Leadership Practices and Knowledge that Support Inclusion: A Case Study

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Curry School of Education

University of Virginia

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In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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By

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May 2014

Abstract

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Inclusion is supported by both legislation and ethical arguments, but the practice of inclusion is not clearly defined. Therefore, the implementation of inclusion is influenced by the beliefs and backgrounds of school leaders. This case study set out to provide a description of leadership practices and knowledge at a school identified as providing successful inclusion for students with disabilities. The findings of this case study are framed using Leithwood et al.'s (2004; 2008) core sets of leadership practices to broadly describe the actions of leaders, and their interactions with followers, at this school that support inclusive programming. Within the broad categories of core sets of leadership practices, I used the conceptual framework of distributed leadership (Spillane, 2006) to describe the specific tools, routines, and structures used by leaders to implement and support inclusion. Further, I used the framework of leadership content knowledge (Stein & Nelson, 2003) to identify the knowledge of both inclusion and leadership that leaders draw on to organize their leadership practices with regards to inclusive programming. Through the use of this framework, I was able to identify the following reoccurring elements of practice that support inclusion at this school: the principal's insight and drive, an inclusive school culture, organizational support, communication, and the buffering of staff from distractions.

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APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation, Leadership Practices and Knowledge that Support Inclusion: A Case Study, has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Akom boys, my husband Chris and our three fantastic sons: Ayden, Nathanial, and Jack.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter One

Introduction to Study

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1990), and subsequent

reauthorizations, set forth the mandate that all students with disabilities be provided a free

and appropriate public education (FAPE). Furthermore, FAPE is required by IDEA to be

provided in the least restrictive environment (LRE). While FAPE can be provided in

many ways, when students with disabilities are not separated, or pulled-out, into small

classes led by special educators but "included" in the general education classrooms with

their non-disabled peers, the model is termed inclusion (Avramidis & Wilde, 2009; Idol,

2006).

Schools are required by IDEA to provide students with disabilities a continuum of

services to access their FAPE, and the inclusion model is trending as the most appropriate

way for students with disabilities to be educated. According to the National Center for

Educational Statistics (2009), the percentage of students with disabilities, including

students with intellectual, learning, and emotional disabilities, who spent more than 21%

of their school day in general education classes rose 69% (from 31.7% to 53.7%) between

1989 and 2006. Additionally, placement of students with intellectual disabilities in

general education classrooms for at least part of the school day increased from 27.3% to

44.7% during the 1990s (Williamson, McLeskey, Hoppey, & Rentz, 2006). In order for

leaders to respond to these trends, further information is needed in regards to the impact

of inclusive practices on student achievement, the characteristics of inclusive schools, and the leadership practices that support the implementation of inclusive practices.

Need for the Study

Federal and state legislation endorse the inclusion of students with disabilities (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1990). This legislation is also supported by ethical arguments rooted in equity and tolerance. While encouraged legislatively and ethically, inclusion is not a clearly defined practice (Kauffman et al., 2011). Thus, the backgrounds and beliefs of school leaders influence how inclusion is practiced at the school level.

Purpose of the Study

This study has two purposes. First, this research will describe the leadership practices and routines that support the inclusion of students with disabilities. Second, this study plans to investigate what special education content knowledge is drawn upon by leaders to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Research Questions

The aim of this study is to contribute to the understanding of how leadership practices facilitate inclusion and identify the knowledge base utilized by school leaders to support inclusion. To that end, two research questions will guide this study:

R_1 What tools, routines, and structures organize the leadership practices that support the inclusion of students with disabilities?

R_2 What knowledge do leaders draw on to organize their leadership practice as it relates to the inclusion of students with disabilities?

Overview of Methodology

This research was conducted using case study methodology. Data were collected through observations and interviews of both formal and informal school leaders. Additionally, documents pertaining to the leadership practices related to inclusion were analyzed. This study occurred at a high school in central Virginia previously identified as an inclusive school through a pilot study (Akom, 2011).

Conceptual Framework

This study is framed by combining three distinct conceptual frameworks: Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership, Stein's leadership content knowledge (Stein & D'Amico, 2000; Stein & Nelson, 2003), and the key functions of leadership as identified by Leithwood (Leithwood et al., 2004; Leithwood et al., 2007; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Distributed leadership emphasizes the practice of leadership, leadership content knowledge focuses on the knowledge needed to lead, and the key functions of leadership target the purpose of leadership. By utilizing three conceptual frameworks, Spillane's distributed leadership (Spillane, 2006), Stein's leadership content knowledge (Stien & D'Amico, 2000; Stein & Nelson, 2003), and the key functions of leadership identified by Leithwood (Leithwood et al., 2007; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003), this study will investigate the special education content knowledge of school leaders as well as the tools, routines, and structures used by those leaders to organize their leadership practices related to inclusion. Additionally, this study will be built upon the assumptions of reflective practice, the notion that actions stem from thoughts and are rooted in schema.

Distributed leadership. Distributed leadership centers specifically on leadership practices and how leadership is stretched across leaders, followers, and the situation (Spillane, 2006; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). With this perspective, the focus on interactions includes not only the interactions between leaders, formal and informal, and followers, but also with the situation, or context, in which the leadership practices are occurring. Within the context, researchers need to push past the formal structures of a school to look at how leaders actually perform leadership routines. To that end, leadership practices can be described in terms of the tasks that make them up and how they are shaped "from the inside out" (Spillane, 2006, p. 12) by tools, resources utilized to complete leadership tasks (Spillane, 2006, p. 18), and routines, regularly occurring patterns, as well as who is responsible for the tasks, how they are carried out over time, and their identified function(s) (Spillane, 2006). The focus is on how leadership is practiced, what leaders are using to complete tasks, and with whom they are interacting. In order to more fully understand leadership in inclusive schools, distributed leadership provides a lens with which to focus on the tools, routines, and practices of leadership as they relate to the practices of inclusion of students with disabilities.

Leadership content knowledge. Leadership content knowledge, as defined by Stein & Nelson (2003), is "that knowledge of subjects and how students learn them that is used by administrators when they function as instructional leaders" (p. 445). This includes being able to identify quality instruction, provide professional development recognizing the characteristics of teachers-as-learners, and set conditions in which learning can occur. Leadership content knowledge insinuates that leaders need to have some understanding of content knowledge and be able to transform that knowledge for

leadership purposes, such as teacher evaluations and allocation of resources (Robinson, 2010; Spillane, 2004). Specific to the inclusion of students with disabilities, leadership content knowledge would include the knowledge of special education law and instructional practices that are transformed by leaders to provide instructional leadership in support of inclusive practices.

Functions of leadership. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) synthesize research focused on successful school leadership, identifying leadership as a function rather than a role with the purpose of providing direction and enabling others to move in that direction. To fulfill leadership functions, leadership practices must include setting direction, developing people, and developing the organization. For the study of leadership as it relates to inclusion, the three functions are reframed as setting a vision for inclusion, developing staff abilities to collaborate and adapt instruction and curriculum, and providing resources and support for inclusion.

Definition of Terms

Disability is defined as any of the following conditions (either individually or in combination) that require special education and related services: intellectual disability (previously known as mental retardation), deafness or hearing impairments, speech or language impairments, blindness or visual impairments, emotional disability, autism, traumatic brain injury, orthopedic impairments, or other health impairments (20 U.S.C. § 1401 (d)(3)(A)).

There are 13 disability categories recognized by the state of Virginia (8 VAC 20-81-340). Researchers investigating the inclusion of students with disabilities define the term disability within their study as appropriate for the purpose and scope of their

research. Unless otherwise specified, this study categorizes disabilities into two groups, high-incidence disabilities and low-incidence disabilities. High-incidence disabilities include learning disabilities, some emotional disabilities, and some other identifications including other health impairments such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, high functioning Autism, and speech and language impairments which do not affect ability level as measured by IQ scores, but can interfere with a student's academic achievement (Gage, Lierheimer, & Goran, 2012). Low-incidence disabilities, then, are those disabilities that impact a student's ability level such as intellectual disabilities (previously known as mental retardation) or traumatic brain injury. Low-incidence disabilities also include some Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) is special education and related services at the preschool, elementary, and secondary level that are provided at no cost to the student, meet the standards of the State Board of Education, and are provided in accordance to the student's individualized education program (IEP) (20 U.S.C. § 1401 (d) (9) (A-D)).

Inclusion, with regards to the education of students with disabilities, has many definitions. At the most basic level, inclusion is similar to the past ideas of mainstreaming and integration where students with disabilities are physically included in general education classrooms or activities. Inclusion is more than just being in the same physical space (Avramidis & Wilde, 2009). Instead, inclusion is the idea that students with disabilities should receive their education with appropriate supports with their non-disabled peers (Mesibov & Shea, 1996). Ideally, the student with a disability should be welcomed and valued (Avramidis & Wilde, 2009). For the purposes of this review, the definition of inclusion, and more specifically, successful inclusion, is derived not from

the theories of inclusion, but from the characteristics and instructional practices evidenced in inclusive schools.   This definition of inclusion can be for any portion of, or the entirety of a school day, and can be facilitated by the general education teacher alone or with the support of a special education teacher or paraprofessional. This definition is distinct from the concept of "full inclusion" which is a separate but related movement in the field of special education that proposes that all students should be taught in the general education classroom for 100% of their education (Idol, 2006).

Individualized Education Program (IEP) is the plan developed, reviewed, and revised to provide students with disabilities a free appropriate public education (20 U.S.C. § 1401 (d) (14)). The IEP outlines the specially designed instruction and related services that are provided to the student.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is defined as "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and (ii) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily" (Federal Register, 2004, pp. 46764-46765).

Special Education is "specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability" (20 U.S.C. § 1401 (d) (29)).

Limitations/Assumptions

This research will be conducted using a case study approach. The study will be limited to data collected from one large high school in a suburban school district in

Virginia. While the use of only one site will limit generalizability and transferability of findings, every effort will be made to thoroughly describe the context of the data collection and provide a richly nuanced description of the identified phenomenon.

Chapter Two

Introduction to the Review of Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a foundation for a study of leadership practices related to the inclusion of students with disabilities. The term inclusion is used often and in a variety of ways; therefore, this review begins with a brief history of special education and inclusion, followed by a description of the characteristics and practices found in inclusive schools, as well as the academic and behavioral outcomes of students in inclusive environments. Further, this review discusses three frameworks used for conceptualizing leadership: Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership, Stein's leadership content knowledge (Stein & D'Amico, 2000; Stein & Nelson, 2003), and the key functions of leadership as identified by Leithwood and colleagues (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Leithwood et al, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2007). The findings of research studies related to leadership practices and the inclusion of students with disabilities are synthesized, and an argument is presented to support the need for further research into the tools, routines, and structures used by school leaders, as well as the special education content knowledge those leaders draw on, to organize their leadership practices related to inclusion.

The literature reviewed in this chapter was acquired primarily through online database searches of Academic Search Complete, Education Full Text, VIRGO, and Dissertations & Theses: Full Text. Further sources were found using the references in

journal articles, book chapters, and dissertations. When searching for studies related to

the inclusion of students with disabilities, the search terms included but were not limited

to: inclusion, mainstream, and special education. To find studies related to leadership

practices and inclusion, the previous search terms were used along with terms including

distributed leadership, leadership content knowledge, school leadership, and

administration.

Historical Background of Inclusive Practices

Historically, education has been exclusive in nature. In 1779, the proposal made

by Thomas Jefferson that Virginia should provide for the education of the poor was

rejected. The efforts of Horace Mann and the populations' concern for the needs of

immigrants to become more American resulted in the passage of laws regarding public

education and compulsory attendance in all states in the early 1900s.   These laws,

however, were not uniformly enforced, and, with the prevailing acceptance of "separate

but equal," students with disabilities were generally excluded from educational

opportunities in public schools. In 1817, Thomas Gallaudet established an education

program at the American Asylum for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and

Dumb in Connecticut; furthermore, in the mid-19th century, Samuel Gridley Howe,

argued for the use of institutions for children with disabilities as a way to reach all

children (Osgood, 2008; Stainback & Smith, 2005). By the early 1900s almost all states

had institutions for individuals who were blind, deaf, or mentally retarded. The

educational opportunities of individuals with disabilities were limited to schooling

provided through asylums or institutions run by the government or churches.   These

limited opportunities were often the result of fear and stereotype, with the general public

perceiving disabilities as related to criminality. In the early part of the 20th century, individuals with disabilities remained excluded from mainstream public education, and even when educated within schools, these students were kept separate from non-disabled students (Osgood, 2008; Stainback & Smith, 2005).

In the 1930s, perceptions regarding disabilities were shifting as "medical, educational, and intellectual leaders became convinced that the eradication of disability depended on early identification, prevention, and treatment" (Osgood, 2008, p. 18). About the same time, informal groups of parents of children with disabilities formed in many states. These groups focused on efforts to improve the quality of life for children with disabilities and their families. These informal groups became more formal associations; the most notable, the National Association of Parents and Friends of Retarded Children (The Arc), focused on social and political agendas by the early 1950s (Osgood, 2008). With the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that separate was fundamentally unequal and the process of desegregation in schools began (Brown v. Board of Education, 1954). The integration of minorities and the momentum of the Civil Rights Movement fueled the growth of The Arc by parents of children with disabilities advocating for their children's education. Then, in 1958, Congress authorized funding to support preparation of teachers for students with disabilities. In 1971 and 1972, with the decisions of Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (1972) and Mills v. Board of Education of District of Columbia (1972), courts in Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia determined that mentally retarded children had the right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Concurrently, the idea of normalization became

part of practice, focusing on teaching basic skills, such as self-care, to people with disabilities (Fisher, Frey, & Thousand, 2003).

The establishment of FAPE in case law was followed by the passage of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Section 504, and its subsequent amendments, required agencies and schools receiving federal money to make provisions guaranteeing the rights of individuals with disabilities. This was followed in 1975 by Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, which was later reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990.

IDEA, and its reauthorizations, legislate that all children, regardless of disability, be provided FAPE in the least restrictive environment (LRE), and include requirements for placement determination and performance standards (Stainback & Smith, 2005). The concept of least restrictive environment involves students with disabilities being educated with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible. The acceptance of the concepts of normalization and LRE led to the development of Community Based Instruction (CBI), which focused on providing portions of a student's education in natural environments (Fisher, et al., 2003).

In the 1970s, the LRE for students with disabilities was commonly perceived to be spending a portion of the day with non-disabled peers in a general education setting and then a portion of the day in a special resource room for direct instruction (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1995). Over time, in part due to the regular education initiative (REI), resource rooms took on the stigma of being a way to segregate students with disabilities (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1995). The roots of the REI movement are explained in Will's "Educating Children with Learning Problems: A Shared Responsibility" (1986). Will

highlighted the barriers associated with the "pull-out" structure prevalent in special education in the early 1980s. Among these barriers are the stigmatization of special education students and the impact of lower expectations. To ameliorate these differences, Will suggested serving students in "more comprehensive ways" (Will, 1986, p. 414): early identification and intervention, curriculum based assessments, and the use of research-based strategies. This view of special education service delivery has led to the movement of "full inclusion," which is a push for students with disabilities to be educated in general education setting 100% of the day.

Characteristics and Practices of Inclusive Schools

As there are no specific guidelines regarding the implementation of inclusion, the practice of inclusion varies among schools and districts. According to Kauffman, Nelson, Simpson, and Mock (2011), the lack of agreement upon what inclusion is and how it should be implemented contributes to the challenges school personnel and parents face when working to determine "when and how to integrate students with disabilities into general education programs most efficiently and effectively" (p. 21). Further, Carter and Hughes (2006) refer to the implementation of inclusive programming country-wide as "slow, sporadic, and uneven" (p. 174). While there is not a prescribed model for the inclusion of students with disabilities, there are several key practices noted by researchers and practitioners for successful inclusive programming. These practices include teams of teachers working together and the use of a collaborative teaching model with shared planning time and regular meetings scheduled to facilitate communication among stakeholders. Additionally, instruction in inclusive schools is supported by IEPs that are standards-based and describe accommodations in detail, manageable caseloads for

service providers (which includes a natural dispersion of students with disabilities among classrooms), integrated therapy, and the availability and utilization of assistive technology. Inclusive schools also have a vision that includes a commitment to inclusive services, and that vision is supported by professional development opportunities for teachers, an emphasis on collaboration among the school, parents, and community members, and community building with all students (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2008; NCERI, 1994; Rea, McLaughlin, & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Sapon-Shevin, 2008).

These characteristics are consistent throughout much of the research regarding inclusion. Inclusive schools have a vision that makes a commitment to educating all students (Dyson & Millwood 1997; Porter, 1997; Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). In inclusive schools, this vision is shared by the principal and the majority of the staff in an inclusive school (Dyson, Farrell, Gallannaugh, Hutcheson, & Polat, 2007). In line with this vision, the climate of inclusive schools is open, with a culture that values diversity (Dyson et al., 2007: Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). York-Barr, Schultz, Doyle, Kronberg, and Crossett (1996) used purposive extreme case sampling procedures to identify cases of successful inclusion to study. Through interviews, focus groups, and member-checking, York-Barr et al. categorized emergent themes throughout the process of inclusive reform into two areas: process and people. Process-oriented themes included setting a vision first and following the vision with strategic planning, while people-oriented themes centered on collaboration and support (York-Barr et al., 1996).

In order to achieve the vision of an inclusive school, certain instructional practices are needed. Most commonly, teachers and administrators in inclusive schools highlight the necessity of extra support in inclusive classrooms (Idol, 2006). This support can be

provided by a special education teacher or a paraprofessional. In a program evaluation of eight inclusive schools, Idol (2006) found that support for general education teachers was provided by cooperative teaching, resource classes, teacher assistance teams, content area teams, consulting teachers, curriculum or instructional coordinators, and life skills programs. Also needed is an ability to adapt instruction and modify the curriculum to meet the needs of all students (Idol, 2006). Instructional adaptations found in inclusive programs include material adaptation (i.e. providing notes, chunking information), cooperative learning, tutoring, task analysis, and re-teaching (Coots, Bishop, & Grenot-Scheyer, 1998; Kos, 2010; Manset & Semmel, 1997). Boscardin (2005), in an examination of two ways administrators implement interventions, emphasizes the need for cross-disciplinary support for inclusive secondary schools so that teachers can collaborate to make instructional decisions for the good of all students. Another common theme found in inclusive schools is a focus on discipline and classroom management (Idol, 2006).

In an article targeting practitioners as the audience, Voltz, Brazil, and Ford (2001) reinforce the premise that inclusion is not a place but a condition. Voltz et al. (2001) highlight elements central to the inclusive condition in schools to be: (a) active participation with non-disabled peers, (b) a sense of belonging shared by students, and (c) shared ownership of all students by the staff of the school. These elements, according to Voltz et al. (2001), are supported through differentiated instructional strategies, a classroom climate of diversity and acceptance, and collaboration among educators for student support and problem-solving.

An operational definition of inclusion, synthesized from literature about inclusive schools' characteristics and practices, must include the themes of vision, commitment, and collaboration. Ideally, these themes would be evidenced in the practices of teachers in inclusive schools. From the research investigated for this review, the following operational definition has been developed: leaders in inclusive schools promote a vision to educate all students that is supported by a commitment of the staff to value diversity, flexibility, and collaboration (Dyson & Milwood, 1997; Dyson, 2007; Porter, 1997; Salisbury & McGregor, 2002; York-Barr et al., 1996). The faculty and staff of inclusive schools are supported by organizational systems that maximize time and resources to facilitate the work required to meet the needs of a diverse student population (Boscardin, 2005; Coots, Bishop, Grenot-Scheyer, 1998; Idol, 2006; Kos, 2010; Manset & Semmel, 1997; Voltz et al., 2001).

Inclusion and Student Outcomes

The inclusion of students with disabilities is not clearly defined in legislation or uniformly implemented. The variability in its definition and practice contributes to an ongoing debate among researchers and practitioners regarding whether inclusion is appropriate and how it should be practiced (Kauffman et al., 2011). Indeed, the value of inclusion is rooted more deeply in ethical arguments than it is in empirical research. Kauffman et al. (2011) point out that the inclusion of students with disabilities has been viewed as "legislative and legal evenhandedness" (p. 21) regardless of the lack of "objective, scientific investigation" (p. 21). This sentiment is echoed by Lindsay (2007) in a review of existing research regarding the effectiveness of inclusion. Lindsay (2007) asserts that the push for inclusion has been primarily motivated by ethical factors rather

than evidence of effectiveness. In spite of the ethical foundations for the debate around inclusive education, proponents of inclusion continue to stress that IDEA demands that students be educated in the least restrictive environment and that students in inclusive settings are exposed to a wider variety of educational experiences and more demanding curriculum. In order to determine whether full inclusion, partial inclusion, or no inclusion is appropriate, this review continues with a synthesis of research regarding student outcomes as a result of inclusion in the areas of academic achievement, classroom behavior, social acceptance and functioning, and the impact on non-disabled peers (Kauffman, 2011).

Academic achievement. One method of determining the effectiveness of inclusion used by researchers has been to compare the academic performance of students with disabilities served in inclusive classrooms to similar students with disabilities served in pullout settings. In a small scale study (n = 58) comparing students at two schools, Rea et al. (2002) investigated the academic achievement of students with disabilities. Students were selected by a computer search of the December 1 count of special education students. Students at school A were all served in inclusive settings while students at school B were served in the pullout setting. The students included in the study were demographically comparable, inclusive of IQ scores, number of years served by special education, and the number of years in the school district. Rea et al. (2002) reported that the achievement scores of included students were significantly different than those served in a pullout setting, with the included students achieving higher scores in the four core content areas. Similarly, the Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study (SEELS), which collected data from 2000 to 2006 from over 11,000 students,

found that included students with disabilities performed higher in math and reading than their less-included peers. Furthermore, both studies found that included students had better school attendance rates than their less-included peers (Blackorby et al., 2005; Rea et al., 2002).

Slavin, Madden, and Leavey (1984) compared the use of Team-Assisted Individualization (TAI) and Individualized Instruction (II) to support students in inclusive settings. Slavin et al. found that the achievement of students with disabilities did not increase significantly under either TAI or II. However, the classes that received the TAI and II demonstrated higher achievement as a whole than those classes which did not. This indicates that students with disabilities and students without disabilities benefitted from the instruction provided in the TAI and II inclusive settings. Similarly, Cawley, Hayden, Cade, and Baker-Kroczynski (2002) studied the effects of teacher teams working together to enhance science instruction in inclusive settings for students with emotional and/or learning disabilities. They found that students with disabilities in the inclusive settings performed as well as their non-disabled peers as measured by their grades and district tests.

With a specific focus on students with intellectual disabilities, Freeman and Alkin (2000) reviewed 36 studies and found that included students performed better academically. They also concluded that the inclusion of students had better results when students were included at younger ages. According to Freeman and Alkin, the benefits of inclusion were more pronounced when students were fully included rather than partially included.   This differs from the conclusions drawn by Marston's (1996) study of students with learning disabilities that reported that a combined service model was more effective

than either full inclusion or full segregation. Part of the difference could be accounted for by the nature of the disabilities included in the studies.

Additional interest includes the impact of inclusive school practice on high-stakes testing. Idol (2006) noted that over the course of inclusion, statewide testing scores were not significantly impacted. However, other studies have suggested high-stakes testing and the pressure associated with those tests as barriers for the implementation of inclusion (Klingner & Vaughn, 2002; Mastropieri et al., 2005, Mastropieri et al. 2006). If academic success is utilized to determine the effectiveness of inclusion, high-stakes testing should be more prevalent in the research on inclusive education.

If academic achievement is the only measure to judge the success of inclusion, the results are mixed. Reviewing the literature has resulted in the identification of several studies that found improvement in academics (Cawley et al., 2002; Freeman & Alkin, 2000; Rea et al., 2002) and others that found inclusion to have little effect on achievement (Marston, 1996; Slavin et al., 1984). However, it is important to note that conclusions based upon academic achievement are limited by the scope of each study, the disability area and age group which each focuses on, and the ways in which data were collected. Rather than an over-arching statement that inclusion is effective for students with disabilities, it is prudent to state that when the achievement of students with disabilities is the priority, inclusion is a service model that should be considered when determining a student's LRE.

Behavior. The behavior of students with disabilities is presented as a concern by both teachers of inclusive classes and teachers who do not teach in inclusive classrooms according to a survey of teacher perceptions towards inclusion (McLeskey et al., 2001).

As early as 1975, the impact of inclusion on the behavior of students with disabilities was investigated (Gottlieb, Gampel, & Budoff, 1975). When studying students with intellectual disabilities, Gottlieb et al. (1975) compared the behavior of students with significant intellectual disabilities, who were served in inclusive settings for a portion of their day, to their peers, who were served in segregated settings. They determined that inclusion increased the amount of prosocial behaviors and decreased the amount of disruptive behaviors as compared to the students served in segregated settings; although their teachers expressed concern that the included students felt more pressure and anxiety than their non-included peers. Moreover, Gottlieb et al. (1975) concluded that including students with disabilities in the general education classroom resulted in students with disabilities having better attitudes towards school.

In Rea et al.'s (2002) study, student disciplinary problems, as collected by analyzing suspension data, remained consistent between students served in inclusive and pullout settings. The determination that negative behavior did not increase as a result of the increasing demands of a regular classroom, in combination with the higher attendance rate for the students included in the regular classroom, implies that included students are more capable of meeting the social expectations of school. Furthermore, in a review of prior studies, Mesibov and Shea (1996) indicated that individualized, appropriate instruction within general education settings positively affected the achievement of students with disabilities academically, and in the realms of attitude and interactions. Additionally, Cawley et al. (2002) found that students included in science instruction had minimal behavior problems during science instruction and the behavior of the non-disabled students in those science classes improved. Cawley et al. (2002) suggested that

the lack of disciplinary problems may be related to the hands-on nature of the science program, as well as the supports teachers had access to prior to the program's implementation.

Social outcomes. Several studies have investigated the social impact of inclusion on students with disabilities. While some studies have found that students with disabilities report lower self-esteem, fewer friends, and a higher likelihood of being bullied (Avramidis & Wilde, 2009; Freeman & Alkin, 2000; Saylor & Leach, 2008), many researchers have found more positive social outcomes resulting from inclusion. For example, Larraviee & Home (1991) compared students with disabilities to students with low, average, and high ability levels from 100 classrooms and determined that students with disabilities had similar peer acceptance to students in low ability groups, and students with average and high ability levels had significantly higher peer acceptance.

These findings are similar to those of Vaughn, Elbaum, & Schumm (1996) who found that the social functioning of students with disabilities were equal to students in low, average, and high ability groups in the areas of self-worth and loneliness. Vaughn et al. (1996) used a pre-test/post-test method to assess the social functioning of students served in an inclusive classrooms with the initial administration given towards the beginning of the school year and the final administration given at the end of the year. Vaughn et al. (1996) also determined that, even though students with disabilities had lower academic self-concepts, the number of friendships they had increased over the course of a year served in an inclusive classroom. These results are echoed in the conclusions of Slavin et al. (1984) who determined that students with disabilities in

inclusive settings experienced more social acceptance than their peers in segregated settings. Furthermore, when social acceptance and functioning was rated with a sociometric measure, Pijl, Forstad, and Flem (2008) found that students with disabilities were less popular and participated less than their non-disabled peers. However, both teachers and the students with disabilities themselves demonstrated positive outlooks with regards to social outcomes in the same study. Since students with disabilities are shown to be less popular but have positive perceptions of their social standing, Pijl et al. infer that students who are included physically need more attention and/or prompting to ensure that they are included socially.

Another consideration should be the effect of an inclusive classroom on the non-disabled students. Parrello (2010) studied the achievement and perceptions of 6th grade students in classrooms with and without in-class support teachers. The study did not yield significant differences in achievement between students in inclusive and non-inclusive environments indicating that the addition of a special education teacher as support in an inclusive classroom is neither significantly helpful nor harmful to the achievement of general education students. Additionally, Parrello utilized a Likert scale survey to identify student perceptions of the inclusive co-taught classroom, determining that, for the most part, students were pleased with the amount of teacher support and their achievement when educated in the co-taught environment.

Summary. With regards to academic, behavioral, and social outcomes of students with disabilities, the available evidence is mixed. "The only certainty regarding the effects of class placement is that there is no consensus" (Forell, et al., 2008, p. 56). Some academic studies present positive effects of inclusion (Blackorby et al., 2005;

Freeman & Alkin, 2000; Rea et al, 2002) while other results are equivocal (Idol, 2006; Slavin, Madden, & Leavey, 1984). The results of studies regarding behavior and social outcomes of students with disabilities that are served in inclusive settings are also diverse. When comparing outcomes in terms of behavior, attitude, or social acceptance, several studies have found that inclusion promotes positive behavior and prosocial interactions (Crawley et al., 2002; Gottlieb, Gampel, & Budoff, 1975; Mesibov & Shea, 1996; Slavin et al., 1984). However, other studies found that students with disabilities served in inclusive settings were less accepted than their non-disabled peers (Avramidis & Wilde, 2009; Freeman & Alkin, 2000; Pijl, Forstad, & Flem, 2008; Saylor & Leach, 2008). When reviewing the mixed results found when studying the outcomes of the inclusion of students with disabilities, it is important to recognize that the results can be impacted by the nature of the disabilities included in the study. Other limitations of research in special education include the variability of participants, complexity of the context of special education, and the difficulty with randomness in assigning students to treatment or non-treatment groups as their education plans are legally mandated (Santoro, Gersten, & Newman-Gonchar, 2011).

Leadership and Inclusion

A consistent theme in the literature regarding successful inclusive schools is that of administrative support. It has been claimed that the leadership in a school has the second highest influence on student learning, behind classroom instruction (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). While often discussed, leadership is not consistently defined. In fact, leadership has been conceptualized in many different ways to include leadership as the focus of group processes, viewing leadership from a personality perspective, or

leadership as a set of traits or behaviors. It can be viewed as a process or a set of skills (Northouse, 2007).

Distributed leadership. One frame for analyzing leadership is a distributed perspective on leadership. Distributed leadership is centered on leadership practice "as a product of the joint interactions of school *leaders*, *followers*, and aspects of their *situation* such as tools and routines" (Spillane, 2006, p. 3). In developing this theory of leadership practice, Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2004) define school leadership as "the identification, acquisition, allocation, co-ordination and use of the social, material, and cultural resources necessary to establish the conditions for the possibility of teaching and learning" (p. 11). Recent literature has focused on further developing distributed leadership as a conceptual framework: describing the ways in which leadership can be distributed, how distributed leadership affects instruction at the school level, and even how distributed leadership can provide a lens through which to analyze the relationship between districts and teacher leaders (Leithwood, Mascall, & Strauss, 2009). In their discussion of districts and teacher leaders, Firestone and Martinez (2009), illuminate a gap in the literature and the need for "research that goes farther to operationalize different leadership tasks from different actors and link them to changes in teaching practice" (p. 84).

The underpinnings of the distributed leadership theory lie in activity theory and theories of distributed cognition. The idea that leadership is distributed is built upon the idea that cognition is distributed both situationally and socially. That is to say that sense-making occurs in the context of the situation and with/through other people (Spillane et al., 2004). Thus, "a distributed perspective on human activity presses us to move beyond

individual activity to consider how the material, cultural, and social situation enables, informs and constrains human activity" (Spillane et al., 2004, p. 10). A distributed perspective, as described by Spillane (2006), suggests researchers focus on formal and informal leaders within a school, which he calls a leader-plus view, as well as hone in on the practice of leadership, which he considers as evident in the interactions among leaders, followers, and the situation. Along these lines, Spillane (2006) recommends connecting leadership practice and instruction by focusing on "how leadership activities connect with teachers and also how leadership activities connect with students and the materials that teachers and students work with" (pp. 25-26).

The focus of researchers using the distributed framework is on the practice of leadership. The actions of leaders are secondary to the interactions of leaders and include connections among formal leaders, informal leaders, followers, and the situation itself (Spillane, 2006). In researching change in a school, rather than focusing on one "great" leader, this perspective allows a more practical approach by recognizing that rarely can one person implement and sustain change and that the focus of investigations should be on the ways in which leaders are distributed and their practices within the context of their school. This view is strikingly analogous to Crockett's (2002) description of special education leadership and York-Barr et al.'s (2005) perception of special education teachers in inclusive classrooms as teacher-leaders. According to Crockett (2002), leadership can be "imagined as extending across a variety of professional roles within a school system" (p. 161).

Leadership content knowledge. Pedagogical content knowledge is fundamentally different than content knowledge. It is the knowledge that is used to help

others learn the specific knowledge of a content area. Stein and Nelson (2003) coined the term leadership content knowledge to convey what knowledge of subject matter school leaders must have in order to skillfully guide instructional practice. Leadership content knowledge is knowledge of subject matter, teaching, and learning that administrators transform to lead instruction. According to Stein and Nelson (2003), "administrators must be able to know strong instruction when they see it, to encourage it when they don't, and to set the conditions for continuous academic learning among their professional staffs" (p. 424).

As part of the High Performance Learning Communities Project, 1996-2001, Stein and D'Amico (2000) collected and analyzed data regarding instructional reform in the content areas of literacy and mathematics in Community School District #2 in New York City. The researchers identified the similarities and differences between literacy and math programs as well as how those differences impacted classroom practice. Taking the concept of subject matter differences one step further, Stein and D'Amico investigated how subject areas matter with regard to professional development and found that, in District #2, professional development is organized differently based on the content area. While both math and literacy professional development were designed to provide opportunities for teachers to participate as learners, the math professional development was scaffolded by the curriculum while the literacy professional development was "organized by forms and techniques associated with the Balanced Literacy program" (p. 31). Since the ways math and literacy are expected to be taught differ, Stein and D'Amico (2000) infer that leaders need a basic understanding of each content area and how the expectations for quality instruction may differ between content

areas. By following the data for both math and literacy instruction and professional development, Stein and D'Amico (2000) make a case that leaders require specific knowledge with regards to content and reform which they term leadership content knowledge.

From their research, Stein and D'Amico identify areas of subject matter knowledge for leaders including

> practice-based standards for instruction in each content area, the forms of teacher observation and instructional artifacts that would be needed to fairly evaluate teachers of literacy and mathematics, understanding of the kinds of difficulties that teachers are apt to experience as they attempt to change their instruction in ways called for by the new reforms in mathematics and literacy, and knowledge of the kinds of professional development that are needed to transform teachers from lecturers to reform teachers of mathematics and literacy (pp. 43-44).

Again using data from District #2, Stein and Nelson (2003) utilized a cross-case analysis of three cases to determine the kinds of leadership content knowledge used to lead reform. They identified characteristics of leadership content knowledge broadly as knowledge of how to teach and how students learn a subject matter within the classroom, which is pedagogical content knowledge in addition to knowledge of how adults learn and how to facilitate learning communities at the school level, and knowledge of what leaders need to learn and how best to teach them at the district level.

The case could then be made that if leaders utilize leadership content knowledge to reform teaching in math and literacy, leaders also would require leadership content knowledge as it relates to the field of special education to lead inclusive programming for students with disabilities. The current knowledge base regarding leadership content knowledge points to a gap in the research; specifically, what content knowledge do leaders need. More research is needed to understand how leaders transform subject

matter knowledge into leadership content knowledge for the purposes of leading effective instruction (Robinson, 2010; Stein & Nelson, 2003).

Core sets of leadership practices. The three sets of core leadership practices are setting direction, developing people, and making the organization work (Leithwood et al., 2004; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Researchers have used the identification of these functions to study leadership in particular contexts. For example, paying particular attention to technology leadership, Dexter et al. (2009) reframes those three functions to be setting a purpose for technology, developing teacher's abilities to utilize technology within the professional community, and providing access and support for technology. For the study of leadership as it relates to inclusion, the three functions could be reframed as setting a vision for inclusion, developing staff abilities to collaborate and adapt instruction and curriculum, and providing resources and support for inclusion.

Vision. The development of a vision for the education of all students, as discussed as a characteristic of inclusive schools, is one of the primary functions of inclusive school leaders (DiPaola, Tschannen-Moran, & Walther-Thomas, 2004; Mayrowetz & Weinstein, 1999; Moore, 2009; Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). In a study of five elementary schools identified as having a commitment to inclusive education, Salisbury and McGregor (2002) reported that they "were struck by the clear vision that these principals were able to maintain on integrating what, in many other buildings, are seen as separate 'general' and 'special' education initiatives" (p. 271).

Inclusion must be expressed as one of the school's core values (Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). It is not enough for the leader to have a vision, but that vision must be conveyed to and eventually shared by all stakeholders (DiPaola et al., 2004; York-Barr et

al., 2005). Moreover, the vision as shared by inclusive school leaders should be a key consideration during the decision-making process (York-Barr et al., 2005). DiPaola et al. (2004) also point out that leaders must be consistent between their shared vision and their daily practice. In daily practice, leaders should model the priorities outlined in their shared vision and the allocation of resources should align with that vision. For example, if inclusion is a central theme in a school's vision, time, such as common planning time for collaborative teachers, should be allocated by school leaders for the support of inclusive practices.

Developing staff. Professional development is one of the most common concerns of teachers in inclusive schools (Dipaola et al., 2004; Praisner, 2003; Roach, Salisbury, & McGregor, 2002; Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007). The general education teachers need training on how to include students with disabilities, and special educators need to learn how to adapt their role from an independent classroom teacher to a collaborative and/or consultant teacher. In order to become instructional partners, teachers need professional development that is teacher-centered and school-based (McLeskey & Waldron, 2002). This form of professional development that is contextualized to address school culture takes time to implement.

Inclusion that is provided by the collaborative service delivery model necessitates that professional development be provided for collaborative pairs to attend training together (Moin, Magiera, & Zigmond, 2009). By learning together, collaborative pairs have an opportunity to grow their interpersonal and communication skills, which are an important component in successful inclusion (Klingner & Vaughn, 2002; Mastropieri et

al., 2005). Principals can also build capacity to achieve their vision by cultivating

informal leaders within their buildings (York-Barr et al., 2005).

     Providing support. In a synthesis of research literature focused on inclusive

schools, Salend and Garrick-Duhaney (1999) found that the conflicting results found in

studies of inclusive settings were related to, not only the quality of the inclusion, but also

to the administrative support for inclusion. When investigating leaders of inclusive

schools, Salisbury (2002) found that successful inclusive leaders were described as

supportive rather than directive or restrictive. The lack of systems support, resources,

and time has been identified by York-Barr et al. (2005) as a major challenge to the

implementation of inclusive programs. Administrative support for inclusive education

can take a variety of forms. Marston (1996) referenced the need for administrators to

provide the financial resources necessary to have special education support in a variety of

settings: such as, self-contained classrooms, classrooms with both general and special

education teachers, and general education classrooms. Additionally, Marston placed the

onus on administrators for ensuring that special education teachers had manageable

caseloads. The importance of balanced caseloads is echoed by Dipaola et al. (2004).

Moreover, DiPaola et al. (2004) emphasize that classrooms should be balanced and

heterogeneous, comprised of students of a variety of ability levels, in order to be

effective. Caseloads, class sizes, and the ability to co-plan fit in the category of effective

programming, as described by Crockett (2002), to be one of the five core principles of

leadership in inclusive schools.

     Time is another resource that leaders in inclusive schools must take into account.

Leaders need to ensure that professional development is provided in an on-going,

systematic manner which requires more time than most traditional, listen to the expert, professional development seminars. An additional time requirement is planning time built into the schedule for collaborative teaching pairs to plan together (Klingner & Vaughn, 2002; Moin et al., 2009; Salend & Garrick-Duhaney, 1999; Scruggs et al., 2007).

Inclusive school leaders demonstrate collaborative decision-making and problem-solving. They encourage and support change through a process of reflection and inquiry (DiPaola et al., 2004; Salisbury, 2002). Furthermore, leaders in inclusive schools make collaboration and communication with all stakeholders a major component of their school culture (Moore, 2009; Salisbury, 2002). This collaborative effort to form productive partnerships is identified by Crockett (2002) as one of the five core principles for special education leadership in inclusive schools. Boscardin (2005) takes the concepts of leadership and collaboration further emphasizing the need for school leaders to purposefully distribute leadership across the boundaries of general and special education.

Summary

While the literature on inclusion shows the variety of ways it has been conceptualized and put into action, leadership theory offers new lenses for considering how a leader might bring inclusion to life in a school. The literature on inclusion suggests attending to the vision, professional development, and organizational supports that facilitate a school's implementation of inclusive practices. The leadership theories of distributed leadership and leadership content knowledge suggest ways to look at leadership practices and the knowledge of inclusion and leadership that leaders draw on to guide their practice.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology that was utilized in this study. The rationale behind the use of a qualitative design will be discussed as well as the conceptual framework and assumptions that guided this study. This chapter will also include a discussion of the procedures for site and participant selection, as well as data collection protocols and analysis.

Research Questions

The aim of this study is to describe the leadership practices and routines that influence the inclusion of students with disabilities. Additionally, this study will describe the leadership content knowledge with regards to special education that leaders draw upon to influence practices related to the inclusion of students with disabilities. This study is guided by two research questions:

R_1 What tools, routines, and structures organize the leadership practices that support the inclusion of students with disabilities?

R_2 What knowledge do leaders draw on to organize their leadership practices as it relates to the inclusion of students with disabilities?

Conceptual Framework

The key ideas of sets of core leadership practices, leadership content knowledge, and distributed leadership make up the conceptual framework that will be used to examine the leadership practices related to the inclusion of students with disabilities. These are described below in terms of how they help to frame the data collection and analysis.

Sets of core leadership practices. The sets of core leadership practices identified by Leithwood and colleagues (2003, 2007) are setting direction, developing people, and making the organization work. These are used to frame this research and provide the three initial categories for data analysis. For the purpose of this case study, those three sets are focused on inclusive practices. The three functions of leadership on which data collection will focus are how leaders go about setting a vision for inclusion, developing staff abilities to collaborate and adapt instruction and curriculum, and providing resources and support for inclusion.

Leadership content knowledge. Stein and Nelson (2003) make the case that leaders use content knowledge to influence their leadership practices. While Stein and Nelson (2003) developed the idea of leadership content knowledge through a study of math and literacy reform, it stands to reason that instructional leaders would also require specific content knowledge in other areas. Through a concept Stein and Nelson (2003) term "post-holing," leaders learn pieces of content knowledge that they transform for leadership purposes. Currently, there are gaps in the knowledge base as to what knowledge is needed in each area and how leaders effectively use that knowledge to influence their practices (Robinson, 2010; Stein & Nelson, 2003). The data collection

protocols in this study will aim to identify the leadership content knowledge related to special education utilized by leaders as they carry out their key leadership functions in an inclusive school.

   Distributed leadership. While the key functions of leadership assist to frame the categories of data for collection and analysis, and leadership content knowledge further refines that research focus, Spillane and colleagues' (2003, 2004, 2006) conception of distributed leadership will also refine data gathering throughout this study. At the center of distributed leadership is the idea that leadership practice is manifested through the interactions of leaders and followers within the situation. Distributed leadership also takes into account the artifacts of leadership, the documents and protocols leaders use to lead, as well as the tools and routines used by leaders (Spillane, 2006). Thus, in this case study, while observing leaders and followers, the focus was their interactions, and particular attention was given to the artifacts that organize and guide the interactions about the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Procedures

   Assumptions and rationale for a qualitative design. A qualitative approach was chosen to investigate the research questions because of how this approach allows for a focus on context. According to Yin (2003), "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p.13). Case study research is a strategy for research that focuses on contemporary events in context with the aim of answering research questions posed using "how" or "why" (Yin, 2003). It is an assumption of this researcher that the actions of leaders and followers are influenced by

the setting in which they occur. The use of a descriptive case study was selected because we know so little about the complex interactions among leaders and followers in an inclusive school, it warrants an approach congruent with exploratory research. By utilizing this approach, it is hoped that the resulting descriptive case study will allow for a concrete illustration of some of the practices that these leaders employ to try and influence the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Researcher's role. The role of researcher in case study research is critical, as the researcher is the primary tool of the research (Yin, 2003). In a qualitative study, the researcher, as the primary research instrument, is tasked with observing interactions in the context within which they occur. Furthermore, a case study investigator should have the following skills: ability to ask good questions, be flexible, have an understanding of the issues being studied, be unbiased, and have an ability to listen without preconceptions (Yin, 2003). The researcher strives to bring understanding to the many perspectives within complex interactions and present data in a manner that is both respectful of participants and informative for others in the field of educational leadership.

This researcher has worked as an educator of students with and without disabilities for twelve years in both public and private schools in Arizona and Virginia. Currently, this researcher works as a special education liaison responsible for providing support for both special education compliance and instruction in twelve middle and high schools. This position requires planning and implementing professional development for school-based faculty and staff working with students with high and low incidence disabilities.

This research took place in a school within the division in which she is employed. This will benefit the researcher in that locations and many participants are previously known to the researcher. Alternatively, this prior knowledge could bias the perceptions and interpretations of the researcher.

Access and entry to selected setting. The site for this case study is a suburban high school previously identified in a pilot study as an inclusive school. A thorough description of the site is in Chapter Four. Access and entry to the selected site was facilitated through the submission of a research proposal to the district's Department of Research and Evaluation. This proposal included the purpose of the research project, the expected educational benefit, as well as the design and procedures for gathering data. This research has also been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Virginia. Once permission was granted at the district level, contact was made with the principal of the selected school, who agreed to participate.

Participant selection. For the purposes of this investigation, formal and informal leaders at the selected school were asked to participate. These leaders included the principal, assistant principals, and the coordinator of special education. Additional participants were identified during observations and interviews. As formal leaders were interviewed, they were asked to identify other individuals within the school that they believe to be leaders of inclusive practices. The individuals identified through this process were also asked to participate.

Assurances of confidentiality. Participants were assured of confidentiality both during and after the study. Each participant was provided a consent form that also details

the confidential nature of this research, including specifically stating that names used in any publication will be pseudonyms and any identifying factors will be omitted.

Data Collection Procedures

Data was collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Interviews. Observations are used to "document and describe complex actions and interactions" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 107). While data collected through observations provides information regarding events within the context, the meaning of events is based on inference. In order to gain a better understanding of the meanings of actions and interactions observed, interviews are a vital component of the research process. An interview allows further understanding of "the meanings that people hold for their everyday activities" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 110). Rather than the researcher inferring the meanings of actions and interactions, interviews provide an opportunity for "the participant's perpective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 108).

In this study, interviews were conducted with the principal and coordinator of special education using a semi-structured interview format. The interviews were scheduled in advance with both the principal and the coordinator of special education. This researcher spent approximately one hour and fifteen minutes interviewing the principal, while the interview with the coordinator lasted approximately one hour. They were structured to focus on the leadership interactions observed and the key practices of inclusion, as suggested by the study's conceptual framework, described earlier. Major points of the interviews were focused on the key practices of inclusion found in the literature including: common planning time, team meetings, teams of teachers working

together, how IEPs are written, school vision, integrated therapy, professional development, assistive technology, community building, and caseload weights. The initial interview protocol is contained in Appendix A.   However, some of the interview questions were changed to follow up on information gained during the observations. Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Once transcribed the actual participant names were replaced with pseudonyms. In addition to the two formal, tape recorded interviews, the researcher had opportunities to conduct informal, follow-up conversations at the conclusion of several observations to clarify what was observed with several of the study's participants.

Observations. Observations of leadership practices and routines occurred during both semesters of the 2012-13 school year. The researcher spent approximately 27 hours over the course of 13 days observing leaders' participation in activities that included monthly faculty meetings, monthly special education department meetings, monthly administrative team meetings, collaborative teacher professional development opportunities, collaborative teacher meetings, school improvement plan meetings, Operation Graduation committee meetings, inclusive classes, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.   Observations were focused on the interactions of formal and informal leaders as they relate to inclusive practices. This protocol is found in Appendix B.

Review of documents. Documents are tools of leadership practice that affect interactions among leaders and followers. In the selected site, the documents reviewed included the master schedule, school improvement plans, teacher observation protocols, faculty handbooks, lesson plans for collaborative classes, caseload assignments, planning

documents for Inclusive Schools Week, minutes from faculty, administrative team, and special education department meetings, documents produced by the special education coordinator to guide practice, and documents produced at the school or district level related to the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Fieldwork journal. While protocols were used to guide interviews and observations, a fieldwork journal was also kept to organize analytic notes. These notes were kept throughout the study with the purpose of collecting detailed information about the context within which the leadership practices occurred. The fieldwork journal was also utilized to collect data during document reviews.

Data Analysis Procedures

All data collected by observations, interviews, and document reviews were subjected to the same coding scheme and process.

Coding scheme. For the purposes of data analysis, codes and categories were drawn from the existing literature reviewed in Chapter Two and identified as the conceptual framework. The three starting categories drawn from the key sets of leadership practices are setting a vision for inclusion, developing staff abilities to collaborate and adapt instruction and curriculum, and making the organization work by providing resources and support for inclusion. Nestled within these three functions of leadership are sub-codes derived from the literature regarding inclusive programming. For example, shared/common planning time is a sub-code that is linked to the code of making the organization work. These sub-codes include: shared/common planning, manageable caseloads, standards-based IEPs, detailed IEPs, collaborative teaching, integrated therapy, assistive technology, professional development, parental

involvement, community building, vision, regular meetings, and instructional

adaptations. Table 1 illustrates how the sub-codes identified through the literature on

inclusive practices are nestled within the three categories of building vision and setting

direction, understanding and developing people, and making the organization work.

Table 1

Sub-codes Derived From Literature on Inclusive Practices

Building Vision and Setting Direction	Understanding and Developing People	Making the Organization Work
Vision	Professional Development Regular Meetings	Shared/Common Planning Manageable Caseloads Standards-based IEPs Detailed IEPs Integrated Therapy Assistive Technology Parental Involvement Community Building Instructional Adaptations

The coding scheme was further developed to include sub-codes focused on leadership

content knowledge. These sub-codes are also aligned with the three categories of

building vision and setting direction, understanding and developing people, and making

the organization work as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Sub-codes Derived From Literature on Leadership Content Knowledge

Building Vision and Setting Direction	Understanding and Developing People	Making the Organization Work
	Participate in Professional Development Knowledge of Resources Knowledge of Adult Learning	Utilize In-house/district Experts

While the conceptual framework developed by Leithwood and colleagues was utilized to code and categorize data, a code of 'other' was included in the coding scheme to allow for unanticipated coding. The code of 'other' was not utilized during this research. A description of the coding scheme can be found in Appendix C.

  Validity and reliability. There are four tests identified by Yin (2003) to judge the quality of a case study research design. These are construct validity, internal validity (used for explanatory or casual studies), external validity, and reliability. Yin (2003) explains the tactics used throughout the design and research process, as well as during the research itself, that case study researchers should employ to maximize the quality of their case study.

  Construct validity is "establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied" (Yin, 2003, p. 34). To meet the requirements of construct validity, researchers should use "multiple sources or evidence," maintain a "chain of evidence," and have the draft results reviewed by key informants (Yin, 2003, p. 36). In order to ensure construct validity by establishing correct operational measures for the study, this research utilized multiple sources of evidence (observations, interviews, and documents) during data collection. Furthermore, as a member check, the researcher requested that several key participants in the study review the draft of the findings.

  External validity is "establishing the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized" (Yin, 2003, p. 34). It is important for the researcher to acknowledge the extent to which their case study research may be generalized, and this is addressed by using theory during the research design phase of the project (Yin, 2003). Since the study was conducted in one school, the findings are difficult to generalize. However, every

attempt was made to include contextual factors and detailed descriptions, thus allowing for the study to be replicated.

Reliability can also be a factor in case study research. Reliability is "demonstrating that the operations of a study…can be repeated with the same results" (Yin, 2003, p. 34). The tactics recommended to address this test are to develop a case study protocol and a database to be used during data collection. To minimize errors and biases in this case study, procedures for the study were well documented and protocols were used for observations and interviews. The use of protocols will allow for later researchers to repeat the study and ideally, come to the same conclusions about this site, or similar conclusions about other sites.

Chapter Four

Results of the Study

This chapter presents the findings for the research questions posed in the introduction and Chapter Three of this study. I begin with an overview of the school selected for the case study, Adams High School, to describe the context in which the data was collected. I selected this school for a case study because I felt it presented an opportunity to learn about inclusion. What I found by investigating specific leadership practices for and content knowledge about inclusion, hereafter referred to as leadership content knowledge, at this school was that school leaders guide the faculty and create conditions within the school so that teachers can address the learning challenges each student faces. As a result of these practices, special education students are likely to have their needs met.

I present the findings of my research framed within the following categories: building vision and setting direction, understanding and developing people, and making the organization work. Within each of these broad categories, I describe the extent to which leaders demonstrated practices I identify as promoting inclusive education as suggested by the literature. To illustrate these leadership practices, I identify the tools (the data, protocols, plans, etc. that "mediate how people practice, shaping interactions among leaders and followers in particular ways" [Spillane, 2006, p. 18]), routines (interactional, "a repetitive, recognizable pattern of interdependent actions" [Spillane,

2006, p. 17]), and structures (conditions or characteristics) leaders developed or implemented to support inclusive education. Furthermore, I describe the leadership content knowledge that guides the Adams' leaders' leadership practices that support of the inclusion of students with disabilities. When describing leadership content knowledge, I am identifying the knowledge that leaders draw upon about what good inclusion looks like, how to enact change when improvement in practice is needed, as well as how to implement the organizational supports within the school that foster inclusive practices. Said more generally, and as the phrase suggests, it encompasses both the Adams' leaders' knowledge of content and their knowledge of school leadership. In this case, I report on what these leaders report as their conscious knowledge and sometimes on what I infer as this undergirding knowledge guiding their leadership of a high school enacting inclusive education.

Overview of Adams High School

Adams High School is a comprehensive high school in a suburban school district located in central Virginia. During the 2012-2013 school year, approximately 2000 students attended this fully accredited high school. For the 2012-2013 school year, Adams met the Annual Measureable Objectives in reading and math for all proficiency gap groups including students with disabilities. Only half of the high schools within the same district as Adams met the Annual Measurable Objectives for both reading and math for the group of students with disabilities.

The students at Adams are diverse. They include students of many races, socioeconomic statuses, and ability. The district zone for Adams draws students from a city border as well as students from affluent neighborhoods. Approximately 200 students

at Adams were enrolled in either Advanced Placement courses or Dual Enrollment courses during this school year, while more than 200 students at Adams earned career or technical education credentials. Of the graduating class of 2013, more than half of the graduating seniors at Adams received an Advanced Diploma, and less than 5% of graduating seniors exited with a Special Diploma.

Adams High School is the home of several catchment programs for students with disabilities. Serving students with disabilities from other schools, more than 10% of the student population, almost 300 students were identified as students with disabilities. Two-thirds of those special education students were identified as students with high incidence disabilities including emotional disabilities, specific learning disabilities, and other health impairments. These students were primarily served in inclusive settings.

Adams High School is led by an administrative team which is comprised of a principal, Bruce, three assistant principals, Tim, Floyd, and Carol, and a dean of students, Jane. Each member of the administrative team is responsible for supervising at least two departments as well as leading numerous committees. Additionally, the full leadership team at Adams includes the chairs of each department (8 in all) as well as the Coordinator for Special Education, Hannah, and the School Counseling Coordinator, Scott. The administrative team meets weekly, and the larger full leadership team meets once each month.

There are approximately 150 teachers at Adams High School. Of those teachers, nearly 50% have earned a Master's degree. About 30 of the teachers at Adams are teachers in the special education department. During the 2012-2013 school year, half of the special education teachers served as case managers for students with high incidence

disabilities and half worked with students with low incidence disabilities in the catchment programs.

Adams High school operates on a block schedule. Each student attends seven classes over the course of two days. Students attend the first block class every day for approximately 45 minutes. On even days, students attend classes 2, 4, and 6, while on odd days, they attend classes 3, 5, and 7. All classes with the exception of first period last about 85 minutes. During the 2012-2013 school year, there were 45 collaborative courses offered at Adams High School. Including the classes provided for students in the catchment programs, there were also 85 self-contained courses offered during the 2012-2013 school year. Additionally, students at Adams High School participate in a daily, 30 minute homeroom with an academic focus.

Building Vision and Setting Direction

Building vision and setting direction is one of the key leadership functions as described by Leithwood and Riehl (2003). Broadly, this function is defined as "developing goals for schooling and inspiring others with a vision of the future" (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003, p. 3). Specifically, building vision and setting direction includes developing and sharing a vision, setting high expectations and monitoring performance, and facilitating communication.

How the School Vision Embraces Inclusion

The vision for Adams High School is aligned with the school district's vision by the way each of these focuses in on *every student*. Such a focus on meeting each student's needs gives Adams an inherently inclusive orientation to its work, as this responsibility-taking for all students' learning underpins inclusion as an idea.

Furthermore, leaders in inclusive schools set a vision for the education of all students

(Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). Adams High School's vision is to "provide an engaging

and relevant education that prepares every student to adapt and thrive in a rapidly

changing world" (School Improvement Plan, 2012-2013). The printed mission of the

school is to "work in partnership with students, families and the community to emphasize

and support high levels of achievement through a global education for all, with options

and opportunities to meet the diverse needs and interests of individual students" (school

website). In an interview with the principal, Bruce indicated that if asked for the vision

or mission of the school, he would have to look it up. In his own words, "our goal at

school here is to try to make every student successful" (Principal interview, May 13,

2013).

At Adams, the vision recognizes students as individuals and implies the school

will need to vary its programming to meet these needs. As a result, the vision

encompasses the ideas of inclusion, although it was not specifically written to address

special education students' needs. The ways in which the vision is articulated to the staff

and put into practice at Adams provides evidence for successful inclusive practices. This

pattern of benefit to special education students, and congruence with the principles of

inclusion, is evident in the leadership practices, described next, that are used to spread the

vision, create shared goals, define teachers' expectations – including for inclusion,

monitor performance, and facilitate communication, all of which contribute to making the

directions in which the school is headed more clear to staff and more likely to be

accomplished.

Leadership practices. While setting a vision for inclusion is imperative, the vision must be articulated to all stakeholders, utilized throughout the decision making process, and evident in daily practice (DiaPaola et al., 2004; York-Barr et al., 2005). At Adams, the tools that leaders use to promote the vision of success for all students include printed materials, presentations by school leaders, and routines focused on student success. Bruce meets with students at the beginning of each school year as a way to introduce the school's expectations for students. It is through these meetings that students are introduced to the school's goal of all students succeeding. Furthermore, Bruce and his staff share the responsibility for passing on that vision to students. As the principal, Bruce is confident that the staff understands the purpose, stating "we know what our purpose is, and so it's up to us to continually communicate that with the kids" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). When asked if students were aware of the school's vision, Bruce responded:

> There's some kids that it's going to take a long time to get that message. There is so much going on in the lives of some kids, that message comes in, they understand it, and then it leaves them almost immediately because there's so many issues going on. I think as a whole, the student population understands the message, because they get it often enough. It's pretty rare when I meet with the students in mass, by grade level or whatever, that that topic doesn't come up. Again, that might be more my call-to-arms than anybody else's. As the leader in the building, I think people have gotten that message. (Principal interview, May 13, 2013)

Additionally, Bruce drafts a weekly update that is shared electronically with staff and parents. The principal's updates early in the school year reference the school's vision, and throughout the year, the updates recognize successes of both students and staff as progress is made towards their goals. When it comes to the staff, Bruce communicates the vision verbally in staff meetings and through the principal updates. As principal, he expressed that part of his role is to notice when teachers are getting tired and then,

"remind them over and over, first of all, that's what our purpose is; second of all, just to thank them for their dedication to the kids at school" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). The literature suggests a key leadership practice is to articulate the vision, and at Adams, Bruce does this by utilizing tools and routines to communicate the school's vision in multiple forms across numerous settings. Each repetition of the vision is congruent with the idea of serving each student's needs, inclusive of all special education students at Adams.

Leadership content knowledge. The congruence between the district vision and the school vision about meeting students' needs is an indication of the underlying knowledge of both inclusion and how to lead used by Bruce and Hannah to promote, implement, and sustain a vision for the inclusion of all students. Bruce expressed that inclusive education was "like our call to arms, to help kids that wouldn't be successful in most other places" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). Both Bruce and Hannah spoke to the need for staff to design services to meet students' needs, and their role in leading towards that outcome. Bruce stated, "we're going to give everything we've got to every kid, we just need to figure out how we're going to provide those services" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). I observed Hannah working with her department to develop plans to provide support for students with disabilities who are served in general education classes. Leading the discussion with the special education teachers, Hannah focused the conversation on ways teachers can "be creative with other times [during the day] and we can still be supportive of kids in general education classes without collab" (observations, 2013). Throughout my observations and interviews, I noted that Bruce and Hannah draw on knowledge of what positive inclusion should look like at Adams High School. This

knowledge is a foundational piece of the development of the school vision. In turn, the

school vision guides and combines with the practices leaders then use so that school staff

identify students' needs, and track the progress teachers make towards meeting those

needs. Bruce and Hannah base school leadership decisions and actions on what they

understand will promote individual student success as it is described in the district vision.

Thus, they show how they draw on both their knowledge of inclusion and reforming an

organization to carry out the leadership practice of building a vision.

Creating Shared Goals

The commitment to the success of all students, including students with

disabilities, is evident through the leadership practice of creating shared goals. An

integral part of building vision and setting direction is the "fostering acceptance of group

goals" (Leithwood et al., 2007, p. 43). The principal of Adams is cognizant of the need

for his staff to understand the school goals and be committed to reaching those goals.

According to Bruce, "it's real easy to say that everybody can be successful, and real hard

to get them there. But you can't ever stop" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). Leaders

at Adams facilitate the creation, implementation, and monitoring of shared goals at many

levels within the school, as described next.

Leadership practices. Leaders encourage all staff members to participate in

several opportunities throughout the year to develop, implement, and monitor plans

designed to foster success among the students at Adams. The Adams administrative team

has created a structure of standing committees to facilitate the creation of shared goals.

The teachers at Adams are invited to participate in committees, including the School

Improvement Plan, Operation Graduation, and the Success program, whose purpose is to

create shared goals to improve student achievement and implement strategies to reach those goals.

One example of this structure in action is the development of the School Improvement Plan. The School Improvement Plan was developed by a team of eight to ten individuals led by one assistant principal, Carol, and the dean of students, Jane. Bruce references the current school improvement plan as "one of the best ones as far as getting people involved" as it was "developed by the staff, as opposed to being developed by me and presented by me" (Principal interview, May 13, 2103). Within the 2012-2013 School Improvement Plan, the three focus areas are the following:

1. Creating, sustaining and communicating a climate of trust, respect, consistency and fairness.
2. Motivating all learners through active learning and relevance.
3. Promoting academic growth for all learners through challenging, rigorous coursework. (School Improvement Plan, 2012-2013)

Each focus area includes targeted strategies to accomplish the goals as well as indicators to measure progress throughout the year.

A second example of the committees as a leadership practice (structure) in place to help facilitate the creation of shared goals is the Success program. This was started by teachers in the building who recognized that freshman were struggling to make the transition to high school, who were unsuccessful in Algebra 1 or had difficulties with attendance. Because these students were less likely to graduate in four years, the Success program committee works to identify and support students who struggle with the transition to high school. The staff members that lead this program identify students as at-risk prior to the end of their eighth grade year. Once identified as candidates for the Success program, students are placed into academic homeroom groups that are smaller than average with teachers who are committed to help these freshman make a smooth,

successful transition to high school. Leaders use time as a tool to allow teachers to build relationships with students identified as at-risk entering high school. In the case of the Success program, the need was identified by teachers, rather than administrators, who then worked together with administrators to develop a plan to address students' needs. The efforts of this team of teachers have been fully supported by the leadership at Adams as the shared goals and implementation plan are aligned with the vision of success for all students (Principal interview, May 13, 2013).

Operation Graduation is a third structure at Adams that makes the development of shared goals possible. This committee serves the purpose of identifying seniors at risk of not graduating and developing individualized plans to encourage those students to graduate on time. The Operation Graduation committee consists of Bruce, an assistant principal, Tim, the school counseling coordinator, Scott, the special education coordinator, Hannah, the school psychologist, and three teachers. This committee meets at every interim and grading period to discuss seniors at risk of not graduating. Seniors are identified as at risk of not graduating if they are failing two or more courses which they need to successfully complete the requirements for a diploma. As students are identified, they are discussed individually, and the leadership team coordinates the supports needed by these students. Similar to the Success program targeted for freshman, a key leadership practice is using time as a tool to build relationships and foster success.

For both the Success program and Operation Graduation, time is a valuable tool. Throughout the development of shared goals, participants in both committees recognized the need for time to meet with struggling students in smaller groups, identify areas of strengths, weaknesses, and interests, and foster relationships between students and staff to

encourage academic progress. In a six hour and forty minute school day, time is a

commodity in high demand. In order to address the shared goals of the School

Improvement Plan, the Success program, and Operation Graduation, the leaders at Adams

adjusted the course schedule to allocate time within the school day for the

implementation of these 3 programs.

The leaders at Adams addressed the need for time within the school day by

incorporating a daily academic homeroom period. When students arrive at Adams, they

are assigned to a homeroom teacher. Each student keeps the same homeroom teacher for

their four years at Adams. Throughout the school year, however, students move to other

classes during this homeroom time for needed remediation or to complete make-up work.

For example, if a student is progressing appropriately and not missing assignments, they

can stay in their homeroom using the time to complete homework, use the computers for

research, or read quietly. However, if a student if having difficulty in math, the math

teacher can request that they attend their class during homeroom for additional, small

group intervention. The time set aside for homeroom is also utilized to complete tests or

laboratory activities which are difficult for students to make up when they have been

absent. Typically, students with disabilities are placed in homerooms with their IEP case

manager, who also follows students though their four years at Adams. While most

students stay in the same homeroom throughout their four years in high school, during

the 2012-2013 school year, leaders at Adams developed three special homerooms

designated as Operation Graduation homerooms. Seniors who were believed to be at-risk

of not graduating were moved from their traditional homerooms into smaller homerooms

for their senior year in which they received targeted supports to help them reach graduation.

Leaders at Adams have made the tools, routines, and structures, that each of these plans rely on, a part of their leadership practice. Each plan depends upon the availability of current data regarding student achievement. The planning committee members must have access to current grade reports and test scores to identify students in need of intervention. At Adams, these tools are not available to every teacher. However, at least one member of each committee, in addition to the administrator leading the committee, is a universal user with global rights to the databases that hold student information. Additionally, there are routines for sharing information put into place by the leadership at Adams. For example, prior to each Operation Graduation meeting, Scott, the school counseling coordinator, creates a spreadsheet listing every at-risk senior. This spreadsheet is provided to the committee members for review at the beginning of each meeting. The leadership at Adams must also facilitate the routines and structures to allow each committee the time and space to meet regularly to accomplish their goals.

Through the leadership practices that foster the creation of shared goals, leaders at Adams create and sustain conditions that promote the success of all students. A result of the interactions between teachers and leaders at Adams, both the Success program and Operation Graduation are developed with the shared purpose of cultivating student success, inclusive of students with disabilities.

Leadership content knowledge. Leaders at Adams use their knowledge of leadership and organizational change to support the creation of shared goals for student success. The knowledge that I was able to observe leaders drawing upon during the

interactions with followers at Adams was that leaders were also aware of and use the power of "buy-in." According to Bruce, "what makes programs work is when all of your staff is on board with it, and then it becomes part of the natural activities in class" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). While Bruce is cognizant of the power of buy-in, he also understands that achieving teacher buy-in for any type of change is difficult.

> The hardest thing in our world is that there are so many staff members, it's really getting buy-in from everybody and having enough time to get back around and back check it all. Because, if you observe it, and it's important to you, when you make mention of it, then people kind of catch on to that. You rarely get, unless it's strictly through intimidation, and that's not my style. Unless you intimidate people into doing things, you're not going to get 100 percent support. Even when you do intimidate people into it, they find a way to do it without really doing it. I don't really know that there is a best method, but we're face-to-face people, we're going to talk about stuff. Teacher buy-in is everything in a program. (Principal interview, May 13, 2013)

Along the same lines, I observed a pre-scheduling meeting in March that Hannah held with the special education teachers. The expressed purpose of the meeting was to discuss which self-contained and collaborative courses should be offered as part of the master schedule for the following school year. The meeting was conducted as an open discussion and teachers shared their current student numbers and expectations for which students would pass or fail, as well as predict which students needed less, the same, or more supports in the upcoming year. While the discussion at the meeting appeared to be productive in guiding Hannah's scheduling priorities, she later shared with me that she could have run a report to give her almost all of the information that the teachers had shared. The true purpose of the meeting was "to allow for input, teachers to have ownership, more input makes scheduling easier because they feel they [the special education teachers] have been heard." Throughout observations and interviews, Hannah was consistent in emphasizing efforts for teachers to have ownership over their work to

include participating in pre-scheduling, providing input regarding with whom they would prefer to collaborate, and leadership in IEP meetings. This consistency suggests that her knowledge of the importance of buy-in was indeed a guiding principle about how to influence shared goals.

Defining Expectations for Inclusion

The leaders at Adams promote the success of all students, inclusive of students with disabilities, through their practices of defining expectations for inclusive practice. In practice, the vision for the inclusion of all students is evidenced by the supports put into place to keep students in inclusive settings. Whenever possible, students with disabilities are served in the general education setting. Bruce's attitude toward inclusion is that students are "out" in general education until it is proven that they cannot succeed without more restrictive supports (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). The leadership practices related to defining expectations for inclusion and the leadership content knowledge that underpins those practices are further discussed below.

Leadership practices. At Adams teachers and leaders coordinate their work so that students are provided targeted support based on student need, regardless of identification. For example, just because a student is identified as having an emotional disability, they are not automatically served in a specific setting (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). Students in subgroup categories for state and federal progress monitoring are not singled out for remediation or targeted intervention. Rather, students that are struggling academically are identified, appropriate interventions are chosen, and progress is monitored.

The Operation Graduation program, as described in the previous section, is a routine that provides evidence of clear expectations for the inclusion of all students. Targeted to support any senior at risk of not graduating, the Operation Graduation program treats each student as an individual. When the Operation Graduation committee meets, the participants are provided information about all seniors who are failing one or more classes that are required for graduation. Within this data, students with disabilities are integrated with every other senior if they are failing one or more class needed for graduation. Throughout committee discussions, each student is discussed individually, current supports are reported, and the committee determines what, if any, additional supports are needed (observations, 2013).

Because the expectation is for all students to be successful, Adams uses the full continuum of services to promote success. While inclusion in the general education setting is a goal (Coordinator interview, May 16, 2013), it appears that some students at Adams are successful because inclusion is not the only option. In a special education department scheduling meeting, teachers talked through the number of self-contained and collaborative math sections that were needed for the following year. One key component of this meeting was the discussion about which students were succeeding because they were served in self-contained math. To further that point, Hannah referenced an 11th grade student who was the entire reason Adams High School opened a self-contained section of Algebra 1 two years prior (Department meeting, 2013). When asked about the expectations for both inclusive and self-contained course sections, Hannah stated "my expectation is that they [self-contained classes] would mirror or be as close as possible to the general curriculum, so that we're following the same criteria, but differentiated in a

way that kids can access it, that kids can understand it" (Coordinator interview, May 16, 2013).

Leadership content knowledge. When setting clear expectations for inclusive programming, the leaders at Adams rely on their specific knowledge about both leadership and inclusion. Bruce's expectation is that instruction in every classroom should be differentiated to meet student needs. "The kinds of things that you're looking for, you know inside of any classroom, whether it's an inclusive classroom or whether it's even an honors class, everybody in that classroom's got different skills and needs" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). The idea that teachers should create classrooms that specifically address individual student needs is similar to the idea of IEPs and that services for students should be individualized to support their progress. Bruce relies on his experiences as the foundation for his knowledge about setting expectations for inclusion at Adams. "That's just from years of experience, not reading. I'm not a big book reader. I think I've always been one of those that was more of a just touch and feel person" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013).

Hannah's knowledge of inclusion and what it takes to achieve on a widespread basis led her to draw on her knowledge regarding the role of setting expectations for inclusion. This was apparent during the pre-scheduling meeting as she led the special education department in a discussion centered on future student services. In this instance, Hannah's knowledge about how to provide inclusive opportunities stemmed from her past experiences.

Monitoring Progress

Once shared goals are set, the literature on inclusion suggests that using strategic planning and progress monitoring to work towards those goals (York-Barr et al., 1996; York-Barr et al., 2005). Inclusive practices at Adams are enabled by the leaders' dedication to monitoring progress toward shared goals. At Adams, leaders draw upon their knowledge of inclusion and how to lead to routinely track progress at both the teacher and student level.

Leadership practices. Teachers at Adams are observed at least twice a year by a member of the administrative team. Observations are conducted using digital forms created at the district level. There are several versions of observations forms to choose from, so leaders are able to determine which form best meets their needs. At Adams, each of the administrators uses a different form to conduct their observations. Following classroom observations, leaders meet with the teachers to provide feedback orally and in writing.

An additional aspect of progress monitoring that began at Adams during the 2012-2013 school year is the use of an annual goals review as part of the teacher evaluation process. Along with classroom observations, each teacher at Adams writes annual goals that are reviewed by members of the administrative team. These goals are mandated by the school district and are tied directly to student progress. Teachers work in conjunction with an administrator to set goals that meet the SMART goal criteria during the first two months of the school year. In the spring, teachers are required to turn in documentation supporting the progress they have made toward their goals. In this first year of implementation for the annual goals review, the goals produced by the teachers at Adams

were audited by a team of experts in professional development, curriculum and instruction, and special education from the district. After reviewing goals from teachers in each content area, the review team provided Bruce with specific feedback with the purpose of improving the goal setting process. During this review, several goals written by teachers at Adams were noted to be exemplar goals for addressing a wide range of student needs with a particular focus on improving academic success of students with disabilities.

Leadership practice involving progress monitoring at Adams includes more than reviewing teachers. Teachers and administrators at Adams regularly track the progress of students through the use of regular assessments, bubble reports, and the Operation Graduation team. The routine of regularly checking student progress provides the information teachers need to continue to modify the supports put into place to help students succeed. One of these routines, bubble reports, is specific to students with disabilities. At each marking period, Hannah is required to document the interventions put into place for all students with disabilities who are earning D's or F's in a core content area SOL courses. These reports are typically completed by students' case managers and then compiled into one report by Hannah to be turned into the director of high schools for the district. By working with the case managers to complete the bubble reports, Hannah is able to monitor both student progress and case manager effectiveness. Similarly, the Operation Graduation committee uses regular meetings to review student progress toward graduation.

Leadership content knowledge. Both Bruce and Hannah demonstrate their leadership content knowledge through how they monitor progress toward shared goals.

Undergirding Bruce's leadership content knowledge regarding monitoring progress is his knowledge of what to look for when conducting observations of teachers. While Bruce uses the district mandated forms to document observations, he also has spent time with content area experts at the district level in meetings and professional development to identify best practices in content instruction. He draws on this as what he specifically looks for during observations; thus this instructional knowledge shapes his leadership behavior and he draws on his knowledge of leadership to influence all teachers' behaviors.

Bruce also reports that he utilizes his experience as a foundational element of his leadership content knowledge.

> To me, I've always said that teaching is an art, not a science. I think you can get processes and procedures in that are going to help, but I've always said that a good teacher can take a bad lesson and make it work. A bad teacher can take a really well-designed lesson and make it fail. To me, it's a teacher's ability to communicate with kids that makes a difference. I don't mean talk to them and the kids listen and understand everything. They literally have a give and take. They make that operation in the classroom work. Whether it be lecture, whether it be class discussion, whether it be Paideia seminars, whether it be working is small groups, it's a matter of your ability to convince kids that this topic is valuable, useful, and that they really need to work hard and learn it. You can kind of tell when somebody has a community effort in class. That's just from years of experience, not reading. (Principal interview, May 13, 2013)

Hannah also relies on past experience as the foundation for her leadership content knowledge focused on monitoring progress. Hannah accounted for her observation practices in inclusive, collaborative classrooms by stating the following:

> I just go in and watch. I look for the team interaction. This is such a driving force for me. I feel like if teachers want to work together, and they have ownership over that collaborative partnership, then they do better together. They serve the students better. So when I go in, I'm looking mostly for relationship, and how they're using the time. Not so much the curricular, or other things. I go in a lot more towards the end of the year, just to see what those relationships are like and if they're healthy for students. (Coordinator interview, May 16, 2013)

Though they monitor progress at the teacher and student level in several different ways, both Bruce and Hannah practice progress monitoring in a manner that is rooted in their knowledge of both leadership and of what quality instruction looks like.

Facilitating Two-Way Communication

By facilitating communication among the staff at Adams, the leaders promote dialog focused on student success, inclusive of students with disabilities. Communication is a priority at Adams. This priority is evidenced through the multiple opportunities for communication afforded by the leaders at Adams described next.

Leadership practices. Leaders communicate information and ideas at Adams using a wide variety of means. Teachers meet with other teachers and school leaders monthly in faculty meetings, department meetings, and on monthly early release days that are set aside by the district for school-based professional development. Additionally, Bruce composes a weekly update that is distributed digitally to both faculty and parents. Two-way communication is also facilitated through teachers' participation in professional learning communities, shared planning time, school committees, and district committees.

Bruce is intentional about the information he shares with the staff at Adams. While Bruce communicates weekly with teachers, his digital updates are typically announcements and celebrations. Bruce is "a face-to-face guy" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013) so when he needs to share information that may require follow-up, new initiatives or any changes in practice, this is typically shared in whole faculty meetings and then further clarified, if needed, in department or PLC meetings.

Communication specific to inclusive practices is supported through the development of the master schedule at Adams. As principal, Bruce has implemented a routine for master scheduling that allows the special education courses to be scheduled first. After Hannah sets the special education schedule, including all collaborative courses, the other department chairs are able to build their schedules. During this planning process, building common planning time for collaborative pairs into the schedule is a priority. This common planning time provides collaborative pairs an opportunity to plan and communicate regularly.

Hannah uses department meetings to share information with and solicit input from the special education department. Hannah communicates through email to pass along announcements to the special education staff, but relies on face-to-face interaction during department meetings to pass along information regarding changes in special education procedures. Hannah schedules additional meeting times to allow teachers to provide input regarding types of courses that should be included in the master schedule, as well as the assignments of collaborative teaching pairs and instructional assistants (observations, 2013). Furthermore, Hannah solicits input from the special education staff through the use of "dream sheets" during the spring, as the master schedule is being designed. The dream sheets give teachers the opportunity to provide their feedback regarding co-teaching teams and instructional assistants in a written form that is kept confidential (Coordinator interview, May 16, 2013).

Leadership content knowledge. Bruce's knowledge of inclusion guides his leadership practice as he set the routine for master schedule development. Bruce knows that communication among collaborative pairs is a key component for successful

inclusion and his practice allows for common planning to be a priority a schedules are made. Bruce's knowledge of how to lead is evident in the multiple ways in which Bruce supports the tools, routines, and structures that facilitate communication.

Hannah is also thoughtful about the ways in which information is shared. In many cases, the information that Hannah shares with her department is based on information passed on to her at district level special education meetings. When asked how she passes on information, Hannah shared the example of recent state changes in credit accommodations for students with disabilities working toward a standard diploma. Information was passed onto Hannah from the district office piecemeal, as it became available from the state department of education. Hannah reported:

> I try to wait as long as possible, and hold that information until everything shakes out on it. Then I take it to a department meeting. I have found that if parts of it leak out, then I get bombarded with questions, and sometimes, I can't answer them. So I usually wait until I can present something, a whole piece of something, and then do it at a department meeting (Coordinator interview, May 16, 2013).

Hannah's knowledge of inclusion and how to lead guides her decisions regarding how and when to share or solicit information from her staff.

Understanding and Developing People

As a function of leadership, developing people refers to providing opportunities for teachers to further develop their abilities in any given area. Leaders who effectively perform the function of understanding and developing people provide opportunities for learning and reflection, arrange for systematic supports that promote change, and serve as models by acting in ways that are consistent with their vision (Liethwood & Riehl, 2003).

Leaders Provide Professional Development Opportunities and Professional Learning Communities

Leaders at Adams support inclusive practices by providing professional development opportunities that are ongoing and differentiated. The literature on inclusive schools suggests that professional development designed to support inclusive practices is a pervasive concern for teachers in inclusive schools (Dipaola, 2004; Praisner, 2003; Roach, Salisbury, & McGregor, 2002; Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007). School leaders must provide professional development that addresses the needs of their teachers. In inclusive schools, this function includes implementing training and support for skills such as collaboration and instructional adaptations (Moin, Magiera, & Zigmond, 2009; McLeskey & Waldron, 2002). Furthermore, progress towards the goal of the success of every student at Adams, inclusive of students with disabilities, is motivated by teams of teachers working together in professional learning communities.

Leadership practices. One routine that supports the implementation of differentiated and ongoing professional development at Adams is the institution of regular early release days built into the school calendar. On the last Wednesday of each month, students are released from school three hours early. The purpose of these monthly early release days is to provide time within the school calendar for school-based professional development opportunities. Due to other district priorities, the original plan for the use of the early release day training times was adjusted throughout the school year. Bruce shared:

> Of course, this year we wanted to start in on working with difficult kids. That was going to be our big thing this year. Well, then back in August, or whenever we did these iLearn days, they [district level leaders] started sucking up all of our half-days. We were doing as much what the county was asking us to do as anything else. We spent the three-hour early release day at the end of September on the SMART Goals. If you remember, everybody had to do that. Then talked one time about blended learning. All of a sudden, you've taken two prime days out of the way. (Principal interview, May 13, 2013)

At Adams, the district-mandated professional development was provided, necessitating

that the school leader's original plans for professional development to be altered.

However, the early release days that were left to the in-school leadership at Adams were

designed to provide the staff with information and strategies as well as time with small

groups to process that information.

> What we try to do on those days is maybe do something in group for 45 minutes and it could be the entire staff or it could be smaller groups, but still larger than your professional learning communities. Then have people in their professional learning communities process and work with that information at a smaller level and very specific to their subject. (Principal interview, May 13, 2013)

The leaders at Adams recognize the importance of providing professional

development that is designed to meet the needs of the staff. For example, Bruce has

facilitated routines to support blended learning, one of the districts key initiatives that

promotes the use of both traditional and digital instruction. These routines include

specialized training by the school's technology integrator, Whitney, on a weekly basis.

Whitney provides individual coaching as well as small and large group classes designed

to meet the needs of the teachers at Adams so they are able to begin and sustain effective

use of technology in their instruction.

Specific to inclusive practices, the leaders at Adams coordinate both professional

development and progress monitoring for their staff with support from in-school and

district personnel. Each year, Hannah works with one of the special education teachers to

provide a short training focused on best practices in collaboration. During the 2012-2013

school year, Hannah and Bruce requested that the district level special education staff

visit Adams and conduct walk-through observations in each of the collaborative classes.

These observations were completed using a collaborative teaching checklist that was

originally designed by district level staff but modified in conjunction with one of the

assistant principals at Adams, Carol, to ensure that each observer was looking for common components of collaborative classrooms that were of particular interest to the leaders at Adams. The observations were conducted on two full school days and each collaborative class was observed by at least two different observers. At the conclusion of these observations, the district level special education staff organized all of the observation data and presented findings and suggestions for the leaders to use as points of focus for future training opportunities.

Leaders at Adams incorporate structures that support continual teacher learning. One such structure is the provision of a time and framework for various teams of teachers to work together. Teachers at Adams each work as a member of a professional learning community (PLC) that is subject specific. For example, all Algebra I teachers meet bi-weekly to plan lessons, develop common assessments, and analyze student data. Leaders at Adams make this possible by both setting the expectations for these teams to meet and creating the master schedule in such a manner that all Algebra I teachers have common planning time during the school day.

In addition to subject specific PLCs, Bruce has set the expectation at Adams that teachers participate in opportunities for vertical teaming. In English, teachers are most often assigned to teach a specific level. Bruce's expectation is that communication occur among teachers of each level, spanning from 6th to 12th grade so that teachers have an understanding of the targeted skills and expectations at each level.

> We've done vertical teaming for a long time. We were doing that before we were doing grade level PLCs, actually. Because that's definitely a skill that's taught over time, and everybody has to know what page everybody else is on, and where do you fit writing into it. How much does it emphasize the reading, the grammar, literature and so on and so forth? That needs to be a 6 through 12 deal because it's a set of skills that are essential. Even coming from the math world, I always tell

everybody, "The most important subject out there is English, because your ability to communicate is everything."

It's hard working between levels, middle school and high school, because there's always that kind of distrust. They think we're always picking on them, and we think they're not doing their job, which is not true in the least. It's really more a matter of people communicating with each other, and understanding what obligations they have in their little world, what obligations you have in your world, and then how does it all fit together. (Principal interview, May 13, 2103)

In subjects other than English, teachers gain an understanding of the expectations at each grade level, not as a result from vertical teaming meetings, but rather Bruce's expectation that teachers have experience teaching at multiple levels.

The thing is, for the most part, our teachers teach multiple levels. Not necessarily multiple grade levels in English, but in math you might have somebody who's teaching Calculus. At some point or another, they're going to be teaching Algebra One, Geometry or Algebra Two. Because we don't try to have somebody as an upper level teacher only and somebody as a lower level teacher only, unless you get stuck by certification doing that. Because to me, if you're going to be a really good teacher, you should be able to teach the spectrum. Not only that, if you have somebody who teaches the end of the spectrum, they know what's needed at the beginning. I think that brings a whole different perspective. Just like if you're going to teach classes at the upper end of the spectrum, you really should have gone through the ones at the bottom end of the spectrum so that you know what kind of foundation those kids have when they walk into your classroom. (Principal interview, May 13, 2013)

Leadership content knowledge. Bruce's knowledge of adult learners appears to drive his decision-making as he considers how and when to offer professional development opportunities. The school district has built professional development time into the school calendar by releasing students three hours early one day each month. On these days, building level administrators are responsible for providing professional development within the school building. Bruce is thoughtful about the ways in which professional development is shared with his staff which reflects his knowledge of adult learning.

> The problem that you have is you can't do in-service one time and expect that everybody is going to be changed. You need to do something probably three or four times so that you're getting feedback, you're doing evaluation and getting feedback and you can kind of see progress and some of these you need to do for more than one year. (Principal interview, May 13, 2013)

Bruce encourages the participation of his staff not only in the professional development opportunities that are provided at the school and district level, but also as members of committees that help to frame policy within the district.

> To me, any time something is offered I try to get people involved. There are some that are mandated like in the Math area, you've got to send people so I just back track to check to see if they are sending folks. Anytime there are committees out there, I've always tried to get people involved. That's not necessarily staff development but you'd be surprised how much you learn when you get involved with those but what I always tell them is if people are going to be making decisions about policies in the County and you have a chance for input and you don't take it, then you have no right to complain when decisions are made. (Principal interview, May 13, 2103)

Additionally, Bruce demonstrates his knowledge of both inclusion and how to lead through his awareness of both school-based and district-level experts. Bruce acknowledges that Hannah, as the in-school special education leader, is his primary resource for special education concerns. Bruce emphasized that he doesn't actively pursue support from resources outside the building, but rather relies on Hannah to know when outside supports are needed. Bruce is agreeable to district level personnel coming in to support efforts at Adams, but stated "I don't go looking for anybody outside of the school building if we have resources in [the building]. The people inside the building, when they need resources, should be going out" (Principal interview, May 13, 2103).

Leaders Participate in Professional Development

With the goal of success of every student, leaders at Adams demonstrate a commitment to improving instructional practice by participating in professional

development opportunities focused on strategies and practices that support the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Leadership practices. As one of the instructional leaders at Adams, Bruce models his expectations by participating in district-level professional development opportunities, many of which are focused on inclusive practices and strategies, to help all students meet or exceed academic standards. When asked about professional development, Bruce indicated that he had not recently taken college courses or attended many conferences. However, he expresses "I go to all the professional development that the county has to offer" (Principal interview, May, 2013). During the 2012-2013 school year, Bruce participated in monthly K-12 principal's meetings and quarterly Superintendent's Leadership Meetings. These meetings each included presentations of discussions focused on enhancing instructional strategies in each school. Additionally, Bruce participated in a poverty workshop led by Ruby Payne and a poverty simulation designed to help educational leaders build a greater understanding of how poverty can impact academic achievement.

Hannah, as the coordinator of special education at Adams, also demonstrates her commitment to improving the instruction of students with disabilities by participating in each school-based professional development opportunity. Additionally, Hannah attends monthly meetings provided by the district's Office of Exceptional Education geared specifically for special education instructional leaders. At the monthly Exceptional Education meetings, Hannah participates in professional development focused on compliance with federal and state regulations as well as instructional strategies aimed to improve the academic achievement of students with disabilities.

Leadership content knowledge. By participating in a variety of professional development opportunities, Bruce and Hannah serve as role models for the staff at Adams. Furthermore, they rely on their knowledge of how adults, and in particular their staff, learn and respond to new initiatives in order to determine how and when to share information they gain during professional development.

Making the Organization Work

According to Leithwood and Riehl (2003), leaders who are making the organization work "enable the school to function as a professional learning community to support and sustain the performance of all key workers"(p.4). In order to fulfill the function of making the organization work, leaders must provide resources and supports that align with their vision. Components of this function include aspects of school culture, organizational structure, collaborative processes, and the school environment (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003).

Leaders Allocate Resources to Promote Inclusive Practices

At Adams, leaders align the allocation of human, financial, and environmental resources with the school's vision of success for all students. Leaders have the responsibility to allocate resources within their building to maximize students' success. The ways in which resources are allocated speaks to the commitment of leaders to the shared vision of their school.

Leadership practices. During the 2012-2013 school year, the master schedule at Adams included 45 co-taught course offerings. In each of these 45 classes, two teachers, one with general education content certification and one with special education certification, work together to adapt instruction so that students with disabilities served in

the general education setting have the supports to be successful. In order for 45 co-taught

courses to be offered, the leaders at Adams, specifically Hannah, the Coordinator for

Special Education, and Tim, the Assistant Principal for coordinating the master schedule,

must thoughtfully allocate human resources to ensure that both a general and special

educator are available to work together during each class period. Additionally, Hannah

acknowledges the importance for teachers who co-teach to have time to co-plan. At

Adams, Hannah is able to set the teaching schedule for the special education teachers

first. Then, the other department chairs build their schedules around the special

education schedule. Together, Hannah and the other department chairs are able to build

in co-taught class sections as well as common planning time for the two teachers who are

assigned to work together.

> I provide them with common planning with their general ed. teacher so that they
> can really work on getting to learn and know the curriculum, and tell them in
> meetings. You have this common planning so that you can plan together, and
> make sure that you understand the expectations of that curriculum as well as the
> regular ed. teacher. (Coordinator interview, May 16, 2013)

Hannah, as the leader of the special education department, is responsible for the

allocation of instructional assistants to support students with disabilities. This includes

instructional assistants who are assigned to work with specific students as well as those

assigned to provide general support in classrooms. When determining the instructional

assistant assignments for each school year, Hannah reviews the "dream sheets" submitted

by the staff in the special education department, data from her classroom observations

throughout the year, and information about specific student needs. Hannah then makes

the assignments with the purpose of maximizing the human resources available at Adams

(Coordinator interview, May 16, 2013).

Leadership content knowledge.   When building the master schedule, assigning co-teaching pairs, and determining the placements for instructional assistants, Hannah relies on knowledge she has gained from experience in her current role as well as her experience as a co-teacher. Hannah's decisions each year as to which teachers should work together are informed, at least in part, by her observations of co-teaching teams throughout the school year. During both her interview and observations, Hannah emphasized the value she places on relationships as she determines which teachers should co-teach together as well as which instructional assistants should work with which teachers. Hannah's knowledge of inclusive practices, including the emphasis on relationships, and her knowledge of how to lead, as demonstrated by her solicitation of input from her staff, informs her leadership practices when allocating resources.

Leaders Buffer Staff

Making the organization work also includes the concept that leaders buffer their staff, allowing them to do their jobs with minimal distractions. Effective leaders "buffer staff from unproductive external demands for attention" (Leithwood et al., 2007, p. 45). Because the leaders at Adams thoughtfully protect staff from extemporaneous obligations, teachers are able to focus on implementing instructional practices that support the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Leadership practices.   At Adams, the task of buffering the staff is distributed among the administrative team. One component of the buffering of staff is the ways in which administrators at Adams learn of district initiatives, as well as if and how they choose to pass that information on to the faculty.   The principal at Adams is required to participate in monthly principal meetings. The agenda of these meetings is determined

by the district level staff based on the priorities of the district. However, the ways in which the information is passed onto school-based staff is up to the discretion of the building principal. According to Bruce, "it is our [administrators] job to take what we learn and make it functional inside of our particular building" (Principal interview, May, 13, 2013).

At the K-12 Principal's Meeting in January, 2013, the district rolled out an initiative to address bullying. The district level staff outlined the purpose of the program, the expectations for school participation, and the supports that would be provided at the district level. The principals were provided extensive resources to support the initiative. Additionally, staff and students from one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school spoke about how the program began in their buildings. Following the presentation, I had an opportunity to speak briefly with the principal of Adams to ask how he planned to implement this initiative at Adams. His response was that I should look through the materials presented by the exemplar high school "because they took it from us. We've been doing stuff like this for years" (Principal observation, January 30, 2013).

Buffering staff is also evidenced through the design of the master schedule. While overseeing the development of the master schedule, the leadership at Adams strives to keep class numbers reasonable. The classes in the lower grades (9th and 10th) are arranged so that they are smaller than classes for juniors and seniors. Additionally, Algebra 1 classes are limited to 15-16 students. Since Algebra 1 is offered in the 8th grade, students that take it at the high school are typically students in the bottom quartile. Bruce recognizes that "for the most part, that's your lowest group of students" (Principal

interview, May 13, 2013), and places emphasis on keeping numbers low in those sections so that the teacher-student ratio is designed to support student success.

Purposeful management of caseload assignments at Adams is further evidence of the leaders' commitment to making the organization work for inclusion by buffering staff. As case managers, special education teachers are responsible for developing and monitoring the implementation of IEPs for all of the students on their case load. At Adams, the special education teachers' caseloads are well within state requirements. Teachers of students with high incidence disabilities have an average caseload of 15 students, while teachers of student with low incidence disabilities have an average caseload of five students. Additionally, most students are assigned to a case manager in their freshman year and are followed by that case manager throughout their four years at Adams. This allows the teacher, student, and parents to build a collaborative relationship over time.

Leadership content knowledge. The leaders at Adams are guided in their decision –making processes by their knowledge of inclusion and of how to lead which is evident in their awareness of the need to buffer staff from information or initiatives that may be at cross purposes with the shared goals of the school. Each of the leadership practices at Adams designed to buffer teachers from unnecessary distractions is evidence of the leaders' knowledge of the importance of teachers' ability to focus on providing high-quality instruction and working toward the shared goal of success for every student. Bruce demonstrated this knowledge when describing how he and the leadership team meet to review and discuss district-level initiatives prior to implementing them at Adams to ensure that they fit with the vision of Adams and are not overwhelming to the staff.

This awareness was also evidenced by Hannah's practices when assigning caseloads to the special education teachers at Adams. By ensuring that caseloads are well within the state mandates, Hannah is able to support teachers' focus on instruction.

Leaders Build Collaborative Culture and Community Among Stakeholders

The inclusion of students with disabilities relies on the collaboration of leaders, staff, students, and families (Boscardin, 2005; Cautson-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2008; Dyson, 2007; Idol, 2006; NCERI, 1994; Rea, McLaughlin, & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Sapon-Shevin, 2008). At Adams, collaboration among stakeholders is evident across several leadership practices. As described in the next section, these practices include collaboration between staff members as well as with students, parents, and the community.

Leadership practices. At Adams, collaboration is evident in the regularly scheduled meetings. The administrative team meets weekly, and the department chairs meet with the administrative team monthly. The faculty and departments have monthly meetings, the PLCs meet biweekly, and the Operation Graduation team meets twice a quarter. Over the course of my observations, I was able to observe both meetings that were informative in nature, such as faculty and department meetings, and meetings that were designed more as work sessions providing teams, such as the Operation Graduation team and the administrative team, time for collaborative problem-solving.

Specific to the inclusion of students with disabilities, the leaders at Adams strive to build collaborative culture by working with teams of stakeholders focused on student success. The IEPs that are developed for the students served in inclusive settings are standards-based and detailed. The general education teachers are involved in the

development of the IEP, and communication between general education teachers and students' case managers is on-going throughout the school year. At the beginning of each school year, Hannah speaks to the faculty at Adams to inform them of the IEP process and their role as general education teachers as part of the IEP team. Furthermore, Hannah sends an email to the staff reiterating their role as IEP team members in January as most IEPs at Adams are drafted in January, February, and March. Hannah emphasizes the importance of the general education teacher to encourage these teachers to fully participate during IEP meetings (Coordinator interview, May 16, 2013).

Adams' leaders encourage teachers to include district level experts in their work. According to Bruce, "we have so many different special-needs students, I think we regularly have people come in and work with us" (Principal interview, May 13, 2013). For example, I had the opportunity to observe the IEP process for a student with Autism at Adams. The IEP team consisted of the student, parents, Hannah, the case manager, the students' English teacher, the students' school counselor, and the district's lead transition coordinator, Jill. Prior to the IEP meeting, the parents had expressed concerns with the student's progress, the possibility of remaining at Adams for 5 years, and opportunities for post-secondary education in conversations with both Hannah and the case manager. Following that discussion, Hannah contacted Jill and extended an invitation to participate in the IEP meeting. Over the course of the IEP meeting, Jill contributed her knowledge of post-secondary resources and helped develop a transition plan for the student based on the student's preferences, interests, needs, and strengths (observations, 2013).

Hannah facilitates the collaboration among district level support staff specific to services and accommodations provided to students at Adams. Some students with

disabilities at Adams have the support of Assistive Technology (AT) to access their education. During the 2012-2013 school year, approximately 60 students utilized AT in various forms including switches, alternative communication devices, word processing devices, and laptops. Students using AT served in inclusive settings primarily utilized laptop computers or other word processing devices and/or electronic spellers.

Collaboration is also evident in the coordination of the delivery of therapies at Adams High School. Hannah is responsible for overseeing the occupational, physical, and speech therapists that work with students at Adams, and assisting therapists in coordinating the most appropriate schedule for service delivery. While integrated therapy is recognized in the literature as a key component of inclusive programming, there is little evidence at Adams that therapies are integrated to help students maximize instructional time in the general education setting. The use of integrated therapy at Adams is primarily targeted to meet the needs of students in the catchment programs who are served primarily in self-contained settings.

Leadership content knowledge. Much of the work accomplished at Adams involves collaboration. The leaders' practices at Adams reflect a knowledge base that emphasizes the importance of collaboration and community. The collaboration among school-based and district level experts is also evidence of Bruce and Hannah's knowledge and use of social capital. Part of their leadership content knowledge that is evidenced by their support of collaboration is their knowledge of who to go to when, they themselves, do not have a particular skill or knowledge base.

Summary

To a varying degree, leaders at Adams provide the organizational supports for each of the key practices for inclusion as identified by the literature. At Adams, leaders have used tools, routines, and structures to support the implementation of what is typically considered to be special education practices and adopted them on a large scale to meet the needs of students in general education. Leaders at Adams have set a vision, worked to create shard goals, and allocated resources to support the success of all students, inclusive of students with disabilities. In some cases, as with the development of the academic homeroom, leaders at Adams used what they had categorized as special education practices with all students in efforts to foster success. Leaders at Adams noticed that the supports provided to students with disabilities by having a consistent case manager throughout high school seemed to benefit students and applied a similar format for academic homeroom. By utilizing these leadership practices, leaders at Adams have created conditions that foster high-quality instruction that is differentiated to meet students' needs. The implications of the leadership practices and leadership content knowledge utilized at Adams are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Implications

Discussion

While inclusive education is supported by many legal and ethical arguments as described in Chapters 1 and 2, the details of implementing and supporting the inclusion of students with disabilities is the purview of the school leaders. I began this research as an endeavor to identify the leadership practices and the leadership content knowledge that guides those practices in a school that successfully includes students with disabilities. This case study has provided an opportunity to learn from the practices and knowledge of leaders at a school where students' needs are identified and staff members are supported in their efforts to meet those needs. What this case study has shown is that successful inclusion of students with disabilities is possible.

The literature points out several key practices for successful inclusion that include a vision and commitment to inclusive practices, teams of teachers working together, collaborative classroom instruction, common planning time, regular meetings, professional development, IEPs that are detailed and standards-based, integrated therapy, use of assistive technology to support inclusion, and community building with parents, students, and other stakeholders (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2008; NCERI, 1994; Rea, McLaughlin, & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Sapon-Shevin, 2008). At Adams, most, but not all, of these practices were evident throughout my observations and interviews. I did not observe the use of integrated therapies in the general education setting, and the use of assistive technology in the general education setting was limited. Additionally, while collaboration among parents and stakeholders was evident at IEP meetings and through

the use of the weekly principal updates, I did not observe other attempts at community building as described in the literature. However, I did notice that the practices utilized at Adams are contextual, performed by a team, and used within the tools and routines of the leaders at Adams with some flexibility as they work to accomplish their goal of student success. Adams' leaders have created a system of practices that reaches the goal of inclusion by using of the key practices of inclusive schools as guiding principles rather than a list of items that must be uniformly implemented.

By framing the work using core sets of leadership practices, I described broadly what leaders are doing at Adams to support inclusive programming. Further, by utilizing the lens of distributed leadership, I was able to focus on specific leadership practices including the tools, routines, and structures used by leaders in their daily work. Additionally, by focusing on leadership content knowledge, I was able to identify the knowledge leaders at Adams have, both of inclusion and how to lead, that guides their leadership practices. This framework provided an opportunity to identify the reoccurring elements of practice that allow for successful inclusion to occur. These elements include: Bruce's insight and drive, an inclusive school culture, a system of organizational supports that allow the staff to accomplish the goal of meeting more than 2000 students' individual needs, facilitation of two-way communication, and the buffering of staff.

Bruce described how he came to promote individualization across the entire student body reflective of the special education practice of individual education programs after first noticing that the level of individualized support provided to students identified as students with disabilities had a positive impact on their performance. This insight then drove his work with formal and informal leaders at Adams to build structures (such as the

Success Program and Operation Graduation Team) and routines (i.e. the identification of struggling students, setting aside time from the academic homeroom, and the implementation of Professional Learning Communities) that facilitated the expansion of individual focus to each student at Adams.

Additionally, Bruce's leadership practices promoting individualization for students and the differentiation of instruction to address students' needs form the foundation of the school's culture of inclusion. The inclusive nature of the school was evident by the lack of delineation between students with disabilities and students without disabilities- it was just the way things worked at Adams High School. Each committee or department discussion I observed focused on students as individuals and what had been or should be done to provide extra supports for enhancing their achievement. Rather than focusing on a particular subgroup, leaders at Adams utilize the structures of Operation Graduation and the Success Program to look at each student deemed to be having difficulty and determine what remediation efforts should be used with which students. It is not a one size fits all model. Rather, the typical approach widely used by the teaching staff is to make a determined effort to look at the unique needs of an individual student and meet those needs through planned interventions. Further, I think it is important to note that, at Adams, the approaches to remediation and student support are varied regardless of whether a student has an identified disability or not. In fact, the continuum of special education services available at Adams is just one part of the organizational structure that overall allows for the large extent of individualized student support efforts from which all students benefit.

Moreover, that teachers are able to routinely consider a student's needs on an individual basis at Adams is greatly facilitated by the organizational support systems the leaders foster. The extent to which instruction is individualized at Adams, with a student population of close to 2000, is remarkable, but even more remarkable is that the teaching staff is not completely overwhelmed trying to meet the needs of each student. The leaders make this possible by creating the organizational structures that allow for teachers to focus on instruction. Teachers are not overwhelmed because the leadership practices have fostered strategic routines to target and address the needs of struggling students. Leaders at Adams have implemented strategic methods to address the tasks of identifying both the students that need intervention and designating which supports should be put into place, leaving the implementation of high quality instruction and remediation to the teachers. The previously discussed structures that illustrate this point include how struggling students are identified prior to both 9th and 12th grades, two pivotal years of their time at Adams, and then small teams of leaders and teachers work with these students to determine how best to integrate them into a course of support. A relatively high number of at-risk students can benefit from the first level of intervention, the Success Program or Operation Graduation, both characterized by their small academic homerooms led by designated teachers. Once within each program, if students demonstrate a need for further intervention, they are discussed by the appropriate committee and further supports are put into place. Thus Adams' leaders strategic methods serve to triage students so that the need for more intensive interventions are reserved for the students for whom more scalable support structures are insufficient.

A critical element helping to unite these leadership practices into a systematic inclusive approach is purposeful two-way communication. Leaders at Adams are intentional about the facilitation of communication among school staff. This includes the structures in place, such as common planning for teachers that work together, that support regular meetings. Further, both Bruce and Hannah make an effort to solicit input from teachers as they make decisions affecting instructional practice. Bruce and Hannah based this solicitation of input on their knowledge of leadership and their belief that when staff members have input into the decision-making process, they are more likely to buy-in to the implementation of decisions that are made.

A final strategy to help the teachers at Adams focus on providing instruction that meets the needs of all students is the leadership practice of buffering the staff from unnecessary distractions. At Adams, Bruce has implemented routines that provide a buffer for teachers from both school-based and district-level initiatives that could interfere with teachers' ability to provide differentiated, high quality instruction. Because the process for identifying struggling students is part of the leadership routines, it is strategically removed from the workload of individual teachers. Further, prior to any district-level initiatives being rolled out to the Adams' staff, they are discussed by the leadership team to determine how those initiatives are aligned with the vision of Adams and how they should be implemented. These two routines are utilized as ways to support teachers' focus on providing instruction that reaches all students at Adams.

Implications

The leadership practices and knowledge discussed above, Bruce's insight and drive, the inclusive culture at Adams, the organizational support, communication, and

buffering of staff identified at Adams have implications for researchers, practitioners, and those who prepare school leaders. As this case study has demonstrated, there are specific leadership practices in place at Adams that support the school's inclusive programming for all of its students. Additionally, this case study has worked to make clear the knowledge that leaders at Adams draw upon in regards to both good inclusive practices and leadership that guide their leadership practices. By specifically addressing what leaders at Adams know and do regarding inclusion, this case study has identified several implications for future research, leadership practices in inclusive schools, and for the preparation of inclusive school leaders.

Implications for research. Much of the prior research on the inclusion of students with disabilities has focused on outcomes rather than leadership practices. This case study adds to the knowledge base regarding how leaders' practices support inclusive programming. Additionally, it highlights the importance of looking at the leadership practices, the tools, routines, and structures that leaders put into place to support progress towards shared goals. Additional research focused on leadership practices in schools with high rates of student success would be beneficial to both practitioners and those who develop leadership preparation programs.

This research focused around the use of a single site to develop the case study. There is potential for further research to be conducted using the same methodology at schools with positive outcomes of different levels, elementary and middle so as to deepen an understanding of leadership practices and knowledge regarding inclusive programming that are common across, or unique to, different school levels. Research could also be conducted in a similar manner in different localities, urban and rural, to

investigate the leadership practices in schools whose populations are significantly different to the student population of Adams. Multiple case studies of successful inclusion leadership in a variety of locations would help to define what elements of leadership practice and leadership content knowledge reoccur, thus allowing for practitioners and those who prepare school leaders to incorporate those elements in their practice.

Implications for practice. When leaders look at students individually, rather than as part of the data from a subgroup, it has implications for the practice of other school leaders. The level of individualization at Adams is noteworthy. Leaders at other schools should examine the extent to which they focus the individual, as well as reflect on the strategic approaches to intervention used at Adams that are naturally inclusive of students with disabilities and allow interventions to be individualized to meet student needs.

Leaders should also think about how their staff takes on responsibility for all students' success, taking note that the interventions and remediation efforts in place at Adams are not uniformly applied to the student population. Rather than adopting one model of intervention and giving a dose of that intervention to every student having difficulty, leaders at Adams look at each student, discuss those student's needs, and then determine appropriate intervention strategies which range in scope from specifically assigned academic homeroom to individual remediation.

The levels of intervention available and their implementation at Adams are similar to the methods used in Response to Intervention (RtI). While Adams' leaders do not use the language of RtI, their practices reflect the leveled interventions and progress monitoring strategies of RtI. Leaders should reflect on the variety of interventions

available at their school to determine if they are or can provide the organizational

supports to differentiate intervention efforts to meet the needs of more students. Leaders

should also examine the current interventions available at their school to consider if

utilizing a structured RtI approach would aide in their efforts to foster student success.

 The leaders at Adams are very aware of their role as buffers between teachers and

any distractions from providing high quality instruction. Several of the leadership

practices observed were routines designed to or that resulted in the buffering of staff. For

other leaders, the implication is that high quality instruction is supported by leaders who

are clear with their vision and who incorporate routines and structures into their

leadership practices to buffer their staffs from initiatives or work that interferes with

progress toward that vision. Leaders should reflect on their own practices and determine

the extent to which they create systems of organizational support that enable, rather than

constrain, progress toward shared goals in their school.

 Implications for leadership preparation. Both Bruce and Hannah attributed

much of their leadership content knowledge to their years of experience. Bruce,

particularly, mentioned that his knowledge of special education practices was a result of

working with special education experts during his time as an assistant principal. New

leaders, however, could gain similar content knowledge if leadership preparation

programs provided coursework focused on best practices in special education.

 A second component of leadership content knowledge evidenced in this study is

the use of social connections. Both Bruce and Hannah were willing and able to utilize

school-based experts as well as invite district level experts to provide support for the staff

and students at Adams. New leaders would need avenues to learn and build such

networks of social connections. School districts should consider providing new leaders with opportunities to meet and work with a variety of leaders and experts within the district to support the development of the leadership content knowledge that comes through the use of social connections.

Conclusions

School-wide inclusion makes a difference for students. At Adams, over 10% of the student population is identified as students with disabilities, yet less than 5% of graduating seniors exit with a Special Diploma. The students with high incidence disabilities at Adams are served through a continuum of services that are designed to meet student needs. Further, any struggling student at Adams, whether identified with a disability or not, has access to a strategically implemented, scaffolded set of supports developed to promote student success. But in order to accomplish such student outcomes, as this study illustrates, leadership matters. The organizational culture and supports at Adams that support inclusive programming are in place due, at least in part, to the leaders' knowledge of what inclusion looks like, awareness of how to lead, and the implementation of that knowledge in their leadership practices.

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Appendix A

Principal Interview Protocol

Date:_____/_____/_____   Activity:_____

Start Time: _____am/pm   End Time: _____am/pm

Leader: Formal _____

These interviews will be guided interviews based on the leadership interactions observed.

Some of the interview questions are expected to change based on the observations.

1. **Building Vision and Setting Direction**
    1.1. What is the school's vision?
         How was the vision developed?
    1.2. How is the vision communicated to staff? Students? Parents? Community
         members?
         How is the vision evidenced in daily school activities?
    1.3. How are shared goals for inclusive practices developed?
         How do you promote shared goals for the learning of "all" students?
         How is your school improvement plan developed? Team? Individual?
         Doe the plan reference the inclusion of students with disabilities specifically?
    1.4. What are your expectations for the inclusion of students with disabilities?
         1.4.1   How often are teachers observed?
                 What protocol is used to observe teachers/?
                 How was that protocol developed?
                 Do protocols differ depending upon subject area? Level of inclusion?
                 What knowledge do you draw upon to know what to look for when
                 observing in an inclusive classroom?
    1.5. How is progress towards shared goals monitored?
    1.6. How are expectations for the inclusion of all students communicated to the staff?
         How is two-way communication about inclusive practices facilitated with the
         school? Meetings? Email? Edmodo? Other?
         How are division level initiatives communicated to the school? Meetings?
         Email? Edmodo? Other?
2. **Understanding and Developing People**
    2.1. Professional Development

2.1.1. What professional development opportunities are available at the school?
Who plans and implements those opportunities? Individual? Team?
How do you determine which pd to offer? What knowledge do you draw upon to determine the professional development needs of the school staff?
Are teachers required to participate in school-based pd?
How is school-based pd differentiated to meet the needs of teachers?
Do you participate in professional development opportunities? How? Where?

2.1.2. Are teachers required to participate in district level pd?
How do they decide what to attend? Choice? Encouraged? Growth plans?
Who from the school works with division leaders to develop district level pd?
How do you learn about district initiavtives/changes in special education practice?
What resources (human/text/digital) are available to help you learn about inclusive practices?

2.2. Do your teachers participate in professional learning communities?
How are PLCs organized?
Who determines which PLC teachers should participate in?

3. **Making the Organization Work**
3.1. How are resources allocated to support inclusive practices?
3.1.1. What is the process for developing the master schedule?
3.3. How is a collaborative culture built in your school?
3.3.1. How often do meetings occur? Faculty? Department? Team? IEP?
Who plans and schedules meetings? Faculty? Department? Team? IEP?
Who facilitates meetings? Faculty? Department? Team? IEP?
3.3.2. How do you work with division leaders to learn about inclusive practices used at other schools?
How do you utilize the expertise of the special educators in your building?
Do you utilize district special education staff? How?
How do you communicate that information with your staff?
3.4 How is community built within the school?
3.4.1. How are parents involved in the school?
How does the school promote parent participation in activities? IEP meetings?
3.4.3. Does the school participate in community building activities that promote the inclusion of all students? Could you provide examples (such as Inclusive School Week)?

Coordinator Interview Protocol

Date:_____/_____/_____   Activity:_____

Start Time: _____am/pm   End Time: _____am/pm

Leader: Formal _____

These interviews will be guided interviews based on the leadership interactions observed.

Some of the interview questions are expected to change based on the observations.

1. **Building Vision and Setting Direction**
   1.1. What is the school's vision?
        How was the vision developed?
   1.2. How is the vision communicated to staff? Students? Parents? Community members?
        How is the vision evidenced in daily school activities?
   1.3. How are shared goals for inclusive practices developed?
        How do you promote shared goals for the learning of "all" students?
   1.4. What are your expectations for the inclusion of students with disabilities?
        1.4.1. How often are teachers observed?
               What protocol is used to observe teachers/?
               How was that protocol developed?
               Do protocols differ depending upon subject area? Level of inclusion?
               What knowledge do you draw upon to know what to look for when observing in an inclusive classroom?
   1.5. How is progress towards shared goals monitored?
   1.6. How are expectations for the inclusion of all students communicated to the staff?
        How is two-way communication about inclusive practices facilitated with the school? Meetings? Email? Edmodo? Other?
        How are division level initiatives communicated to the school? Meetings? Email? Edmodo? Other?
2. **Understanding and Developing People**
   2.1. Professional Development
        2.1.1. What professional development opportunities are available at the school?
               Who plans and implements those opportunities? Individual? Team?
               How do you determine which pd to offer? What knowledge do you draw upon to determine the professional development needs of the school staff?
               Are teachers required to participate in school-based pd?
               How is school-based pd differentiated to meet the needs of teachers?
               Do you participate in professional development opportunities? How? Where?

2.1.2. Are teachers required to participate in district level pd?
How do they decide what to attend? Choice? Encouraged? Growth plans?
Who from the school works with division leaders to develop district level pd?
How do you learn about district initiavtives/changes in special education practice?
What resources (human/text/digital) are available to help you learn about inclusive practices?

2.2. Do your teachers participate in professional learning communities?
How are PLCs organized?
Who determines which PLC teachers should participate in?

3. Making the Organization Work

3.1. How are resources allocated to support inclusive practices?
3.1.1. What is the process for developing the master schedule?
Who participates in the development of the master schedule?
How are teachers identified as co-teaching pairs? Choice? Assigned?
3.1.2. How are special education teachers and support staff scheduled?
3.1.3. How many collaborative classes are offered?
How is the number and type of collaborative offerings determined?
3.1.4. How is common/shared planning time coordinated for collaborative teachers?
3.1.5. What types of assistive technology are used by students?
Who is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the use of AT?
How is AT used to facilitate inclusion?
3.1.6. How are therapies provided to students (speech, OT, PT)?
Are therapies integrated? Provided in pull-out settings only?
Who is responsible for coordinating therapies?

3.2. How are caseloads determined?
What is the average caseload weight for a teacher of high-incidence disabilities? Low-incidence?

3.3. How is a collaborative culture built in your school?
3.3.1. How often do meetings occur? Faculty? Department? Team? IEP?
Who plans and schedules meetings? Faculty? Department? Team? IEP?
Who facilitates meetings? Faculty? Department? Team? IEP?
3.3.3. How do you work with division leaders to learn about inclusive practices used at other schools?
How do you communicate that information with your staff?
How do you utilize the expertise of the special educators in your building?
Do you utilize district special education staff? How?
3.3.4. Who participates in the development of IEPs?
Are the IEPs developed standards-based? How are teams informed of the standards-based IEP process?
How do IEPs include detailed information about instruction adaptations and accommodations?
3.3.5. How is information in IEPs communicated to general education teachers?

3.4. How is community built within the school?

3.4.1. How are parents involved in the school?
How does the school promote parent participation in activities? IEP meetings?

3.3.6. How does the school work with outside agencies (CSB, FAPT) to support students?

3.3.7. Does the school participate in community building activities that promote the inclusion of all students? Could you provide examples (such as Inclusive School Week)?

Appendix B

Observation Protocol

Date:____/_____/_____   Activity:_____

Start Time: _____am/pm   End Time: _____am/pm

Leader: Formal/Informal _____

E = Evident

H = How (What tools, routines, or structures were evident to facilitate the leadership activity observed)

W = Who (With whom did the interaction/activity take place)

Leadership Interactions	E	H	W
1. Building Vision and Setting Direction			
Creating a vision for inclusive practices			
Sharing a vision for inclusive practices			
Communicating using references to the learning of "all" students			
Defining expectations for inclusion			
Development of teacher observation protocols			
Use of teacher observation protocols			
School Improvement Plan supports inclusion (development)			
School Improvement Plan supports inclusion(communication of plan)			

School Improvement Plan supports inclusion (progress monitoring)		
Facilitating intentional communication within school		
Facilitating intentional communication with division leaders		
Other		
2. Understanding and Developing People		
Professional Development-IEP Development		
Professional Development- Collaborative teaching		
Professional Development- Inclusion		
Professional Development – Other		
Professional Development is differentiated by teacher/staff need		
Professional Development planning with division leaders		
Professional Development implementation with division leaders		
Teams of teachers working together		
Professional learning communities		
Other		
3. Making the Organization Work		
Regular Meetings (faculty)		
Regular Meetings (department)		
Regular Meetings (co-teaching teams)		

Regular Meetings (IEP)			
Allocation of staff to support student needs			
Schedule is designed to support collaborative teaching			
Facilitation of shared/common planning			
Manageable caseloads			
Instructional adaptations			
Assistive technology is utilized to facilitate inclusion			
Integrated therapy			
Standards-based IEPs			
Detailed IEPs			
IEP goals/accommodations are communicated to general education staff			
Work with division leaders to share inclusive practices from other schools			
Parental Involvement			
Work with Outside Agencies – CSB			
Work with Outside Agencies – FAPT			
Work with Outside Agencies – Other			
Participation in inclusive events (Inclusive Schools Week)			
Other			

Appendix C

Coding Scheme

1. Building Vision and Setting Direction
   1.1 Setting a vision for the inclusion of students with disabilities
   1.2 Articulating the vision for inclusion
         1.2.1   Leaders reference learning for "all" students
   1.3 Creating shared goals
         1.3.1   Leaders develop a shared plan for school improvement
         1.3.2   Leaders promote goals for the learning of "all" students
   1.4 Defining expectations for inclusion
         1.4.1   Protocols are used for teacher observation
   1.5 Monitoring performance
         1.5.1   Progress toward shared goals is routinely monitored
   1.6 Facilitating two-way communication
         1.6.1   Leaders facilitate intentional communication regarding inclusive practices with the school faculty
         1.6.2   Leaders facilitate intentional communication with division leaders for the implementation of division-wide inclusion initiatives
   1.7 Other
2. Understanding and Developing People
   2.1 Leaders provide/promote professional development opportunities focused on a variety of topics (IEP development, collaboration, inclusive practices)
         2.1.1   Leaders provide school-based professional development opportunities
         2.1.2   Leaders work with division leaders to provide professional development opportunities
   2.2 Leaders encourage teams of teachers to work together in professional learning communities
   2.3 Leaders demonstrate knowledge of how adults learn and how to facilitate learning communities a the school level
         2.3.1   Leaders participate in ongoing professional development
         2.3.2   Leaders demonstrate knowledge of resources for content knowledge related to inclusive practices
   2.4 Other
3. Making the Organization Work
   3.1 Leaders allocate resources to promote inclusive practices
         3.1.1   Leaders utilize staff to support student needs
         3.1.2   Leaders coordinate staff to maximize instructional time

3.1.3   Leaders schedule opportunities for collaborative classes
    3.1.4   Leaders facilitate shared/common planning time
    3.1.5   Leaders ensure that assistive technology is provided to foster inclusive practices
    3.1.6   Leaders facilitate the integration of therapies to maximize instructional time

3.2 Leaders buffer staff
    3.2.1   Leaders coordinate caseload assignments so the teachers are not overburdened

3.3 Leaders build collaborative culture
    3.3.1   Leaders facilitate regular meetings (department, faculty, co-teaching teams, IEP teams)
    3.3.2   Leaders work with division leaders to facilitate the sharing of practices from other schools
    3.3.3   Leaders manage the IEP process so that IEPs are standards-based and detailed
    3.3.4   Leaders coordinate the communication of IEP goals/accommodations to all general education teachers

3.4 Leaders facilitate community building
    3.4.1   Leaders build relationships with parents
    3.4.2   Leaders communicate with outside agencies to provide additional support for students and staff (Community Services Board, Family Assistance and Planning Team)
    3.4.3   Leaders promote participation in inclusive activities (Inclusive Schools Week)
    3.4.4   Leaders utilize school-based and district-level experts to guide inclusive practices

3.5 Other