency. Academic proficiency includes ACT achievement, and proficiency in subject areas like Algebra I and English II.

Many components help schools to become successful. Parents play a large role in helping schools to meet their achievement goals (LaRocque, Kleiman & Darling, 2011). Family or parental involvement at school can manifest in many ways. Parents can volunteer at school, help children with homework, attend school functions or visit their child's classroom. The No Child Left Behind Act made it imperative for schools to inform parents regarding activities happening in the schools (LaRocque et al., 2011).

Some parents want to be more involved, but are not always able to because of social inhabitants. Many of these parents lack jobs that would afford them flexibility in being active in their child's school during the day (LaRocque et al., 2011). A lot of times, these parents cannot make school conferences and other important meetings and may be viewed by school staff as not easy to work with.

Research shows that parents who have higher aspirations for their students see greater academic results for these students (Fan, 2001). Fan's research showed

accelerated academic growth from eighth to 12th grade. Parent volunteering showed a positive but small effect on student academics.

This literature review will support assumptions regarding community support and involvement and its impact on student achievement. Teacher perceptions of increased parental involvement directly correlate to student achievement (Gordon & Louis, 2009). Researchers have also indicated that parenting style and parental expectations had a greater impact on students than attendance at parent-teacher conferences or other school functions. Creating participatory structures in schools can increase “parents and community members sense of engagement in children’s education” (Gordon & Louis, 2009, p.4). The Social System Theory undergirds this research by allowing school leaders to examine other parts that make up the whole school community (Green, 2005). The external environment that consists of parents, government, non-profit and business has resources that help to boost a students’ overall engagement.

Teacher Perceptions

Many factors impact a child’s educational future. A student’s confidence in his or her teacher and how the teacher perceives him or her is also important (Miller, Kuykendall & Thomas, 2013). Teachers face many challenges in the classroom. These societal challenges may impact how teachers view their students (Miller et al., 2013). Teachers unconsciously exhibit certain behaviors to students based on socio-economic class or status of parents (Cakmak, Demirkaya & Derya, 2011). How well students perform in class is also influenced by teacher perceptions. If teachers are more knowledgeable of the neighborhood in which they teach, they are more likely to have a more positive perception of the children they serve (Miller et al., 2013). Researchers

have found that teachers are more engaged with their students and teach at a higher level when they perceive the students to have a high achievement level. By the same token, they have less effective practices with students who they perceive as average or not achieving as highly (Miller et al, 2013).

Teacher perception can also be tied to how concerned teachers are about student success (Shaunessy & McHatton, 2008). When teachers feel positively about the community, they create stronger classroom environments with diverse populations and not always placing value on academic performance (Miller et al., 2013). Educators who have advanced degrees and teach higher grades are sometimes more negative of their students, job and the school community (Miller et al., 2013). Minority and more experienced teachers tend to have a more positive outlook regarding their students and the school environment.

Communication with parents is key. Minority teachers view their communication with parents more favorably (Miller et al., 2013). Teachers with advanced degrees and those working with older students have lower perceptions of communication with parents. In schools where more staff assaults occur and students have high attendance rates and are impoverished, there are lower perceptions of communication with parents (Miller et al., 2013). In the research of Miller et al. (2013) staff assaults and attendance rates are constantly associated with negative perceptions. Teacher perceptions are lower in schools where students are more economically disadvantaged. In these schools, teachers have lower perceptions of student character, success of students, communications with parents and overall school environment (Miller et al., 2013).

Oppositional relationships between teachers and parents take place when children's behavior at school results in teachers labeling of parents (Lawson, 2003). Parents believe that teachers stop listening to their issues when teachers make judgements that they don't love or care for their children. Some teachers perceive parental involvement to mean that parents cooperate.

The 2008 project of Harris and Goodall was initiated in two phases. The first one consisted of data collection from a number of schools within the EPRA project. The second phase consisted of in-depth case studies of a sample of schools. All of the schools were and consent to the needs of the school as defined by teachers (Lawson, 2003). Lawson (2003) had an investigator inside a school for about two years. The investigator interviewed parents and teachers and was able to uncover many perceptions regarding parental involvement.

One teacher perceives parental involvement to mean that parents are just a phone call away and that whenever she needs them they are right there (Lawson, 2003). Another teacher describes school based parental involvement as parents volunteering in the library, on the playground, or monitoring the halls. Even another teacher believes that parental involvement can go a step further by parents working cooperatively with teachers to create a powerful learning environment as a classroom aide. When students do not quite get it, parents can be the bridge to understanding by helping to make a lesson plain to a student learner (Lawson, 2003).

Another teacher perception of parental involvement is that of home-based involvement. Some teachers believe parental involvement assists them in the teaching process (Lawson, 2003). This type of involvement centers on homebased activities that

mirror the school's mission and the teacher's lessons. Teachers say a lack of home based parental involvement is a hindrance to what they are trying to achieve as educators.

Teacher expectation of Academic Achievement

Researchers have uncovered a link between teacher expectations and student academic achievement. Timmermans, de Boer & van der Werf (2016) conducted research to see if there is a link between teacher expectations and teacher perceptions of student attributes. The research was conducted in the Netherlands consisting of 5316 students and 469 classes in a 6th grade class from Dutch primary education. Student attributes that were looked at include working habits, popularity, self-confidence, student-teacher relationships and classroom behavior (Timmersman et al., 2016).

Teachers make references concerning the tracks students are placed on in secondary education.

Timmermans et al. (2016) revealed that teachers may partly rely on their perceptions of student's behavior in the classroom and student motivation while completing classwork when forming perceptions regarding student academic performance. Student expectations are inferential judgements that teachers make about student's future success (Timmermans et al., 2016). When teachers expect too much or too little from students, this is when bias attends to occur. For students with equal performance track records, teachers tend to have lower expectations from students who come from a lower socio-economic status family. Sometimes when the student is male there is a bias (Timmermans et al., 2016).

In this study by Timmermans et al. (2016), student engagement was noted by students' effort, frequency of doing homework, attentiveness or disruptions. Teacher

expectations for students' academic performance were higher when student's engagements were higher. Educators also had higher expectations for students whom they perceived had a more positive student-teacher relationship.

Teachers make track recommendations for Dutch secondary education. There are five different tracks for Dutch secondary education. The length of the tracks varies. Each track offers different access to further education (Timmermans et al., 2016). The pre-university track is the highest and takes six years. Other tracks have a mixture of university or vocational education. Mobility of tracks can be limited. After three years in secondary education, eighty-five percent of students are still in the track of their teacher recommendation (Timmermans et al., 2016).

This study was conducted within the Dutch primary education and dealt with transition to secondary education. Eighty-five percent of schools administer the Cito school leavers test (Timmermans et al., 2016). This test is standardized and consists of basic subjects that are designed to help teachers with track recommendations. The track recommendations that students receive is considered an expression of the teacher's expectation for that student (Timmermans et al., 2016)

The results of this study show a strong association between teacher expectations and student performance on the school leavers test at 88% (Timmermans et al., 2016). Lower but still strong correlations exist with teacher expectations and students in the monitoring system. The monitoring system of tests shows how students perform in various subjects during their last year of primary education. For language there was a 65 percent correlation, 75% with mathematics and 76 % with reading (Timmermans et al.,

2016). A modest correlation existed between teacher expectation and student work habits at 42 %.

Teacher expectations for student academic performance are important since this is believed to have a self-fulfilling prophecy effect on students (Rubies-Davis, Peterson, Sibley, & Rosenthal, 2015). When teachers have high expectations for students, they interact with them in ways that cause students to excel. Researchers have identified teacher behaviors that translate their expectations. Teachers tend to wait less for low expectation students to answer a question than for high expectation students (Rubies-Davies et al., 2015). They criticize low expectation students more often for failures than highs. They also call on lows less frequently than highs to answer questions.

All students in classes of high expectation teachers are involved in challenging, exciting instructional activities (Rubies-Davies et al., 2015). High expectation teachers also create a warmer environment than low expectation teachers. There is evidence that a warm classroom environment increases student learning. Hattie (2009) has shown that a positive teacher-student relationship has a large effect on student learning. Hattie's (2009) research also reveals that teachers who provide clear feedback to students have a positive effect on student achievement.

Policy makers and educational leaders believe that high expectations lead to improved academics. Many educational leaders encourage their teachers to have high expectations for all students. This is proof that teachers can change their expectations about students. The research of Rubies-Davies et al. (2015) involved 90 teachers in New Zealand. Forty-six teachers were randomly assigned to the teacher expectation intervention. Forty-four formed the control condition and took the regular professional

development provided by their school. Teachers in the treatment group attended four separate workshops spread over two months, analyzed video data, implemented workshop practices in their classrooms and attended follow-up meetings with the researchers (Rubies-Davies et al., 2015).

The workshops that the teachers attended were centered on the teaching behaviors that high expectation teachers engage in. The workshops dealt with grouping and learning activities, class climate, motivation, evaluation, feedback and enhancing student autonomy (Rubies-Davies et al., 2015). High expectation teachers give their students choice in the activities they can complete and are allowed to work with a variety of peers. High expectation teachers created a much warmer environment for their students and were very positive towards them. High expectation teachers focused on mastery of goals and encouraged cooperation and collaboration among students. High expectation teachers also monitored student progress closely (Rubies-Davis et al., 2015). The results showed that for both reading and math student achievement increased over the year.

Some researchers link teacher expectations to a particular set of behaviors. A program that has been around for nearly 50 years has a proven track record in teaching educators about student expectations. The Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement (TESA) is centered around fifteen behaviors called interactions (Cantor, Kester & Miller, 2000.). The interactions are designed to help teachers treat students with dignity and equality by heightening the awareness of how teacher expectations affect student achievement. After teachers attend the training, they see improvements in attendance, performance, and discipline and school climate.

The TESA program is based on the expectation theory. Researchers say two kinds of teacher expectations affect student performance (Cantor et al., 2000). The expectations are self-fulfilling prophecy and sustaining expectations. Self-fulfilling prophecy effects can be based on inaccurate expectations towards students. Sustaining expectations can occur more often and assume that a student's performance will remain the same over time. With the TESA training, teachers are encouraged to give all students more opportunity to perform in class, receive more feedback and establish respectful relationships with their students (Cantor et al., 2000). Some of the interactions that TESA teachers are exposed to are: equitable distribution of response opportunity, affirmation or correction, proximity, individual helping, courtesy, latency, reasons for praise and higher-level questioning (Cantor et al., 2000).

School Climate Link with Teacher Expectations

Teacher perceptions and expectations of students are tied into school climate. School climate refers to the feel of a school. It can vary from different schools in the same district (Tableman & Herron, 2004). School climate displays the physical and psychological details of a school. Positive school climate is necessary in order to have effective teaching and learning. Some of the aspects of school climate include student interactions, faculty interactions, leadership, discipline, and learning environment.

Research shows that a positive and sustained school climate is paramount in promoting student academic achievement. A positive school culture also helps in teacher retention, which promotes student achievement, thus decreasing the dropout rate in high schools (Cohen, Pickeral, & McCloskey, 2009). How students, teachers, staff, parents,

and other visitors are treated includes the school climate and has a direct effect on student achievement (Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005).

Role of Parent

Students with more involved parents regardless of their income or background tend to make better grades (Lin, Isernhagen, Scherz & Denner, 2014). Too many times educators have left parental involvement up to the parents. Many have viewed parental involvement as participation in parent-teacher conferences, volunteer or fundraising activities (Lin et al., 2014). When parental involvement is addressed, educators sometimes believe that parents alone are responsible. Sometimes teachers can perceive parents as not having the motivation or interest in their child's education.

There must be systems, processes and procedures in place that will encourage parental involvement (Lin et al., 2014). Family, school and community exhibit the totality of a student's surrounding. These are the areas where the majority of students receive their influence. Lin et al. (2014) cite Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. In this model, a student's overall success in school depends upon their total environment. School, home and community connections work together as socializing agents for the student. Researchers offer some advice when addressing parental involvement in rural communities. Schools must be aware of their specific rural setting, give directives on their expectations of involvement for parents, teachers and the community, be knowledgeable of the different cultures surrounding them, and have activities that promote student learning in school (Lin et al., 2014).

In one study by Lin et al. (2014), rural educators believe the definition of parental involvement consists of engaging parents in parent-teacher conferences, volunteering at

school, school activities and discussion of the teacher's personal goals and expectations for their child's academic future. The largest outcome percentage was in the area of collaboration between educators and parents for the benefit of their child. The next largest outcome was the student's increasing motivation to obtain an education. From what rural educators believe, the least important outcome was a parent providing additional learning resources for their child after-school.

Research on parental involvement in low-income school communities reveals complex multi-cultural and political factors that lead to low parental involvement and participation in school functions (Lawson, 2003). Low parental involvement is usually caused by conflicts in relationships between low-income parents and teachers. Researchers attribute these conflicts to differences in power and status (Lawson, 2003). A breakdown in messaging hinders teacher interactions with parents. Many times schools do not recognize racial and cultural differences that might lead to mistreatment of stakeholders.

Parental involvement can be defined as many different parental behaviors. It also includes parental practices like taking an interest in your child's education (Fan & Chen, 2001). Some researchers have placed parental involvement into four categories. Those categories are "basic obligations, school to home communications, parental involvement at school and parental involvement in learning activities at home" (Fan & Chen, 2001 pg. 2). Some of the verbiage now includes "providing volunteer opportunities for parents, assisting parents with child-rearing skills, school-parent communications, involving parent in school decision-making, and involving parents in school-community collaborations" (Fan & Chen, 2001 p. 3).

Researchers say parent engagement at home will have the largest outcomes in relation to student learning (Harris & Goodall, 2008). Most parental involvement is at the school level or school based. For one year, researchers in England explored the relationship between parental involvement and student achievement. A governmental guideline for children entitled *The Children's Plan* has a component for parental involvement (Harris & Goodall, 2008), but researchers wanted to dig deeper on their own. *The Children's Plan* reinforces the findings that the more engaged parents are the more successful their children will be. In order to fully understand the relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at schools, this researcher explored the different types of community support and their impact on student achievement as you will see later in this text.

Harris and Goodall (2008) conducted research to investigate the association between different approaches to parental involvement and student success. One goal of the research was to notate the opinions of parents, students and teachers. The research of Harris and Goodall (2008) was also a part of a larger project that they worked on led by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust in partnership with the Association of School and College Leaders. The larger project Engaging Parents in Raising Achievement Project (EPRA) was financed through the Department of Education and Skills. The intent was to find creative ways of involving parents in learning. This project touched more than 100 secondary schools across the United Kingdom. Some of the components included: "supporting parents to help their children learn, personalizing provision for parents themselves as learners, intelligent reporting, and enhancing pastoral care (Harris & Goodall, 2008, p. 281). The project was launched to explore the relationships with the

above components to parental engagement and student achievement. The case studies consisted of interviews with parent, teachers, support staff and students (Harris & Goodall, 2008). Topics addressed in the research were different views of parental engagement, values of parental engagement, behavior, barriers to parental engagement and hard to reach parents.

The research revealed the differing views of parental engagement from the parent and teacher perspective. Parents' view of parental engagement consisted of offering support to students. Teachers "viewed it as a means to improved behavior and support for the school" (Harris & Goodall, 2008, p. 282). Both agreed that parental involvement was crucial to the success of the student. Schools did use parental engagement and involvement reciprocally.

Data from this research revealed aspects concerning the value of parental engagement as perceived by participants (Harris & Goodall, 2008). Staff felt that moral support and better student behavior were the top benefits. Parents voted more for moral support and the value of education. The value of education for parents meant that they felt they were being caring and responsible. This research revealed that parental engagement had a direct effect on student behavior. Educators perceive student behavior as having a direct correlation to student achievement (Harris & Goodall, 2008).

Findings from this research revealed that the school itself could be a barrier to parental involvement. So called "hard to reach" parents believed the school was hard to reach (Harris & Goodall, 2008, p. 284). The data made distinctions between parent perceptions of elementary and secondary schools. Parents perceived that it was easier to be engaged in primary schools. Parents like the relationships built at the school entrance

with other parents. Some parents felt that high schools were intimidating. The office can be intimidating as well as the students. Parents did not think size mattered in relation to being intimidated but the number of people with whom they have to relate to in secondary schools (Harris & Goodall, 2008).

This research reveals that some parents saw schools as a “closed system” existing to support teachers over students when there were conflicts (Harris & Goodall, 2008, p. 285). Other tensions can arise when parents and staff have different perceptions of the type, purpose and frequency of parental engagement. Some parents admit that they felt powerless with schools. Schools often communicated by letter or email which was a barrier to a parent with poor reading skills (Harris & Goodall, 2008).

Harris and Goodall’s (2008, p. 285) research revealed the preoccupation of schools with “hard to reach parents.” A parent quoted a teacher as saying these types of parents “come in only when they have to” (Harris & Goodall, 2008, p. 285). Schools targeted this group no matter the size in conjunction with the overall parent body. Some schools even targeted programs around these parents. These parents were also said to be the parents of under-performing students. Some schools were successful in reaching this group of parents while others were not. Researchers concluded that some schools spent too much effort getting these parents involved and should have balanced their efforts with all parents (Harris & Goodall, 2008). Researchers say engaging parents is the best way of improving student achievement. Parent involvement increases with the parent’s level of education, income and social status. Many parents who are not involved face barriers which can be interpreted as resistant or refusing to compromise. Parental engagement

has to be a focused priority and parents should be involved in their children's education (Harris & Goodall, 2008).

Researcher surveyed over 1500 parents in the Kansas City, Missouri area to find out what they think would help their children to learn and what would they do as parents to further their children's learning (Johnson, Gupta, Hagelskamp & Hess, 2013). From their findings, the majority of parents are "ready, willing and able" to participate in their children's education (Johnson et al., 2013, p. 2). One-third of parents are ready to take on more responsibility at the school level to assist in improving their children's education. They would be willing to serve on committees for selecting teachers and the utilizing of school resources. Many say they want to go beyond serving with the Parent Teacher Association, chaperoning field trips and participating in bake sales.

This report reveals three different groups of parents. Parents who would like to play a larger role in how schools operate are referred to as "potential transformers" (Johnson et al., 2013, p.2). Those who say they could do more to help out are referred to as "school helpers" (p.2). Parents who are concerned about their children's education and are looking for guidance are called "help seekers" (Johnson et al., 2013, p.2). About 23% of parents in the Kansas City area do not fall into any one of these categories. Researchers hope that school and district leaders are able to reach out to these parents. Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS) lost its accreditation in 2012. At the time of this research, it was the only school district in that region which allowed charter schools (Johnson et al., 2013). KCPS parents were very concerned about their schools, but remained hopeful that the right programs would be implemented to get parents involved.

In this report, sixty-four percent of parents say their school actively seeks to encourage more parents to get involved. Half of the parents say they can trust their school's principals and teachers to do what's right (Johnson et al., 2013). The majority of parents consider themselves knowledgeable about their child's academic rank compared to other students. However, thirty-seven percent of parents do not feel that way. Forty-percent know about the qualifications of their children's teacher but many don't know if their child's school made adequate yearly progress or (AYP). Many of the parents are not that well informed about charter schools and don't know if the schools are better alternatives.

Half of the parents surveyed by Johnson et al. (2013) say they are currently doing as much as they can to be involved in their children's education. Sixty-three percent say they are doing as much as possible to support their children at home. Parents say the best way for educators to communicate with them regarding their children's academic progress is through email. Three out of ten parents prefer face to face meeting while nine percent prefer phone calls. African-American and Hispanic parents were the most likely to prefer face to face meetings at 45 % and 48% respectively (Johnson et al., 2013).

Many parents say work is the number one reason for them not being more involved. According to the survey, another reason parents are not more involved is because no one has asked. Twenty-four percent of parents say no one has contacted them in the past year about volunteering at school (Johnson et al., 2013). Fifty-two percent of parents' surveyed say being involved with their children's education at home will have a greater impact than their being involved in setting school policies. When asked to choose

three ideas to improve local schools, most choose more money, better teachers and more parental involvement.

Most parents agree that a good education is important for their children's future but it is not the only factor in what determines their children's success. Forty-three percent of parents say making sure their children get a good education is the biggest challenge. Thirty-eight percent of parents say their greatest worry is protecting their children from negative influences. Sixteen percent cite making ends meet as the biggest challenge (Johnson et al., 2013). One-third of parents surveyed said making sure their children get a college education is the best way to ensure success while 37% cite having a good work ethic and 25 % say getting along with people is the best way to ensure success (Johnson et al., 2013).

Parents who have been identified as "potential transformers" are willing to get involved at the school level in their children's education (Johnson et al., 2013). They are comfortable meeting with district leaders regarding improvements at their children's school or contacting the local media to share views on education. They share key demographic characteristics with other parents such as level of education, employment status and income. They are more likely to be African-American parents. "Potential transformers" are better informed about some important topics of education compared to other parents (Johnson et al., 2013). Seventy-three percent say they know how their children's school ranks compared to others in the region. They also appear to be more informed about the adequate yearly progress (AYP) of their children's school.

"Potential transformers" are more likely to be very interested in having their children attend a charter school (Johnson et al., 2013, p.14). Fifty-two percent of these

parents are most likely to say their children's teachers and administrators are great in communicating about their children's progress. This compares to 36% of other parents. Seventy-one percent of these parents are more likely to say the school aggressively encourages parents to get involved compared to 60% of other parents. These parents are 36% more likely to say schools are getting better than 27 % of other parents (Johnson et al., 2013).

Researchers also noted that while many of these parents are ready to get involved in activities to affect school policies many have not done so. One in five has served on school committees for teacher searches or use of school funds (Johnson et al., 2013). About 24% have served on school discipline committees. Nineteen percent have contacted the media regarding school issues. However, thirty-one percent have met with school district officials regarding improvements at their children's school. Fifty-percent of these parents say they could be more involved if they tried harder (Johnson et al., 2013).

Researchers classified a third of the parents in the Kansas City area as "helpers" (Johnson et al., 2013, p.16). Few of these parents seem interested in activities to change school policies. These parents also admit they could be more involved if they tried. These parents are not really advocates or transformers but they are under-utilized by schools. These parents are already doing a lot. Seventy-three percent say they have volunteered at the school in the past year at sporting events or bake sales. Six of ten parents have attended a PTA meeting. Forty-two percent of these parents believe that more parental involvement will improve schools (Johnson et al., 2013).

This group of parents holds particularly high views of their children's teachers and administrators. Sixty-three percent say they trust school staff to do what's right for their children (Johnson et al., 2013). This compares to 50% of all parents surveyed. Eighty-five percent of these parents feel that principals and teachers have a good idea of what is going on in the community. These parents are similar in education levels and ethnicity to other parents but more than likely are a part of a two parent household. Their household income levels are also higher (Johnson et al., 2013).

Another group of parents in research by Johnson et al. (2013) are classified as "helpers" (p.18). This group represents 19% of the parents surveyed. They are concerned about their child's success in school but tend to be more critical of school staff. Half of these parents say there is still more work to be done in helping their children to be more successful in school. These parents don't think they can be more involved than they already are, but they are waiting for schools to do more (Johnson et al., 2013). Thirty-six percent of these parents say their schools are getting worse compared to 27% in the overall survey. Forty-three percent of parents would like their children to remain in their current school compared to 53% in the overall survey.

Twenty-five percent of these parents say their children have been diagnosed with learning disabilities compared to 13% of other parents (Johnson et al., 2013). This may be a contributing factor to their frustration. These parents are also very interested in having their children attend a charter school. "Help seekers" are less likely to believe that teachers and administrators are in touch with the community (Johnson et al., 2013, p.18). These parents are less likely to say they feel comfortable with traditional parental

involvement activities like volunteering at sporting events or participating in bake sales. Sixty-percent of these parents would compare to 83% of parents surveyed.

This group of parents can at times be absentee parents. They are likely than most parents to have gotten involved throughout the school year. Half say they have met three or four times with their children's teachers to discuss academic progress (Johnson et al., 2013). They also say they check homework just as much as other parents. This group of parents can be a challenge for schools seeking to boost parental involvement. They are more disillusioned about their children's school than other parents. Few of the items researchers presented to increase parental involvement appealed to them. One item that appealed to them asked that employers would provide flexibility to parents to attend their children's school (Johnson et al., 2013). Fifty-three percent of "help seekers" say this would tremendously improve parental involvement.

These parents are more likely than other parents to live in urban neighborhoods. Most of these parents have completed high school or have a GED degree (Johnson et al., 2013). Fifty-four percent have some college experience. Researchers say these parents are searching for a type of involvement that was not evident in the survey. They are generally less satisfied with their children's school than other parents. They are also less comfortable in taking on other roles like a potential transformer or helper (Johnson et al., 2013). This study implies that if schools did more to attract these parents they would become more engaged.

Kansas City Public Schools were operating without accreditation during the time of this research (Johnson et al., 2013). One-third of the children in that metropolitan area attend charter schools. That is one of the highest percentages in the country. The district

has faced problems common to urban districts such as a declining tax base, poverty, depopulation, school closings and budget issues.

Some researchers believe that parental engagement in schools is weak because many urban schools have become increasingly isolated from families and communities (Warren, Hong, Rubin, & Uy, 2009). These same neighborhoods where families are disconnected from schools often have strong community-based organizations (CBOs). Many of these organizations are starting to collaborate with public schools thus sparking more parental engagement in schools. Warren et al. (2009) investigated the efforts of CBOs engaging parents in schools in low-income communities. The researchers used case study methodology looking at three school-community collaborations.

Warren et al. (2009) discovered some common dimensions of parental engagement in their studies. “There is an emphasis on relationship building among parents and between parents and educators. Secondly, there is a focus on the leadership development of parents. Thirdly, there is an effort to bridge the gap in culture and power between parents and educators” (Warren et al., 2009, p.2210.)

Role of Community

Schools and communities have their own specific characteristics. Rural schools and communities have challenges that are specific to their location (Lin et al., 2014). Schools in rural communities that maybe isolated face different challenges. Some of the challenges include finding qualified staff, high teacher turnover, poorly prepared teachers or lack of resources and poor facilities. Rural schools also have many high points. These schools often become the center of their town. School sports and other events also engage the community. When students do well, the community is generally very proud.

These accomplishments become points of engagement for the larger community (Lin et al., 2014). Many opportunities that present themselves to students often have to do with the communities' resources or economic infrastructure such as hunting, fishing, skiing and the like.

Lessons that Warren et al. (2009) learned from this research stem from case studies of three types of collaborations. The collaborations include service, development and organizing models. The service model includes service delivery organizations who partner with public schools (Warren et al., 2009). The result is an open community or full-service school that provides after-school programs, night classes and health services for students and their families. For the development model, community development corporations team up with educators to open charter schools or community based schools. These community development corporations have generally had interests in building affordable housing and economic development (Warren et al., 2009). Community organizing groups partner with public schools and focus on building power for social and political change. Their initiatives are usually in the school through the process of relationship building, leadership development and public action (Warren et al., 2009).

Warren et al. (2009) found that working-class parents are not networking with other parents in the same school. These parents often don't see themselves as equals to standing up to school administrators. Researchers believe educators should foster better relationships with parents to boost parental engagement. It will take authentic collaborations between teachers and parents to address unevenness of knowledge and power between teachers and less educated parents. Low income parents felt left out from

the school loop (Warren et al., 2009). When excluded from school, many become critical even angry.

Strong parental leadership and collective parent action can conflict with educators (Warren et al., 2009). Researchers offer the framework for solution by connecting the concept of social capital to understanding relational power. This type of power is in contrast to unilateral power. Relational power emphasizes the ability to get things done. Unilateral power has an emphasis of power over others (Warren et al., 2009). Researchers say “educators who fear parent power are operating out of the unilateral framework of winners and losers” (p.2213). Proponents of district level change say a more collaborative form of power is paramount to creating the capacity to build and sustain school reform.

Warren et al. (2009) says educators can benefit from being patient in the process of parental engagement in schools. Relationships can be built over time. Schools may not be able to engage parents on their own. Community based organizations offer schools that social capital expertise that they are seeking (Warren et al., 2009). Next, educators need to understand that communities have different needs and desires regarding their children’s education. Educators should collaborate with community partners to help develop parent leadership thus forming initiatives that meet “the interests, values, and capacities of any particular school community (Warren et al., 2009, p. 2210).

Parental involvement is not the only element of community engagement. Other members of the community play an important role in the overall success of a school. One researcher highlighted community schools (Daniel, 2017). The Quitman Community School in Newark, New Jersey has developed relationships over the years

with not only parents but also other members of the extended community. Daniel (2017) looked at some of the ways community schools have been able to engage the extended community. The Quitman Community School offers a full service health clinic and has resources available to help parents build their leadership capacity. Daniel's (2017) research examines "educational leadership and the importance of strong collaborative relationships between community partners, school leaders and teachers" (p. 3).

The presence of community partners can support the work of the school. It can improve school organization, student achievement, and build trust with those beyond the school walls (Daniel, 2017). Daniel (2017) cites strategies that must exist in order for schools to become successful with collaborative relationships. There must be time set aside for collaborations. The process of collaboration must be prioritized. There must be a creation of structures and roles. There must be a commitment to the leadership development and capacity building of leadership in community members and stakeholders. Their participation must be meaningful (Daniel, 2017). These types of priorities are crucial to the success of community schools. Community schools "bring equitable access to high-quality educational resources, extended learning time and opportunities" (Daniel, 2017, p.3).

Research shows out of school factors account for 60% of student outcomes (Daniel, 2017). Some of those factors include income inequality, family income level, food insecurity and housing stability. Community schools are gaining popularity in helping school districts to create equity. Equity is created by providing resources and supports to address barriers to learning. The school then becomes a community hub

where parents and community members have a level of ownership (Daniel, 2017). Daniel (2017) is quick to note that it takes specific attention and commitment from schools to be successful in creating these collaborative relationships. The researcher defines collaborative leadership as shared decision making (Daniel, 2017). Teachers and other stakeholders have a say in how the school is managed. This is best facilitated when trusting relationships exist among stakeholders. With these collaborative partnerships, school leaders should be open to the fact that stakeholders provide expertise to the work when power and responsibility are shared (Daniel, 2017). Research shows that higher achieving schools share leadership to a greater degree than lower achieving schools. Stakeholders share leadership, school climate improves, and teachers are more motivated thus resulting in better working relationships and improved results.

Daniel (2017) pointed out three elements associated with school reform. Stakeholders are trusted, respected and encouraged (Daniel, 2017, p. 5). Secondly, there is a focus on student achievement, educators' value differences, and critical reflective dialogue is apparent. Thirdly, these reforms are ongoing, caring and imbedded with nurturing professional development (Daniel, 2017).

Community schools seek involvement of the community in hopes that school and community can support each other (Daniel, 2017). Reformers in the school can help foster critical trusting relationships. They can accomplish this greeting families in the school, welcoming their leadership and creating collaborative events that includes teachers and community partners in decision making (Daniel, 2017). As community schools include families and community members, they can more closely determine the

needs of the community that will encourage community engagement and impact student learning.

Daniel (2017) highlights the five stakeholders contributing to collaboration at the school level. They are principals, teachers, parents, Community School Directors (CSD), and external organizations. CSDs often coordinate the different components of the community school model. These school leaders are pivotal in developing “the internal and external processes that connect students, parents and communities to school resources” (Daniel, 2017, p.6). The principal will facilitate the involvement of all stakeholders into the planning and execution of the school vision. This collaborative school culture builds the capacity for the school to meet the needs of the students through the use of community resources.

Principals play a critical role in the transformation of the community school. Those who are committed to equity and social justice can promote inclusive cultures and practices in the school (Daniel, 2017). Teaching colleagues should be viewed as professional equals. Leadership should be distributed among school staff, parents, community members and district staff. This will in no way diminish the role of the principal. Participation at this level promotes student achievement with an influence on teacher motivation (Daniel, 2017). This has an effect on teacher instruction thus promoting student self-concept, participation and engagement. Principals impact student achievement by creating a climate and culture that promotes professional learning and taking action steps to promote teacher’s personal growth. These actions include observations of practice, individual conversations in classrooms and team meetings (Daniel, 2017).

The school leader can also support Community School Directors in their work. Regular interaction, shared-decision making and facilitation of tasks between principals and CSDs can result in a more engaged community thus improving school capacity (Daniel, 2017). The research shows that Community School Directors developed strong relationships with the principals and played a key role in school leadership and planning. Both principals and CSDs revealed that regular communication and strong relationships allow Community School Directors to function more effectively in helping to support school goals (Daniel, 2017).

Daniel's (2017) research reveals that teacher turn-over and the teacher's experience with shared-leadership with principals is worse in high poverty schools than in low poverty schools (p.9). Teachers are more likely to remain at schools if they see themselves as part of a collaborative team, "feel supported by school leadership, have influence over work environment and trust their principal" (Daniel, 2017, p.9). By developing collaborative relationships with teachers, schools that struggle with low achievement can build organizational supports to provide high quality instruction for all students and improve equity in student outcomes.

Family and community school partnerships can be an important component for student and school success (Daniel, 2017). When parents are involved in student learning, teachers see powerful effects. Schools can build community members capacity to engage in the school community when they recognize these capacities and knowledge. As school support the development of family members and school staff, trust and successful engagement is developed. Trust helps to nurture the school base in the school

community thus reform initiatives grow over time positively impacting student achievement (Daniel, 2017).

Traditional models of parent engagement such as Parent-Teacher Associations must have cultural relevancy for all parents to feel welcomed (Daniel, 2017). Parents must also feel respected by school staff. If not, engagement can be limited. Low income parents and parents of color are many times not offered opportunities to participate at school in meaningful ways. Community engagement is paramount in setting the agenda and programming of the school. Community schools place emphasis on collaborative school culture and meaningful engagement (Daniel, 2017). These schools are better positioned to improve on existing processes to transfer schools into resources hubs for the community thus building strengths of communities and schools.

Schools can greatly benefit from meaningful partnerships with external groups like non-profit organizations and government agencies (Daniel, 2017). These organizations can help provide services that the schools are lacking. Students and families can gain access to such resources as healthcare or housing. Many partnerships extend beyond providing services to defining problems, developing solutions and implementing plans (Daniel, 2017). Some types of community organizing can bring knowledge into the school and increase the power of the surrounding community.

Collaborative approaches to school reform can improve school climate and instruction (Daniel, 2017). Collaborative leadership is necessary to improve school capacity to reform. School leaders must provide space, time, and support for these collaborations to take place. School and community collaborations have a positive effect on student outcomes. School capacity is best defined as the “school’s ability to support

teaching and learning, enabling the professional learning of staff and engaging family and community members in school governance” (Daniel, 2017, p.11) Schools that have shared decision-making often demonstrate important elements of student achievement. These elements include “cooperative relationships, higher levels of interaction and increased teacher motivation, efficacy and accountability” (Daniel, 2017, p.11)

Daniel (2017) believes that collaborative decision-making is more than just getting everyone involved. It is implemented in a way that stakeholders come together around a clear vision, tight processes, and democratic accountability to the community. Principals are able to build their school capacity on the wisdom and expertise of teachers, parents and community partners (Daniel, 2017).

Researchers offer these strategies for implementing collaborative relationships. Create time for the collaboration. Make time to assess issues and set common goals. Daniel (2017) encourages leaders to prioritize process. This begins with open dialogue in designated areas. These spaces can allow participants to honestly and constructively engage in problem solving. This can lead to rich learning environments where stakeholders engage in collective reflection and improve practices. The leadership needs to have structures and roles (Daniel, 2017). Stakeholders have regular meetings to discuss their work and collective capacity. Leadership can provide both support and pressure to contribute to changing attitudes, beliefs, and practices for effective reform (Daniel, 2017, p.12).

There should also be a commitment to collective leadership (Daniel, 2017). School communities can support and challenge teachers to help them improve their practices. When capacity of community members is built, this helps to improve

conditions for learning and growth in and outside of the school. This includes sharing data and research and creates collaborative space for all stakeholders to learn (Daniel, 2017).

Attendance

Nationally, school attendance rates range from 90 to 97% (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Some schools are concerned with improving attendance while others focus on maintaining good attendance. Researchers have noted that schools can improve student attendance through programs and procedures. Large schools tend to have problems with attendance than schools of a smaller size (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Schools have generally not sought family guidance on attendance until the problem becomes severe.

“Forty-five percent of teachers and 42 percent of principals say excessive absenteeism is a large factor in students dropping out of school (Bridgeland, Dilulio & Balfanz, 2009). The literature also confirms that dropping out of school is not a one-time event but a slow act of disengagement. Attendance is a strong indicator that a student is falling behind academically (Bridgeland et al., 2009). Constantly missing school can also contribute to behavior issues.

If a student has poor attendance, that is an early predictor that they are in danger of dropping out of school (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). It is apparent that a student who is not attending class is not fully mastering the curriculum. Researchers reveal that students with consistent attendance perform better on standardized tests. Particular family involvement activities like “parental monitoring, parent participation at the school, and PTA membership are linked to student attendance” (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002, p. 309).

When students are absent, most schools contact the homes of students to inquire about the absence. Phone calls to the parents of absent students have been linked to increased attendance rates (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Also, schools that provide information to families about attendance and attendance policies see increases in attendance.

Absences not only affect students who are absent, but also it keeps schools from making their goals. Funding to school districts is partially dependent upon the regular attendance of students (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Lower student attendance means fewer dollars for programs. Researchers and their field studies offer some areas of focus to assist schools in achieving attendance goals. Six types of involvement link partnership activities with school goals. Those involvements are “parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community” (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002, p. 309).

Providing students with incentives for attendance has shown to be effective. Other effective measures for improving attendance include assigning a truant officer to students, family workshops on attendance, student conferences with guidance counselors and connecting parents with a school contact person (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Schools that offer after-school programs also experience higher rates of attendance. This may prove an additional incentive for students to come to school so that they can participate in these programs.

In previous years, the topic of attendance was overlooked in research data until the connection was made that it may contribute to student disengagement and dropping out of school (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Researchers believe attendance improves when

schools take a proactive look at approaches to family and community involvement. Some effective activities in a study conducted by Epstein & Sheldon (2002) saw an increase in student attendance. Those activities included providing rewards to students for improved attendance and referring students to counselors to discuss attendance issues. Other activities involving parents were also effective. Those included communicating with families about attendance, providing a contact person at school for parents to call, conducting workshops, and conducting home visits.

Graduation

According to Murnane (2013), the United States high school graduation rate is 83.7%. African-Americans and Hispanics are slightly behind this rate at 78.2% for African-Americans and 77.8% for Hispanics. Females of all races have higher graduation rates than males. White females are graduating rate is 88.6%. African-American females are graduating at a rate of 84.2%. Hispanic females are graduating at a rate of 81.8% (Murnane, 2013). This data comes from the American Community Survey of the 2010 Census. In one researcher's survey, forty-eight percent of teachers and 55% of principals felt like their school was graduating 90% of students with their cohort. Some researchers are advocating for states to follow the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate as presented by the National Governor's Association (Bridgeland, Dilulio & Balfanz, 2009).

Schools that offer rigorous coursework can have a great effect in decreasing their dropout rate (Bridgeland et al., 2009). Schools offer rigorous math courses like Algebra I and above decrease their chances of students dropping out by 28%. If courses like Calculus are offered, that risk is reduced by 55%. Challenging curricula is a good

indication of a school having more students who are college and career ready (Bridgeland et al., 2009). Many times these challenging courses are not available to low-income students.

According to the United States Census, 3.3 million people were labeled as high school dropouts in 2006. It is very difficult for a person to earn a meaningful living without a high school diploma (Neild, Balfanz, & Herzog, 2007). Data reveals that one-third to one half of minorities do not graduate from high school. Researchers say there are social, psychological, and financial consequences associated with school dropouts (White & Kelly, 2010).

A majority of teachers and principals in one survey felt like parental engagement was the key factor in many dropout situations (Bridgeland et al., 2009). Parents feel their children are often trapped in low performing schools and don't have the benefit of a rigorous curriculum. These parents also feel that the schools are not engaging them or communicating effectively and they would like better information and tools to help their children succeed (Bridgeland et al., 2009). Schools can provide parents with information about graduation requirements, college entrance and homework hotlines.

Academic Proficiency

Research continues to reveal that parents expectations for their children is the most effective type of parental involvement that promotes academic achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001). When parents have high expectations for their children, they perform better in school. Some researchers speculate that the effect of parental involvement on student academic proficiency may fluctuate based on the type of academic measurement (Fan & Chen, 2001). Some of the global indicators whereby student achievement is measured

include post-secondary school attendance, grade point average (GPA), ACT college readiness assessment or standardized test scores in specific subject areas. Fan and Chen (2001) noticed that parental involvement at home that included the monitoring of homework had the lowest correlation with student achievement. A parent's expectation and aspiration for their child academically appeared to have the strongest effect on a student's academic achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001).

ACT reports the average ACT score is 21 (Xu & Liu, 2016). ACT composite scores have remained unchanged over the last 20 years. The ACT is a tool used throughout the United States to measure the academic knowledge that a high school student has accumulated over their academic career (Xu & Liu, 2016). It is used primarily for entry into college. ACT is also one type of admission test used for entry into colleges. Some high schools use ACT to gauge their school's effectiveness.

Fan & Chen (2001) indicate that certain elements of parental involvement have a measurable effect on student achievement. The overall average of parental involvement and academic achievement is about .25. Researchers Fan & Chen (2001) looked at about 25 empirical studies. The .25 represents a medium effect size with .50 being large and .10 being small. According to this research, parent's aspiration and expectation for their child's academic future have the strongest relationship to academic achievement.

Sixty-two percent of teachers and sixty percent of principals list students not being prepared for high school as a reason some do not achieve high academics (Bridgeland, Dilulio & Balfanz, 2009). They believe this is a primary cause of high school dropout. Researchers believe that teachers and administrators should expect students to excel. Of teachers and principals surveyed, thirty-two percent of teachers believe that they should

have high expectations for all students to meet high academic standards and be prepared for college (Bridgeland et al., 2009). Fifty-nine percent of veteran teachers and fifty-eight percent of teachers new to the industry believe there should be separate academic tracks for students. Seventy-five percent of teachers and sixty-six percent of principals don't believe at-risk students would work harder to meet standards that are higher (Bridgeland et al., 2009).

Some educators question their influence on student achievement without the student and parent assuming responsibility. Educators feel limited if students do not show a commitment to their education (Bridgeland et al., 2009). It is important for teachers to have confidence in their teaching abilities. Research explains that teacher perceptions about their abilities in the classroom have a powerful effect on student achievement, motivation, and a student's self-confidence.

Sixty-one percent of teachers and seventy-two percent of principals believe some improvements are needed to high schools to boost graduation rates. Some of the improvements they identified include "smaller classes and schools, more parental and mentor involvement, more hands-on learning that connects to the real world, and alternate learning environments" (Bridgeland et al., 2009, p. 27).

To improve student achievement, sixty-three percent of teachers and fifty-one percent of principals strongly endorsed increasing parental outreach. Researchers reveal how valuable parental involvement is to schools. Schools would have to spend an extra \$1000 per student to account for the value an involved parent brings to the school (Bridgeland et al., 2009). School districts across the country added programs that get parents involved. Some have interactive homework programs that parents and students

can work on together like Teachers Involving Parents in Schools (TIPS). This program was developed at John Hopkins University. Evaluation studies show students involved in this program outperforming their peers who are not in an interactive homework program (Bridgeland et al., 2009).

Researchers have also looked at the effects of parental involvement on mathematics. Sirvani (2007) studied teacher communication with parents and used Algebra I classes in the research. All students were taught by one teacher. Two classes were placed in control groups while two classes were placed in experimental group. “Parents of the experimental group received monitoring sheets twice a week” (p.31). These parents also received information on daily homework and test grades. Parents of the control group did not receive monitoring sheets.

Students in the experimental group outperformed students in the control group. Researchers studied 52 freshmen high school students from four regular Algebra I classes. There were 33 male students and 19 female students (Sirvani, 2007). The teacher used the same textbook, tests and homework assignments throughout the study (p.35). The study compared the mathematics achievement of students who received parental involvement and those who did not. Twice a week, the teacher gave students in the experimental group monitoring sheets to take home to be signed by parents (Sirvani, 2007).

Researchers used previous year’s Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) to examine whether students in both groups performed at the same level. According to an independent t-test, students did not differ in mathematics ability (Sirvani, 2007). Students in the experimental group outperformed students in the control group on

homework assignments. The mean average of the experimental group was 75.64. The mean average of the control group was 49.51. The teacher administered seven tests during the study. The mean test variables for the experimental group were higher than the control group. Manova testing indicated that the treatment significantly improved students' test and exam scores (Sirvani, 2007). Parental involvement did not affect student scores significantly based on gender.

Sirvani (2007) believes students in the experimental group out-performed those in the control group because parents received their children's grade twice a week. This caused students to become more motivated to complete assignments and study for tests. Findings from this research suggest that all parents want students to improve their mathematical ability regardless of gender. The study also investigated the effect of parental involvement on low-performing students in both groups (Sirvani, 2007). Manova testing showed that lower performing students in the experimental group out performed lower-performing students in the control group.

The researcher did note some limitations to this study. The sample from this study came from two ethnic groups which were Hispanic and African-American (Sirvani, 2007). Another limitation involved using a smaller sample size. Sirvani (2007) believes a larger sample size would have been even more convincing of the importance of parental involvement in student achievement. These findings can help teachers and administrators implement this strategy to improve student achievement. A principal could require all teachers to implement files indicating the parental involvement for each child (Sirvani, 2007). School districts can hire social workers whose main job is parent engagement.

Helping students to complete high schools are the major goals of the U.S. education system. Parent expectations and school initiated contact with parents show strong positive effects on student's school engagement motivation towards mathematics and English (Ross, 2016). Parental advising positively affects motivation in English.

Chapter 3

Methods (Community Involvement)

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationships between educators' perceptions of the quality of community support and involvement at their high schools and five indices of school effectiveness longitudinally measured in terms of student attendance, student graduation, and student achievement as measured by state-mandated assessments of high school proficiency and a nationally standardized test of college readiness.

After a restatement of the research questions, the present chapter begins with an explanation of the general methodology employed in this study—specifically, secondary analysis of an existing set of survey data. Immediately following is a description of the *Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Questionnaire* from which these survey data were derived and a discussion of that instrument's psychometric properties. In the next section, an outline is provided of the conditions under which the secondary data specific to this study were collected, supplemented by tables that statistically describe the set of Tennessee educators whose responses constitute the present dataset. Inclusive of a discussion of the source and meaning of the control, independent, and dependent variables employed in this study, the final section of the chapter provides a statement of the analytic strategies to be employed in answering the research questions following:

- 1) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student attendance rates, averaged over three years?
- 2) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student graduation rates, averaged over three years?
- 3) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and students' ACT Composite scores, averaged over three years?
- 4) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in Algebra I, averaged over three years?
- 5) Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in English II, averaged over three years?

The present chapter continues with an explanation of the general methodology employed in this study—specifically, secondary analysis of an existing set of survey data. Immediately following is a description of the *Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Questionnaire* from which these survey data were derived and a discussion of that instrument's psychometric properties. In the next section, an outline is provided of the conditions under which the secondary data specific to this study were

collected; supplemented by two tables that statistically describe the set of Tennessee educators whose responses constitute the present dataset. Inclusive of a discussion of the source and meaning of the control, independent, and dependent variables employed in this study, the final section of the chapter provides a statement of the analytic strategies to be employed in answering the research questions previously stated.

Overall Methodology

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), research is usually categorized in terms of its general methodology, as qualitative, quantitative, experimental, or non-experimental. When employing a quantitative approach, questionnaires, tests, records, standardized observation instruments, and existing data bases can serve as appropriate sources for data (Patton, 1997). Common to the quantitative approach is the utilization of data from human samples and the placing of that the data in predetermined categories for statistical analysis, the intended result being an unbiased and objective interpretation of data (Creswell, 2008).

Drawing upon existing data sources, the researcher approached the five research questions posed by this study quantitatively and non-experimentally, working in a mode of inquiry commonly referred to as “analysis of secondary data” or more simply “secondary analysis.”

According to Hakim (1982), secondary data analysis may be defined as “further analysis of an existing data-set which presents interpretations, conclusions, or knowledge additional to, or different from, those presented in the first report on the data collection and its results” (p. 1). On this definition, specific uses to which such analyses may be put include:

- Condensed reports (such as social area analysis based on selected social indicators)
- More detailed reports (offering additional detail on the same topic)
- Reports which focus on a particular sub-topic (such as unemployment) or social group (such as ethnic minority)
- Reports angled towards a particular policy issue or question
- Analyses based on a conceptual framework or theory not applied to the original analysis
- Re-analyses which take advantage of more sophisticated analytical techniques to test hypotheses and answer questions in a more comprehensive and succinct manner than in the original report. (Hakim, 1982, p. 1)

Given the uses Hakim outlined, the present study would appear to lend itself to secondary analysis in three respects. First, it focuses on a particular set of “subtopics” included in the original study—namely, teachers’ perceptions of professional development, teachers’ professional plans, and teachers’ level of satisfaction with their working conditions—and examines these three subtopics in relation to each other. Second, in merging these perceptual data with student outcomes, the study enables additional study of how high quality professional development might lead to higher levels of student achievement. Finally, going beyond a simple description of questionnaire outcomes in terms of frequencies and percentages, as exemplified by the state- district- and school-level *TELL* reports that have been published online, the present study applies somewhat “more sophisticated analytical techniques to . . . answer questions” (Hakim, p. 1) that were either not fully addressed or were unaddressed previously.

Instrument

Context and history.

A review of the literature indicates that a wide variety of measures of the school environment—whether conceived of under the aegis of “school climate,” “learning environment” “teacher working conditions,” etc.—are in use. Witcher (1993) reviewed several of these measures and found that those that resulted in the most reliable assessments were those that generated information about multiple aspects of the school—including “an emphasis on academics, an ambience of caring, a motivating curriculum, professional collegiality, and closeness to parents and community.” According to Witcher, these most reliable instruments were also easy for respondents to understand, were appropriate to several levels of schooling and possessed of adequate evidence of psychometric validity and reliability.

A school climate instrument that is widely thought to meet these requirements is the *Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning Questionnaire (TELL)*. Originally developed in 2002 by the New Teacher Center (NTC), the instrument made its debut in North Carolina but since then has been administered across 18 states to nearly 1.5 million educators (New Teacher Center, 2016). Currently being implemented in six states and in three metropolitan school districts, the *TELL* continues to provide information to both policymakers and practitioners about the following eight research-based constructs:

- Time—Available time to plan, to collaborate, to provide instruction, and to eliminate barriers in order to maximize instructional time during the school day

- Facilities and Resources—Availability of instructional, technology, office, communication, and school resources to teachers
- Community Support and Involvement—Community and parent/guardian communication and influence in the school
- Managing Student Conduct—Policies and practices to address student conduct issues and ensure a safe school environment
- Teacher Leadership—Teacher involvement in decisions that impact classroom and school practices
- School Leadership—The ability of school leadership to create trusting, supportive environments and address teacher concerns
- Professional Development—Availability and quality of learning opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching
- Instructional Practices and Support—Data and support available to teachers to improve instruction and student learning. (TELL Tennessee Research Brief, 2013).

In addition to information about these eight climate-related constructs and a modicum of demographic data about the respondent (i.e., total years of teaching experience, number years at the school, grades served by the respondents' school), the *TELL* also provides some synoptic indicators of the respondents' level of satisfaction with the school with respect to an item concerning the degree to which they find their school to be "overall . . . a good place to work and learn" as well as an item about the respondents' "immediate professional intentions." These professional intentions embrace such choices as to whether the respondent intends to remain at his/her current school, to

transfer to another school or district, or to leave the classroom for another position, either administrative, non-administrative, or entirely outside of education.

Evidence of the validity and reliability of the TELL.

Some degree of informal or *prima facie* evidence of the validity of the *TELL* instrument seems inherent in the instrument's longevity and widespread adoption. This sort of testimonial evidence aside, however, resources provided on the *TELL TN* website not only chart the evolution of the instrument's "content validity" but also report on statistical analyses pertinent to the reliability and "structural validity" of the eight research-based constructs alluded to previously. As summarized in a Spring 2013 research brief published on the *TELL TN* website, the items developed for the first iteration of the instrument originated in one part from a wide-ranging literature review of research on the role of working conditions on teacher dissatisfaction and teacher mobility and in another part from School and Staffing Survey data. Over and above these issues of "content validity," the same research brief also points to studies done to establish the instrument's "structural validity." Using data taken from 400,000 teachers from 5,000 schools in 12 states, Swanlund (2011) used a combination of factor analysis and "Rasch measurement modeling" to examine the dimensionality of the instrument. In his analyses, Swanlund found more constructs (13) than the eight that the instrument purported to measure. However, Swanlund went onto note that the additional constructs seemed also to fit comfortably within the eight-construct framework, with the additional five clusters of items serving to refine four of the original domains. When an early wave of *TELL Tennessee* data was analyzed using an approach similar to Swanlund's, the

analyst identified 10 constructs, with the Facilities and Resources construct and Instructional Practices and Support construct each splitting into two subsets.

To sum up, all statistical analyses carried out on the *TELL* to date suggest that the original instrument and its variants do in the main “measure what they purport to measure” (Popham, 2016) but that more fine-grained conclusions may be drawn about specific groups of items within two or three of the constructs.

Focus of the Present Study

Informed by the *TELL*'s precedent use in the legacy Memphis City Schools as an element of the district's partnership with the Gates Foundation, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) subsequently adopted the *TELL* as its measure of choice with respect to school climate issues. Although the state has since moved on to a different instrument with different purposes, the first statewide administration of the *TELL* occurred in 2011 and was succeeded by a second statewide administration in 2013, this second administration providing the bulk of the raw data on which this study depends.

Based on the strength of pilot studies conducted by University of Memphis Department of Leadership students and faculty, the secondary data that this study employs were received directly from the New Teacher Center and are grounded in observations related to the *TELL*'s “Community Support and Involvement” construct. While items germane to eternal support for schools may, to some extent, be found in various sections of the *TELL*, those appearing in the section expressly labeled as such are the subject of this study. These items are presented in Table 1 following:

Table 1

Item Means and Standard Deviations for the Community Support and Involvement construct (N = 248)

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Parents/guardians are influential decision makers in this school.	2.65	0.271
2. This school maintains clear, two-way communication with parents/guardians and the community.	3.06	0.206
3. This school does a good job of encouraging parent/guardian involvement.	3.09	0.219
4. Teachers provide parents/guardians with useful information about student learning.	3.15	0.152
5. Parents/guardians know what is going on in this school.	2.93	0.227
6. Parents/guardians support teachers, contributing to their success with students.	2.67	0.268
7. Community members support teachers, contributing to their success with students.	2.90	0.222
8. The community we serve is supportive of this school.	3.03	0.278

Note. Scale $M = 2.93$, $SD = 0.196$, $\alpha = .95$

With teacher-level responses to these items aggregated to the level of the school, these secondary data were subsequently merged with other data sources published on the TDOE website. Data from one source supplied information pertinent to the school's institutional characteristics, such as percent minority students, percent of students receiving free or reduced lunch, etc. Data from additional sources supplied information pertinent those pertinent to student achievement outcomes for the period 2010 through

2012. Among such data was longitudinal information pertinent to schools' graduation rate, attendance rate, percent of students proficient in Algebra I courses and in English II courses and students' average ACT Composite scores.

Description of Sample

Focus of the present study and description of sample.

Informed by the *TELL*'s precedent use in the legacy Memphis City Schools as an element of the district's partnership with the Gates Foundation, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) subsequently adopted the *TELL* as its measure of choice with respect to school climate issues. Using school-and district level online reports derived from the second of two *TELL* administrations sponsored by the TDOE, University of Memphis, Department of Leadership students and faculty subsequently mounted a series of pilot studies that involved the manipulation of the online *TELL* data and their merging with other TDOE school demographic and student achievement information. When the New Teacher Center was made aware of these efforts, they made available to the U of M Leadership students and faculty the entire *TELL* Tennessee dataset for 2013, this dataset populated with some 61,341 observations linked to 1668 educational institutions.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample at the Individual Level (N = 61341)

Characteristic	<i>f</i>	%
School Level		
Elementary	24185	44.3
High	15130	27.7
Middle	15039	27.5
Special	279	0.5
Position		
Teacher	54633	89.1
Principal	1107	1.8
Assistant Principal	1213	2.0
Other Education Professional	3199	5.2
Not Answered	1189	1.9
Years of Experience		
First Year	3552	5.8
2-3 Years	5698	9.3
4-6 Years	8051	13.1
7-10 Years	9782	15.9
11-20 Years	18412	30.0
20+ years	14471	23.6
Not Answered	1375	2.2
Years at the School		
First Year	8392	13.7
2-3 Years	10906	17.8
4-6 Years	11799	19.2
7-10 Years	10394	16.9
11-20 Years	12194	19.9
20+ years	5686	9.3
Not Answered	1970	3.2

Demographic characteristics of sample: individual level.

As Table 2 shows, about 44% of the 60,000 plus sample counted themselves as being from elementary institutions, roughly equal proportions linked themselves to middle schools (27.5%) and high schools (27.9%), and less than 1% indicated their connection to some “special” educational site (0.5%). Absent about 2% of all respondents who did not declare what position they occupied at their institution, nearly 90% of the respondents remaining indicated that they were teachers (89.1%), about equal numbers listed themselves as either principals (1.8%) or assistant principals (2.0), and the rest as some “other” education professional. While about 2% of the respondents also failed to indicate how long they had been an educator, slightly more than 45% indicated that their careers spanned 10 or fewer years (45.1%), while slightly fewer than 54% indicated that their careers exceeded 10 years (53.6%). With respect to school tenure, more than half of the respondents noted that they had been at their current schools six or fewer years, while a little less than half put their tenure at more than six years.

Demographic Characteristics of Sample: Institutional Level.

After aggregating these data to the school level and merging them with additional information obtained from the TDOE website, some 248 institutions were found to have non-missing values on the intake and outcome variables that were projected for use in this study. As shown in Table 3, with respect to intake variables pertinent to students, TDOE statistics indicated that on average slightly more than 50% of such students qualify for free and reduced lunch (53.36%), a little less than one-quarter could be categorized as being non-White (23.35%), and about 13% might be classified as subject to some sort of learning disability (12.23%). As also shown in Table 2, with respect to

intake variables pertinent to faculty, responses to *TELL* items indicated that, on average, somewhat more than half of educators at these institutions claimed more than 10 years of experience (55.14%) while a somewhat smaller proportion indicated their having been employed at their present school more than six years (51.41%).

In terms of the school's functioning as an academic institution, TDOE accountability data indicates that, averaged across three years, the percent of students proficient and advanced approached 50% in Algebra ($M = 48.3\%$, $SD = 13.62$) and 60% in English ($M = 59.24\%$, $SD = 12.70$). Consistent with this figures, the three-year ACT composite for these high schools was approximately 19.0 ($M = 18.90$, $SD = 1.76$), significantly less than the national ACT composite norm of 21.0 (ACT,2017). These outcomes notwithstanding, both the attendance rate and the graduation rate for these 248 schools was quite high, exceeding 90% in the former instance ($M = 93.50$, $SD = 1.91$) and approaching 90% in the latter instance ($M = 88.77$, $SD = 6.10$). Nearing a mean of 3.0 on a four-point Likert-type scale, respondents appeared to be generally content with the level of Community Support and Involvement at their schools ($M = 2.93$, $SD = .20$)

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample: Institutional Level

Characteristic	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Students on F/R Lunch (%)	53.36	17.17
Minority Students (%)	23.35	26.07
Students w/ Disabilities (%)	12.23	6.00
Teachers > 10 Years' Experience (%)	55.14	10.91
Teachers > 6 Years' Tenure (%)	51.41	11.84
Attendance Rate 2010-2012 (%)	93.50	1.91
Graduation Rate 2010-12 (%)	88.77	6.10
ACT Composite Score 2010-2012 (<i>M</i>)	18.90	1.76
Algebra I Proficiency 2010-12 (%)	48.30	13.62
English II Proficiency 2010-2012 (%)	59.24	12.70
Community Involvement and Support (<i>M</i>)	2.93	0.20

Proposed Analyses

Hierarchical multiple regression will be the analytic strategy used to answer all five research questions, with control and independent variables remaining the same from one analysis to the next and only the dependent variable changing. For each analysis, the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, the percentage of minority (non-white) students, and the percentage of students with disabilities will be entered in a first block. Finally, the mean of respondents' perceptions of the quality of community support and involvement will be entered and its statistical significance noted with respect to explaining the outcomes stated in the research questions, over and above the contribution of the previous blocks of variables. Where statistical significance is observed, it may be concluded that respondent perceptions of the quality of community support and involvement to some extent heighten or detract from the outcome being examined, whether that outcome be attendance, graduation, or student achievement. Where statistical significance is not observed, it may be concluded that perceptions of community support and involvement bear no relation to these outcomes and help materially neither to predict or explain them.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationships between educators' perceptions of the quality of community support and involvement at their high schools and school effectiveness longitudinally measured in terms of five student-related outcomes. Deriving from this overall purpose are the five more specific research questions following:

Research Question 1:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student attendance rates, averaged over three years?

Research Question 2:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student graduation rates, averaged over three years?

Research Question 3:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and students' ACT Composite scores, averaged over three years?

Research Question 4:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at

their high schools and the percent of students proficient in Algebra I, averaged over three years?

Research Question 5:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in English II, averaged over three years?

The chapter opens with an inspection of the descriptive statistics underwriting the multiple regression analyses employed to answer the five research questions.

Accompanied by brief discussions, summaries of the aforementioned multiple regression analyses are provided for each research question in turn. A brief synopsis of what was learned from these analyses concludes the chapter.

Descriptive Statistics

Inspection of the zero-order correlation matrix that summarizes the relationships between the five “control” variables employed in these analyses and the independent variable suggests that three of the five controls significantly co-vary with the perceived level of community support and involvement at the school (see Table 4). While the percent of students classified as LD is apparently unrelated to how involved the community is thought to be in school matters ($r = -.01, p = .883$), other student-oriented demographic characteristics are markedly associated with that variable and in a negative direction. Within the sample of 248 high schools, as the percent of students on free and reduced lunch increases, community support and involvement is perceived to diminish ($r = -.48, p < .001$). Similarly, albeit less strongly, community support and involvement is

perceived to decrease as the percent of minority (that is, non-white) students rises ($r = -.17, p = .007$).

At about the same level of magnitude, higher levels of faculty experience appear to be linked to higher levels of community support and involvement ($r = .18, p = .005$). However, increases in both faculty experience and faculty tenure variables appear to be significantly at odds with increases in two of the three student demographic variables, most notably with respect to the percent of faculty with more than six years' tenure and the percentage of minority students ($r = -.53, p < .001$). Insofar as both faculty-oriented variables concern teachers persisting over time, the faculty experience and faculty tenure variables are themselves inter-correlated ($r = .70, p < .001$).

Table 4

Matrix of Zero-Order Correlations between Control Variables in the Model and Educators' Perception of Community Support and Involvement (N = 248)

Variable	2	3	4	5	6
1. F/R Lunch Students (%)	.41**	.22**	-.22**	-.24**	-.48**
2. Minority Students (%)	1	.04	-.28**	-.53**	-.17**
3. LD Students (%)		1	.00	.01	-.01
4. Faculty Experience (%)			1	.70**	.18**
5. Faculty Tenure (%)				1	.10
6. Community Support					1

** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

With respect these to these five “intake” variables and the five student outcomes being investigated, consistent patterns emerge (see Table 5). Negative relationships are systematically noted between student demographic characteristics and student outcomes,

especially between the percent of students on free and reduced lunch and student attendance rates ($r = -.51, p < .001$), graduation rates ($r = -.53, p < .001$), ACT Composite scores ($r = -.86, p < .001$), Algebra proficiency percentages ($r = -.59, p < .001$), and English proficiency percentages ($r = -.84, p < .001$). On the other hand, both faculty-oriented demographic variables can be seen to enable these five outcomes, with the percent of faculty with more than six years' tenure consistently appearing to do so to slightly greater effect than the percent of faculty with more than ten years' experience.

To greater effect than both of these, however, are the relations observed between the perceived level of community support and involvement—the independent variable—and all five outcomes of interest. Of these relationships, the lowest in magnitude is seen for student graduation rate ($r = .35, p < .001$) while the highest is seen for ACT Composite scores ($r = .53, p < .001$). Although other influences at the school are not being statistically controlled in these computations, results such as these would seem to forecast systematically positive linkages between higher perceived levels of community support and involvement and better student outcomes, however these are represented. Results pertinent to such inferences are explored in the text following.

Research Question 1:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student attendance rates, averaged over three years?

For all five hierarchical multiple regressions that were conducted to answer the research questions, procedures outlined by Field (2013, p. 316) were followed to check for linearity and unusual cases and to determine whether the statistical assumptions of

homoscedasticity, normality, and independence were tenable. With no violations of these assumptions observed, final regressions were executed for the present research question, as well as subsequent research questions.

Table 5

Matrix of Zero-Order Correlations between Student Outcomes and Other Variables in the Regression Model (N = 248)

Variable	Attendance Rate	Graduation Rate	ACT Composite	Algebra I Proficiency	English II Proficiency
1. F/R Lunch Students (%)	-.51**	-.53**	-.86**	-.59**	-.84**
2. Minority Students (%)	-.39**	-.54**	-.40**	-.41**	-.54**
3. LD Students (%)	-.22**	-.22**	-.27**	-.20**	-.35**
4. Faculty Experience (%)	.27**	.21**	.31**	.22**	.30**
5. Faculty Tenure (%)	.28**	.33**	.33**	.29**	.34**
6. Community Support (M)	.40**	.35**	.53**	.42**	.49**

** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Across a sample of 248 Tennessee high schools, the perceived level of community support and involvement evidences a statistically significant relationship to the school's attendance rate averaged over three years ($\beta = 0.22$, $t = 3.65$, $p < .001$) and is observed to explain about 3.5% of the variance in that outcome, controlling for the effects of student and faculty demographic variables.

As presented in Table 6, the three student demographic variables included in block one collectively explain a statistically significant proportion of the variance in student attendance rate ($F(3, 244) = 37.67, p < .001, R^2 = .317$). Inspection of the block statistics reveals the percent of students on free and reduced lunch to have the largest *beta* weight and thus the greatest importance among the three variables ($\beta = -0.39, t = -6.56, p < .001$). Second in explaining the attendance rate is the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.22, t = -3.85, p < .001$), followed by the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.13, t = -2.34, p = .020$).

In block two of the regression, the inclusion of the two faculty-oriented variables results in a statistically significant change in the proportion of variance explained in the outcome F Change ($2, 242) = 3.25, p = .040, R^2 = .334$). However, of the variables added, only the one pertinent to faculty experience was statistically significantly related to the outcome ($\beta = 0.16, t = 2.09, p = .038$).

After all variables had been entered in block three of the model, the variable measuring faculty experience became non-significant in the presence of the one denoting perceptions of community support and involvement. Of the variables remaining, the one most strongly related to the attendance rate was the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -0.26, t = -4.02, p < .001$), followed by community support and involvement (as noted above), the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.21, t = -3.14, p = .002$), and the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.15, t = -2.91, p = .004$).

Research Question 2:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student graduation rates, averaged over three years?

As with the student attendance rate, the perceived level of community support and involvement evidences a statistically significant relationship to the school's graduation rate averaged over three years ($\beta = 0.15, t = 2.78, p = .006$). As contrasted with the attendance rate, however, the regression of the perceived level of community support and involvement on the school's graduation rate is observed to explain only about 1.8% of the variance in that outcome, controlling for the effects of student and faculty demographic variables.

As presented in Table 7, the three student demographic variables included in block one explain a statistically significant proportion of the variance in the school's graduation rate ($F(3, 244) = 59.81, p < .001, R^2 = .424$). Inspection of the block statistics reveals the percent of the minority (non-white) students to have the largest *beta* weight and thus the greatest importance among the three variables ($\beta = -0.40, t = -7.40, p < .001$). Ranked second in explaining the outcome is the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -0.34, t = -6.21, p < .001$), followed by the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.13, t = -2.57, p = .011$).

In block two of the regression, the inclusion of the two faculty-oriented variables results in no statistically significant change in the proportion of variance explained in the outcome ($F \text{ Change } (2, 242) = 0.49, p = .611, R^2 = .426$). Neither the variable pertinent to faculty experience ($\beta = -0.01, t = -0.16, p = .871$) nor the one related to faculty tenure (β

= 0.07, $t = 0.83$, $p = .409$) was statistically significantly related to the school's graduation rate.

After all variables had been entered in block three of the model, there was little change in the results pertinent to measuring faculty experience and faculty tenure. Of the four variables remaining, the one of most strongly related to the graduation rate was the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.37$, $t = -5.93$, $p < .001$), followed by the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -0.26$, $t = -4.26$, $p < .001$). In importance, the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.15$, $t = -2.94$, $p = .004$) and the perceived level of community support and involvement at the school were essentially tied.

Research Question 3:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and students' ACT Composite scores, averaged over three years?

As with the student attendance and graduation rates, the perceived level of community support and involvement evidences a statistically significant relationship to students' ACT Composite scores averaged over three years ($\beta = 0.16$, $t = 4.67$, $p < .001$). Similar to the results found for the graduation rate, the regression of the perceived level of community support and involvement on students' ACT Composite scores is observed to explain about 2.0% of the variance in that outcome, controlling for the effects of student and faculty demographic variables.

Table 6

*Hierarchical Regression Summary of Community Support and Involvement on Average**Attendance Rates, 2010-2012 (N = 248)*

Source on Attendance Rate	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.B.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> =
Block 1: Student Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(3, 244) = 37.67, p < .001, R^2 = .317$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.04	0.01	-0.39	-6.56	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.02	0.00	-0.22	-3.85	0.000
LD Students (%)	-0.04	0.02	-0.13	-2.34	0.020
Block 2: Student Demographics + Faculty Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(5, 242) = 24.32, p < .001, R^2 = .334,$					
F Change (2, 242) = 3.25, $p = .040$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.04	0.01	-0.37	-6.23	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.01	0.00	-0.20	-3.02	0.003
LD Students (%)	-0.04	0.02	-0.13	-2.44	0.015
Faculty Experience (%)	0.03	0.01	0.16	2.09	0.038
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.00	0.01	-0.03	-0.35	0.725
Block 3: Student + Faculty Demographics + Parent/Community Support					
Model Fit: $F(6, 241) = 23.51, p < .001, R^2 = .369,$					
F Change (1, 241) = 13.30, $p < .001$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.03	0.01	-0.26	-4.02	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.02	0.00	-0.21	-3.14	0.002
LD Students (%)	-0.05	0.02	-0.15	-2.91	0.004
Faculty Experience (%)	0.02	0.01	0.12	1.65	0.099
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.00	0.01	0.00	-0.03	0.974
Community Support (<i>M</i>)	2.11	0.58	0.22	3.65	0.000

Table 7

*Hierarchical Regression Summary of Community Support and Involvement on Average**Graduation Rates, 2010-2012 (N = 248)*

Source on Graduation Rate	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.B.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> =
Block 1: Student Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(3, 244) = 59.81, p < .001, R^2 = .424$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.12	0.02	-0.34	-6.21	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.09	0.01	-0.40	-7.40	0.000
LD Students (%)	-0.13	0.05	-0.13	-2.57	0.011
Block 2: Student Demographics + Faculty Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(5, 242) = 35.94, p < .001, R^2 = .426,$					
F Change (2, 242) = 0.49, $p = .611$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.12	0.02	-0.34	-6.13	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.09	0.01	-0.36	-5.82	0.000
LD Students (%)	-0.13	0.05	-0.13	-2.60	0.010
Faculty Experience (%)	-0.01	0.04	-0.01	-0.16	0.871
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.03	0.04	0.07	0.83	0.409
Block 3: Student + Faculty Demographics + Parent/Community Support					
Model Fit: $F(6, 241) = 32.07, p < .001, R^2 = .444,$					
F Change (1, 241) = 7.74, $p = .002$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.09	0.02	-0.26	-4.26	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.09	0.01	-0.37	-5.93	0.000
LD Students (%)	-0.15	0.05	-0.15	-2.94	0.004
Faculty Experience (%)	-0.02	0.04	-0.04	-0.52	0.604
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.04	0.04	0.08	1.08	0.279
Community Support (<i>M</i>)	4.82	1.73	0.15	2.78	0.006

As presented in Table 8, two of the three student demographic variables included in block one explain a statistically significant proportion of the variance in schools' long-term ACT Composite scores ($F(3, 244) = 234.38, p < .001, R^2 = .742$). Inspection of the block statistics reveals the percent of students on free and reduced lunch to have the largest *beta* weight and thus the greatest importance among the three variables ($\beta = -0.81, t = -22.06, p < .001$). The percent of LD students may also be seen to contribute to the proportion of variance explained in students' ACT Composite scores ($\beta = -0.09, t = -2.72, p = .007$), but the percent of minority students at the school proves not to be statistically significantly related to the outcome ($\beta = -0.06, t = -1.81, p = .072$).

The addition of the two faculty-oriented demographic variables results in a statistically significant change in the proportion of variance explained (F Change (2, 242) = 9.32, $p < .001$); however, neither the variable concerning faculty experience ($\beta = 0.09, t = 1.92, p = .056$) nor the variable concerning faculty tenure ($\beta = 0.08, t = 1.52, p = .130$), individually meet the threshold for statistical significance.

In the final block, four of the six variables are found to be predictive of the ACT outcome. Overwhelmingly the strongest predictor, the percent of students on free and reduced lunch is significantly negatively associated with the outcome ($\beta = -0.71, t = -18.45, p < .001$). While the percent of LD students is also negatively linked, albeit to a much smaller extent ($\beta = -0.11, t = -3.63, p < .001$), both community support and involvement (as mentioned above) and the percent of faculty with more than six years' tenure ($\beta = 0.10, t = 2.00, p = .047$) would appear to enable students' ACT performance, offsetting somewhat the influence of student demographics.

Table 8

*Hierarchical Regression Summary of Community Support and Involvement on Average**ACT Composite Scores, 2010-2012 (N = 248)*

Source on ACT Composite	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.B.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> =
Block 1: Student Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(3, 244) = 234.38, p < .001, R^2 = .742$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.08	0.00	-0.81	-22.06	0.000
Minority Students (%)	0.00	0.00	-0.06	-1.81	0.072
LD Students (%)	-0.03	0.01	-0.09	-2.72	0.007
Block 2: Student Demographics + Faculty Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(5, 242) = 153.95, p < .001, R^2 = .761,$					
F Change (2, 242) = 9.32, $p < .001$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.08	0.00	-0.79	-22.20	0.000
Minority Students (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.11	0.910
LD Students (%)	-0.03	0.01	-0.10	-2.98	0.003
Faculty Experience (%)	0.01	0.01	0.09	1.92	0.056
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.01	0.01	0.08	1.52	0.130
Block 3: Student + Faculty Demographics + Parent/Community Support					
Model Fit: $F(6, 241) = 142.96, p < .001, R^2 = .781.$					
F Change (1, 241) = 21.82, $p < .001$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.07	0.00	-0.71	-18.45	0.000
Minority Students (%)	0.00	0.00	-0.01	-0.17	0.864
LD Students (%)	-0.03	0.01	-0.11	-3.63	0.000
Faculty Experience (%)	0.01	0.01	0.06	1.38	0.168
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.01	0.01	0.10	2.00	0.047
Community Support (<i>M</i>)	1.46	0.31	0.16	4.67	0.000

Research Question 4:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in Algebra I, averaged over three years?

As can be seen in Table 9, the regression of the six variables in the model on the percent of students proficient in Algebra I explains an overall proportion of variance in that outcome similar to that observed for the high school graduation rate ($F(6, 241) = 29.27, p < .001, R^2 = .422$). Computation of the difference between the R^2 statistics observed for blocks 2 and 3 suggests that, by itself, the perception of community support and involvement explains about 5.2% of the variability in Algebra I proficiency ($\beta = 0.21, t = 3.62, p < .001$). In importance, community support and involvement is second to that of the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -0.37, t = -5.97, p < .001$) and above that of the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.16, t = -2.60, p = .010$) and the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.11, t = -2.23, p = .027$). Whether upon their introduction or as elements of the full, six-variable model, neither the percent of faculty with more than ten years' experience ($\beta = -0.02, t = -0.22, p = .827$) nor the percent of faculty with more than six years' tenure ($\beta = 0.10, t = 1.26, p = .209$) prove to be associated with the outcome.

Compared with such outcomes as ACT composite scores and (as will be shown below) the percent of students proficient in English II, overall variance explained is

considerably more for the percent of students proficient in Algebra I as student demographics are less predictive of that outcome than the other two.

Table 9

*Hierarchical Regression Summary of Community Support and Involvement on Average**Percentage of Students Proficient in Algebra I, 2010-2012 (N = 248)*

Source on Algebra I Prof	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.B.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> =
Block 1: Student Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(3, 244) = 50.80, p < .001, R^2 = .384$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.38	0.04	-0.48	-8.52	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.11	0.03	-0.20	-3.70	0.000
LD Students (%)	-0.20	0.12	-0.09	-1.72	0.087
Block 2: Student Demographics + Faculty Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(5, 242) = 30.96, p < .001, R^2 = .390,$					
F Change (2, 242) = 1.12, $p = .327$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.38	0.05	-0.48	-8.36	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.08	0.03	-0.16	-2.50	0.013
LD Students (%)	-0.21	0.12	-0.09	-1.78	0.076
Faculty Experience (%)	0.02	0.09	0.02	0.24	0.810
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.92	0.360
Block 3: Student + Faculty Demographics + Parent/Community Support					
Model Fit: $F(6, 241) = 29.27, p < .001, R^2 = .422,$					
F Change (1, 241) = 13.09, $p < .001$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.30	0.05	-0.37	-5.97	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.09	0.03	-0.16	-2.60	0.010
LD Students (%)	-0.26	0.12	-0.11	-2.23	0.027
Faculty Experience (%)	-0.02	0.09	-0.02	-0.22	0.827
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.12	0.09	0.10	1.26	0.209
Community Support (<i>M</i>)	14.28	3.95	0.21	3.62	0.000

Table 10

*Hierarchical Regression Summary of Community Support and Involvement on Average**Percentage of Students Proficient in English II, 2010-2012 (N = 248)*

Source on English II Prof	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.B.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> =
Block 1: Student Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(3, 244) = 282.26, p < .001, R^2 = .776$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.52	0.03	-0.70	-20.44	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.12	0.02	-0.24	-7.18	0.000
LD Students (%)	-0.39	0.07	-0.18	-5.88	0.000
Block 2: Student Demographics + Faculty Demographics					
Model Fit: $F(5, 242) = 175.60, p < .001, R^2 = .784,$					
F Change (2, 242) = 4.27, $p = .015$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.51	0.03	-0.69	-20.17	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.11	0.02	-0.22	-5.71	0.000
LD Students (%)	-0.39	0.07	-0.19	-6.06	0.000
Faculty Experience (%)	0.11	0.05	0.09	2.17	0.031
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.00	0.05	0.00	-0.05	0.958
Block 3: Student + Faculty Demographics + Parent/Community Support					
Model Fit: $F(6, 241) = 159.30, p < .001, R^2 = .799,$					
F Change (1, 241) = 17.60, $p < .001$					
F/R Lunch Students (%)	-0.45	0.03	-0.62	-16.63	0.000
Minority Students (%)	-0.11	0.02	-0.22	-5.95	0.000
LD Students (%)	-0.43	0.06	-0.20	-6.71	0.000
Faculty Experience (%)	0.08	0.05	0.07	1.69	0.093
Faculty Tenure (%)	0.02	0.05	0.02	0.32	0.748
Community Support (<i>M</i>)	9.10	2.17	0.14	4.19	0.000

Question 5:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in English II, averaged over three years?

As with the previous models, the perceived level of community support and involvement is significantly linked to the percent of students proficient in English II and by itself explains about 1.5% of the variance in that outcome (see Table 10). Although nearly 80% of the variance in student proficiency is explained by the model's six variables, some 77.6% of that percentage is attributable solely to the influence of student demographic characteristics ($F(3, 244) = 282.26, p < .001, R^2 = .776$). Determined in block one and varying only slightly from the results observed therein, the order of influence across the model is the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -0.70, t = -20.44, p < .000$); the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.24, t = -7.18, p < .000$); and the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.18, t = -5.88, p < .000$).

Adding the two faculty-oriented demographic variables in block two results in a statistically significant change in the R^2 statistic (F Change (2, 242) = 4.27, $p = .015$), but only the one pertinent to faculty experience was found to be statistically significant ($\beta = 0.09, t = 2.17, p = .031$).

In the presence of the community support and involvement variable, the impact of the faculty experience is no longer statistically significant. In the final model, the only positive influence on student proficiency in English II is exercised by community support

and involvement ($\beta = 0.14, t = 4.19, p < .000$). One of four variables remaining in the model, its influence is exceeded by the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -0.62, t = -16.63, p < .000$); the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.22, t = -5.95, p < .000$); and the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.20, t = -6.71, p < .000$).

Summary

As the literature suggests, higher perceived levels of community support and involvement are systematically linked to better academic outcomes for students. While the most potent influences of the community support and influence variable appears to be on getting students to attend school and to learn math, its impact on students' graduation rate, ACT scores, and proficiency levels in English are not insignificant, either statistically or substantively. While student background characteristics seem strongly to be determinative of their academic success, the demonstrated impact of community support and involvement suggests that this may be somewhat less the case, given both broader and more concentrated efforts at soliciting community support.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Introduction

Chapter 5 is the final chapter of the dissertation “An Analysis of the Relationship between Teacher Perceptions of Community Support and Involvement at Their School and Student Rates of Attendance, Graduation, and Academic Proficiency.” The chapter contains a summary of the study which includes (a) purpose of the study, (b) discussion of data analysis, (c) summary of findings, (d) discussions and implications for practice (e) recommendations for future research (f) conclusions.

Community support and involvement in a school is important because research shows that parental involvement boosts academic achievement regardless of the income of the parents (Lin, Isernhagen, Scherz & Denner, 2014). Educators felt that moral support and better student behavior were some of the top benefits of parental involvement (Harris & Goodall, 2008). Also, community based organizations offer schools that social capital expertise that they are seeking (Warren et al., 2009). Educators can collaborate with community partners to help develop parent leadership (Warren et al., 2009).

Teachers and administrators say poor attendance is a large factor in students dropping out of school (Bridgeland, Dilulio & Balfanz, 2009). Community support and involvement has an effect on student attendance according to this research. Specific family involvement like “parental monitoring, parent participation at school and parent-

teacher memberships are linked to student achievement” (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002 p. 309). Schools that provide after-school programs have even higher attendance rates. These programs may be an additional draw for students. Researchers believe attendance improves when schools take a proactive look at approaches to family and community involvement (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002, p. 309).

Community involvement also improves graduation rates. United States Graduation rates are around 84% (Murnane, 2013). Attendance, graduation rates, ACT composite scores and performance on Algebra I and English II End of Course exams are tied in together. High Schools effectiveness depends on the number of students graduating from high school as well as student performance on ACT tests and End of Course tests like Algebra I and English II. Research confirms that parental expectation is the most effective type of parental involvement promoting academic achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001). Parents with high expectations have children who perform better in school. African-Americans and Hispanics are graduating slightly behind other Americans. Both groups are right around 78% graduation rates.

Some of the global indicators whereby student achievement is measured include post-secondary school attendance, grade point average (GPA), ACT college readiness assessment or standardized test scores in specific subject areas like Algebra I and English II. (Fan & Chen, 2001). The ACT is a test used throughout the United States to measure a student’s academic proficiency throughout their academic career (Xu & Liu, 2016). Researchers say school administrators have set up information sessions with stakeholders in an effort to boost ACT scores. School leaders have increased communications and discussions with teachers, parents and students (Xu & Liu, 2016). “Forty-nine percent of

white students met three or more college readiness benchmarks compared to 11% of African-American students and 23% of Hispanic/Latino students,” (Royster, Gross, & Hockbein, 2015, p. 208).

Across the United States, Algebra I is viewed as a gatekeeper to other studies in mathematics (Remillard, Baker, Steele, Hoe, & Traylor (2017). Universal enrollment policies require all students to complete Algebra I by 8th or 9th grade. Many policy initiatives have targeted Algebra I enrollment and the successful completion of it as a means to increase participation in higher levels of mathematics in high school (Remillard et al., 2017). Research of parental involvement in relationship with Algebra show students whose parents are monitoring their progress achieved higher scores than other students (Sirvani, 2007). This research shows that all parents want to improve their child’s mathematical ability regardless of gender. The perception of community support and involvement explains 5.2% variability in Algebra I proficiency.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships between educators’ perceptions of the quality of community support and involvement at their high schools and five longitudinally measured indices of school effectiveness. Given a sample of 248 Tennessee high schools, secondary data derived from the “Community Support and Involvement” subsection of the *Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Questionnaire* Survey administered in 2013 were merged with concurrent student attendance, student graduation, and student achievement outcomes archived and made publically available on the Tennessee Department of Education website.

Discussion of Data Analysis

The methodology of this research was secondary analysis of existing survey data. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to answer all five research questions. Control and independent variables remained the same from one analysis to the next and only the dependent variable changed. For each analysis, the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, the percentage of minority (non-white) students, and the percentage of students with disabilities was entered into the first block. Finally the mean of respondents' perceptions of the quality of community support and involvement was entered and its statistical significance noted with respect to explaining the outcomes stated in the research questions, over and above the contribution of the previous blocks of variables. Where statistical significance was observed, it is concluded that respondent perceptions of the quality of community support and involvement to some extent heightened or detracted from the outcome being examined, whether that outcome was attendance, graduation, or student achievement. Where statistical significance was not observed, it was concluded that perception of community support and involvement bear no relation to those outcomes and help materially neither to predict or explain them.

The researcher reviewed the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Questionnaire. Survey data was derived from this instrument which constitutes Tennessee educators responses. This school climate instrument was developed in 2002 by the New Teacher Center (NTC). The instrument launched in North Carolina but has since made its appearance across 18 states and interacted with 1.5 million educators (New Teacher Center, 2016).

This data was received directly from the New Teacher Center after being made aware of the efforts by The University of Memphis, Department of Leadership which mounted a variety of pilot studies involving the online TELL data. Also, the TELL instrument has been utilized with the legacy Memphis City Schools as an element of its partnership with the Gates Foundation. This instrument was also once used by the Tennessee Department of Education with respect to school climate issues.

The researcher examined the “Community Support and Involvement” construct which examined perceptions of educators and their responses regarding parental and community support at their school. The researcher also utilized demographic characteristics of the sample in the categories of school level, position, years of experience and years at the school. A review of important components for the research questions were gathered from characteristics of the sample: institutional level. If you refer to Table 3, you can see the percentage of students on free or reduced lunch, minority students, attendance rate, graduation rate, ACT composite, Algebra I proficiency, English II proficiency and Community Support and Involvement.

The database from which the researcher utilized existing data consisted of 61,341 observations linked to 1668 educational institutions. Forty-four percent of the 60,000 plus sample identify themselves as being a part of elementary institutions. Another 25% are either from high schools or middle schools. Ninety percent of respondents indicated they were teachers. Nearly four percent indicated they were principals or assistant principals. About 45% of respondents have 10 or fewer years of experience while 54% have been in their career for more than 10 years.

Summary of Findings

A multiple regression analysis revealed answers to the five research questions. Inspection of the zero-order correlation matrix that summarizes the relationships between the five “control” variables employed in these analyses and the independent variable suggests that three of the five controls significantly co-vary with the perceived level of community support and involvement at the school. The researcher did note that as the number of minority students increases the percent of community involvement decreases. Higher levels of faculty experiences appear to be linked to higher levels of community support and involvement. The researcher looked at five different outcomes and the analyses revealed a positive relationship between each of the variables and community involvement.

A look at the zero-order correlation matrix reveals that three of the five controls significantly co-vary with the perceived level of community support and involvement at the school. However, the percent of students classified as LD appears to be unrelated to how involved the community is thought to be in school matters ($r = -.01, p = .883$). Other student-oriented demographic characteristics are markedly associated with that variable and in a negative direction. Within the sample of 248 high schools, as the percent of students on free and reduced lunch increases, community support and involvement is perceived to diminish ($r = -.48, p < .001$.) Community support and involvement is perceived to decrease as the percent of minority (non-white) students rises ($r = -.17, p = .007$).

At about the same level of magnitude, higher levels of faculty experience appear to be linked to higher levels of community support and involvement ($r = .18, p = .005$).

However, increases in both faculty experience and faculty tenure variables appear to be significantly at odds with increases in two of the three student demographic variables, most notably with respect to the percent of faculty with more than six years' tenure and the percentage of minority students ($r = -.53, p < .001$). Insofar as both faculty-oriented variables concern teachers persisting over time, the faculty experience and faculty tenure variables are themselves inter-correlated ($r = .70, p < .001$).

Negative relationships were observed between student demographic characteristics and student outcomes especially between the students on free and reduced lunch and student attendance rates, graduation rates, ACT Composite scores, Algebra proficiency and English proficiency. However, both faculty-oriented demographic variables can be seen to enable these five outcomes, with the percent of faculty with more than six years' tenure consistently appearing to do so to slightly greater effect than the percent of faculty with more than ten years' experience.

The relationships were much stronger between the perceived level of community support and involvement—the independent variable—and all five outcomes of interest. Of these relationships, the lowest in correlation is seen for student graduation rate ($r = .35, p < .001$) while the highest is observed for ACT Composite scores ($r = .53, p < .001$). Based on this research and the relationships of the independent variables to dependent variables, community support and involvement has a better impact on student outcomes.

Research questions

Research Question 1:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student attendance rates, averaged over three years?

The perceived level of community support and involvement shows a statistically significant relationship to the school's attendance rate averaged over three years ($\beta = 0.22, t = 3.65, p < .001$) and is observed to explain about 3.5% of the variance in that outcome, controlling for the effects of student and faculty demographic variables.

The student demographic variables of students on free and reduced lunch, minority students, and students with learning disabilities collectively explain a statistically significant proportion of the variance in the student attendance rate. ($F(3,244) = 37.67, p < .001, R^2 = .317$). The percent of students on free and reduced lunch had the largest *beta* weight and the greatest importance of the three variables ($\beta = -.022, t = -3.85, p < .001$), followed by the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.13, t = -2.34, p = .020$).

The inclusion of the two faculty-oriented variable results in a statistically significant change in the proportion of variance explained in the outcome F Change ($2,242) = 3.25, p = .040, R^2 = .334$). Of the variables added, only the one pertinent to faculty experience was statistically significantly related to the outcome ($\beta = 0.16, t = 2.09, p = .038$). The variable measuring faculty experience became non-significant in the presence of the one denoting perceptions of community support and involvement. Of the variables remaining, the one most strongly related to the attendance rate was the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -.026, t = -4.02, p < .001$), followed by

community support and involvement, the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.21$, $t = -3.14$, $p = .002$), and the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.15$, $t = -2.91$, $p = .004$).

Based on this data, teachers and administrators believed community support and involvement to have a greater effect on student attendance rates. The literature in Chapter 2 suggests that teacher perceptions of increased parental involvement directly correlate to student achievement (Gordon & Louis, 2009). Researchers also indicated that parenting style and parental expectations had a greater impact on students than parental attendance at parent teacher conferences. Therefore, it can be inferred that teachers and administrators can increase parent and community members' engagement in children's education (Gordon & Louis, 2009).

Green (2010) pointed out in the 13 competencies that effective leaders have Unity of Purpose. School leaders are able to acquire the support of their faculty to support a single focus. In this case it would be increasing community support and involvement in their school. The data from this research also suggests that higher levels of faculty experience ($r = .18$) is linked to higher levels of community support and involvement. Another Core Competency (Visionary Leaders) has the leader communicating values that all children can learn at a high level (Green, 2010). Faculty can then be a part of transforming the school into a community school where parents are more engaged and the community is more involved.

Furthermore, forty-five percent of teachers and 42% of principals say chronic absenteeism is a major factor in students dropping out of school (Brideland et al., 2009). The disengagement started long before students actually dropped out of school. Therefore, attendance is a strong indicator that a student is falling behind academically

(Bridgeland et al, 2009). Parental involvement and community support can assist in turning this disengagement around.

Research Question 2:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and student graduation rates, averaged over three years?

The perceived level of community support and involvement shows a statistically significant relationship to the school's graduation rate averaged over three years ($\beta = 0.5$, $t=2.78$, $p = .006$). As contrasted with the attendance rate, the regression of the perceived level of community support and involvement on the school's graduation rate is observed to explain only about 1.8% of the variance in that outcome, controlling for the effects of student and faculty demographic variables.

In table 7, the three student demographic variables included in block one explain a statistically significant proportion of the variance in the school's graduation rate ($F(3,244) = 59.81$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .424$). Inspection of the block statistics reveals the percent of the minority (non-white) students to have the largest *beta* weight and thus the greatest importance among the three variables ($\beta = -0.40$, $t = -7.40$, $p < .001$). Ranked second in explaining the outcome is the percent of students on free and reduced lunch. ($\beta = -.034$, $t = -6.21$, $p < .001$), followed by the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.13$, $t = -2.57$, $p = .011$).

The inclusion of two faculty-oriented variable yielded no statistically significant change in the proportion of variance explained in the outcome ($F \text{ Change } (2,241) = 0.49$, $p = .611$, $R^2 = .426$). Neither the variable pertinent to faculty experience ($\beta = -0.01$, $t = -0.16$, $p = .871$) nor the one related to faculty tenure ($\beta = 0.07$, $t = 0.83$, $p = .409$) ($\beta = -$

0.01, $t = -0.16$, $p = .871$) was statistically significantly related to the school's graduation rate.

There was little change in the results pertinent to measuring faculty experience and faculty tenure. Percent of minority students was most strongly related to the graduation rate ($\beta = -0.37$, $t = -5.93$, $p < .001$), followed by the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -0.26$, $t = -4.26$, $p < .001$). In importance, the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.15$, $t = -2.94$, $p = .004$) and the perceived level of community support and involvement at the school were essentially tied.

Eighty-four percent of Americans are graduating from high school (Murnane, 2013). This data reveals the work that needs to be done in communities with large amounts of minorities, a large number of students on free and reduced lunch and significant number of students with learning disabilities. This research has already shown evidence that community support has an effect on graduation. When looking at student demographics, it is much more evident that more targeted approaches to community involvement and the perception there of need to be addressed.

Research Question 3:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and students' ACT Composite scores, averaged over three years?

The perceived level of community support and involvement shows statistical significance in relations to students' ACT composite scores averaged over three year ($\beta = 0.16$, $t = 4.67$, $p < .001$). With results similar to the graduation rate, the regression of the perceived level of community support and involvement on student's ACT composite

scores is observed to explain about 2.0% of the variance in that outcome, controlling for the effects of student and faculty demographic variables.

The percent of students on free and reduced lunch has the largest beta weight and the greatest importance among three observed under student demographics. Students on free and reduced lunch have the largest *beta* weight and the greatest important of three variables observed ($\beta = -0.81, t = -22.06, p < .001$). The percent of LD students may also be seen to contribute to the proportion of variance explained in students' ACT composite scores ($\beta = -0.09, t = -2.7, p = .007$), the percent of minority students at the school proves not to be statistically significant related to the outcome ($\beta = -0.06, t = -1.81, p = .072$).

When faculty tenure and faculty experience were examined, neither had statistical significance on the ACT composite scores. Also, the percent of minority students at the school does not prove to be statistically significant. Four of six variables are found to be predictive of the ACT outcome. The strongest predictor was students on free and reduced lunch which is significantly negatively associated with the outcome ($\beta = -0.71, t = -18.45, p < .001$). Percent of students with LD also negatively impacts ACT composite scores, but community support and involvement and the percent of faculty with more than six years' tenure ($\beta = 0.10, t = 2.00, p = .047$) would appear to enable student's ACT performance.

Since community support and involvement shows to be statistically significant towards ACT composite score ($r = .53, p < .001$), the education community should focus on getting the parents and community involved to increase these numbers even more. The ACT college readiness assessment is a global indicator of student achievement. More investment in ACT preparation would greatly impact these numbers.

Research Question 4:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in Algebra I, averaged over three years?

Community support and involvement continues to have a positive impact on student achievement as it shows a strong correlation with Algebra I proficiency. By itself, the perception of community support and involvement explains about 5.2% of the variability in Algebra I proficiency ($\beta = 0.21, t = 3.62, p < .001$). In importance, it is second to that of the percent of students on free and reduced lunch ($\beta = -.037, t = -5.97, p < .001$) and above that of the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.16, t = -2.60, p < .001$) and above that of the percent of LD students ($\beta = -.011, t = -2.23, p = .027$). Neither the percent of faculty with more than ten years' experience ($\beta = -0.02, t = -0.22, p = .827$) nor the percent of faculty with more than six years' tenure ($\beta = 0.10, t = 1.26, p = .209$) prove to be associated with the outcome.

Parental involvement does improve Algebra I proficiency. Sirvani (2010) studied teacher communication with parents in Algebra I classes. Students in the experimental group out performed those in the control group. Parents in the experimental group monitored their children's progress. Since Algebra I is a gateway course to other mathematics, an investment in improving community support and involvement can yield great results (Remillard et al., 2017).

Research Question 5:

Controlling for student and faculty characteristics, what is the strength of relationship between educators' perceptions of community support and involvement at their high schools and the percent of students proficient in English II, averaged over three years?

As with previous variables in this research, the perception of community support and involvement is significantly linked to the percent of students proficient in English II and explains about 1.5% variance in that outcome. Eighty percent of the variance in student proficiency is explained by the model's six variables. About 77.6% of that percentage can be attributed solely to the influence of student demographic characteristics ($F(3,244) = 282.26, p < .001, R^2 = .776$).

The largest *beta* in this table 10 is attributed to students with free and reduced lunch, then the percent of minority students, followed by the percent of LD students. The two faculty-oriented demographic variables in the block result in a statistically significant change in R^2 statistic ($F \text{ Change}(2,242) = 4.27, p = .015$). Only the one pertinent to faculty experience was found to be statistically significant ($\beta = 0.09, t = 2.17, p = .031$).

The community support and involvement variable makes the impact of faculty experience no longer statistically significant in relation to English II proficiency. Students on free and reduced lunch has a large effect on English II proficiency ($\beta = -0.62, t = -16.63, p < .000$) followed by the percent of minority students ($\beta = -0.22, t = -5.95, p < .000$) and the percent of LD students ($\beta = -0.20, t = -6.71, p < .000$).

Fan and Chen (2001) say parental involvement has a .25 effect size on academic proficiency. Students taking English II would greatly benefit from increased parental and community involvement. Ross (2016) says school initiated contacts with parent and parent expectation have positive effects on students' engagement in English.

General Discussion and Implications for practice

The findings of this research provide strong evidence for the case for community support and involvement. However, there are other implications of note in this research that has to do with community perceptions and how they should be addressed.

Community support and involvement had major effects across the board with all of the variables in the research questions. This is research based evidence for schools to take to their school boards when trying to fund parent or community support staff to help build a school's capacity. The literature review builds the case for parental and community support and how it impacts academic achievement.

After conducting this research, it is evident that strong community support can reverse the destiny of low performing schools. Before this research, the researcher knew that parental involvement and community support are good to have. Now, the researcher knows that it is the lifeblood of schools and without it, schools cannot be fully successful. It is now more apparent the reasons why teachers and administrators alike spent nights and weekends networking with those in their community, places of worships and various organizations letting them know about the great things that are going on at their school. Even more importantly, the researcher now better understands why administrators and teachers spend countless hours developing partnerships with businesses and organizations around their schools.

The results of this research do line up with the literature. Even though there are not clear cut definitions for parental involvement, it is vital to the success of a school. Parents and community members need to be encouraged and various forms of engagement activities need to be available for more to participate. It is also important for high schools to continue to engage parents and the community since historically support drops off significantly after elementary or middle school.

Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher believes there is room for more research on the inner city effects on student outcomes. Community support and involvement will be of benefit in this area. A good percentage of public schools across the nation are categorized as urban and have some of the same issues. However this data shows that community support and involvement makes a difference in every area. Then, teachers and administrators have to look at specific demographics.

In Green's (2010) 13 Core Competencies, effective leaders know how to collaborate and engage all stakeholders. There are an abundance of non-profits in addition to business and government that can provide the wrap around services that schools seek. Research also greatly needs to be expanded around the achievement of English II.

Researchers should investigate the national formula for graduation rate and how well it is being implemented nationwide. Is the graduation rate that we are seeing accurate? Why or why not? Also, researchers should investigate the types of community support and involvement and see which ones have the highest engagement rate. Does community support and involvement differ from rural to suburban schools? What are the

critical need areas of community support and involvement? For example, are parent teacher conferences the most critical support area for rural schools or is Family Math and Science Night most effective? Do students in urban schools need more mentors as opposed to Family Math and Science Night attendance? What types of community support and involvement is most effective for English II improvement? How can schools gear community support and involvement around attendance?

Schools should use title one funds to improve community support and involvement for your school. The principal should have a community support engagement team to assist in engaging parents and the local community. Staff should include a family engagement specialist. This research is proof that community support and involvement will help you achieve academic goals. Schools should partner with those in the community to develop parent leadership (Warren et al., 2009). Institutions should include after-school programs. These programs have even higher attendance rates and are also an additional draw for students (Epstein & Sheldon, 2009). Establishments have to be proactive in addressing attendance. The school house should also implement monitoring systems for students enrolled in Algebra I. Parents whose students are monitored by them while taking this course achieve higher scores than other students (Sirvani, 2007. Student's successful completion of Algebra I is a means of participation in higher mathematic courses (Remillard et al., 2017). An experienced faculty also increases community support and involvement according to this research. Fifty-four percent of respondents in survey data have 10 or more years of experience.

Conclusions

The variables in this study are all important to school effectiveness. Therefore, it appears that community involvement is an important element to making school effective and students successful. Consequently, school leaders are well advised to find means and approaches to involving their communities in the educational landscape. At least, teachers must perceive the community is involved and based on the research that in itself will increase student achievement.

Community support and involvement positively impacts student outcomes. There are other indicators that do need attention. The percent of students on free and reduced lunch tends to have a negative impact on ACT Composite. However, the researcher believes increased community support and involvement can help with this issue. This could possibly mean that these schools are located in areas where both parents are always working and may not have the time to be actively involved. Schools can implement before care and after-care programs to have an opportunity to interact with parents while also providing a service for them. This could generate funds that schools can in turn use to increase community support and involvement.

These findings refer back to the theory on which this research was based. The premise of the Social Systems Theory is that interrelated parts work together to achieve a specific purpose (Green, 2005). The findings that were uncovered show that community support and involvement components work with the school environment to produce student achievement goals. Social Systems theory views the organization as a whole with the interaction with its internal and external environment (Green, 2005). That is true with

this research where the school works with its external and internal environment to produce student achievement goals.

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