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EXAMINING GROUP DYNAMICS OF HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE TEAMS:
HOW INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAITS FOSTER INTEGRATION
OF IDEAS AND ACTIONS IN LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS

by

Steven Thomas Brady

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctorate in Education.

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

December 2018

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Reader: Dr. Jeff Riddlehoover
Reader: Dr. Thomas Hoffman

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To my wife, Stephanie. Thank you for being my dissertation partner, support group, task master and for sharing your love with me. Thank you for accepting and putting up with “Dissertation Steve” and my many quirks during this journey. You helped me see the beauty in project forecasting and management, by showing me love is not just words, but actions, high expectations and follow through on life goals. You are an amazing human, mother and wife. Thank you for being my greatest team member.

“Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.”

-Andrew Carnegie

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I wanted to dedicate this dissertation to my children, and then I thought it would be better to deeply acknowledge their contributions to this dissertation. Both Henry (Age 9) and Helen (age 5) had an amazing aptitude to sing, play, wrestle, laugh, chirp, cry, snap (Helen), and make various fascinating sounds, every time I started to write. My biggest hope is that you both see how important education is for all, and my biggest fear from this process is that they may believe that dissertation is a swear word.

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Brady, S. Examining group dynamics of high school administrative teams: How individual and group leadership traits foster integration of ideas and actions in learning organizations. (2018)

This dissertation examines the complexity of leadership teamwork and focuses on high school administration teams. These teams are complex and support multiple stakeholders throughout their educational institutions. The primary purpose of this study is to understand how high school administration teams construct strong dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization. The secondary focus is understanding leadership traits that teams and individual leaders of high school administration teams possess and how teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams. The study analyzed high school administration teams, of three or more members, looking at the team components of team context, essential conditions and team performance. The findings reveal that successful high school administration teams have reoccurring structured team meetings, well-defined norms, and utilize clear and concise communication among and between all stakeholders. Additionally, the participants disclosed that being Trustworthy, Dependable and Empathic are traits that support strong teams. In conclusion, this study looks at the structures, traits and how group dynamics are fostered within high school administration teams. The research findings, in this dissertation, can provide valuable information to teams in complex conditions.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Overview

Peter Senge (2006) states that, “leadership has inspired organizations for thousands of years, it’s capacity to hold a shared picture of the future we seek to create” (p. 9). This picture of success that Senge “pictures” cannot be done in isolation (Schlechty, 2011). Yet much education research is focused on leadership as one singular building leader (Munir & Khalil, 2016; Player, Youngs, Perrone, & Grogan, 2017) or focused on the team of teachers (Bergman, Rentsch, Small, Davenport & Bergman, 2012), with principals as support, manager or as a resource (Munir & Khalil, 2016; Hauserman & Stik, 2013). School leadership is critical for school success and has a major impact on district initiatives, teacher success, and student success. At the high school setting, leadership is shared with a team of principals: lead, associate, assistant or vice principals. This study will help understand the character traits of individual leaders on high school administration teams and how these character traits correlate to leadership teams and their ability to construct group dynamics that foster ideas across a learning organization. The following research will focus on high school principal and associate/assistant/vice principal teamwork.

High school educational leaders are in a critical position to encourage strong teamwork (Sarin & McDermott, 2003) through understanding personal leadership traits and how teams function in demanding educational settings. Northouse (2013) states, “A team is a specific type of group composed of members who are interdependent, who share common goals, and who must coordinate their activities.” (p. 287). I have personally been on both dynamic leadership teams and teams that do not function well.

During my 15 years as an educator, I have also had the opportunity to be on a plethora of teams as a paraprofessional, teacher, a teacher leader, a leader in science curriculum, an administrator and as a student. During this time, I have experienced multiple team structures that are extremely aligned and successful. I have also had the unfortunate experiences of being on teams that function as a group of individuals and are misguided and dysfunctional.

Principals are intuitively leaders, and within leadership, there are traits that align to high quality teams. I have always wondered why some teams are a pleasure to work on and other teams seem to struggle. This inquiry has led to this research about high school administrators and how they support each other to create high functioning teams. This study will focus on high school leadership teams in two different ways. First, the study will focus on professional traits of administrators in high schools. Second, it will focus on understanding how the traits, like communication, support team dynamics through integration of knowledge in learning organizations. To deeply understand the complexity of my research problem, I will utilize a mixed method design that will include surveying and interviewing secondary leaders and their leadership teams.

Statement of Research Problem(s)

The study I will conduct will examine the individual and group components of secondary leadership teams. My primary research question is: “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” My secondary research questions are: “Which individual leadership traits of high school administrators are viewed as most essential to

creating effective leadership teams?” and “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?”

Research Question Rationale

The primary rationale for my research is to determine and clarify how high school leadership teams create strong group dynamics. For this research, I will be able to concretely understand how high school leadership teams construct practices or theories of action, create systems, and gather data. I am examining how high school administrators collect information from multiple sources and how they use this data to foster integration and develop common beliefs, norms, and practices that lead to strong shared decisions. The information gained in this study will shed light on how district leaders and principals can support teamwork at the secondary administration level.

A second rationale for my research is to discover which individual leadership traits in secondary administrators influence the formation of effective leadership teams. To understand the dynamics within secondary administration teams, I will study individual leadership traits and how these individual traits support or detract from successful communication and interpersonal relationships between team members. To quantify the individual leadership traits, I will have principals and associate/assistant/vice principals complete Northouse’s Leadership Trait Questionnaire (LTQ). The LTQ was developed by Peter Northouse (2013). The purpose of this questionnaire is to measure the personal characteristics of leadership. It is completed by the individual and by other peers and colleagues who are familiar with the leader. My research will analyze specific leadership traits that individuals state they possess, and which leadership traits principals and associate principals believe their colleagues possess. Then, by interviewing the

individuals on high school administration teams, I will be able to better understand how these traits build strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization.

To understand both of my secondary questions, the rationale will also focus on how high school administration uses communication as a tool to strengthen relationships within their secondary administration team and throughout the team's educational system. This secondary question is critical to leadership teams. For the secondary questions and the primary research question, the inspiration was provided by Barry Oshry and his writing *In The Middle* (1994). Oshry describes the power of individuals and teams in the middle of an organization, like high school leadership teams. He stated, "Middleness is also a potentially empowering system condition." (p. 43) He further describes middleness as a "unique opportunity for sensitive and effective influence over the course of system life." (p. 51) This opportunity comes from strong group dynamics, the ability to integrate and synthesize data, and to utilize clear and concise communication with individuals throughout the educational system. From Oshry's writings, I have developed an interest in how groups, like high school leadership teams, communicate to individuals at the district level and to teachers and staff in their buildings.

Personal Beliefs Related to Secondary Leadership Teams

I have had many experiences participating in teams and groups. As I reflect on my experiences of watching others lead teams, one of my most vivid experiences with a team and a leader was at a wilderness camp as an 11 year old camper. I was on a seven day trip through the Quetico Wilderness Area. This was an extensive trip for a young

boy. There were long rugged portages, setting up camp at night, and hours of canoeing. I was the youngest child on this trip. There were two counselors and five other campers. Since I was the youngest camper, the weakest paddler, I struggled on this trip. I know that I frustrated other campers and slowed down the entire trip. I also have an extremely positive memory of the camp counselors talking to the group about the strength of our team. They shared that we need to support each other; we need to help each other. The teamwork was extremely important on multiple occasions, like in business or education, the team had a set of goals. In this situation, the main outcome was to successfully finish the trip. The personal goals were to paddle across a specific lake or carry a pack across a portage which all lead to the larger team goal. The importance of this memory has shown me that individuals, with vastly different backgrounds (and in this situation varying levels of physical strength), can come together under leadership and travel great lengths. The lessons from this experience and others as a youth at a wilderness camp have led me to wondering, if there are certain qualities or traits a leader needs in order to create a high functioning team that can accomplish shared goals in a complex system.

As I grew, my experiences with teams and teamwork evolved. Growing up in a small town, high school athletics was a part of my life. In the fall or weeknights, it surrounded watching friends play football, basketball and volleyball. I was always impressed with the coaches and assistant coaches who could get my friends to behave in ways that created individual and team success. There were plenty of times where the team success was absent, but the organization, goals, and group dynamics that were created by the coaches impacted me both personally and professionally.

As I attended undergraduate and graduate school, my view of teams shifted from non-formal to formal. An example of non-formal teams happened as an undergraduate chemistry major. To be successful in chemistry, especially Physical Chemistry (Thermodynamics), my school colleagues and I knew that working in isolation would not be beneficial for our GPA and our sanity, so we created a study group. Like many highly functioning teams, we supported each other, and we all had a set goal: to be accountable to ourselves and the team and to communicate clearly. In the end, the shared goal was to receive a passing grade in Physical Chemistry. For me, our team was incredibly special. The group created a space where it was safe to ask questions, questions we would not feel comfortable to ask in class. The group developed norms like trust, shared responsibility, and high expectations. As I reflect back to this experience, I know that because of our group, I passed Physical Chemistry. I also came to understand how team dynamics were critically important to our work and our goal. I believe this was possible, because each member brought multiple leadership characteristics to the team.

As I transitioned from a student to a professional career, I had the opportunity to work with teams of teachers in a variety of different ways: from informally in the teacher lounge to Professional Learning Communities. As a classroom teacher, I had opportunities to step into more formal educational leadership roles at my elementary school and throughout the district. One of my first experiences was participating in the school's site-based leadership team. This team supported the building's professional development. This team was led by the building principal. This leadership opportunity gave me insight on how a building leader can support teachers and teacher leaders through a shared leadership model. The principal created structures and protocols for our

team to dialog and discuss topics and theories of action. When the decisions were finalized, she asked the team to cascade the message to our colleagues.

As I developed from a classroom leader to a building leader, I had the opportunity to move from an elementary teacher to an associate principal at a high school. This opportunity gave me insight as to how a single building principal functions compared to secondary principal leadership teams. One of the biggest differences is the function of the end decision makers. At the elementary school, the sole leader and decision maker was the building principal. She took feedback and suggestions from the team, but she was the final decision maker. At my high school, there are two associate principals and one principal. The feedback and communication cycle feels different. With three different leaders, leading different departments, projects and initiatives, the team's communication and clarity becomes extremely important. I believe that principals and associate principals have the capacity to function at a high level, but multiple messages from district leaders or teachers create an environment where confusion exists.

As a result of my doctoral studies, I have had the opportunity to read and study multiple leadership theories. These theories have been fundamental for me to craft my research questions. Many of the theories state that leadership teams are one of the most critical aspects for highly successful companies. This view is different from past theories that I have read, which focused on single charismatic leaders (CEOs and Presidents) who are able to turn their companies around or create significant leadership theories. The theories all surround how teams are constructed in various environments and situations.

The term constructivism was new to me when I started my doctoral work. It has had a major impact on my beliefs to learning and leading. Understanding how

individuals construct knowledge, why they chose to interpret specific data, and what beliefs, both conscious and unconscious they espouse, is critical to understanding how individuals function. This is even more important to teams, because each individual on the team has created their own experience from their current environment. The knowledge that individuals create is from the actions and the reflection on their actions (Fosnot, 2005).

A visual metaphor that helps to understand how knowledge is constructed and deconstructed to support learning is the transposition of an origami animal to another shape. This visual metaphor can also be used to describe how teams can be developed. Imagine that every human starts with an unfolded piece of paper and through their personal, educational, family, work, and other life experiences, the paper is creased, folded and constructed into an origami animal. Every fold of the paper, every crease, every line is a past experience or learning. We have each created a different origami animal, through each individual's personally constructed view of their environment. The conceptual structures that supports the individual's acquired knowledge develops into different shapes and sizes (Fosnot, 2005). This visual metaphor is connected to a leadership team by imagining that each member of the team is represented as a different origami animal. This is generally a positive with each individual bringing their own past experiences and systems to support the group.

My research question asks how do administration teams construct strong group dynamics, because leadership teams do not always have positive group dynamics. Patrick Lencioni (2002) illustrates how teams can have less than positive team dynamics in *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. The dysfunctions are: Absent of Trust, Fear of

Conflict, Lack of Communication, Avoidance of Accountability and Inattention to Results. The reason five dysfunctions exist is because each individual of a team has constructed their own method of handling situations based on their past experiences. This is where systems and learning as a team is critical. Individuals need to harness their past constructed knowledge supporting the team and deconstructing past practices and knowledge that is detrimental to group development. Individuals need to unfold their current origami forms (“knowledge”), and then re-fold, re-crease, and reconstruct new shapes to develop the team.

To understand the constructs of teamwork models, I will utilize Thompson's (2008) research of integrated teamwork model. His model has three themes a team should focus on: team context, essential conditions and team performance. Thompson's first focus is team context. He argues that teams are products of the larger organizational setting within which the team does its work. Each team is designed differently, with design and the organizational setting impacting the culture of the team. The second focus is essential conditions which is described as a number of factors including abilities, motivation, and strategy which must be in place for a team to be successful. His third focus is team performance. Successful teams need a high level of productivity, cohesiveness, and possess skills to always be learning and integrating throughout the organization. This also extends to individuals on a team, who have acquired leadership knowledge, traits and preference before joining their current team.

Leadership is critical for a team to develop and grow. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) believe most definitions of leadership have two functions: “providing direction” and “exercising influence.” (2004, p. 20). Leaders help

shape the individual into strong team members. This is done by providing directional support and creating essential conditions by developing abilities in individuals and supporting a strong strategy. Leadership is also responsible for supporting the deconstruction of knowledge and practices that do not support the team. This deconstruction process is combined with constructing new norms and beliefs of the group. In referring back to the origami metaphor, the leader is unfolding the individuals' constructed animals, with the purpose of creating new folds (knowledge) and creases (systems and structures). The influence provided by leadership is critical for the development of the team. As the team develops, the new knowledge affects the team. Every new fold or crease is impacted by prior knowledge or beliefs. The lines that were once crisp and clean are now being crossed by new folds and creases. This is a critical struggle for leaders and teams. Our past knowledge, communication styles and even relationships can cause stress when trying to create a new model. For secondary leaders, the pressures do not only come from teachers, students and parents. There are pressures from the district, community members, and other stakeholders. For many secondary high school teams, they are in the middle between the needs of the district and the needs of the staff and students. Barry Oshry (1994) states this position as a middle or "middleness is the condition in which we exist between two or more individuals or groups" (p. 3). The building principal lives in the middle and experiences the condition of middleness daily.

The condition of middleness (Oshry, 1994) is compounded when there are multiple leaders on a team, like a secondary administration team. This intersection of middleness, leadership and teamwork, is extremely exciting as the focus of research. I believe that successful high school administrators do not make the best decisions in

isolation. Administrators can positively support the stakeholders of their district, by harnessing the strengths of team members. I feel that many district leaders, superintendents, directors and others, overlook the membership of the secondary leadership teams at a deeper level. It is my personal belief that, if a team can harness effective leadership traits, the team's success rate will increase dramatically. I also believe that as team efficacy increases, individual leadership traits of trust, self-confidence, communication, and empathy will improve.

From my experiences, a successful team is more than a group of individuals working together. Lencioni (2012) states a leadership team is, "a small group of people who are collectively responsible for achieving a common objective for their organization" (p. 21). A successful team effectively combines multiple individual's personal experiences and their leadership values and beliefs. Lencioni also believes, "the only reason that a person should be on a team is that she (or he) represents a key part of the organization or brings truly critical talent or insight to the table" (Lencioni, 2012, p. 24). These quotes helped drive research topics. I ask myself, "What is the insight or talent that successful secondary principals need to support a great team?" The advantage that my personal experiences will have on my dissertation is the fact that I have worked with successful teams. While on these teams, I have had the opportunity to read leadership books and put the theories into practice. The readings will help support my literature review, and the theories will help guide my development of questions and data collection.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction

This review of literature captures multiple critical components, which I believe are fundamental to understanding and answering my research questions. The review starts with defining the philosophical and theoretical framework of my research. This includes my research question and an introduction to defined terms. The working definitions, frameworks, and theories are from prominent researchers and specialists in business, healthcare, and education. The main researchers and experts include Northhouse (2013), Thompson (2008), and Lencioni (2010, 2012) to National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) (2004, 2010), Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005) and Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom & Anderson (2010). The work of these eminent individuals is critical for answering my research questions. Their work establishes a foundation for the definitions and frameworks that support my dissertation.

As stated in chapter one, my research questions focus on the group dynamics of high school administration teams with a focus on the individual leadership traits and how teams construct the conditions to foster integration and communication across a learning organization. This review will cover five themes that support my research question. The five themes are Leadership, Leadership Traits, Teams, School Administration Leadership (Principalship), and High School Administration Teams. Each theme will be defined and analyzed for their correlation to group dynamics. In conclusion, this literature review is a compilation of work from prominent leaders and researchers in the fields of education and business that support and enhance my research and the question I am endeavoring to answer.

Philosophical and Theoretical Framework

This study will perform an examination on the workings of high school leadership teams. My primary research question is: “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” My secondary research questions are: “Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams?” and “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?”

Leadership teams are not new to schools and businesses, according to Thompson (2008), “Teams and team thinking have been around for years at companies such as Procter & Gamble and Boeing” (p. 5). The idea of modern teams started over 80 years ago. One of the pioneers in teams and teamwork, Professor Elton Mayo, conducted research on teamwork from 1927 to 1932 (Workforce, 2002). Teams and team thinking in education have been present in schools for years. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) emerged in the 1960’s, and research into PLCs became more mainstream in the 1990s (Joyce, 2004). At the surface, research on high school leadership teams would seem to have previously been answered. The fact is that after an extensive literature review, I have found little information to support my question and the complex ideas around high school administration teams and how group dynamics are supported by integration and diffusion of knowledge (Louis, K. S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K. L., & Anderson, S. E. 2010).

The essential terminology in this literature review were selected based on multiple theories of teamwork in the world of business and education. The terms of Leadership, Leadership Traits, Teams, School Administration Leadership (Principalship), Leadership, Teams and Group Dynamics are critical in aspects of my research questions. To help the reader understand the role of the leader in this research, I will also define the terms Principal and Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. The terminology defined will support my research questions. Secondly, I will utilize the research to give the reader a bridge between these terms in the realm of business and education.

Many people likely believe they understand the complexity of leadership and teamwork in schools. The truth is that the role of the school principal is complex. Shaked and Schechter (2013) articulate this point well, “school leadership has never been easy; however, practitioners and researchers alike agree that current-day principals face particularly complex challenges” (p. 773). Shaked and Schechter’s quote points to the importance of school leadership and the complex challenges they face. It is equally important to have a strong understanding of the terms and the perspective of high school principals and associate principals who spent their time and energy building strong administration teams which foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization. For this research, I will use associate/assistant/vice principal. The following sections are aligned to define the critical terms and groups in this research: Leadership, Leadership Traits, Teams, School Administration Leadership (Principalship), High School Administration Leadership Teams and Group Dynamics.

Leadership

There is little debate that organizations need leadership to support vision, mission, communication and culture (Lencioni, 2012). School leadership and leadership in other industries have congruent and incongruent alignment on leadership theory and practice. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) believe most definitions of leadership have two functions: “providing direction” and “exercising influence” (p. 20). Ferrell, Hirt and Ferrell (2016) define leadership as, “the ability to influence employees to work toward organizational goals” (p. 176). Leadership in education, business, health care settings or other industries have similarities, where leaders need strong results for the product they produce or service they provide. In education, leaders are doing both, providing direction (vision, mission, operation planning, curriculum) and exercising influence (on teams, teachers and students). Hirsh and Killion (2007) believe leaders have a responsibility to consider every decision and action on how it impacts the outcomes or organizational goals (student achievement) and to build the capacity of all individuals (principals, teachers and support staff). Educational and business research tells us that leadership is about finding solutions to the problems that organization and constituents face. (Sergiovanni, 2009; Fritz, 2011; Hallinger, 2003).

Business leadership research possesses a spectrum of leadership theories that range from hierarchical driven leadership styles like strategic leadership, which is “the ability to make day-to-day decisions that enhance the long-term viability of the organization” (Rowe, 2011, p.81), to Path-Goal Theory where leaders support employee performances by creating clear goals, clarifying the path each employee should take,

removing obstacles in the path and providing support (Northouse, 2013). The other end of the spectrum is servant leadership.

Northouse (2013) describes servant leadership as a “paradox” to traditional leadership models. Servant leadership places the leader’s wants and needs second to the employees or followers. Greenleaf (1991) describes the dichotomy at the ends of this leadership spectrum:

The servant-leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature (p.6).

In educational research, there have been many theory driven leadership approaches. Some leaders have utilized the above theories of Strategic, Path-Goal or Servant leadership. Research states that there are two fundamental leadership theories that have strongly influenced educational leaders, which are the Instructional and Transformational leadership theories.

Hallinger (2003) writes that Instructional leadership emerged in the 1990s and was focused on principals and other leaders to focus on curriculum and instruction as a focal point. Hallinger (2003) goes on to state that the importance of the role of an Instructional leader is to support change implementation, school effectiveness and school improvement. A limitation of instructional leadership is that principals have a larger role

than just instruction. Principals focus on managerial, instructional, human resource, political and symbolic leadership roles within their building and school community. (Hallinger, 2003; Mombourquette, 2013)

One of the most widely favored and implemented leadership models in education has been Transformational leadership. Transformational leadership gained popularity in the early 1990's. This leadership style evokes individuals to build the organization's capacity by empowering employees through a lense of shared leadership (Hallinger, 2003). Bass and Avolio (1993) categorize transformational leadership into four different components or factors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Bass was one of the first researchers in the 1980's to categorize transformational leadership. Other researchers have enumerated transformational leadership through various and widespread research. Bennis and Nanus (1985) set conditions for leaders to create: clear vision of future state of their organization, social architects for their organization, creating trust in their organization and using a creative deployment of self-regard. Others like Kouzer and Posner (1997, 2002) and Leithwood et al. (2000) have described and aligned how transformational leaders support individuals, create shared goals, build culture and model for employees. Other leadership theories have been developed and quantified to support leaders. One driver for each of the various leadership theories is the ability of the leader to understand him or herself and to be able to use their leadership characteristics, strengths or traits to support the various human managerial and organizational components within their organization.

Leadership Traits

Many researchers over the years have focused on leadership traits to explain how individuals succeed in leadership positions. Howard Gardner's (1985) Theory of Multiple Intelligences supported the idea of a single intelligence that was dominant over the other intelligences in individuals. In 2008, Gardner published the *5 Minds for the Future: Disciplined, Synthesizing, Creating, Respectful, and Ethical*. In his research, he describes a "synthesis" (p. 153) of the minds, but still describes the five minds have an order for mastering. Gardner's *5 Minds for the Future* help individuals to be "well equipped to deal with what is expected, as well as what cannot be anticipated" (p. 2).

Other researchers have created lists of characteristics, traits or strengths to describe leadership or personality styles, such as Tom Rath (2007) who compiled a list of 34 themed strengths. These strengths cover a "common language or classification of talents" (p. 16). The strengths, published in *Strength Finders 2.0*, focus on an individual's talent and investment and report five specific strengths for individuals to utilize. The power of Rath's (2007) *Strength Finders 2.0* is similar to the research by Gardner. If you know yourself and your strengths, minds or traits, you will be able to "help uncover people's hidden talents and build a stronger team" (p. 23). The power of knowing your leadership traits is that you know your strengths and weaknesses. Other prominent education researcher's work, like Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2005), focused on large meta-analysis of leadership studies and identified 21 School Leader Responsibilities that correlate with school success and contribute to student achievement.

Sergiovanni (2009) believes that "Leadership is more about helping people gain an understanding" (p. 9). Understanding personal leadership strengths, responsibilities,

minds, or traits can help leaders communication, lead, and support individuals and teams. Northouse's leadership traits have many similarities to Gardner's Minds or Rath's Strengths or Marzano et al. 21 responsibilities. Northouse's (2013) traits are backed by strong research on an individual's traits and how they support team learning. "The Leadership Trait Questionnaire (LTQ) quantifies the perceptions of the individual leader and selected observers, such as subordinates or peers" (p. 37). The LTQ measures "an individual's traits and points the individual to the areas in which that individual may have special strengths or weaknesses". (p.37) The Leadership Traits from the Leadership Trait Questionnaire (LTQ) is located in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Northouse Leadership Traits

The 14 leadership traits are:

1. Articulate: communicates effectively with others
2. Perceptive: is discerning and insightful
3. Self-confident: believes in himself/herself and his/her ability
4. Self-assured: is secure with self, free of doubts
5. Persistent: stays fixed on the goals, despite interference
6. Determined: takes a firm stand, acts with certainty
7. Trustworthy: is authentic and inspires confidence
8. Dependable: is consistent and reliable
9. Friendly: shows kindness and warmth
10. Outgoing: talks freely, gets along well with others
11. Conscientious: is thorough, organized and controlled
12. Diligent: is persistent, hardworking
13. Sensitive: shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic
14. Empathic: understands others, identifies with others

Like other leaders, leadership traits create insight for principals and associate principals to support building strong teams, collaborating with teachers and how to use their strengths to support the school's vision and mission. Northouse's Leadership traits will support this research by creating a clearer understanding of how individual leaders rate themselves and their colleagues. This information gained will highlight leadership traits and how the complex dynamics support high school leadership teams.

Team

Harvard Business School Professor Elton Mayo conducted one of the earliest research experiments about teams (Workforce, 2002). Later on, this research became known as the Hawthorne Experiment. Mayo conducted experiments at the Western Electric Hawthorne Works in Chicago. These investigations into teamwork and team building occurred from 1927 to 1932 and were substantial groundwork for increasing productivity in assembly line teams and had significant impact that remains today. The research in this paper is focused on high school administration teams. Lencioni (2012) believes a “team is a small group of people who are collectively responsible for achieving a common objective for their organization” (p. 21). To many, a team is a specific type of group who “are interdependent” (Hill, 2013; Hatch 2006;), “share common goals” (Hill, 2013; Thompson, 2008; Lencioni, 2010) “coordinate their activities” (Marazano & Waters, 2009) and support the social structure (Daly, Liou & Brown, 2016). Teams take collective leadership, a term used by Louis et al. (2010) which refers to the extent of influence that members in an organization exert on the decisions and outcomes in their school. Thus, group knowledge comes from team members integrating knowledge from multiple sources. Espinosa and Clark (2014) define team knowledge in collective leadership as “collective knowledge that combines task and team-related knowledge together with members’ understanding of the current situation” (p. 335). For this research, I will use Thompson’s (2008) definition of a team, “a group of people who are interdependent with respect to information, resources, and skills and who seek to combine their efforts to achieve a common goal” (p. 4).

Thompson (2008) refers to Alderfer's (1976) description of a team as having five characteristics when they are successful. Table 2.2 has Alderfer's five characteristics with additional current research. When these characteristics are visible, Thompson (2008) believes a team will be strong.

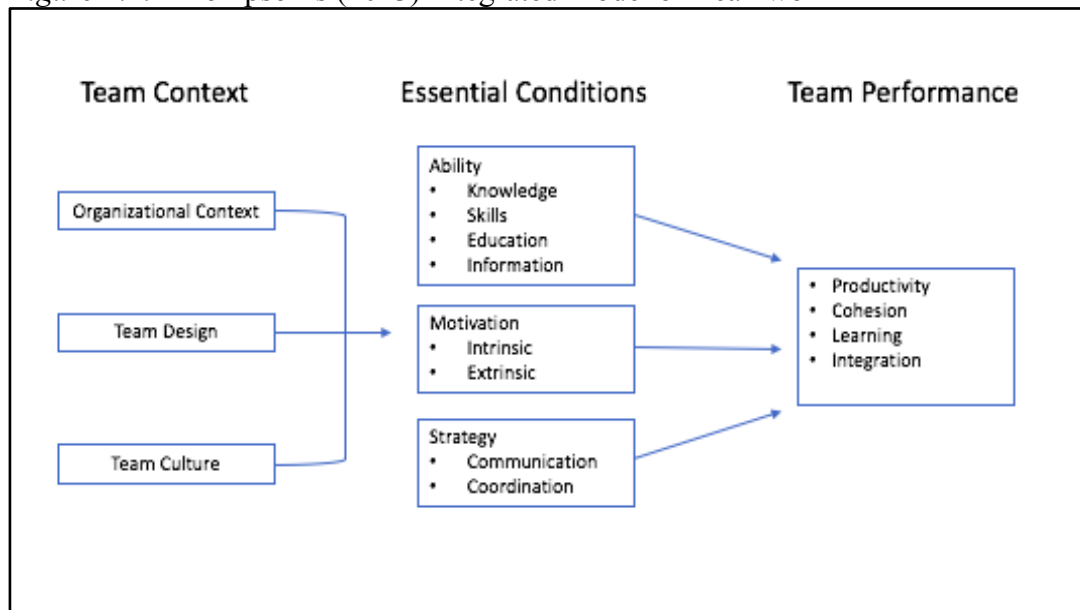
Table 2.2. Alderfer's Five Characteristics

Teams exist to achieve a shared goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (individuals) who feel jointly responsible for the success of whatever process or project they are engaged in (Bushe, 2011) • individuals understand the purpose and share goals (Lencioni, 2010) • people enjoy regular interaction with individuals who have similar interests and goals (Scarnati, 2001). • groups provide each member of the team with prestige and recognition (Scarnati, 2001)
Team members are interdependent regarding some common goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • team members must never be fully self-directed or completely independent (Johnson, Heimann, & O'Neill, 2000) • teams are often empowered to accomplish tasks not available to individuals (Scarnati, 2001) • high performing systems establish and accomplish nonnegotiable goals in every space of the organization (Marazano & Waters, 2009) • "teams that are willing to commit publicly to specific results are more likely to work with a passionate, even desperate desire to achieve those results" (Lencioni, 202, p. 219)
Teams are bounded and stable over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (a) team has members that are identifiable and all members are known to each other. (Thompson, 2008) • "relational trust develops through interactions with people who share some common experiences" (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere & Montie, 2006, p. 37) • "project members who interact over a long time develop standard work patterns that are familiar and comfortable" (Thompson, 2008, p. 161)
Team Members have the authority to manage their own work and internal processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • team members determine how their work gets completed. (Thompson, 2008) • a sense of autonomy has a powerful effect on individual performance and attitude. (Pink, 2009, p.90)
Teams operate in a social system context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "people are able to understand the interrelationships they have with each other and with their environment" (Bodaken and Fritz, 2006, p. 126) • "the environment of an organization does not exist independently of the organization, rather it is socially constructed and reconstructed as people gather and analyze information, make decisions and take actions based on their analysis" (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006, p. 45) • team members, including the principal construction personal relationships that advance the school culture to increase support for all. (NASSP, 2004)

Self-managing teams, like high school administration teams, have partnerships which include creating the conditions that must focus on shared goals, create stable boundaries and understand the social system they manage.

Team partnerships and dynamics are complex. Thompson's (2013) Integrated Model of Teamwork (Figure 2.1) derived from Hackman's (1995) Oriented Framework shows that there are three themes a team should focus on to be successful. These themes are: Team Context, Essential Conditions and Team Performance. The three themes relate directly to Alderfer's (1976) five characteristics of a successful team.

Figure 2.1. Thompson's (2013) Integrated Model of Teamwork



Senge (2006) argues that leading for deep change requires replacing the myth of the 'hero leader' with the concept of leadership communities. Leadership communities work within the constraints of organizational context and design. The first theme of Thompson's Integrated Model of Teamwork (2008), in Table 2.3, details team context and the factors connected with this theme and the definitions associated.

Table 2.3. Thompson's Integrated Model of Teamwork (2008) - Team Context

Team Context – includes the larger organizational setting within which the team does its work, the design of the team in terms of its internal functioning, and the culture of the team.

Thompson further defines these factors:

- **Organizational Context.** The organizational context includes the basic structure of the organization (e.g., lateral, hierarchical), the information system, the education system and the reward system. It includes organizational policy and material and physical resources required to accomplish group tasks.
- **Team Design.** Team design refers to the observable structure of the team (e.g., manager-led or self-managing). It refers to the leadership style within the team, functional roles, communication patterns, composition of the team, and the training of the members.
- **Team Culture.** Culture is the personality of the team. In contrast to team design, which is often deliberate and explicit, team culture includes the unstated, implicit aspects of the team that are not discussed in a formal fashion but that nevertheless shape behavior.

As stated earlier, there are many traits that help support successful leaders.

Thompson (2008) believes that conscientiousness, as a trait, also predicts effective team performance” (p. 26). He goes on to state, “teams are superior to individuals in terms of analyzing information, convergent thinking, and assimilating information” (p. 27).

Teams influence the work or tasks performed including: the tasks and activities that are formally organized as part of the job, supporting the organization’s knowledge base and directly impacting the organizational goals. (Morgeson, Reider, & Campion, 2005). The second theme of Thompson’s Integrated Model of Teamwork (2008) is shown in Table 2.4. Thompson’s second theme focuses on essential conditions and the factors connected with team success.

Table 2.4. Thompson's Integrated Model of Teamwork (2008) - Essential Conditions

Essential Conditions – a number of factors must be in place for a team to be successful. The team member must:

- Bring adequate knowledge and skill to bear on the task.
- Exert sufficient motivation and effort to accomplish the task at an acceptable level of performance.
- Coordinate their activities and communication. (p. 25)

Thompson further defines these factors:

- **Abilities.** For teams to perform effectively, members must have the requisite teamwork knowledge, skill, and ability. Teams are superior to individuals in terms of analyzing information, convergent thinking and assimilating information. (p. 26-27).
- **Motivation.** Comes from both person and external factors. The belief that the group has in themselves, also known as group potency, is a significant predictor of actual performance. (p. 29)
- **Strategy.** A team needs to coordinate the skills, efforts, and actions of its members in order to effectively enact team strategy. Coordination is the combined synchronization of the strategies of all members. (p. 36)

Team performance does not happen in isolation or a vacuum. Teams are governed by the principle of “equifinality” where a “team can reach the same outcome from various initial conditions and by a variety of means” (p. 42). Professional learning teams of teachers and high school administration teams can strengthen their bonds by engaging in collaborative learning work (Schomker, 1996; York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere & Montie, 2006; Marzano & Walters, 2009). The third theme of Thompson's Integrated Model of Teamwork (2008) is provided in Table 2.5 where it details team performance and the skills connected with this theme and the definitions associated.

Table 2.5. Thompson's Integrated Model of Teamwork (2008) - Team Performance

Team Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Productivity. Productivity is arguably the most important measure of team success. The productivity of a team is highly correlated with its goals, as well as the ability of the team to adapt, change, and accommodate the goals in the face of new information, changing organizational priorities, and the changing marketplace. (p. 38) ● Cohesion. For teams, cohesion refers to the process that keeps members of a team (e.g., military unit, work group) united. (p. 40) ● Learning. Teams should represent growth and development opportunities for the individual needs of the members. Teams should be sensitive to members and provide opportunities for members to develop new skills. (p. 41) ● Integration. Teams need to integrate with other units in the organization. Practically, this means that teams must disseminate information, results, status reports, failures, expertise, and ideas in a timely and efficient manner. (p. 41)

Strong and dynamic teams need individuals who share a common group goal, have interdependency with the ability to manage their own work, are bounded and stable and understand the social connections within the team and organization. Thompson's Integrated Teamwork Model illustrates the components that attribute to a team's success. High School Administration teams can utilize the structures above to understand how individual leadership traits and group dynamics can affect the functioning of the team.

School Administration Leadership (Principalship)

In educational leadership, there is a large breadth of research that is focused on principals as building and instructional leaders (Sergiovanni, 2009; Protheroe, 2011, Louis et al., 2010). The literature available focuses on the principal's "complex and demanding role," as a building leader and how principals can lead and partner with teachers (Mercer, 2016, p.7; Shaw & Newton, 2014). Educational research shows a correlation between the success of a teacher from the support of the building principal

(Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2003). Research on how the leadership qualities and traits of how principals support teachers have been thoroughly hypothesized, analyzed and reported (Shaw & Newton, 2014; Bergman et al., 2012; Gulcan, 2012; Hauserman & Stick 2013; Knoeppel & Rinehart, 2008; & Munir & Khalil, 2016). High school leaders are individuals that support the administration of a high school. For the purpose of this study, I have removed middle, elementary or district leaders from this definition. The education institution, for the purpose of this research, would include schools that serve students in grades 9-12. High school leaders include principals and associate principals. There is a plethora of research on job descriptions and responsibilities, lists of characteristics principals possess, and multiple research journals dedicated to principals as leaders. Many of the principal leadership qualities and traits are described in this literature review under the sections of leadership and leadership traits. One impediment to this research is that there are multiple definitions that do not describe the vast complex and unpredictable role of principalship. The definition from the Webster Online Dictionary (2018) states, a “principal” is “a person who has controlling authority or is in a leading position” and “the chief executive officer of an educational institution.” The Encyclopedia of Educational Leadership and Administration (English, 2006) describes principals as “midlevel managers responsible for the efficient and effective function of the building and the occupants in it” (p. 797). These descriptions of principalship seem correct but incomplete. The principalship is a complex role, with many multifarious roles, expectations and proficiencies. To define the principalship, we will look at multiple seminal researchers and organizations to help clarify the complexity.

A principal's daily experience can vary from day to day. Research, from Stanford University's Institute for Research on Education Policy and Practice (Horng, Klasik & Loeb, 2009), illustrates nationally how principals spend their time. (Table 2.6)

Table 2.6. A Principal's Daily Experience, (Horng, Klasik & Loeb, 2009)

		Admin	Organ Mgmt	Day-to- Day Instructio n	Instructio nal Program	Internal Relation s	External Relation s
School Type	Elementary	25.31 (3.50)	20.86 (3.76)	9.26 (2.83)	6.97 (2.40)	17.23 (3.39)	4.61 (1.87)
	Middle	22.48 (2.68)	23.76 (3.73)	8.38 (2.42)	8.63 (2.92)	11.01** (1.63)	4.39 (1.79)
	High School	27.43 (1.63)	20.95 (1.19)	5.88 (1.33)	6.73 (1.22)	14.64 (1.22)	7.70 (1.13)
% Black Students	Lowest Quartile	22.54* (3.73)	23.24 (2.62)	4.39 (1.99)	5.84 (1.74)	15.21 (1.66)	3.99 (2.16)
	Highest Quartile	34.52 (3.60)	21.53 (2.79)	3.65 (1.43)	4.81 (2.08)	14.49 (2.92)	2.83 (1.11)
School Poverty	Lowest Quartile	24.89* (1.52)	21.37 (1.60)	6.32 (1.42)	7.00 (1.46)	14.32 (1.78)	5.41 (1.67)
	Highest Quartile	30.60 (2.95)	20.44 (1.77)	5.34 (2.38)	6.41 (2.03)	15.04 (2.29)	3.82 (1.46)
Principal Gender	Female	26.03 (2.32)	22.58 (1.84)	5.99 (2.66)	8.63 (2.50)	15.33 (1.94)	5.86 (2.31)
	Male	27.79 (1.99)	20.68 (1.68)	5.82 (1.40)	5.10 (1.07)	14.95 (1.78)	4.59 (1.24)
Principal Experienc e	4+ years	21.91* ** (4.32)	19.99 (3.16)	6.15 (2.43)	6.16 (3.16)	17.51 (1.69)	5.99 (3.28)
	2-3 years	27.67 (4.08)	20.58 (3.02)	7.10 (3.09)	7.49 (3.53)	12.92 (2.48)	4.66 (1.72)
	0-1 years	33.76 (3.52)	22.80 (2.40)	3.36 (1.76)	6.05 (1.76)	14.30 (1.69)	3.20 (1.09)

Parentheses indicate robust standard errors. Asterisks indicate significant differences from last category within groupings. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Leithwood, et al. (2004) believes that school leadership has two functions: providing direction and exercising influence. Bambrick-Santoyo (2012) research on the seven levers to an effective school leader incorporates Leithwood's two functions.

Bambrick-Santoyo breaks his seven levers into two groups, instructional levers and cultural levers as referenced in Table 2.7. In the first four levers, the primary focus is on providing direction. For example, under the first lever, data-driven instruction, focuses on designing roadmaps. Other researchers report widespread agreement that principals (leaders) are the key to providing direction in the area of vision, observations, planning and professional development (Barth, 1990; Hargreves & Fink, 2006; Kindal, Crowe & Elsass, 2018; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). The second lever focuses on exercising influence through building culture and teamwork. Bambrick-Santoyo's levers might have been written for educational leaders; however, their influence crosses over to business research as well, where utilizing the levers of teamwork and employee and organizational culture is extremely important. (Tabassi, Roufechaei, Abu Bkar, & Yusof, 2017; Körner, Wirtz, Bengel, & Göritz, 2015).

Table 2.7. Seven Instructional Levers by Bambrick-Santoyo

Direction Levers

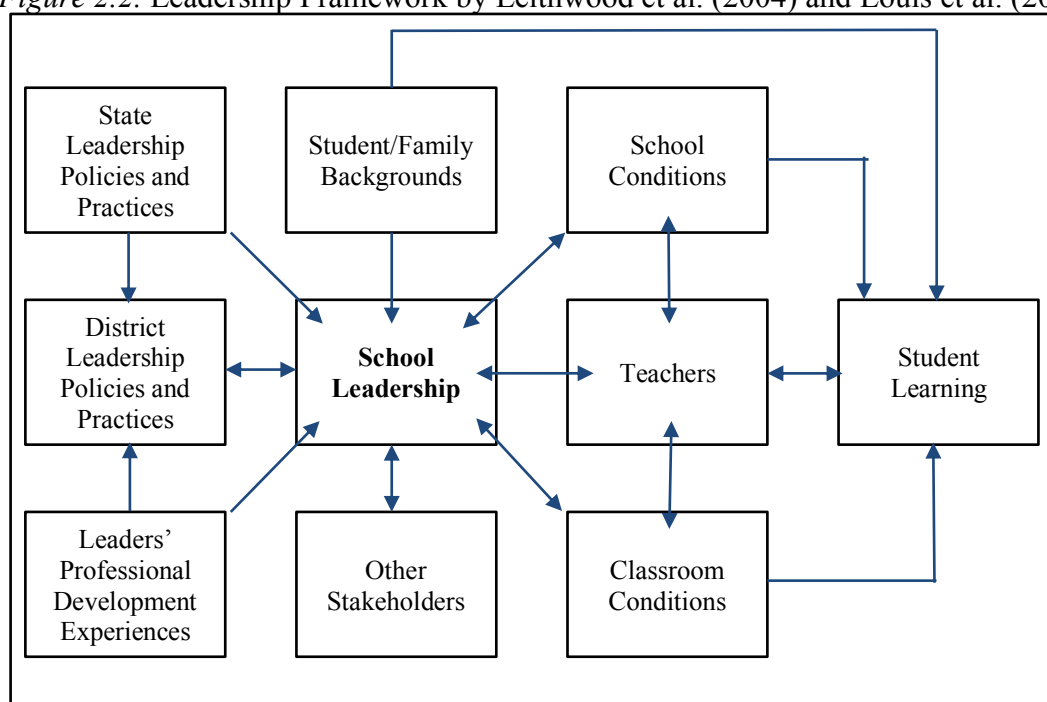
1. Data-driven instruction. Define the roadmap for rigor and adapt teaching to meet students' needs.
2. Observations and feedback. Give all teachers professional, one-on-one coaching that increases their effectiveness as instructors.
3. Instructional planning. Guarantee every student well-structured lessons that teach the right content.
4. Professional development. Strengthen both culture and instruction with hands-on training that sticks.

Cultural Levers

5. Student culture. Create strong culture where learning thrives.
6. Staff culture. Build and support the right team for your school.
7. Managing school leadership teams. Train instructional leaders to expand your impact across the school. (p. 10)

The seminal research by Leithwood et al. (2004) describes school leadership (principalship) as the center force in supporting student learning. Figure 2.2 diagrams the framework that has guided Leithwood et al. (2004) and Louis et al. (2010) research in improving student learning. The arrows on the framework represent where school leadership can provide direction and exercise influence on classrooms, teachers and other conditions.

Figure 2.2. Leadership Framework by Leithwood et al. (2004) and Louis et al. (2010)



Leithwood et al. 2004

The National Association of Secondary School principals' (NASSP) (2018) vision is to have "Great Leaders in every school committed to the success of each student." To reach this commitment, NASSP has developed 10 school administrator skills for the 21st century. NASSP's skills relate to Leithwood et al. (2004) belief that school leadership has two functions: providing direction and exercising influence. Each NASSP skill aligns to providing direction and/or exercising influence. For example, setting

instructional direction relates directly to providing direction. Table 2.8 defines the NASSP (2010) at a deeper level.

Table 2.8. NASSP 10 School Administrator Skills for the 21st Century

Educational Leadership		
Setting Instructional Direction Implementing strategies for improving teaching and learning including putting programs and improvement effort into action. Developing a vision and establishing clear goals; providing direction in achieving stated goals; encouraging others to contribute to goal achievement; securing commitment to a course of action from individuals and groups.	Teamwork Seeking and encouraging involvement of team members. Modeling and encouraging the behaviors that move the group to task completion. Support group accomplishments.	Sensitivity Perceiving the needs and concerns of others. Dealing tactfully with others in emotionally stressful situations or in conflict. Knowing what information to communicate and to whom. Appropriately relating to people of varying ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds.
Resolving Complex Problems		
Judgment Reaching logical conclusions and making high quality decisions based on available information. Assigning appropriate priority to significant issues. Exercising appropriate caution in making decisions and in taking actions. Seeking out relevant data, facts and impressions. Analyzing and interpreting complex information.	Organizational Ability Planning and scheduling one's own work and the work of others so that resources are used appropriately. Scheduling flow of activities; establishing procedures to monitor projects. Practicing time and task management; knowing what to delegate and to whom.	Results Orientation Assuming Responsibility. Recognizing when a decision is required. Taking prompt action as issues emerge. Resolving short-term issues while balancing them against long-term objectives.
Communication		
Oral Communication Clearly communicating when speaking to individuals, small groups, and large groups. Making oral presentations that are clear and easy to understand.		Written Communication Expressing ideas clearly in writing; demonstrating technical proficiency. Writing appropriately for different audiences.
Developing Self and Others		
Development of Others Teaching, coaching and helping others. Providing specific feedback based on observations and data.		Understanding Own Strengths and Weaknesses Understanding personal strengths and weaknesses. Taking responsibility for improvement by actively pursuing developmental activities. Striving for continuous learning.

The role of the principal has changed over time. Traditionally, the role focused on administrative processes and functions. As stated by Bambrick-Santoyo (2012), Leithwood et al. (2004) and NASSP (2010), the role of the principalship is complex, yet themes and similarities from each does emerge. Therefore, creating one definition for a principal would be a heavy task (Shaked and Schecter, 2013). As Stogdil (1974) articulated extremely well, “leadership is...”, which exemplifies the difficulty of clearly defining one leadership in either business or education. Northouse (2013) states there are as “many different definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it” (p.4). From the literature review, defining the principalship is very similar, therefore Northouse (2013) will also provide us with a definition we can use for the principalship: “Leadership (Principalship) is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”. (p. 5) The groups can be teachers, students, board members, district leadership or other stewards of education.

High School Administration Team

As school administration leadership showcased, the role of the principalship is complex. The research for this literature review does not only cover the head principals, but it also focuses on associate principals. An associate principal is an individual that is successful in using the same leadership skills as a principal, but also an individual who is skillful in followership.

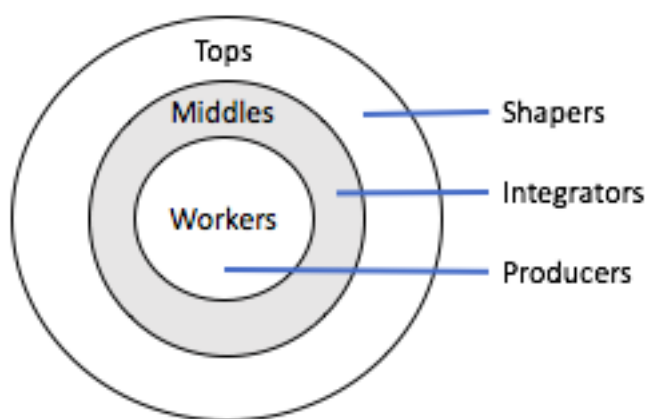
Joy Whitlock (2013) describes followership as the following, “Followership is an emerging concept based on human factors science. It describes a set of skills and behaviors that help improve team performance” (p 20). Whitlock goes on and states that, “good followership is increasingly being recognized as an important component for high

performance” (p. 20). “One of the hallmarks of being a follower is commitment.”

(Sergiovanni, 2009, p. 14) Followership can also be defined as leading from the middle (Oshry, 1994).

Berry Oshry (1994) defines middleness as, “the condition in which we exist between two or more individuals or groups; these groups have differing priorities, perspectives, goals, needs and wants; and each of them exerts pressure on us to function on its behalf” (p. 3). Glaser, Stam & Takeuchi (2016) believe that “middle managers serve as organizational linking pins who are often expected to proactively identify new opportunities emerging at lower levels and overcome obstacles by mobilizing support for initiatives from top managers” (p. 1341). Oshry (1994) defines a system in three parts in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3. System Levels by Berry Oshry.



The outer circle (Tops or Shapers), for the context of this research, would be district leadership. The inner circle (Workers or Producers) would consist of teachers, students, and other constituents. Between the Tops and Workers are the Middles. This position defines a high school leadership team. The Middles report to the “Tops” or

“Shapers” of the district which include the superintendent, members of the district leadership team and/or others, depending on the specific leadership structure. A high school leadership team is also accountable to the third portion of Oshry’s system, the “Workers” or “Producers” in the system (p. 43). These Producers are the teachers, paraprofessionals, and students. The Producers have their own specific needs, so they can be productive and feel part of the system. The pull from both Shapers and Producers can affect the high school leadership team. The high school leadership teams must understand that each group has different needs and expectations. Tops and Middles “influence strategy formation and implementation” (Rays, Heijitjes & Glunk, 2011, p. 102) by living the vision together. Oshry (1994) believes that Middles are the most powerful group in a system. He also believes that Middles can only be successful if they are integrators and diffusers of the information.

Oshry (1994) defines system integrators as individuals or teams that “act in ways which enhance the coordination of system parts, to influence system parts (Tops, Workers, and other level Middles) so that these parts function in sync with one another, so they enhance rather than block one another, so that each part can adjust its performance to meet the requirements of the whole” (p. 54). Integration is present in the workforce from education to business in Thompson’s Integrated Model of Teamwork (2008). One of Thompson’s indicators under team performance is integration and how it supports the organization. Individuals on teams must integrate and disseminate information, results, status reports, failures, expertise, and ideas in a timely and efficient manner.

A strength of the principal and the high school leadership team is they are what Oshry (1994) describes as system diffusers. Oshry believes that “Diffusion is a source of the unique power of the Middle. Diffusion provides contact with and information about different parts of the system, and it is that contact and information which makes it possible for Middles to see the total system more clearly than either Tops or Bottoms (Producers) and which enables them to function in a sensitive and informed manner” (p. 12). In any environment of an organization, there does not exist vast independence, rather there are large socially constructed supports where people gather and analyze information. The importance of diffusion in organizations is that it makes decisions and actions visible based on the team’s analysis of the information gathered (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006).

High school leadership is dynamic and complex. Leaders need to understand how their personal leadership traits (Northouse, 2008), leadership skills (NASSP, 2005, 2010) and responsibilities (Marzano et al. 2005) of the principalship affect their leadership team. With multiple administrators, it is additionally important to ensure staff and student success, because each individual on the team has a different set of knowledge, experiences and leadership traits. The knowledge that individuals create is from the actions and the reflection on their actions (Fosnot, 2005) and can impact the leadership team’s success. The role of the administration team is to integrate the various systems, knowledge and traits. To develop these systems and knowledge, strong teams utilize the research presented in Thompson (2008) Integrated Model of Teamwork. Teams focus on the team’s context, the conditions that support strong teams and the overall performance indicators.

Administrators can utilize the theories presented by Oshry's (1994) research on the power of working in the middle to understand group dynamics. Oshry shows us that individuals gain information from multiple parts in the systems and can integrate and diffuse that knowledge to see the complexities from multiple viewpoints. The role of the high school leadership team is more complex than the single principal leader. Teams must understand how individual traits, followership, leadership theory and their position in the middle of the educational organization can affect their group dynamics and how the high school administration team influences the school and district.

Summary

The research presented in this literature review demonstrates the need for research on high school leadership teams. There is a large amount of research focused on leadership, leadership traits and teams. This research is clear that individuals have various leadership traits, and these traits can support how teams function. There is limited research on how high school administration teams function together and how these teams integrate and diffuse knowledge to manage their system. Chapter three will encapsulate the research in this literature review through a mixed method approach to better understand my primary and secondary research questions. The research in this chapter will also influence how I understand my findings in chapter four and my conclusion in chapter five.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Design and Methods

The research study described in this dissertation examined how high school administrative teams function as a group. This study was limited by the extent of responses able to be collected, so it included data from high schools with larger administrative teams in Minnesota. The data collected helped me to understand which leadership traits were present within teams and how teams communicate to colleagues, supervisors, teachers and other stakeholders. This research is near and dear to my heart, since I have been a high school administrator for the past eight years. To understand the complexity of high school leadership teams, I selected a mixed method approach. Creswell and Clark (2011) believe that a mixed method study is needed when the “complexity of our research problems calls for answers beyond simple numbers in a quantitative sense or words in a qualitative sense” (p. 21). McMillan and Schumaner (2010) believe that the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods “provides a more complete investigation” (p. 25). This mixed method study addressed my research questions from chapter one: “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” My secondary research questions were: “Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams?” and “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?” To answer my research questions, I used an explanatory sequential, mixed methods design implemented sequentially, starting with quantitative data collection and analysis in phase one followed by qualitative data collection and analysis in phase two. (Creswell & Clark, 2011)

Research Setting

The setting for my research took place in Minnesota. The following data from the Minnesota Department of Minnesota describe current public school districts and school statistics.

The State of Minnesota School District demographics are provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Public School Districts (2017-18)

Quantity	Type of Public District
327	Public Operating Elementary and Secondary Independent Districts
164	Charter Schools
22	Miscellaneous Cooperative Districts
16	Special Education &/or Vocational Cooperative Districts
12	Education Districts
4	Intermediate School Districts
3	Integration Districts
2	State Schools/Academies
2	Special School Districts
2	Non-Operating Common School Districts

The State of Minnesota has 2,072 Public Schools. Table 3.2 displays the State of Minnesota Public School Types (MDE, 2018) demographics.

Table 3.2. Public School Types (2017-18)

Quantity	Type of School
282	Area Learning Centers-ALC's
33	Distance Learning Programs - State Approved
10	K-12 Schools
983	Elementary Schools
228	Middle Schools Grades 5-8
18	Junior Highs Grades 7-9
223	Senior Highs Grades 9-12 or 10-12
220	Combined Grades 7-12

Minnesota and the school systems within have the reputation as some of the nation's best educational systems. According to Education Week *Quality Counts 2018*, Minnesota ranks in the top ten (10th) best states for education. Education weekly looks at

three areas: chance for success, school finance, and K-12 Achievement (Education Week, 2018).

Research Participants

For the quantitative data collection, the research participants were from secondary schools, as defined by the Minnesota Department of Education. I utilized Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) to distribute my research survey. The survey was sent to Minnesota Secondary Principals in Senior Highs and Secondary Schools (7-12) (MDE, 2018). The eligibility criteria for research participants were as follows: 1.) if the recipient was a lead or associate/assistant/vice principal and (2) if the associate/assistant/vice principal had a high school administration team of three or more. The team needed to be a principal and associate/assistant/vice principal as defined in chapter two.

Qualitative data collected was from two metro high schools and one large rural high school. The schools fell into MDE's school categories of Senior Highs (9-12 or 10-12) and/or Secondary Schools (7-12) (MDE, 2018). Each participating team that was interviewed had a high school administration team of three or more. These teams consisted of a building principal and associate/assistant/vice principals. The data was collected from one-on-one interviews. The interview questions utilized the data collected during the quantitative data collected in the survey. By connecting the qualitative questions to the survey data, it helped validate the survey questions and support the overall data collection.

Research Methodology

High school leadership teams are complex. To articulate and understand the data, there needed to be a thorough research methodology. In order to understand my complex research topic, I selected a mixed method approach. I believed that only utilizing a quantitative or qualitative approach would not give the rich detail needed to thoroughly understand high school leadership teams. By using both quantitative and qualitative data, I collected a more comprehensive data set, was able to investigate using different types of research questions and enhanced the credibility of findings from a singular method (McMillan and Schumaner, 2010).

The mixed methods sequential explanatory design consists of two distinct phases: collection of quantitative data followed by qualitative data. This design followed a participant-selection variant of mixed methods sequential explanatory design (Cresswell & Clark, 2011). In this design, the researcher first collects and analyzes the quantitative data followed by interviewing individuals. In a participant-selection variant, “the research places priority on the second, qualitative phase instead of the initial quantitative phase” (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The quantitative phase helped to shape qualitative data collection through interview questions asked to the research participants.

The importance of the quantitative approach is articulated well by McMillan and Schumaner (2010) as quantitative research states, “emphasize objectivity in measuring and describing phenomena” (p. 21). For this qualitative portion of research, I utilized a series of survey questions (Appendix 1). This survey was sent to high school principals and associate/assistant/vice principals through the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP). There were two versions of the survey sent to the principals

and associate/assistant/vice principals. The first version was intended for lead principals, and the second was for associate/assistant/vice principals. This is to ensure the data collected could be desegregated by principal and associate/assistant/vice principals.

The survey covered three areas: demographics, a leadership traits questionnaire, and team dynamics. Please see Appendix A for the survey questions for both the principal and associate/assistant/vice principals. The first section, demographics, utilized multiple choice questions. Section two was the Leadership Traits Questionnaire from Northouse (2013). The purpose of this questionnaire was to collect data and measure individual and team member's personal characteristics of leadership. Each principal associate/assistant/vice principal rated themselves, and then they individually rated each of their administration team members. The third section of this survey focused on team dynamics. This section was designed to understand the qualities of teams as defined by Thompson (2008). These qualities are Essential Conditions and Team Performance. The team dynamics portion of the survey asked respondents to answer multiple choice questions and questions placed on a Likert Scale. The Likert scale was used to understand the respondents' attitudes towards the questions in the team dynamic section.

To deepen the research and discern beliefs, actions, and attitudes of individuals on high school leadership teams, the second portion of this mixed method research was qualitative. Qualitative research is critical to understand how high school administration teams function. Creswell (2007) defines qualitative as "research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problem(s)" (p. 37). Creswell (2007) finishes the definition of qualitative research with the reason I picked a mixed method research approach. "The final written report...includes the voices of

participants, the reflectivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem (p. 37). I strongly believe that to understand the complexity of high school leadership teams, we need to hear the voice of the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals. To capture the voice of my participants, I used interviews.

The interview questions (Appendix 1) focused on answering my three research questions. The data collected from the quantitative portion of this research helped to support the qualitative portion. The interview questions were open ended, and the data collected from the interview helped to verify the data collected from the surveys. The interviews were conducted one-on-one with each interviewee.

Mixed method research provided strength to understand the complexity that is manifested in high school leadership teams. The first phase of quantitative research using surveys helped to understand the participant's demographics, leadership traits and team dynamics. The quantitative research strengthened and supported the development of the qualitative interview questions. By choosing a mixed method approach, I was able to collect a more comprehensive data set.

Conceptual Framework

For this research, I designed an explanatory process with a participant-selection variant to better understand the responses to interview questions. Quantitative research alone is not rigorous enough for this topic of research. The quantitative research laid the groundwork for the qualitative research and interviews with the high school leadership teams. This mixed method design was chosen based on the power of individuals' experiences and the constructed experiences of my research participants. From my

extensive literature review, past and current research has focused on theories based in leadership and teamwork (Yoon & Thye, 2012, Thompson, 2008), on how leadership can partner with others to promote positive culture (Bushe, 2011), and on how principals can communicate with other educational personnel like counselors, deans, teachers, instructional leaders, and other stakeholders.

The literature review for this study verified that there is little research on the aspects of how high school leadership teams work together to create a climate where collaboration, support and excellence is fostered. I believe that my dissertation will be a first in studying the relationship of high school leadership teams and how they build strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization.

For the literature review, I selected five themes which support a deeper understanding of my research questions, from an in-depth study of current and past literature. These themes support my second research question, “Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams?”

The five themes are: Leadership, Leadership Traits, Leadership Teams, School Administration Leadership (Principalship) and High School Administration Teams. I utilized the Northouse (2013) Leadership Trait Questionnaire (LTQ) to gain insight on the individual’s and high school team’s leadership traits.

The 14 leadership traits are:

1. Articulate: Communicates effectively with others
2. Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful

3. Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability
4. Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts
5. Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference
6. Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty
7. Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence
8. Dependable: Is consistent and reliable
9. Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth
10. Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others
11. Conscientious: Is thorough, organized and controlled
12. Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking
13. Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic
14. Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others

The rationale for using Northouse's LTQ was to understand which leadership traits principals believe they possess. I asked the research participant to rate their leadership colleagues using the same leadership traits. The result gave me both the personal leadership traits and what the leadership traits perceive their colleagues possess. The survey questions are located in Appendix 1.

The data collection period for the first phase of this research was opened for twenty-one days. During this time, MASSP sent an email to principals and associate/assistant/vice principals across Minnesota. MASSP sent three other reminders over the twenty-one day period. The final reminder was sent before the data collection period end date. I utilized Survey Monkey as the host for my electronic survey. The electronic program tabulated the quantitative responses into the categories created:

demographics, LTQ for primary respondent, LTQ for colleagues and leadership questions based on communication and teams.

Phase two of data collection included interviewing three high school administration teams. The teams were selected by me prior to the survey being administered. Each team is part of the MASSP and came highly recommended from multiple sources. Their schools also had teams of three or more, and the principal had been on the team for more than four years. I did not know personally how the high school functioned before I asked them to interview. I believe that every Minnesota high school leadership team has their strengths and weaknesses, and the interview process unearthed both. As a researcher, I needed to look at the data to see what the strengths of each site were, and that data helped me answer my research questions. The leadership teams were not identified and selected based on student data or personal or school-based awards. Each interviewee had access to the survey. Two of the administration teams had four members, and the third team had three members. The interviews were in-person at the principal's or associate/assistant/vice principal's schools. I asked the same questions to each secondary high school team member, and information gathered by the interviews was then cross-referenced with the survey data to show validity in my research methodology and data.

Reliability and Validity

As a member of a high school leadership team, this research is very significant to me. To make sure I was not placing strong personal values or beliefs into the research, I wanted to reflect on my own subjectivity. During the design and analysis, "limited my subjectivity on selecting data that fit my preconceptions and selecting data" that stand out

to me as a researcher and a member of a high school leadership team (Maxwell, 2013, p. 124). Other reliability and validity considerations were what Maxwell (2013) describes as reactivity. My intention was to be intentional in order not to "control" the study for a particular outcome (p. 124). To make sure that I created a valid research project, I implemented Maxwell's (2013) validity test checklist. This checklist consisted of eight areas to focus on for validity: Intensive Long Term Involvement, Rich Data, Respondent Validation, Intervention, Searching for Discrepant Evidence and Negative Cases, Triangulation, Numbers, and Comparison.

Maxwell believes that the fundamental process, when using these validity tests, is to reduce bias and reactivity by "looking for evidence that could challenge your conclusions, or that bears on the plausibility of the potential threats" (p. 125). This research and the membership of the research participants, my research themes, questions and methodology all passed Maxwell's validity test checklist.

Data Analysis

This research study included two data sets. The first data of this mixed method study included quantitative data from a survey. The second set of data was qualitative through a series of interviews. The quantitative data informed the qualitative data collected.

The first phase of data collection was quantitative data. I used the survey data from SurveyMonkey to group traits of principals and associate/assistant/vice principals and looked for themes in the data. The data was aggregated into multiple areas. The first area was the demographic data from the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals independently. For this research, I only considered individuals who work on a high

school leadership team of three or more. After filtering for individuals on leadership teams, I then disaggregated the remainder of the demographic data. By disaggregating this data, I organized the leaders into different groups according to their school and staff size. I believe this gave important insight on how leadership teams communicate and integrate information within their schools. The second data set from the survey data was analyzed for traits of individual leadership, both for principals and associate/assistant/vice principals. I ranked trait by popularity and by individual principals and associate/assistant/vice principals. In the survey, I asked the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals to rate the leadership traits of the members on their high school leadership teams. Using this data, I looked for leadership trait themes that participants recognized in their colleagues. To gather this information, I sent out two surveys; one survey to principals and a second survey to associate/assistant/vice principals. After the individual data was analyzed, I combined the data sets. During this step in the data analysis, I focused the analyzation on comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences between the two groups. The final data set from the survey was used to analyze the answers under the heading for team dynamics. To analyze, I filtered the data by principals and associate/assistant/vice principals to see if there were differences and/or similarities between the different leadership positions. After analyzing the survey data and understanding the various themes that may occur, I used that information to craft my interview questions, with a focus on leadership traits, team learning, and cohesion, that emerge and how individuals answered the questions under team dynamics.

I chose three high school administration teams to interview based on personal belief that they are a more successful leadership platform. These teams are innovative and support students in different conditions. The second phase of this mix methods research was qualitative. After interviewing 11 principals and associate/assistant/vice principals, I analyzed the interview data by classifying and coding for themes around leadership traits, team dynamics and communication. This coding allowed me to understand how each team member describes their roles, relationships, beliefs, and leadership traits with their high school administration teams. The information provided and the data from the interviews allowed me to understand how teams communicate with each other and others within their organization. The final data investigation was to cross-reference the themes developed from the survey and interview data.

Summary

The complexity of my research questions and the research presented in the literature review demonstrated the need to collect a more comprehensive set of quantitative and qualitative data. The intricacy of understanding how individuals and team members constructed strong group dynamics, which leadership traits were present in teams, and how teams communicate was collected through a participant-selection variant of mixed methods sequential explanatory design method. The initial data collected, which is the quantitative data on demographics, leadership traits using Northouse (2013) Leadership Trait Questionnaire, and collected data on team dynamics, allowed me to identify the essential conditions of teams and team performance. The qualitative portions of this research or the interviews of individuals on high school leadership teams gave me deep insight into leadership teams and how they construct

strong group dynamics that foster communication and integration of ideas and actions across their learning organization. The data from the qualitative and quantitative data helped to validate my findings. The data in this chapter also influenced how I understand my findings in chapter four. In chapter four, I used the quantitative and qualitative data to validate and verify my findings about high school leadership teams based on my literature review. The research methodology used in this study and the review of literature supported the summary, discussion, and implications in chapter five.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Overview

High school leadership can be a complex and multifaceted position. This complexity can be multiplied by having a leadership team. This mixed method study researched individuals and teams to answer my primary research question: “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” The secondary research questions are: “Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams?” and “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?” The intricacy of understanding how individuals and team members constructed strong group dynamics, which leadership traits were present in teams, and how teams communicated was collected through a mixed methods sequential explanatory design method.

The mixed methods sequential explanatory design consisted of two distinct phases: collection of quantitative data followed by qualitative data. To understand the research data, this chapter is broken into multiple parts. This chapter starts with the results from the survey. First, the chapter looks at the principal data, then it interprets the data from the associate/assistant/vice principal surveys. Secondly, both of the surveys were then combined to understand the leadership traits, context, essential conditions, and performance of high school leadership teams.

There were two versions of the survey, to understand the complex role principals and associate/assistant/vice principals have. The survey data was collected using Survey Monkey with one electronic survey for principals and one for associate/assistant/vice

principals. The eligibility criteria for participants to take the surveys were the following: 1.) if the recipient was a lead or associate/assistant/vice principal and 2.) if the associate/assistant/vice principal had a high school administration team of three or more. For this research, the team must have included a principal and associate/assistant/vice principals as defined in chapter two. The surveys collected data on the following: demographics, leadership traits, data on team dynamics, essential team conditions and team performance.

The second portion of this chapter shares the data from 11 interviews of administrators. The administrators consisted of three principals and eight associate/assistant/vice principals, from three Minnesota high schools that each had a high school administration team of three or more. The qualitative portions of this research, from the three high school administration teams, gave me deeper insights into leadership teams and how they construct strong group dynamics that foster communication and integration of ideas and actions across their learning organization. The research from the interviews are broken into three different areas: demographics, leadership traits for self and team members, and the context, conditions and performance of each team. Then, the survey data was compared and contrasted in each area.

Survey

Finding of Survey Results by High School Principals

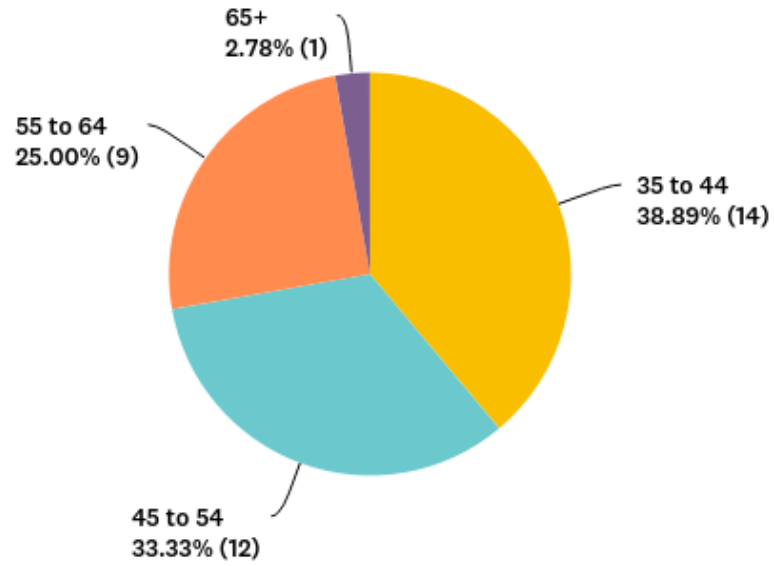
The survey sent to Minnesota high school principals on teams of three or more provided a great deal of information on the various demographics, how principals rate themselves on using Northouse's leadership traits and how their administration leadership team functions. The survey was sent to all administrative members via the Minnesota

Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP). According to MASSP, there are over 1,300 active and retired high school and middle school members. My survey asked MASSP members to respond only if they have a team of three or more. There were 54 principals that started the survey and completed the first section. Of the 54 principals that started the survey, 36 principals completed section two and three. To understand the data, I filtered the results to only look at the data provided by principals that completed the whole survey. This means that there was a total of 36 high school principals, on a team of three or more, that completed the survey.

Demographic results.

The first question in this survey is the consent. All respondents stated *yes* to the consent before completing the survey. The second question asked to respondents was their age (Figure 4.1). The breakdown of principals' age in this survey varied with over half of the respondents being over the age of 45. The other interesting fact was that none of the respondents were the under the age of 34. The further break down of the data showed 14 (38.89%) of the individuals were in the category of age 35 to 44. 12 (33.33%) of the individual respondents were in the range of age 45 to 54. The other categories in this question had a smaller number of respondents. Age 55 to 64 had nine respondents (25%) and one (2.78%) individual was over 65. The results in this question are not surprising, since in the state of Minnesota, principals are experienced educators that are required to have a Master's degree and specific administration license to lead a school. Leading a school is a timely and costly process, so the results of a more aged population aligns to the principalship process.

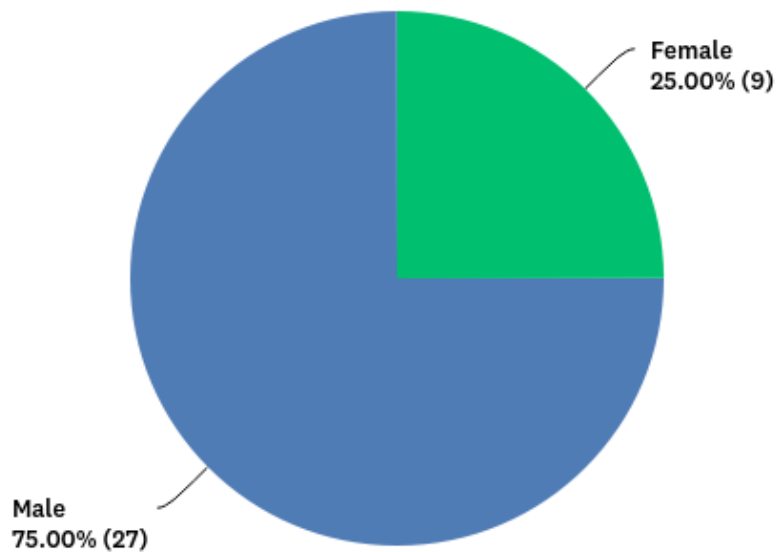
Figure 4.1. Principal Survey Q2: What is your age?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
24 and under	0.00%	0
25 to 34	0.00%	0
35 to 44	38.89%	14
45 to 54	33.33%	12
55 to 64	25.00%	9
65+	2.78%	1
TOTAL		36

The third survey question was related to gender of the high school principal (Figure 4.2). 27 (75%) of the respondents were male and nine (25%) of the respondents were female.

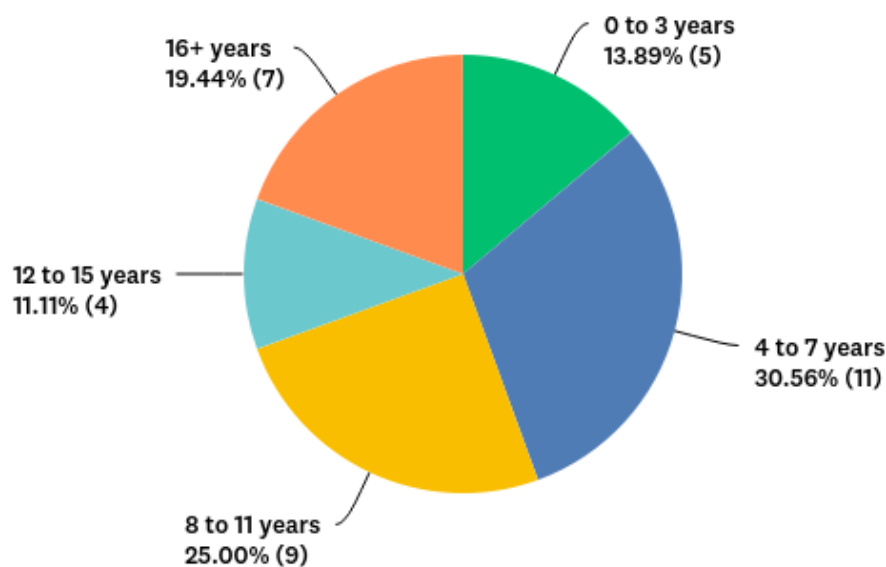
Figure 4.2. Principal Survey Q3: What is your gender?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	25.00%	9
Male	75.00%	27
TOTAL		36

The fourth survey question asked respondents to answer how many years in leadership (as Principals). This question shows the breakdown of individuals and how long they have been in the principal leadership position (Figure 4.3). Over half, 20 (55.55%) of 36 of the respondents, state they have been a principal for over eight years. With seven (19.44%) stating they have been a principal for 16 or more years. The range with the greatest individual category was 4 to 7 years with 11 respondents (30.56%). The next prevalent age range was 8 to 11 years with nine respondents (25%).

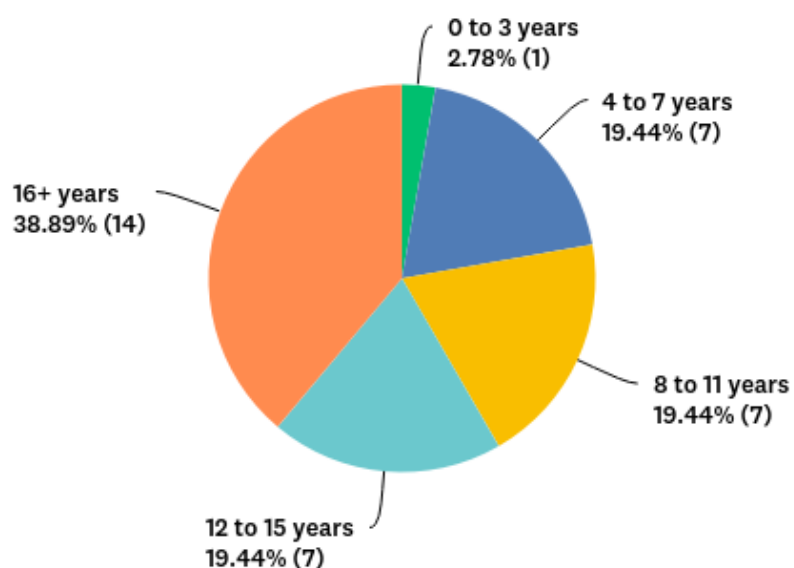
Figure 4.3. Principal Survey Q4: Years in leadership (as Principal)?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 to 3 years	13.89%	5
4 to 7 years	30.56%	11
8 to 11 years	25.00%	9
12 to 15 years	11.11%	4
16+ years	19.44%	7
TOTAL		36

The fifth survey question asked respondents to answer how many years they have been a principal and/or an associate/assistant/vice Principal (Figure 4.4). 14 respondents (38.89%) answered that they have been in leadership for 16 years or more. The smallest respondent category was 0 to 3 years with only one respondent (2.78%) choosing this category. The age categories of 4 to 7 years, 8 to 11 years, and 12 to 15 years had the same number of respondents. Each one had seven individuals (19.44%).

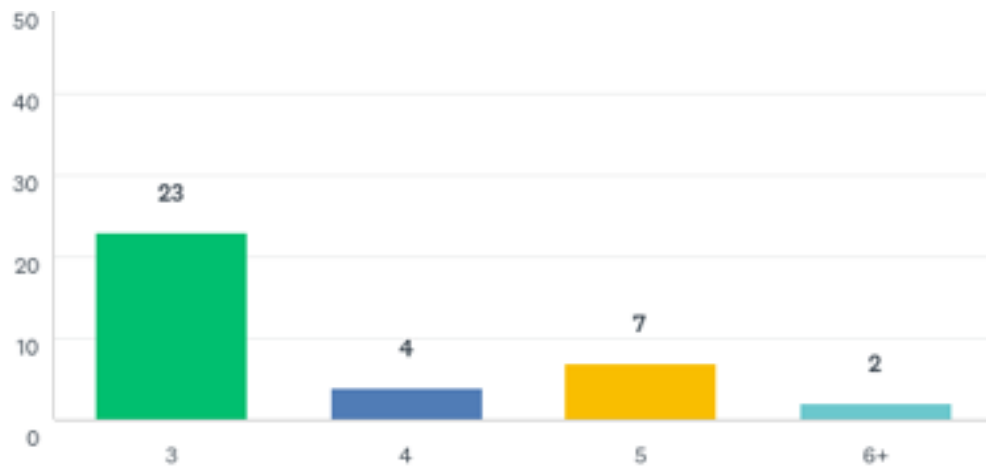
Figure 4.4. Principal Survey Q5: Total years in leadership (as a Principal and/or an Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal)?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0 to 3 years	2.78% (1)
4 to 7 years	19.44% (7)
8 to 11 years	19.44% (7)
12 to 15 years	19.44% (7)
16+ years	38.89% (14)
TOTAL	36

The sixth survey question asked respondents to answer how many members are on their administration/leadership team (Figure 4.5). The largest category was a leadership team of three (63.89%). The next highest category was a leadership team of five (19.44%) followed by four (11.11%) and six or more with two (5.56%).

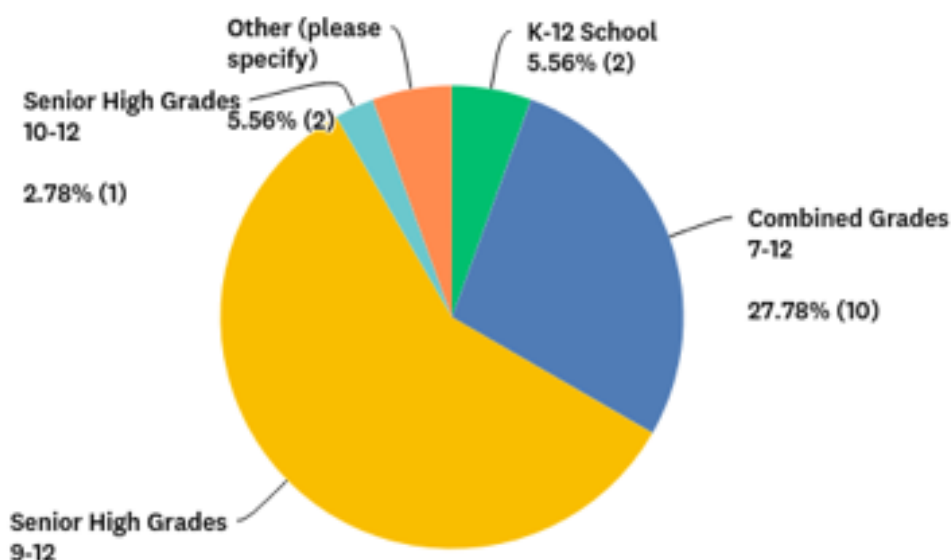
Figure 4.5. Principal Survey Q6: Number of members on your administration/leadership team?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
3	63.89%	23
4	11.11%	4
5	19.44%	7
6+	5.56%	2
TOTAL		36

The seventh question used Minnesota Department of Education school classifications. Respondent reported (Figure 4.6) that a high percentage of the respondents' schools, 21 (58.33%) would fall under Senior High Grades 9-12. The next highest category had 10 respondents (27.78%) and selected combined grades 7-12. The remaining categories had a low incident rate of less than 6%. Two respondents answered they were in K-12 schools. One interesting item was that two individuals were principals in buildings that were outside of MDE's classifications. These principal buildings had a grade level range of 6-12 and 5-12.

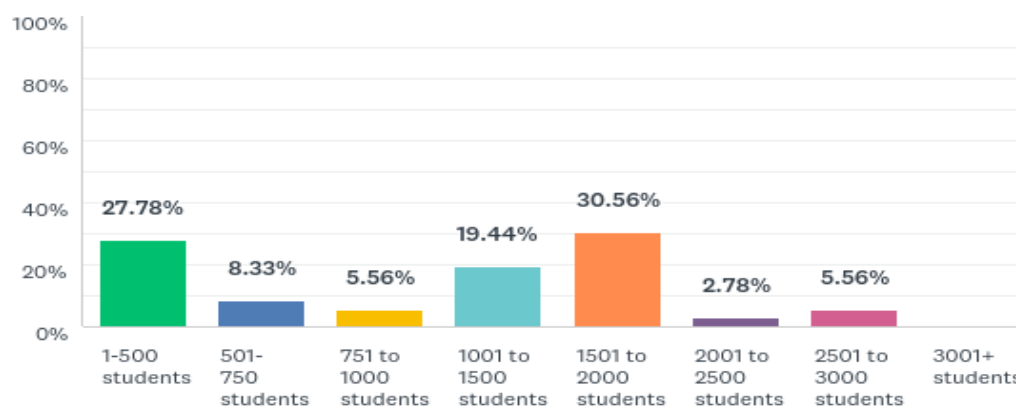
Figure 4.6. Principal Survey Q7: What best describes your high school?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
K-12 School	5.56%	2
Combined Grades 7-12	27.78%	10
Senior High Grades 9-12	58.33%	21
Senior High Grades 10-12	2.78%	1
Other (please specify)	5.56%	2
TOTAL		36

The eighth question asked what the current enrollment of the principal's high school was (Figure 4.7). The greatest range on the survey was 3001+ students, and 0 participants chose this enrollment range. 11 (30.56%) of individuals chose the response 1501 to 2000 students. The second highest range was 1 to 500 students with 10 respondents (27.78%). The third highest range was 1001 to 1500, and seven principals (19.44%) chose this range. The higher number in the range of 1 to 500 showcases that many principals with teams of three or more work in systems that do not have the traditional suburb or city grade structures. On the opposite side, there were two respondents who chose the student range of 2501 to 3000 students.

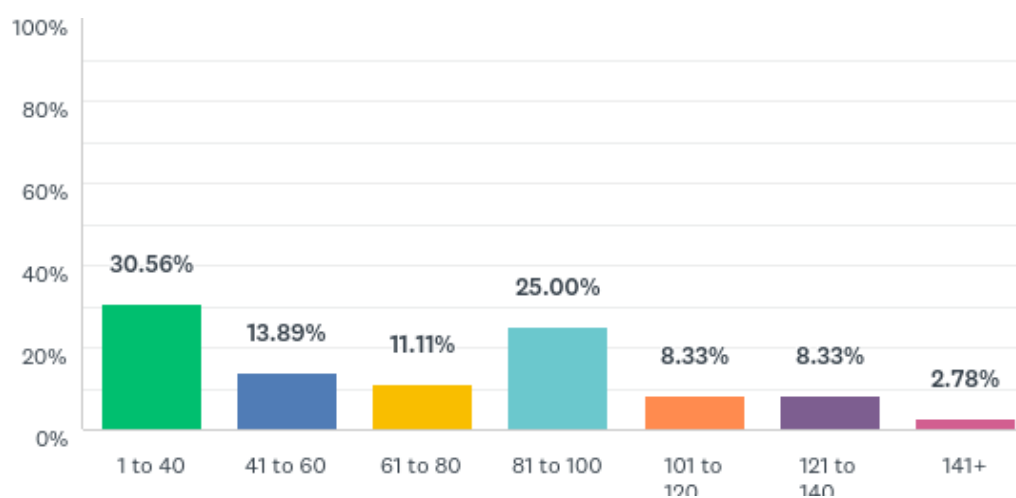
Figure 4.7. Principal Survey Q8: What is the current enrollment of your high school?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-500 students	27.78%	10
501-750 students	8.33%	3
751 to 1000 students	5.56%	2
1001 to 1500 students	19.44%	7
1501 to 2000 students	30.56%	11
2001 to 2500 students	2.78%	1
2501 to 3000 students	5.56%	2
3001+ students	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The ninth survey question asked respondents to answer, in a range, how many licensed teachers they have in their buildings (Figure 4.8). The greatest range were individuals with one to 40 teachers in their high school. This corresponded with the previous question results. 11 principals who took this survey oversee schools that include teachers from K-8. The second highest rate of response was in the 81 to 100 licensed teacher range. Principals (25%) chose this range followed by 41 to 60 (13.89%) and 61 to 80 (11.11%).

Figure 4.8. Principal Survey Q9: What is the current number of licensed teachers in your high school?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1 to 40	30.56%	11
41 to 60	13.89%	5
61 to 80	11.11%	4
81 to 100	25.00%	9
101 to 120	8.33%	3
121 to 140	8.33%	3
141+	2.78%	1
TOTAL		36

Leadership traits for principals and their teams.

The second portion of the survey focused on leadership traits. Respondents were asked to rate themselves and then rate each member of their leadership team. The tenth question asks principals to rate themselves. The survey results show that many principals strongly agree or agree that Articulation, Perception, Trustworthiness and Diligent are the top traits, with 100% of the respondents reporting they agree or strongly agree. Articulation, Perception, Trustworthiness and Diligent are leadership traits that are critical for them.

For questions 11 through 16, the principals were asked to rate the individuals on their leadership team. Table 4.1 shows the leadership traits from how the principals self-rated themselves. The table also shows how principals rated their team members. The survey results show that many principals strongly agree or agree that Trustworthiness and Diligent are the top traits, with both having 95.06% of the respondents reporting they agree or strongly agree that Diligent are team leadership traits that are critical for their colleagues to possess. There are some major differences between how the principals rated themselves and rated their team members. Principals agreed or strongly agreed that they were Articulate, but only agreed or strongly agreed 89.02% that their team members were Articulate. The same difference can be seen in Perceptive. Another interesting finding was that principals agreed or strongly agreed that they were Self-assured 66.67%, but stated they agree or strongly agree their team members are Self-assured 87.8%. This data point is very interesting to see. It is understandable that principals have doubt in their actions, compared to their team members. It is their responsibility to set the vision

of the school, and they are responsible for the staff, students and their administrative team.

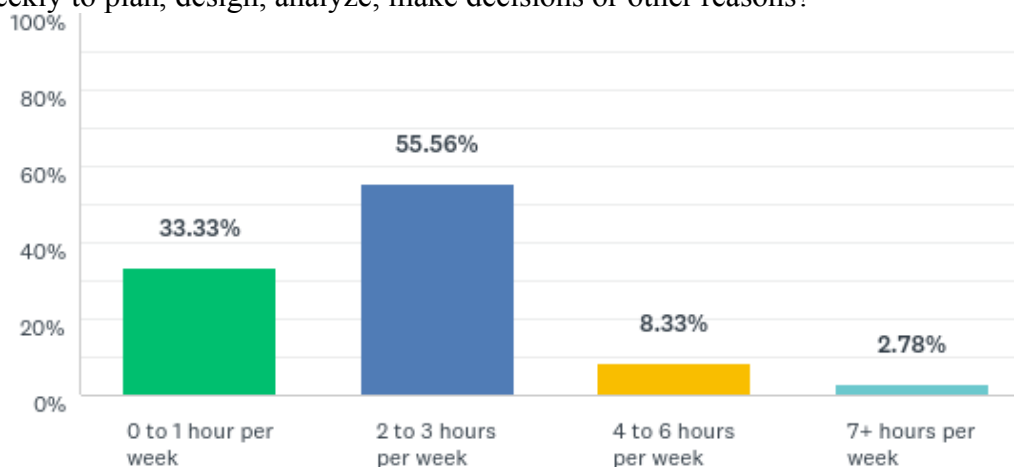
Table 4.1. Principal trait self-reflection and team reflection

Leadership Traits	Type of Reflection	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree & Strongly Agree
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	75.00%	25.00%	100.00%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	2.44%	8.54%	65.85%	23.17%	89.02%
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	63.89%	36.11%	100.00%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	2.44%	9.76%	60.98%	26.83%	87.80%
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	2.78%	8.33%	58.33%	30.56%	88.89%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	1.22%	6.10%	68.29%	24.39%	92.68%
Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	11.11%	22.22%	44.44%	22.22%	66.67%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	0.00%	12.20%	68.29%	19.51%	87.80%
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	2.78%	8.33%	69.44%	19.44%	88.89%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	1.22%	14.63%	45.12%	39.02%	84.15%
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	61.11%	30.56%	91.67%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	1.25%	0.00%	11.25%	43.75%	43.75%	87.50%
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%	100.00%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	1.23%	3.70%	44.44%	50.62%	95.06%
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	2.78%	25.00%	72.22%	97.22%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	1.25%	5.00%	40.00%	53.75%	93.75%
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	27.78%	66.67%	94.44%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	2.47%	4.94%	51.85%	40.74%	92.59%
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	36.11%	52.78%	88.89%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	0.00%	6.17%	54.32%	39.51%	93.83%
Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	11.43%	62.86%	25.71%	88.57%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	2.53%	3.80%	45.57%	48.10%	93.67%
Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%	100.00%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	1.23%	3.70%	51.85%	43.21%	95.06%
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	5.71%	48.57%	45.71%	94.29%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	3.70%	9.88%	56.79%	29.63%	86.42%
Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	2.78%	52.78%	44.44%	97.22%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0	0.00%	12.35%	56.79%	30.86%	87.65%

Team context, Essential Conditions and Team Performance

The third section of the survey was focused on components that support successful teams. These components from Thompson (2008) are team context, essential conditions and team performance. The seventeenth question asked respondents to reflect on how many hours they utilize to plan, design, analyze and make decisions together (Figure 4.9). 20 respondents (55.56%) reported they spend 2 to 3 hours a week with their administration team. 12 respondents (33.33%) reported they spend 0-1 hour a week with their administration team, followed by three (8.33%) spending 4 to 6 hours per week and 1 (2.78%) spending 7 or more hours a week.

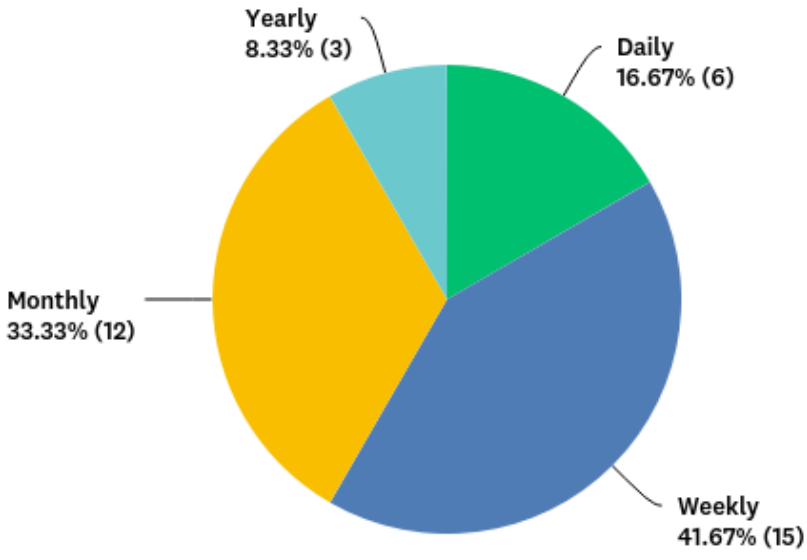
Figure 4.9. Principal Survey Q17: How often does your high school administration team meet weekly to plan, design, analyze, make decisions or other reasons?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 to 1 hour per week	33.33%	12
2 to 3 hours per week	55.56%	20
4 to 6 hours per week	8.33%	3
7+ hours per week	2.78%	1
TOTAL		36

The eighteenth question asked how often the administration team learns together (Figure 4.10). The highest percentage of respondents, 15 respondents (41.67%), reported that they learn together weekly. This was followed by 12 respondents (33.33%) reporting they learn together monthly, 6 (16.67%) reported they learn together daily and 3 (8.33%) stated they learn together yearly.

Figure 4.10. Principal Survey Q18: How often does your high school administration team learn together?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	16.67%	6
Weekly	41.67%	15
Monthly	33.33%	12
Yearly	8.33%	3
TOTAL		36

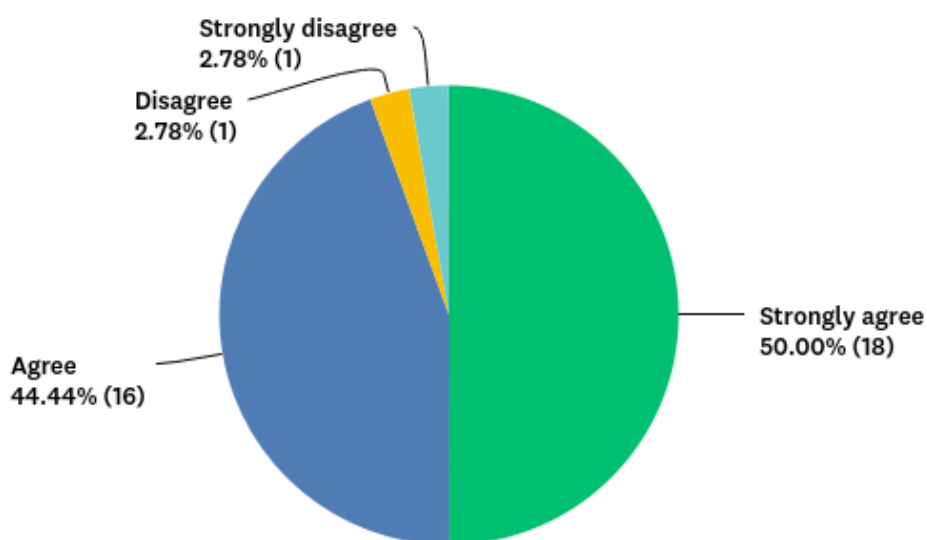
The nineteenth question focused on what learning opportunities that the teams experience. The respondents were asked to check all that applied to their team. Table 4.2 shows the result. The data shows that many teams are participating in different learning opportunities. Learning together is a critical component to Thompson's (2008) Integrated Teamwork Model. Only one principal stated that their team does not learn together. The two other learnings were described as Daily/Weekly Roundtables and Staff Professional Development.

Table 4.2. Principal Survey Q19: What type of learning opportunities does your team experience?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Administrative PLC	52.78%
District Provided Learning Events (Examples: District Leadership team, Principal Learning Teams or others)	72.22%
Administrative Book Study	38.89%
Attend Principal Association Events (Example: MASSP)	66.67%
National Professional Development Events (Examples: Learning Forward, iNACOL, NASSP or others)	8.33%
None	2.78%
Other learning events your team attends	5.56%

The twentieth question asked principals to analyze if their team has the requisite knowledge to create success in their school (Figure 4.11). 94.44% of surveyed principals agree (44.44%) and/or strongly agree (50%). This is predictable as many principals can hire, coach, mentor, lead and release members of their leadership teams. One interesting fact is that two principals believe that their team does not have the requisite knowledge to analyze and create success in their schools. One principal chose disagree and one principal chose strongly disagree.

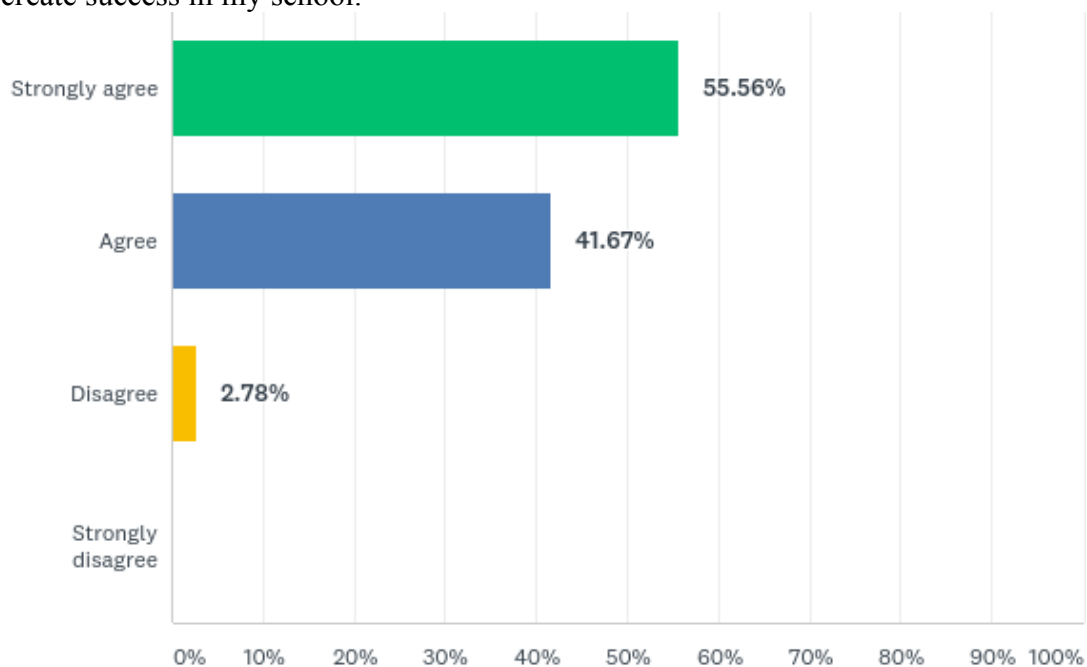
Figure 4.11. Principal Survey Q20: My team has the requisite knowledge to analyze and create success in my school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	50.00%	18
Agree	44.44%	16
Disagree	2.78%	1
Strongly disagree	2.78%	1
TOTAL		36

The twenty-first question asked principals to answer if their team has the requisite skill and ability to analyze and create success in their school (Figure 4.12). 97.23% of respondents stated that they agree (55.56%) or strongly agree (41.67%) their team has the requisite skills and ability. One respondent chose the answer of disagree.

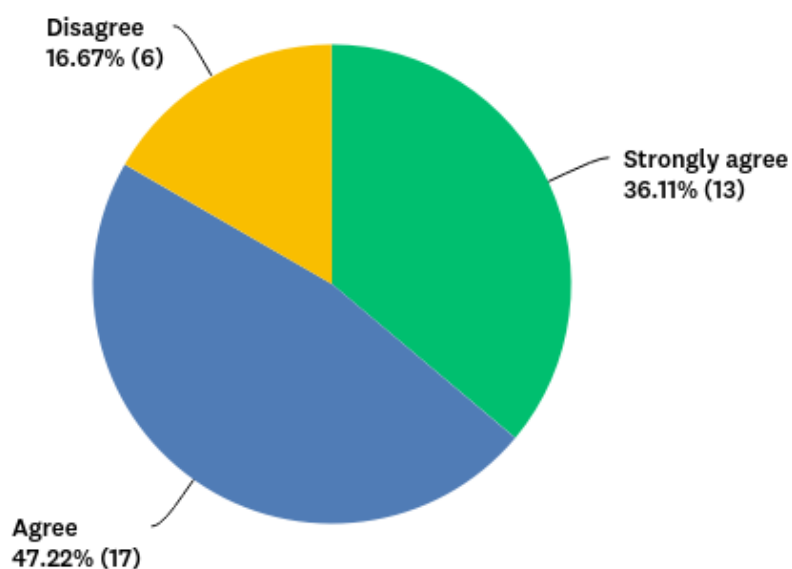
Figure 4.12. Principal Survey Q21: My team has the requisite skill and ability to analyze and create success in my school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	55.56%	20
Agree	41.67%	15
Disagree	2.78%	1
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The twenty-second question asked principals to answer if their team has the resources to analyze and create success in their school (Figure 4.13). The results of the survey show that many principals believe their teams possess the requisite skills and ability to analyze and create success in their schools. 30 of the respondents (83.33%) answered that they agree (47.22%) or strongly agree (36.11%) they have the skills and ability. Six individuals of the principals surveyed reported that they do not have the resources to analyze and create success in their school.

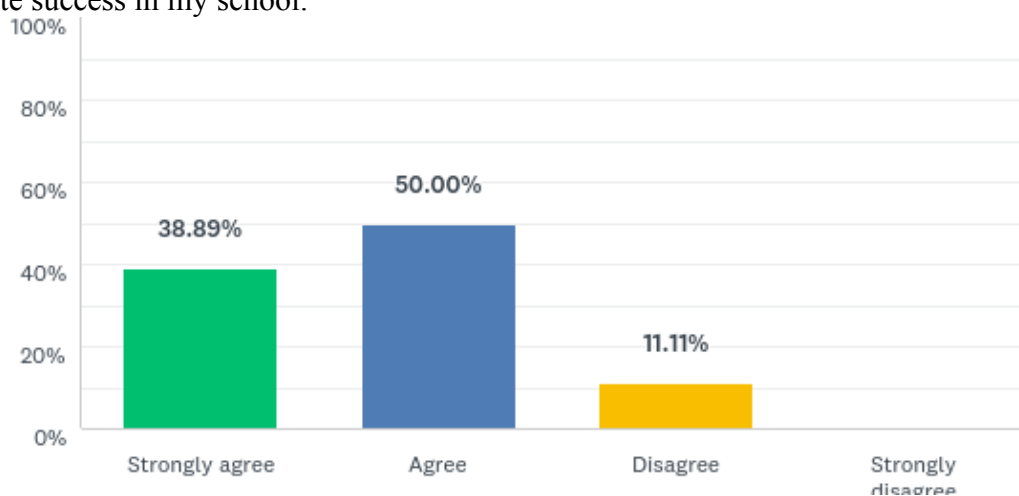
Figure 4.13. Principal Survey Q22: My team has the resources to analyze and create success in my school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	36.11%	13
Agree	47.22%	17
Disagree	16.67%	6
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The twenty-third question asked principals to reflect on the support they receive from the district office (Figure 4.14). 88.89% of respondents state they agree (50%) or strongly agree (38.89%) that their team has support from the district office to analyze and create support in their schools. Zero respondents stated they strongly disagree and four respondents (11.11%) stated they disagree with the statement that their team gets support from their district office.

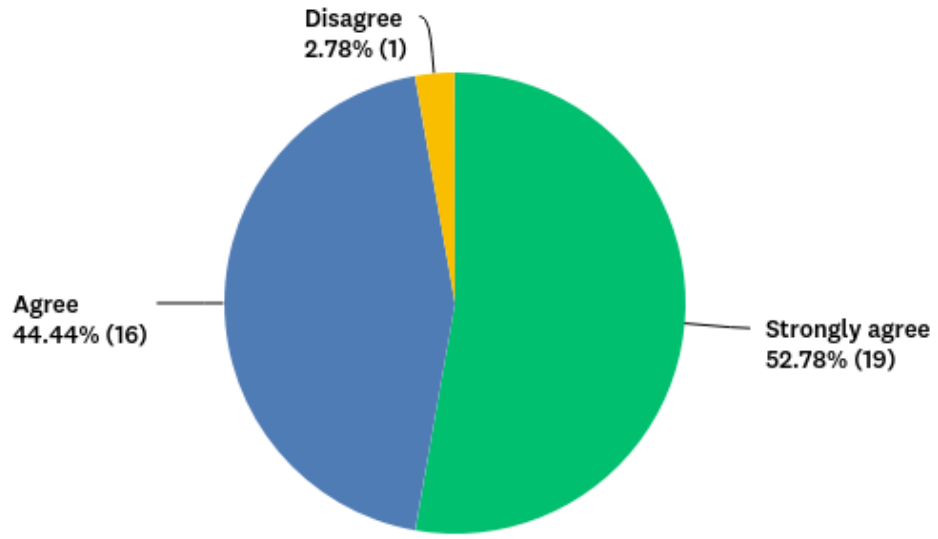
Figure 4.14. Principal Survey Q23: My team has the support, from the district, to analyze and create success in my school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	38.89%	14
Agree	50.00%	18
Disagree	11.11%	4
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The twenty-fourth question focused on motivation to accomplish tasks that are provided to them by district personnel (Figure 4.15). Like the earlier questions, an extremely large portion of the respondents agree (44.44%) and/or strongly agree (52.78%) with the statement. Only one respondent believes their team does not have the motivation to accomplish tasks provided to them by district personnel.

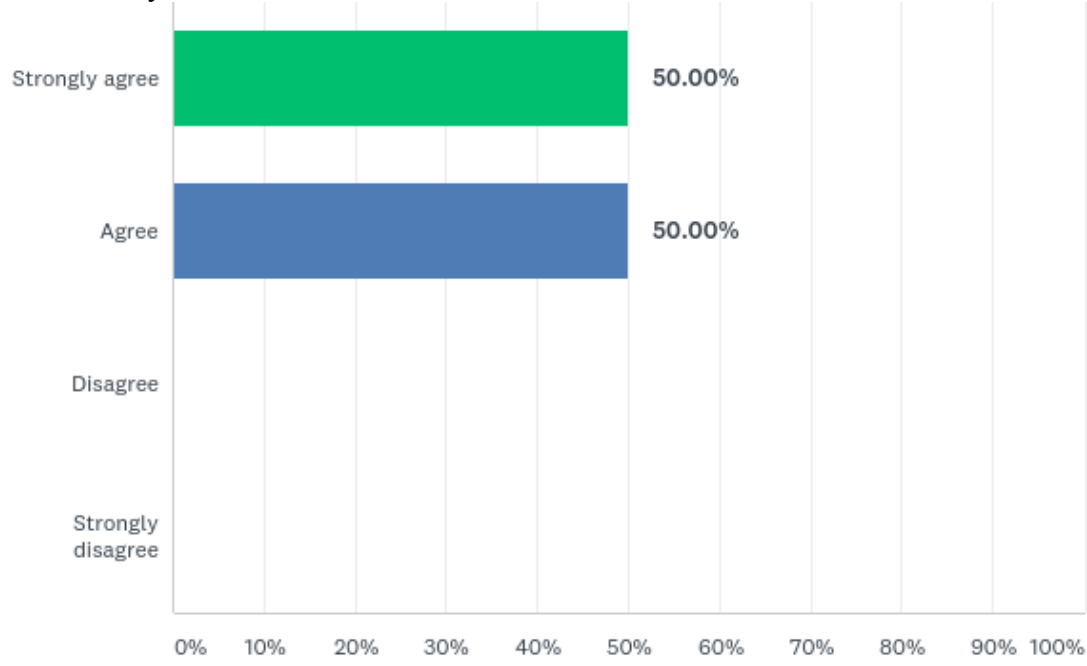
Figure 4.15. Principal Survey Q24: My team has the motivation to accomplish tasks provided to them by district personnel.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	52.78%	19
Agree	44.44%	16
Disagree	2.78%	1
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The twenty-fifth question focuses on motivation to accomplish tasks that are provided to them by teachers in the school (Figure 4.16). There were zero respondents who disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. 50% of the respondents reported they agree and 50% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree.

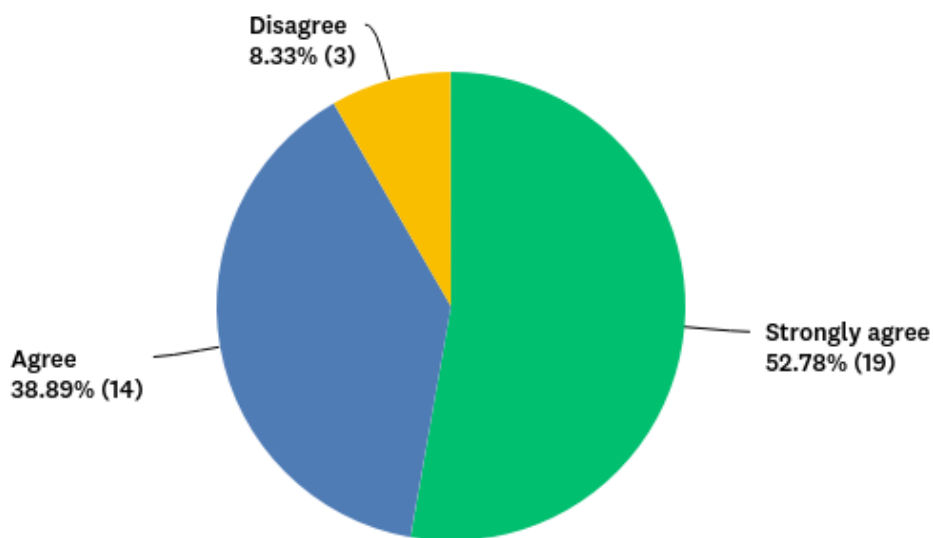
Figure 4.16. Principal Survey Q25: My team has the motivation to accomplish tasks given to them by teachers in the school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	50.00%	18
Agree	50.00%	18
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The twenty-sixth question asked principals to reflect on how their team coordinates their activities to effectively enact team strategy (Figure 4.17). Like the previous questions, there was a high agreement response to this statement, 52.78% strongly agree and 38.89% agree. Three respondents disagree with the statement and 0% strongly disagree.

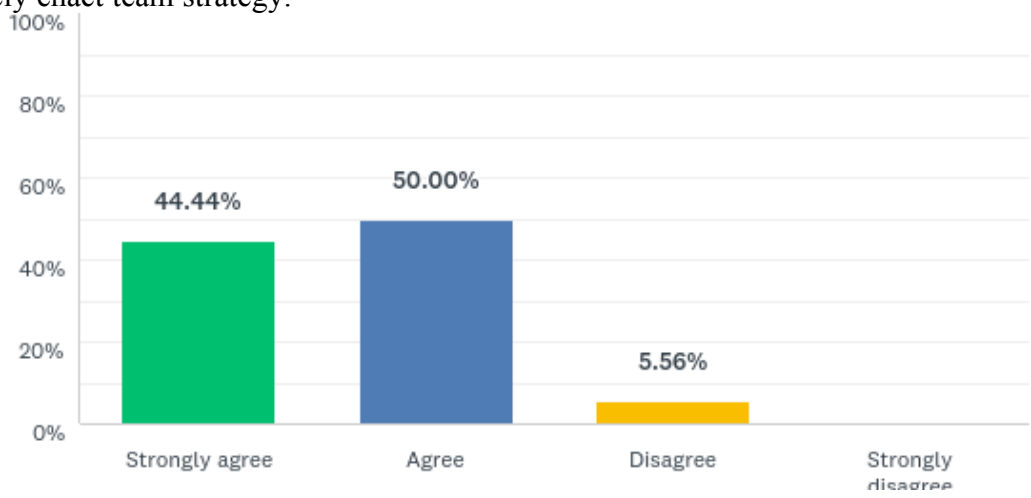
Figure 4.17. Principal Survey Q26: My team can coordinate our activities to effectively enact team strategy.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	52.78%	19
Agree	38.89%	14
Disagree	8.33%	3
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The twenty-seventh question asked principals to agree or disagree with the statement, “My team can coordinate our communication to effectively enact team strategy” (Figure 4.18). 94.44% of the respondents strongly agree or agree, 50% agree and 44.44% strongly agree with the statement. 5.56% of respondents disagree with the statement and 0% strongly disagree.

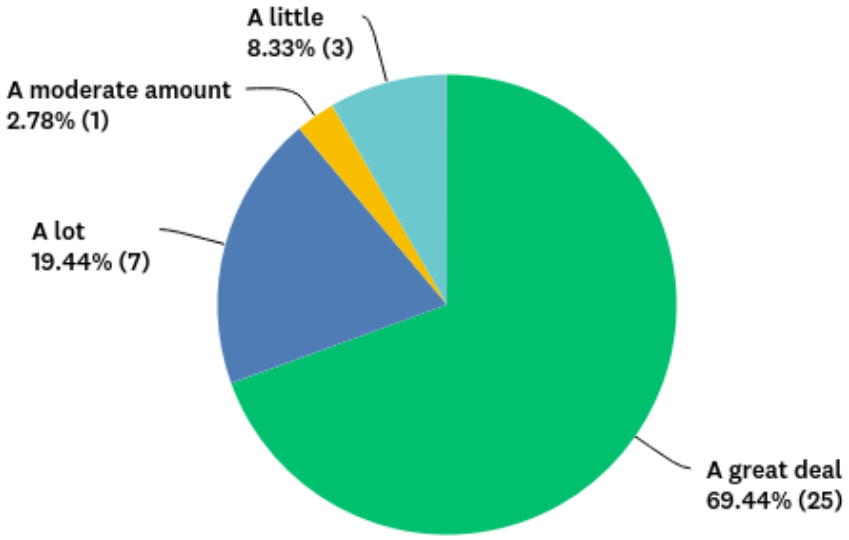
Figure 4.18. Principal Survey Q27: My team can coordinate our communication to effectively enact team strategy.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	44.44%	16
Agree	50.00%	18
Disagree	5.56%	2
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The twenty-eighth question focused on team cohesion (Figure 4.19). Respondents were asked if their team has strong cohesion. The definition used for strong cohesion was the following: the ability to stick together in the pursuit of a common goal. 69.44% of respondents believe their team has a great deal of cohesion followed by 19.44% believing they have a lot of cohesion. 11.11% of respondents stated they have a moderate amount (2.78%) or a little (8.33%).

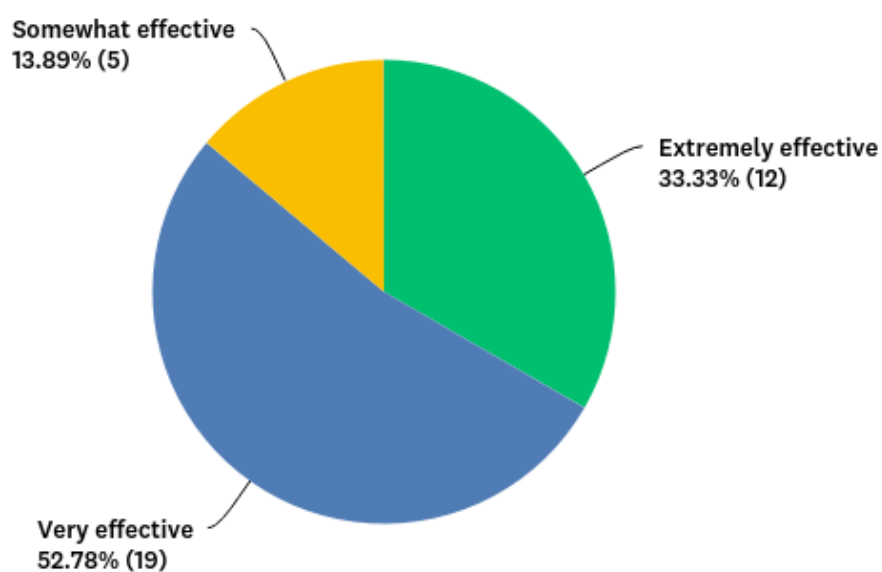
Figure 4.19. Principal Survey Q28: Does your team have strong cohesion? (Definition: The ability to stick together in the pursuit of a common goal.)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A great deal	69.44%	25
A lot	19.44%	7
A moderate amount	2.78%	1
A little	8.33%	3
None at all	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The twenty-ninth question asked the principals how their team is viewed by district office personnel as effectively integrating ideas and actions across their learning organization (Figure 4.20). 52.78% of respondents stated they are very effective and 33.33% stated they are extremely effective (the highest rating). 13.89% believe they are somewhat effective and 0% not so effective or not at all effective.

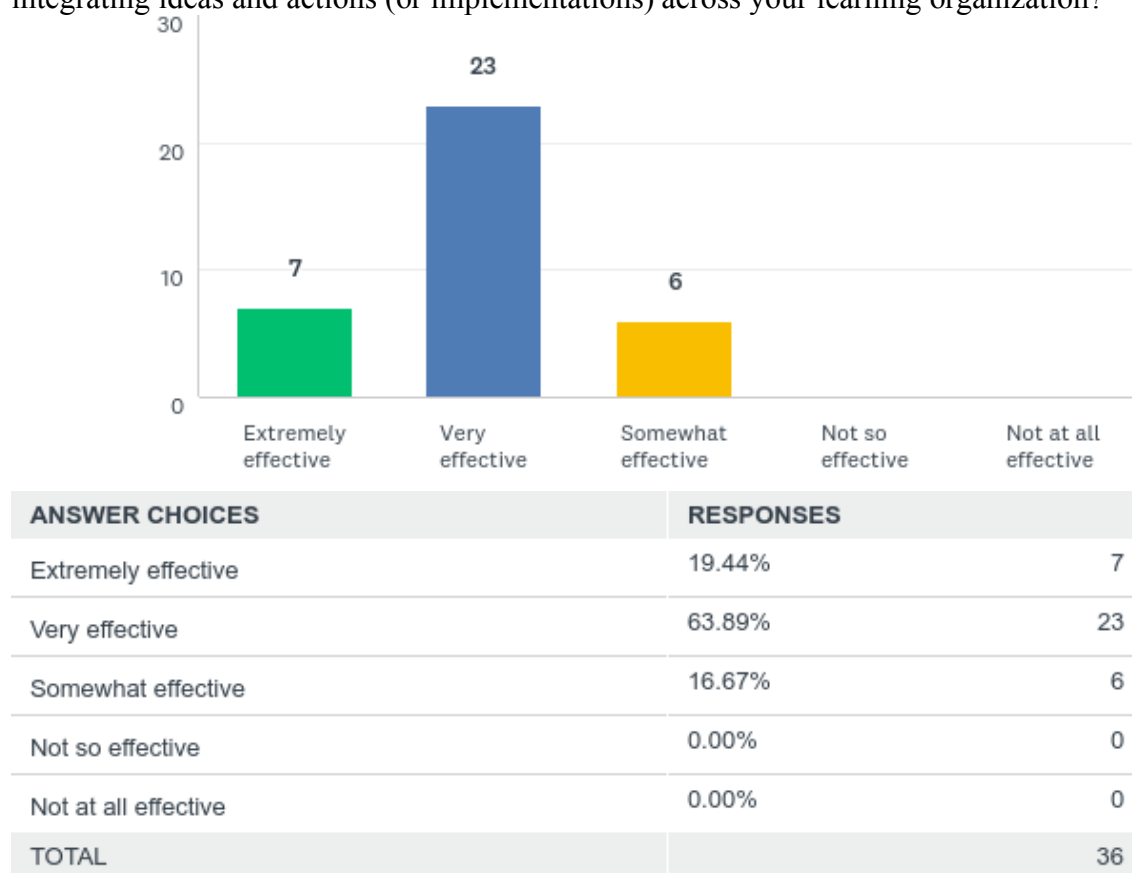
Figure 4.20. Principal Survey Q29: How is your team viewed by district office personnel as effectively integrating ideas and actions (or implementations) across your learning organization?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely effective	33.33%	12
Very effective	52.78%	19
Somewhat effective	13.89%	5
Not so effective	0.00%	0
Not at all effective	0.00%	0
TOTAL		36

The final question of this survey asked the principals how their team is viewed by teachers as effectively integrating ideas and actions across their learning organization (Figure 4.21). 63.89% of respondents stated they are very effective and 19.44% stated they are extremely effective (the highest rating). 16.67% believe they are somewhat effective and 0% not so effective or not at all effective.

Figure 4.21. Principal Survey Q30: How is your team viewed by teachers as effectively integrating ideas and actions (or implementations) across your learning organization?



Finding of Survey Results by High School Associate/Assistant/Vice Principals

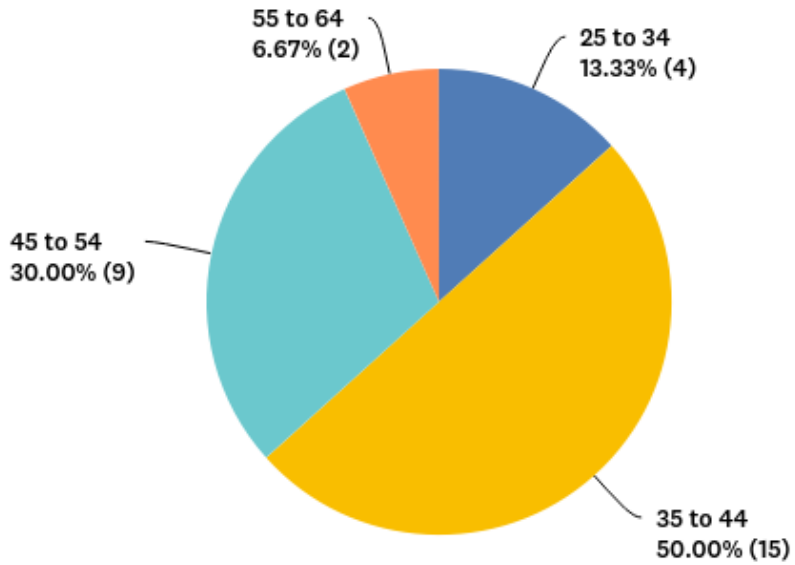
To understand how principals and associate/assistant/vice principals function as a team, I divided this survey into two different sections. This second section focuses on the results from the associate/assistant/vice principals who completed the survey. There were 47 associate/assistant/vice principals who started the survey and completed the first section. Of the 47 associate/assistant/vice principals that started the survey, 30 associate/assistant/vice principals completed section 2 and 3. To understand the data, I filtered the results to only look at the data provided by associate/assistant/vice principals that completed the whole survey. This means that there was a total of 30 high school associate/assistant/vice principals on a team of three or more that completed the survey.

Demographic results.

The first question in this survey is the consent form. All respondents stated *yes* to the consent before completing the survey. The second question asked to the respondents was their age (Figure 4.22). The breakdown of associate/assistant/vice (A/A/V) principals' age showed a large group in the middle of their career with 80% of the respondents being in the age group of age 35 to 44 and age 45 to 54. The further breakdown of the data showed 15 respondents (50%) selected the age range of age 35 to 44. The second highest was age 45 to 54 with nine respondents (30%). The next highest was the age group of age 25 to 34 with 4 respondents (13.33%). Like the data from the principal survey, the results in this question are not surprising. Not having any individuals under age 24 is logical, since, in the state of Minnesota, the associate/assistant/vice principal position is many times a first or second leadership

position for individuals, and they are experienced educators that are required to have a Master’s degree and specific administration license.

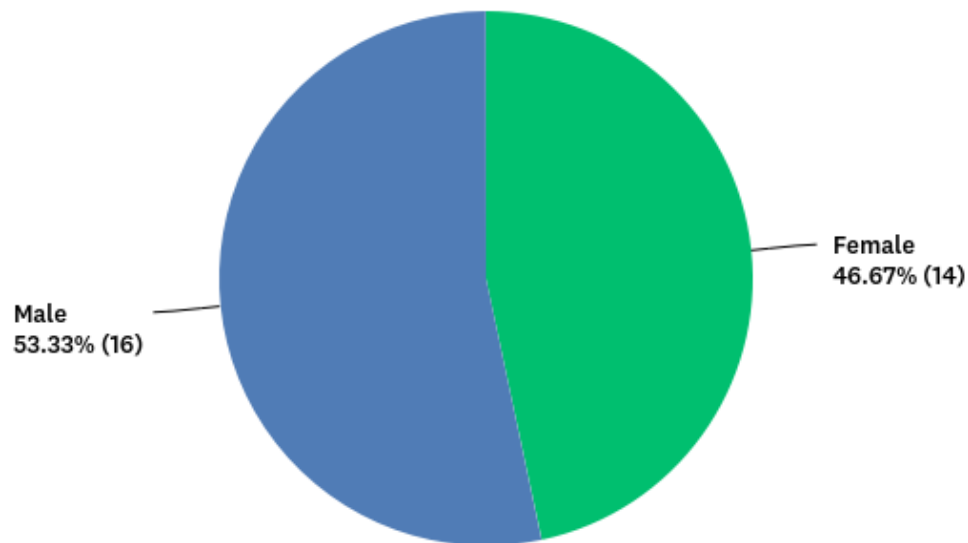
Figure 4.22. A/A/V Principal Survey Q2: What is your age?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
24 and under	0.00%	0
25 to 34	13.33%	4
35 to 44	50.00%	15
45 to 54	30.00%	9
55 to 64	6.67%	2
65+	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

The third survey question was related to gender of the high school principal (Figure 4.23). 14 (46.67%) of the respondents were female and 16 (53.33%) of the respondents were male. The data from this survey question is very different from the similar question posed to principals.

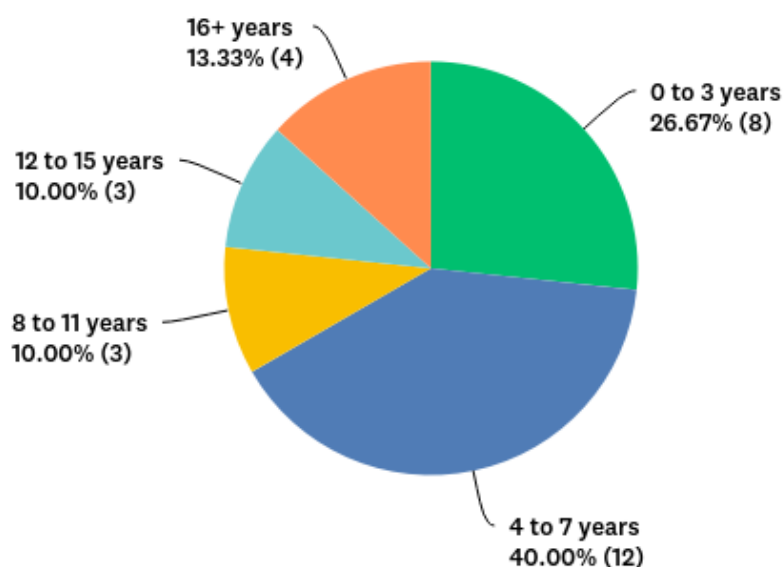
Figure 4.23. A/A/V Principal Survey Q3: What is your gender?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	46.67%	14
Male	53.33%	16
TOTAL		30

The fourth survey question asked respondents to answer how many years in leadership (as an associate/assistant/vice principal) (Figure 4.24). 20 respondents (66.67%) stated they have been a leader between 0-7 years. With the high percentage of 4 to 7 years (40%) and the next being 0 to 3 years (26.67%). Four individuals (13.33%) stated they have been an associate/assistant/vice principal for 16 or more years.

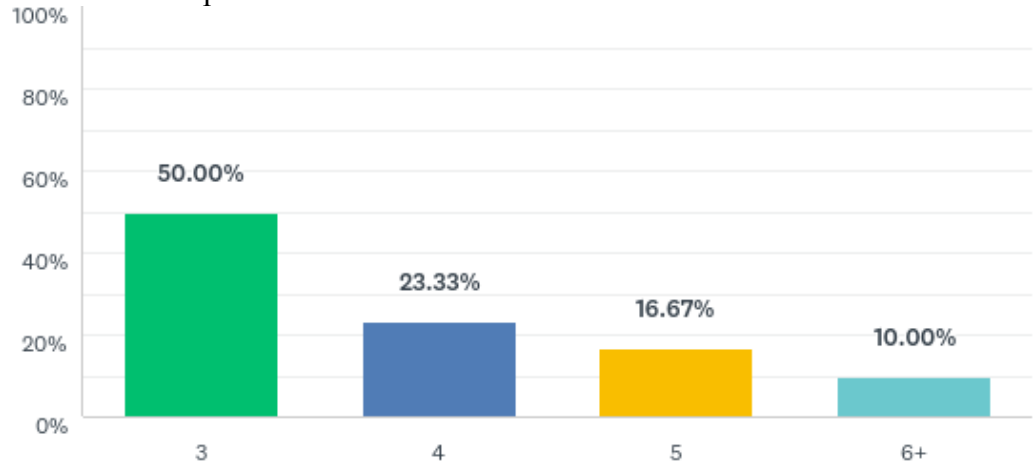
Figure 4.24. A/A/V Principal Survey Q4: Years in leadership (as an Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal)?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 to 3 years	26.67%	8
4 to 7 years	40.00%	12
8 to 11 years	10.00%	3
12 to 15 years	10.00%	3
16+ years	13.33%	4
TOTAL		30

The fifth survey question asked respondents to answer how many members are on their administration/leadership team (Figure 4.25). The largest category is a leadership team of three (50%). The next highest category was a leadership team of four (23.33%) followed by five (16.67%) and 6 or more (10%) with three responses.

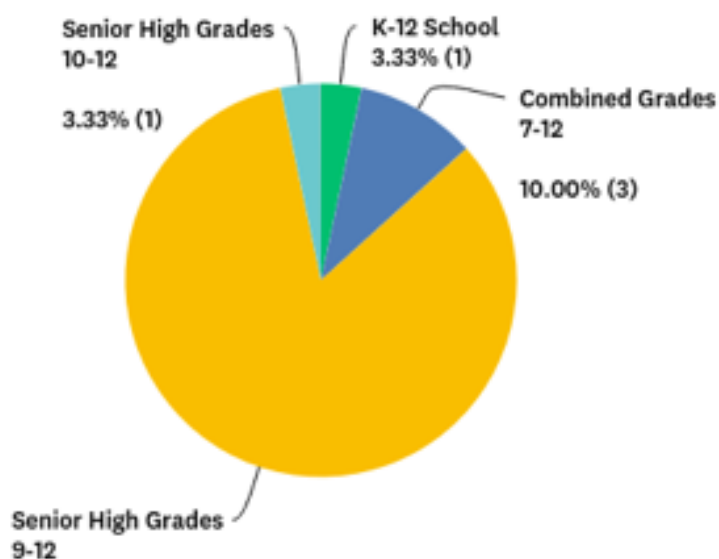
Figure 4.25. A/A/V Principal Survey Q5: Number of members on your administration/leadership team?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
3	50.00% 15
4	23.33% 7
5	16.67% 5
6+	10.00% 3
TOTAL	30

The sixth question used Minnesota Department of Education school classifications (Figure 4.26). Respondents reported that a high percentage of the respondents' schools, 25 (83.33%), would fall under Senior High Grades 9-12. The next highest category had three respondents (10%) and selected combined grades 7-12. The remaining categories had a low incident rate of both and had one respondent, K-12 Schools and Senior High Grades 10-12.

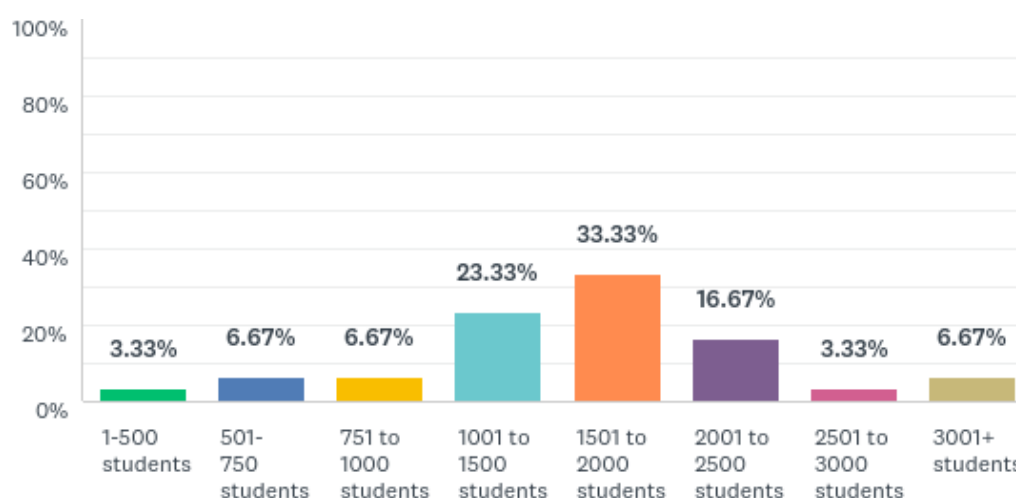
Figure 4.26. A/A/V Principal Survey Q6: What best describes your high school?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
K-12 School	3.33%	1
Combined Grades 7-12	10.00%	3
Senior High Grades 9-12	83.33%	25
Senior High Grades 10-12	3.33%	1
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

The seventh question asked what is the current enrollment of the associate/assistant/vice principal's high school (Figure 4.27). The highest response fell under the 1501 to 2000 student category where there were ten (33.33%) individuals who chose the response. The second highest range was 1001 to 1500, where seven principals (23.33%) chose this range. A small amount of respondents fell in the 1 to 500 and 2501 to 3000 student categories.

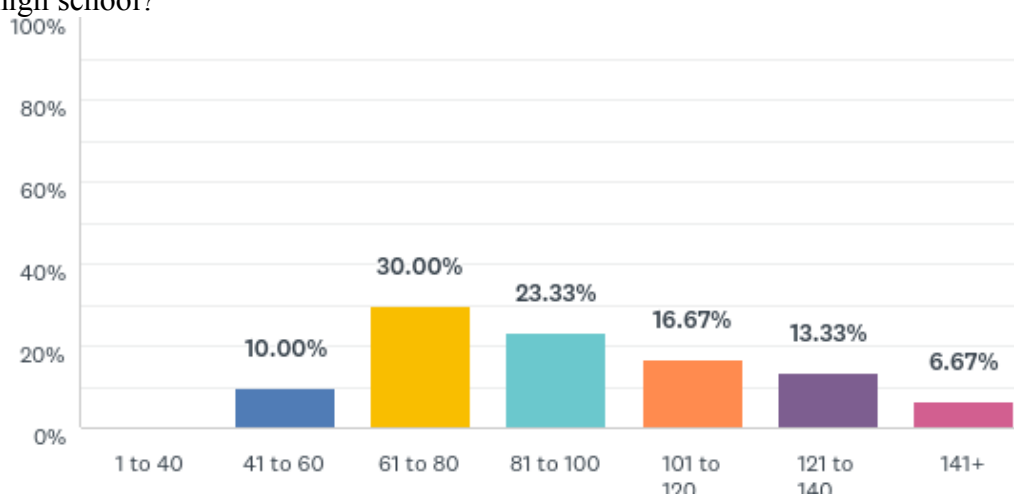
Figure 4.27. A/A/V Principal Survey Q7: What is the current enrollment of your high school?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1-500 students	3.33% 1
501-750 students	6.67% 2
751 to 1000 students	6.67% 2
1001 to 1500 students	23.33% 7
1501 to 2000 students	33.33% 10
2001 to 2500 students	16.67% 5
2501 to 3000 students	3.33% 1
3001+ students	6.67% 2
TOTAL	30

The eighth survey question asked respondents to answer, in a range, how many licensed teachers they have in their buildings (Figure 4.28). The greatest range was individuals with 61 to 80 teachers in their high school. There were nine respondents (30%) that chose this range. The second highest rate of response was in the 81-100 licensed teachers (23.33%). Five principals (16.67%) chose 101 to 120 range followed by four respondents choosing 121 to 140 (13.33%).

Figure 4.28. A/A/V Principal Survey Q8: What is the current number of licensed teachers in your high school?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1 to 40	0.00% 0
41 to 60	10.00% 3
61 to 80	30.00% 9
81 to 100	23.33% 7
101 to 120	16.67% 5
121 to 140	13.33% 4
141+	6.67% 2
TOTAL	30

Leadership traits for associate/assistant/vice principals and their teams.

The second portion of the survey focused on leadership traits. Respondents were asked to rate themselves and then rate each member of their leadership team. Table 4.3 shows the results from question 9, 10 and 11-15. The white boxes are the self-reported traits from associate/assistant/vice principals. The yellow boxes are the data reported by the associate/assistant/vice principals on the leadership traits of their principal. The green boxes represent the data reported by associate/assistant/vice principals on the leadership traits of their other team members. The ninth question asked associate/assistant/vice principals to rate themselves. The survey results show that many associate/assistant/vice principals strongly agree or agree that Perception and Dependability are the top two traits, with 100% of the respondents reporting they agree or strongly agreeing Perception and Dependability are leadership traits that are critical for them.

Question ten asks the associate/assistant/vice principal to reflect on the leadership traits that their principal possesses. The survey results (Table 4.3) show that many associate/assistant/vice principals strongly agree or agree that Self-confident is by far the top trait their principals have, 96.43% of respondents said they agree or strongly agree their principal has the trait of Self-Confidence. The second highest choice was Perceptive which had 92.86% of the respondents reporting they agree or strongly agree.

Questions 11 through 15 the associate/assistant/vice principals were asked to rate the individual on their leadership team. The table below shows the accumulated rating from the associate/assistant/vice principal. This table speaks to the traits the associate/assistant/vice principals see in their associate/assistant/vice principal colleagues. The principal data is not entered into this table. The survey results (Table 4.3) show that many associate/assistant/vice principals strongly agree or agree that Self-

Confidence and being Diligent are the top traits, with both having 91.94% of the respondents reporting they agree or strongly agree that Self-confident and Diligent are team leadership traits that are critical for their colleagues to possess.

Table 4.3. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal Rating Self, Principal and Team Members

Leadership Traits	Type of Reflection	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	Agree & Strongly Agree
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	Self	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%	60.00%	36.67%	96.67%
	Principal	3.57%	3.57%	10.71%	42.86%	39.29%	82.14%
	A/A/VP Team members	1.61%	3.23%	9.68%	56.45%	29.03%	85.48%
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	Self	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	33.33%	100.00%
	Principal	0.00%	3.57%	3.57%	39.29%	53.57%	92.86%
	A/A/VP Team members	1.61%	1.61%	11.29%	51.61%	33.87%	85.48%
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	Self	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	56.67%	33.33%	90.00%
	Principal	0.00%	3.57%	0.00%	28.57%	67.86%	96.43%
	A/A/VP Team members	0.00%	0.00%	8.06%	37.10%	54.84%	91.94%
Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	Self	0.00%	6.67%	23.33%	50.00%	20.00%	70.00%
	Principal	0.00%	3.57%	14.29%	25.00%	57.14%	82.14%
	A/A/VP Team members	0.00%	4.84%	14.52%	46.77%	33.87%	80.65%
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	Self	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	56.67%	36.67%	93.33%
	Principal	3.57%	7.14%	3.57%	35.71%	50.00%	85.71%
	A/A/VP Team members	0.00%	6.45%	3.23%	41.94%	48.39%	90.32%
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	Self	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%	70.00%	26.67%	96.67%
	Principal	0.00%	10.71%	0.00%	32.14%	57.14%	89.29%
	A/A/VP Team members	0.00%	1.61%	6.45%	43.55%	48.39%	91.94%
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	Self	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%	26.67%	70.00%	96.67%
	Principal	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	25.00%	60.71%	85.71%
	A/A/VP Team members	1.61%	6.45%	3.23%	50.00%	38.71%	88.71%

Table 4.3. (Cont.) Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal Rating Self, Principal and Team Members

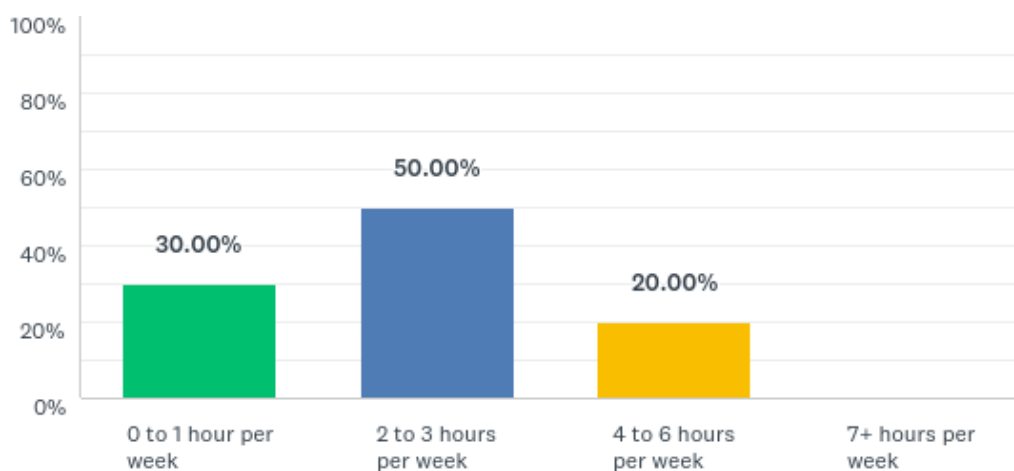
Leadership Traits	Type of Reflection	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	Agree & Strongly Agree
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	Self	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%	100.00%
	Principal	3.57%	0.00%	7.14%	39.29%	50.00%	89.29%
	A/A/VP Team members	1.61%	3.23%	9.68%	43.55%	41.94%	85.48%
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	Self	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	30.00%	63.33%	93.33%
	Principal	0.00%	0.00%	3.57%	39.29%	57.14%	96.43%
	A/A/VP Team members	1.61%	4.84%	11.29%	54.84%	27.42%	82.26%
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	Self	0.00%	3.33%	10.00%	30.00%	56.67%	86.67%
	Principal	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	32.14%	53.57%	85.71%
	A/A/VP Team members	1.64%	1.64%	13.11%	49.18%	34.43%	83.61%
Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	Self	0.00%	0.00%	13.33%	46.67%	40.00%	86.67%
	Principal	3.57%	0.00%	14.29%	46.43%	35.71%	82.14%
	A/A/VP Team members	0.00%	6.45%	8.06%	45.16%	40.32%	85.48%
Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	Self	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	40.00%	53.33%	93.33%
	Principal	3.57%	3.57%	3.57%	35.71%	53.57%	89.29%
	A/A/VP Team members	1.61%	1.61%	8.06%	50.00%	38.71%	88.71%
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	Self	0.00%	3.33%	6.67%	43.33%	46.67%	90.00%
	Principal	0.00%	3.57%	7.14%	46.43%	42.86%	89.29%
	A/A/VP Team members	1.61%	4.84%	12.90%	51.61%	29.03%	80.65%
Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	Self	0.00%	0.00%	3.45%	44.83%	51.72%	96.55%
	Principal	0.00%	7.14%	10.71%	32.14%	50.00%	82.14%
	A/A/VP Team members	0.00%	6.56%	13.11%	54.10%	26.23%	80.33%

The results from the associate/assistant/vice principals reporting on their leadership traits compared to how they reported the leadership traits their principal or team member has is very interesting. One data point that is extremely interesting is that self-assured is a leadership trait that individuals, both principals and associate/assistant/vice principals, rate themselves as the lowest of the leadership traits. The respondents reported that their teammates have a great deal more. In Table 4.3, 70% of the associate/assistant/vice principals agree or strongly agree they are self-assured. 82.14% of the respondents agree or strongly agree their principal is self-assured and 80.65% for their teammates. It is also interesting to note that 100% of the associate/assistant/vice respondents reported they agree or strongly agree they are Dependable and Perceptive. To me, these traits connect directly to working with team members. When you are on a team, you need to be a Dependable team member. The team needs to be able to count on every team member to complete their assigned duties. Team members also need to be Perceptive to other members. They need to be able to understand the verbal and nonverbal communications. Associate/assistant/vice principals also need to understand how to partner with other team members and to perceive the vision of the principal. The ability to understand the context and essential conditions of the team are valuable for each team member.

Team context, essential conditions and team performance.

The third section of the survey was focused on components that support successful teams. These components from Thompson (2008) are team context, essential conditions and team performance. The sixteenth question asked respondents to reflect on how many hours they utilize to plan, design, analyze and make decisions together (Figure 4.29). 15 respondents (50%) reported they spend 2 to 3 hours per week with their administration team. Nine respondents (30%) report they spend 0-1 hour per week with their administration team, followed by 6 (20%) spending 4-6 hours per week, and 0 associate/assistant/vice principals reported spending 7 or more hours per week.

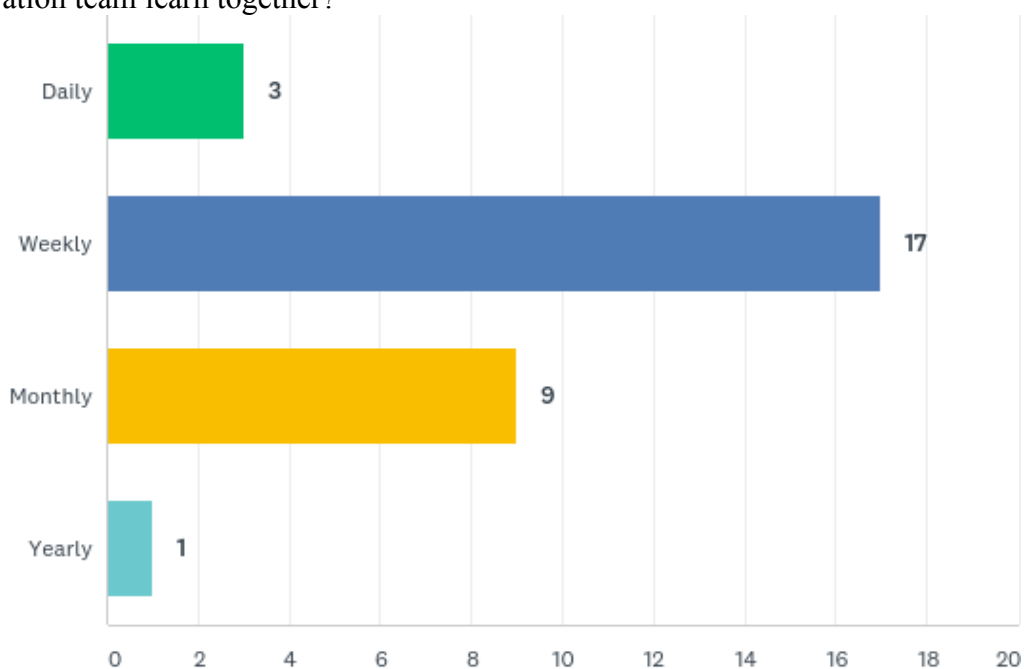
Figure 4.29. A/A/V Principal Survey Q16: How often does your high school administration team meet weekly to plan, design, analyze, make decisions or other reasons?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0 to 1 hour per week	30.00% 9
2 to 3 hours per week	50.00% 15
4 to 6 hours per week	20.00% 6
7+ hours per week	0.00% 0
TOTAL	30

The seventeenth question asked how often does the administration team learn together (Figure 4.30). The highest percentage of respondents, 17 respondents (56.67%), reported that they learn together weekly. This was followed by nine respondents (30%) reporting they learn together monthly, three (10%) reported they learn together daily, and one (3.33%) stating they only learn together yearly.

Figure 4.30. A/A/V Principal Survey Q17: How often does your high school administration team learn together?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	10.00%	3
Weekly	56.67%	17
Monthly	30.00%	9
Yearly	3.33%	1
TOTAL		30

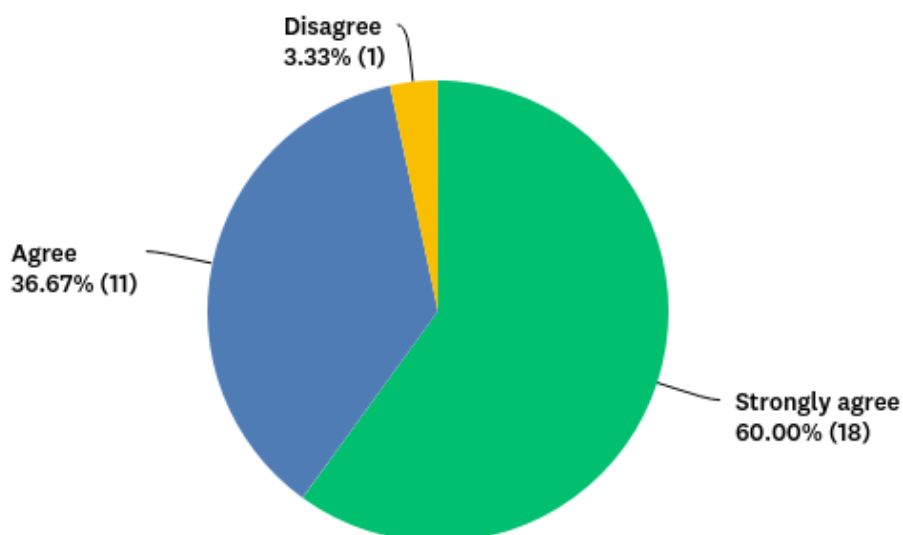
The eighteenth question focused on what learning opportunities the teams experience. The respondents were asked to check all that applied to their team. Table 4.4 shows the result. The data shows that many teams are participating in different learning opportunities. Learning together is a critical component to Thompson's (2008) Integrated Teamwork Model. The two "other learning events your team attends" were described as a community book read and teacher development team.

Table 4.4. A/A/V Principal Survey Q18: What type of learning opportunities does your team experience?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Administrative PLC	75.86%
District Provided Learning Events (Examples: District Leadership team, Principal Learning Teams or others)	75.86%
Administrative Book Study	62.07%
Attend Principal Association Events (Example: MASSP)	75.86%
National Professional Development Events (Examples: Learning Forward, iNACOL, NASSP or others)	20.69%
None	0.00%
Other learning events your team attends	6.90%

The nineteenth question asked associate/assistant/vice principals to analyze if their team has the requisite knowledge to create success in their school (Figure 4.31). 96.67% of surveyed principals agree (36.67%) and/or strongly agree (60%). One interesting fact is that one associate/assistant/vice principal believes that their team does not have the requisite knowledge to analyze and create success in their schools. I believe this shows that teaming is part of being a strong leader and follower.

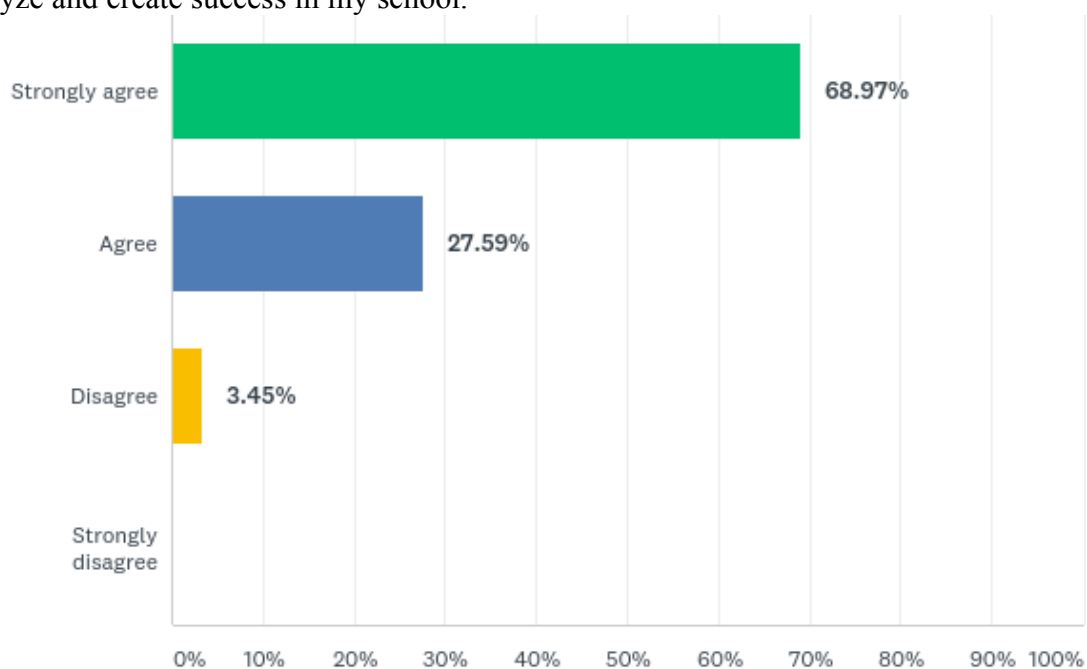
Figure 4.31. A/A/V Principal Survey Q19: My team has the requisite knowledge to analyze and create success in my school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	60.00% 18
Agree	36.67% 11
Disagree	3.33% 1
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	30

The twentieth question asked associate/assistant/vice principals to answer if their team has the requisite skill and ability to analyze and create success in their school (Figure 4.32). 96.56% of respondents stated that they agree (27.59%) or strongly agree (68.97%) their team has the requisite skills and ability. One respondent chose the answer of disagree.

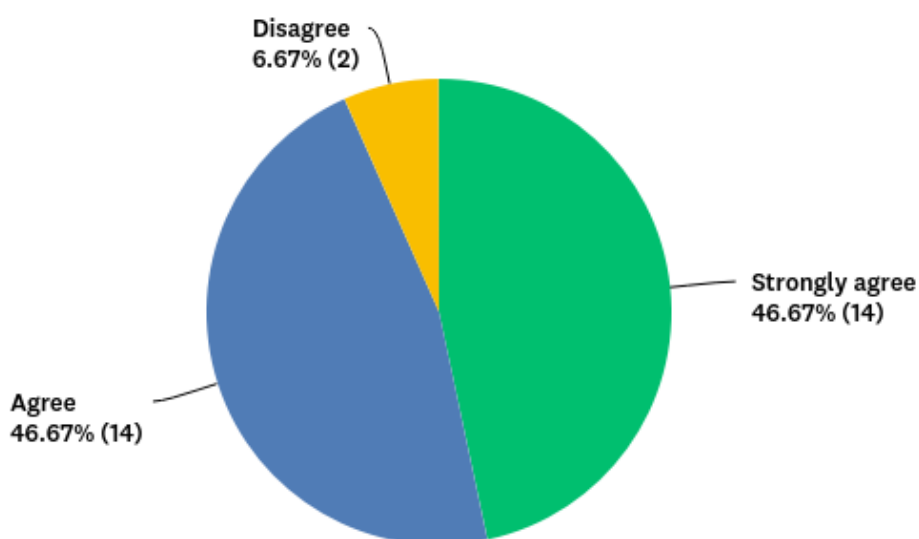
Figure 4.32. A/A/V Principal Survey Q20: My team has the requisite skill and ability to analyze and create success in my school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	68.97%	20
Agree	27.59%	8
Disagree	3.45%	1
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		29

The twenty-first question asked principals to answer if their team has the resources to analyze and create success in their school (Figure 4.33). 93.34% answered that they agree (46.67%) or strongly agree (46.67%). 6.67% of the principals surveyed reported that they do not have the resources to analyze and create success in their school.

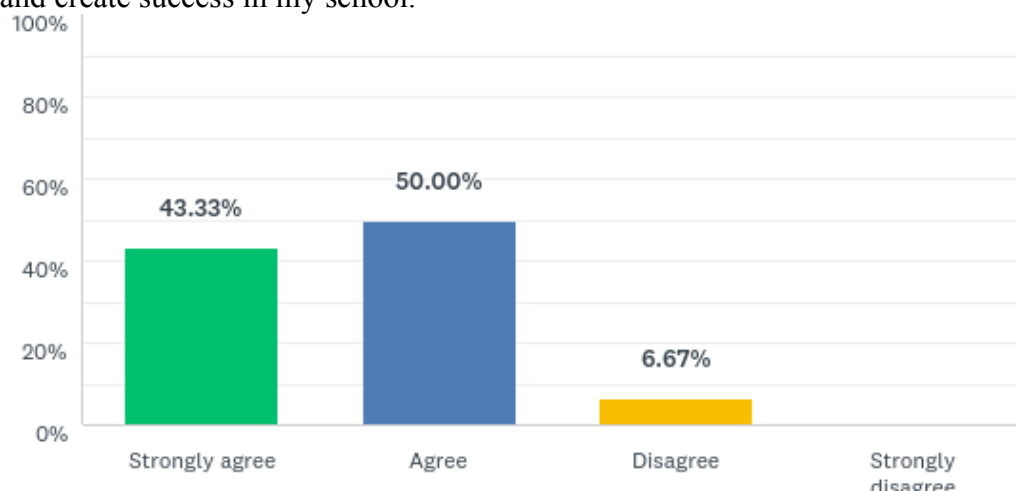
Figure 4.33. A/A/V Principal Survey Q21: My team has the resources to analyze and create success in my school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	46.67%	14
Agree	46.67%	14
Disagree	6.67%	2
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

The twenty-second question asked associate/assistant/vice principals to reflect on the support they receive from the district office to create success in their school (Figure 4.34). 93.33% of respondents state they agree (50%) or strongly agree (43.33%) that their team has support from the district office to analyze and create support in their schools. Zero respondents stated they strongly disagree and two respondents (6.67%) stated they disagree with the statement that their team gets support from their district office.

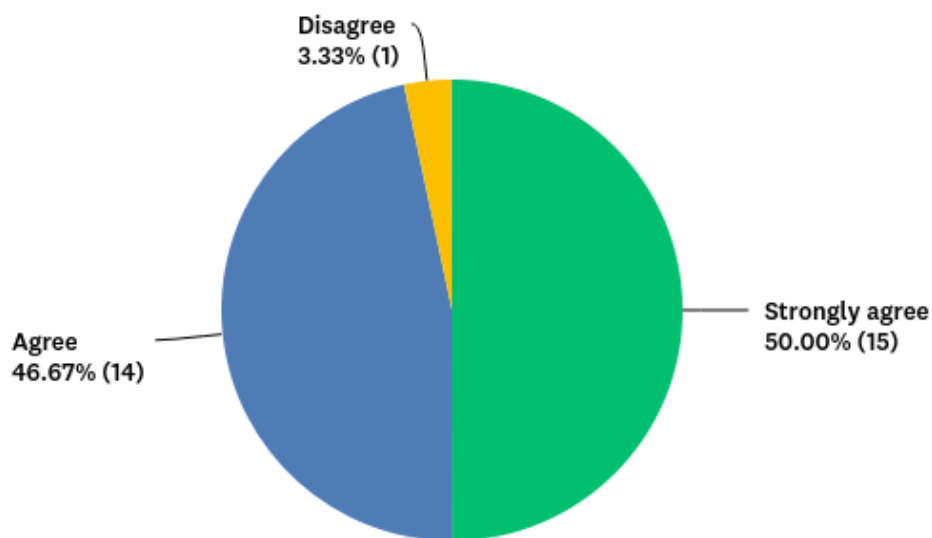
Figure 4.34. A/A/V Principal Survey Q22: My team has the support, from the district, to analyze and create success in my school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	43.33%	13
Agree	50.00%	15
Disagree	6.67%	2
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

The twenty-third question focused on motivation to accomplish tasks that are provided to them by district personnel (Figure 4.35). Like the twenty-second question, an extremely large portion of the respondents agree (46.67%) and/or strongly agree (50.00%) with the statement. Only one respondent believes their team does not have the motivation to accomplish tasks provided to them by district personnel.

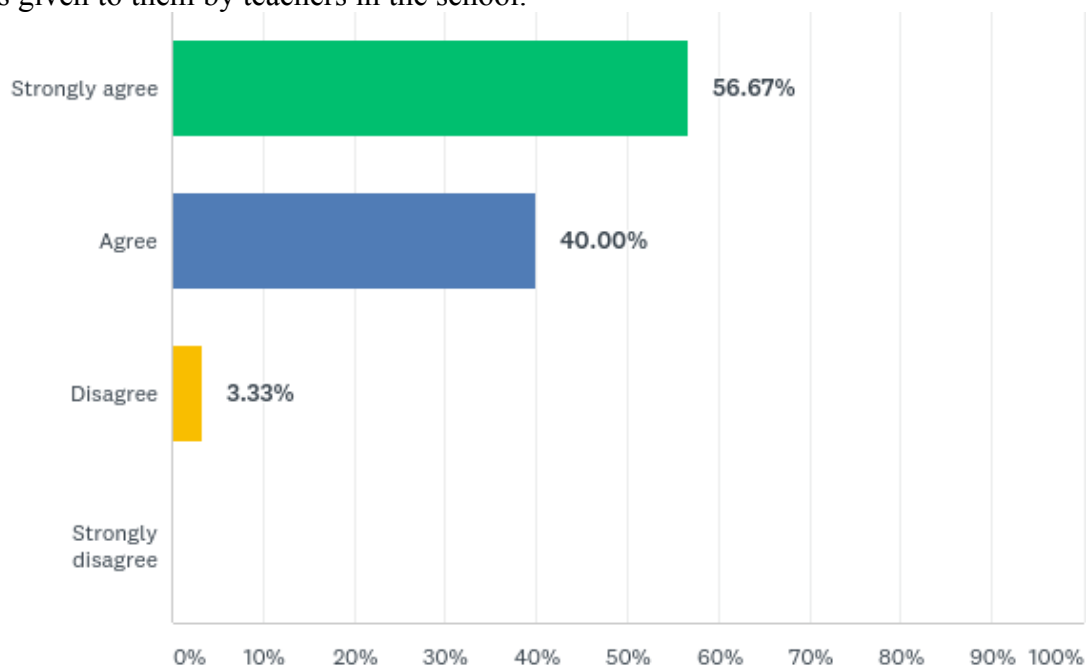
Figure 4.35. A/A/V Principal Survey Q23: My team has the motivation to accomplish tasks provided to them by district personnel.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	50.00%	15
Agree	46.67%	14
Disagree	3.33%	1
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

The twenty-fourth question focused on motivation to accomplish tasks that are provided to them by teachers in the school (Figure 4.36). There was one respondent who indicated they disagree with this statement. 40% of the respondents reported they agree and 56.67% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree.

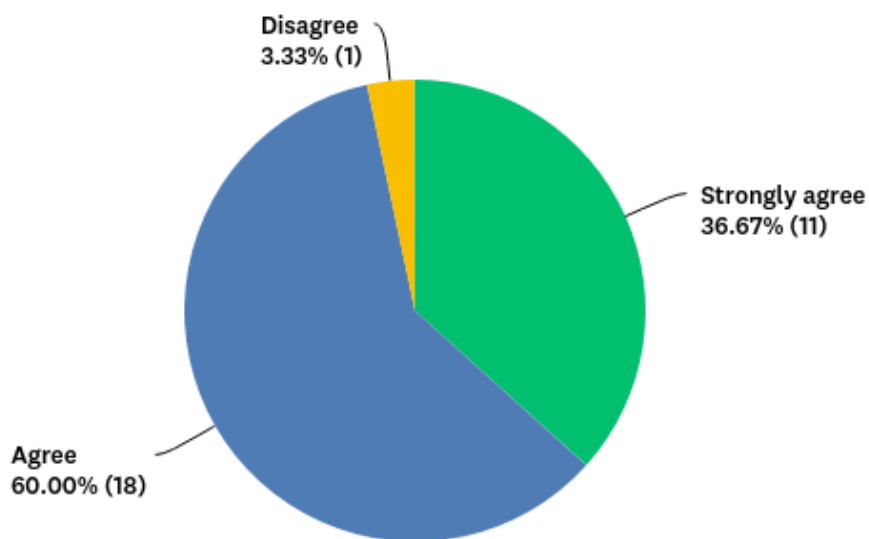
Figure 4.36. A/A/V Principal Survey Q24: My team has the motivation to accomplish tasks given to them by teachers in the school.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	56.67%	17
Agree	40.00%	12
Disagree	3.33%	1
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

The twenty-fifth question asked associate/assistant/vice principals to reflect on how their team coordinates their activities to effectively enact team strategy (Figure 4.37). Like the previous questions, there was a high agreement response to this statement, with 36.67% of respondents indicating they strongly agree and 60% indicating they agree. One respondent (3.33%) disagree with the statement and 0% strongly disagree.

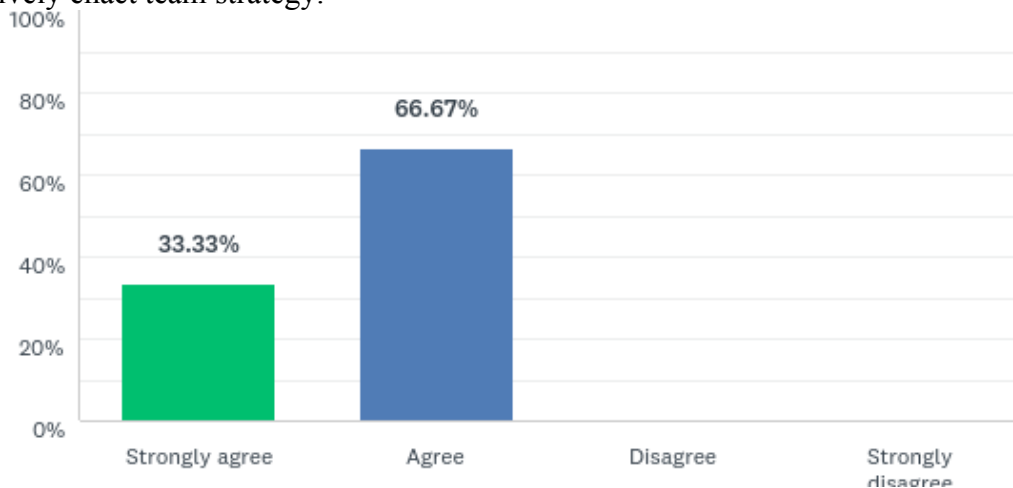
Figure 4.37. A/A/V Principal Survey Q25: My team can coordinate our activities to effectively to enact team strategy.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	36.67%	11
Agree	60.00%	18
Disagree	3.33%	1
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

The twenty-sixth question asked principals to agree or disagree with the statement, “My team can coordinate our communication to effectively enact team strategy.” 100% of the respondents agree or strongly agree (66.67% agree and 33.33% strongly agree) with the statement.

Figure 4.38. A/A/V Principal Survey Q26: My team can coordinate our communication to effectively enact team strategy.

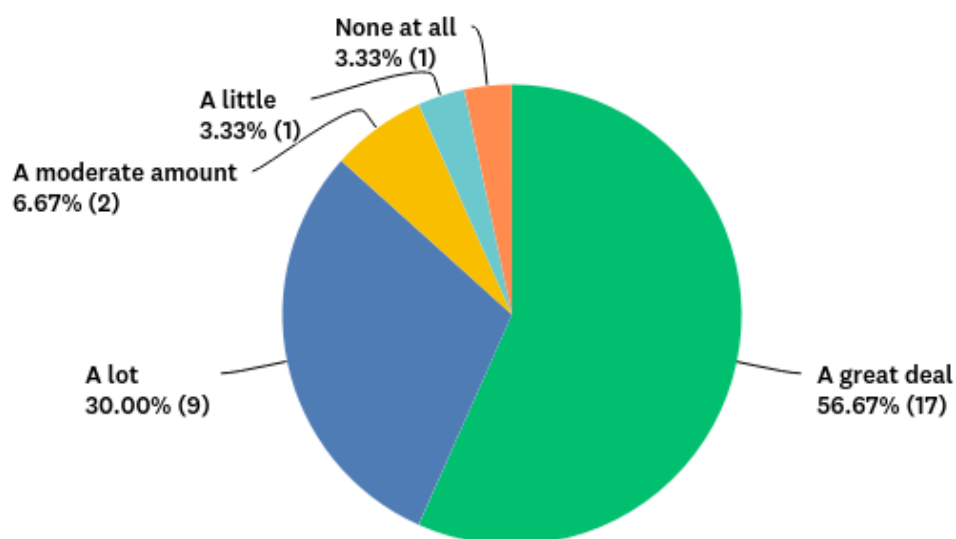


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	33.33% 10
Agree	66.67% 20
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	30

The twenty-seventh question focused on team cohesion (Figure 4.39).

Respondents were asked if their team has strong cohesion. The definition used for this survey was the following: the ability to stick together in the pursuit of a common goal. 56.67% of respondents believe their team has a great deal of cohesion followed by 30% believing they have a lot of cohesion. 6.67% of respondents stated they have a moderate amount.

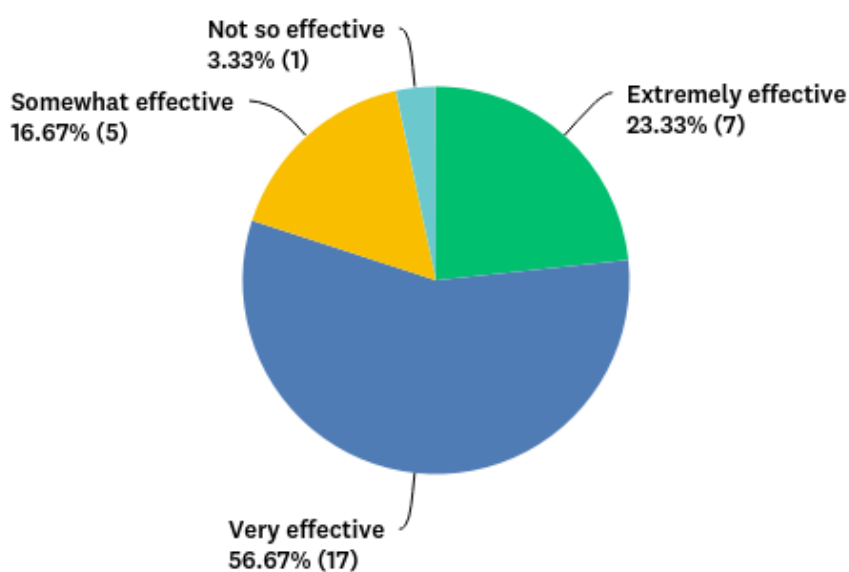
Figure 4.39. A/A/V Principal Survey Q27: Does your team have strong cohesion? (Definition: The ability to stick together in the pursuit of a common goal.)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
A great deal	56.67% 17
A lot	30.00% 9
A moderate amount	6.67% 2
A little	3.33% 1
None at all	3.33% 1
TOTAL	30

The twenty-eighth question asked the principals how their team is viewed by district office personnel as effectively integrating ideas and actions across their learning organization (Figure 4.40). 56.67% of respondents stated they are very effective and 23.33% stated they are extremely effective (the highest rating). 16.67% believe they are somewhat effective, 3.33% not so effective and 0% not at all effective.

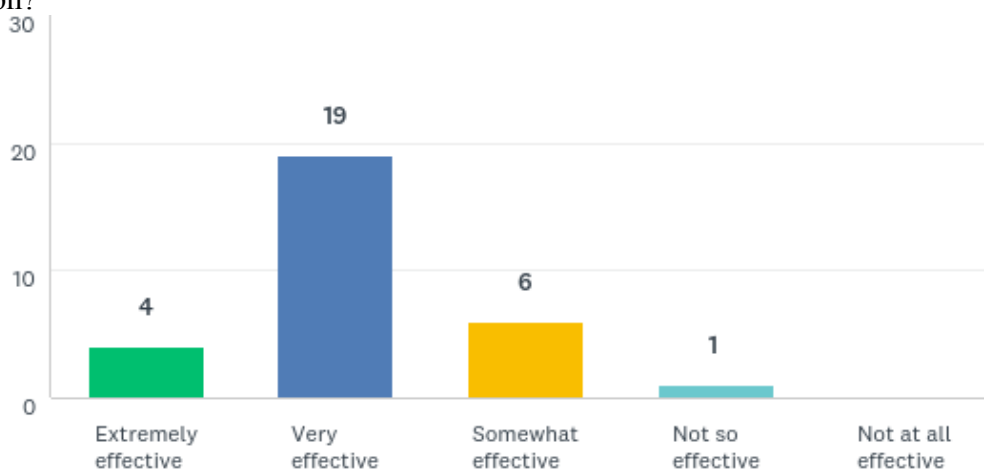
Figure 4.40. A/A/V Principal Survey - Q28: How is your team viewed by district office personnel as effectively integrating ideas and actions (or implementations) across your learning organization?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely effective	23.33%	7
Very effective	56.67%	17
Somewhat effective	16.67%	5
Not so effective	3.33%	1
Not at all effective	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

The final question of this survey asks the principals how their team is viewed by teachers as effectively integrating ideas and actions across their learning organization (Figure 4.41). 63.33% of respondents stated they are very effective and 13.33% stated they are extremely effective (the highest rating). 20% believe they are somewhat effective, 3.33% not so effective and 0% not at all effective.

Figure 4.41. A/A/V Principal Survey Q29: How is your team viewed by teachers as effectively integrating ideas and actions (or implementations) across your learning organization?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely effective	13.33%	4
Very effective	63.33%	19
Somewhat effective	20.00%	6
Not so effective	3.33%	1
Not at all effective	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

Comparisons Between Surveys

Many of the results show commonalities between the principal and associate/assistant/vice principal surveys. This research is to understand how team members on high school administration teams' function and support each other.

Summary of survey demographics.

The first portion of the survey investigated demographic data. The similarities between the principal and associate/assistant/vice principal include age, years in leadership and members on their administration team. As stated in previous sections, both surveys have individuals that are in the middle of their career and have been in leadership for multiple years. The difference between the surveys show that principals are older and have been in leadership positions for a longer time than associate/assistant/vice principals. Both surveys had half of the respondents reporting they have over 50% of their teams with three members. Principal respondents reported 65.89% and associate/assistant/vice principal respondents reported 50% with three team members.

Another similarity between the two surveys is the reporting on the Minnesota Department of Education's categories, current student enrollment, and staff size. The respondents in the principal and the associate/assistant/vice principal surveys fall mostly into the category of Senior High Grade 9-12 (58.33% and 83.33% respectively). Both surveys have the largest percentage of enrollment between the 1501 to 2000 students. The survey's data also has similarities in the current number of licensed teachers. The surveys report that many schools have between 61 and 100 licensed staff members. In the Principal survey, 11 respondents reported that they have between 1 to 40 licensed

teachers. To understand this data point, I dove into individual responses. The reason for the high number in this category is because of all the principals who are in small school districts, these principals oversee programs that would be classified as K-12, 5-12, and others. These principals are on teams of three or more but did not report on the K-12 total population they oversee.

Summary of surveys: leadership traits.

One of the secondary questions that has been asked in this research is, “Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams?” The second portion of the survey asks principal and associate/assistant/vice principals to self-reflect on Northhouse’s (2013) leadership traits. Table 4.5 is a comparison between principal and associate/assistant/vice principals and how they rated themselves on each of the 14 leadership traits.

Table 4.5. Principal and Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal Self-Reflection on Northouse's Leadership Traits

Leadership Traits	Type of Reflection	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	75.00%	25.00%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%	60.00%	36.67%
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	63.89%	36.11%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	33.33%
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	2.78%	8.33%	58.33%	30.56%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	56.67%	33.33%
Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	11.11%	22.22%	44.44%	22.22%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	6.67%	23.33%	50.00%	20.00%
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	2.78%	8.33%	69.44%	19.44%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	56.67%	36.67%
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	61.11%	30.56%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%	70.00%	26.67%
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%	26.67%	70.00%
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	2.78%	25.00%	72.22%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	5.56%	27.78%	66.67%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	30.00%	63.33%
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	11.11%	36.11%	52.78%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	3.33%	10.00%	30.00%	56.67%
Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	11.43%	62.86%	25.71%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	13.33%	46.67%	40.00%
Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	6.67%	40.00%	53.33%
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	5.71%	48.57%	45.71%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	3.33%	6.67%	43.33%	46.67%
Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	2.78%	52.78%	44.44%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	0.00%	3.45%	44.83%	51.72%

To understand the self-reflected leadership traits that principals and associate/assistant/vice principals chose, the data was disaggregated by % of respondents who selected either Agree or Strongly Agree. In Table 4.6, the data is presented. The final column is the average % of respondents. The data presents the leadership traits that respondents believe are the most critical. The first trait is Perceptive - Is discerning and insightful (100% and 100%), the second is Articulate - Communicates effectively with others (100% and 96.67%), the third is Trustworthy - Is authentic and inspires confidence (100% and 96.67%), and the fourth is Dependable - Is consistent and reliable (97.22% and 100%).

The data also show the leadership traits that Principals and associate/assistant/vice principals feel are the least important. The first trait, Self-assured - Is secure with self, free of doubts (66.67% and 70%), was vastly different than any other of the leadership traits. The next two leadership traits, Conscientious - Is thorough, organized, and controlled and Outgoing - Talks freely, gets along well with others, were reported the lowest and are over 17 percentage points higher.

Table 4.6. Comparison between Principal and Associate/Assistant/Vice Principals Self-Reflection on Northouse's Leadership Traits

Leadership Traits	Group Member	% of Agree and Strongly Agree	Average % of Principals and AP/AP/VP
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	Principal	100.00%	98.34%
	AP/AP/VP	96.67%	
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	Principal	100.00%	100.00%
	AP/AP/VP	100.00%	
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	Principal	88.89%	89.45%
	AP/AP/VP	90.00%	
Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	Principal	66.67%	68.34%
	AP/AP/VP	70.00%	
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	Principal	88.89%	91.11%
	AP/AP/VP	93.33%	
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	Principal	91.67%	94.17%
	AP/AP/VP	96.67%	
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	Principal	100.00%	98.34%
	AP/AP/VP	96.67%	
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	Principal	97.22%	98.61%
	AP/AP/VP	100.00%	
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	Principal	94.44%	93.89%
	AP/AP/VP	93.33%	
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	Principal	88.89%	87.78%
	AP/AP/VP	86.67%	
Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	Principal	88.57%	87.62%
	AP/AP/VP	86.67%	
Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	Principal	100.00%	96.67%
	AP/AP/VP	93.33%	
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	Principal	94.29%	92.15%
	AP/AP/VP	90.00%	
Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	Principal	97.22%	96.89%
	AP/AP/VP	96.55%	

The survey data not only asked respondents to self-reflect and select which leadership traits best describe themselves. The survey also asked the respondents to rate their administration team members. Principals and associate/assistant/vice principals rated their team members individually. In Table 4.7, I have combined all the data from both surveys to see which leadership traits principals and associate/assistant/vice principals believe their teammates possess. The associate/assistant/vice principal data includes all of their leadership team members, the principal and the associate/assistant/vice principals. This will give us a better picture of how the associate/assistant/vice principals view their entire high school administration team. The data shows that principals and associate/assistant/vice principals have different traits according to the respondents. I believe this is based on the difference of the leadership role. The principal is responsible for the team members and looking at the data. The principals strongly agree their team members possess Determination and Trustworthiness. The associate/assistant/vice principals strongly agree that their team members have Self-Confidence. The principals overall gave less strongly agree designation to their team members than the associate/assistant/vice principals gave to their team members.

Table 4.7. Principal and Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal Team-Reflection on Northouse's Leadership Traits

Leadership Trait	Type of Reflection	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	2.44%	8.54%	65.85%	23.17%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	2.22%	3.33%	10.00%	52.22%	32.22%
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	2.44%	9.76%	60.98%	26.83%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	1.11%	2.22%	8.89%	47.78%	40.00%
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	1.22%	6.10%	68.29%	24.39%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	1.11%	5.56%	34.44%	58.89%
Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	12.20%	68.29%	19.51%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	4.44%	14.44%	40.00%	41.11%
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	1.22%	14.63%	45.12%	39.02%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	1.11%	6.67%	3.33%	40.00%	48.89%
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	1.25%	0.00%	11.25%	43.75%	43.75%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	4.44%	4.44%	40.00%	51.11%
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	1.23%	3.70%	44.44%	50.62%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	1.11%	6.67%	4.44%	42.22%	45.56%
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	1.25%	5.00%	40.00%	53.75%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	2.22%	2.22%	8.89%	42.22%	44.44%
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	2.47%	4.94%	51.85%	40.74%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	1.11%	3.33%	8.89%	50.00%	36.67%
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	6.17%	54.32%	39.51%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	1.12%	1.12%	13.48%	43.82%	40.45%
Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	2.53%	3.80%	45.57%	48.10%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	1.11%	4.44%	10.00%	45.56%	38.89%
Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	1.23%	3.70%	51.85%	43.21%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	2.22%	2.22%	6.67%	45.56%	43.33%
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	3.70%	9.88%	56.79%	29.63%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	1.11%	4.44%	11.11%	50.00%	33.33%
Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	PRINCIPAL SELF RATING	0.00%	0.00%	12.35%	56.79%	30.86%
	PRINCIPAL TEAM RATING	0.00%	6.74%	12.36%	47.19%	33.71%

Reported data on team member leadership traits was further disaggregated by % of respondents who selected either Agree or Strongly Agree. In table 4.8, the data is presented. The final column is the average % of respondents. The data presents the leadership traits that respondents believe are the most critical for team members. The highest rated trait is Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability (92.68% and 93.33%), the second greatest was Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking (95.06% and 88.89%), the third is Trustworthy - Is authentic and inspires confidence (95.06% and 87.67%), and the fourth is Dependable - Is consistent and reliable (93.75% and 86.67%).

The data also show the leadership traits that Principals and associate/assistant/vice principals feel are the least important. The first is Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others (87.65% and 80.90%), which was vastly different than any other of the leadership traits. The next two lowest rated leadership traits are Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts and Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic.

Table 4.8. Comparison between Principal and Associate/Assistant/Vice Principals Team Members Northouse's Leadership Traits

Leadership Trait	Group Member	% of Agree and Strongly Agree	Average % of Principals and AP/AP/VP
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	Principal	89.02%	86.73%
	AP/AP/VP	84.44%	
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	Principal	87.80%	87.79%
	AP/AP/VP	87.78%	
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	Principal	92.68%	93.01%
	AP/AP/VP	93.33%	
Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	Principal	87.80%	84.46%
	AP/AP/VP	81.11%	
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	Principal	84.15%	86.52%
	AP/AP/VP	88.89%	
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	Principal	87.50%	89.31%
	AP/AP/VP	91.11%	
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	Principal	95.06%	91.42%
	AP/AP/VP	87.78%	
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	Principal	93.75%	90.21%
	AP/AP/VP	86.67%	
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	Principal	92.59%	89.63%
	AP/AP/VP	86.67%	
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	Principal	93.83%	89.05%
	AP/AP/VP	84.27%	
Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	Principal	93.67%	89.06%
	AP/AP/VP	84.44%	
Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	Principal	95.06%	91.98%
	AP/AP/VP	88.89%	
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	Principal	86.42%	84.88%
	AP/AP/VP	83.33%	
Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	Principal	87.65%	84.28%
	AP/AP/VP	80.90%	

The final table, Table 4.9, shows a comparison of Northouse's Leadership traits between the respondents self-reflection and what they chose for their team members. When comparing the two tables, Trustworthy and Dependable are both in the top four on the lists. Each of the Northouse leadership traits are powerful characteristics for any leader. One interesting data point is that Self-Assured is on the bottom of both lists. It seems that many leaders feel doubt even though self-confidence is one of the top-ranking leadership traits individuals saw in their leadership teams.

Table 4.9. Data comparison between self-reflection and team member rating

Rank	Self-Reflected leadership traits of principals and associate/assistant/vice principals	Team member leadership traits of principals and associate/assistant/vice principals
1	Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability
2	Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking
3	Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence
4	Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	Dependable: Is consistent and reliable
5	Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth
6	Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty
7	Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled
8	Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others
9	Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful
10	Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	Articulate: Communicates effectively with others
11	Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference
12	Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic
13	Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts
14	Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.

The findings of my research provided me with some very exciting data. One fascinating finding was the leadership traits individuals chose for themselves and the leadership traits they look for in their teammates. The data from the surveys state that individuals believe being Perceptive and Dependable are the most important of Northouse (2013) Leadership Traits. Table 4.9 (above) helps to answer the secondary research questions, which will be further discussed in the interview section. The individual leadership traits that are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams are Perceptive, Dependable and Articulate for individuals and Self-confident, Diligent and Trustworthy for team members.

The selection of leadership traits showed that many individuals have different leadership traits, and they use them successfully to lead their schools. One theme that permeated the findings from the interviews was how important it was for high school administration teams to have a system where they meet weekly or even daily to norm, discuss projects and initiatives, and communicate to each other. By creating norms and meeting, the administration teams develop communication and project plans that support their teachers and inform their district personnel. The results show that when teams meet daily, weekly or even monthly, the team members have more cohesion and were able to stick with their goals.

Summary of surveys: team context, essential conditions and performance.

The third section of the survey looked into leadership teams. The survey questions took themes from Thompson (2008) Integrated Model of Teamwork. This model focuses on team context, essential conditions and team performance. Team

context focuses on the organization context, team design and team culture. From the demographic data, most teams that completed the survey were on teams of three. Looking at the culture of the team, many individuals who took the survey stated their high school administration teams spend two to three hours meeting weekly to plan, design, analyze, make decisions or other reasons.

From the literature review (Thompson, 2008), teams need to have a number of factors that can create team success. These essential conditions include abilities, motivation and strategy. Multiple questions from the survey focus on these essential conditions. The data showed that respondents believe they have the requisite knowledge to analyze and create success in their schools.

Table 4.10 shows the combined data from questions 20 on the principal survey and question 19 on the associate/assistant/vice principal survey. The results show that 54.55% of the respondents Strongly agree their team has the requisite knowledge to create success in their schools.

Table 4.10. Combined data: My team has the requisite knowledge to analyze and create success in my school.

Answer	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Response	54.55%	40.91%	3.03%	1.52%

Teams also need to have skills and the ability to create success. Question 21 on the principal survey and question 20 on the associate/assistant/vice principal survey asked individuals if they believe their teams have the skills and abilities to analyze and create success. Table 4.11 shows that 63 (96.92%) of principals and associate/assistant/vice principals felt their team has the requisite skill and ability to analyze and create success in their school.

Table 4.11. Combined survey data: My team has the requisite skill and ability to analyze and create success in my school.

Answer	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Response	61.54%	35.38%	3.08%	0.00%

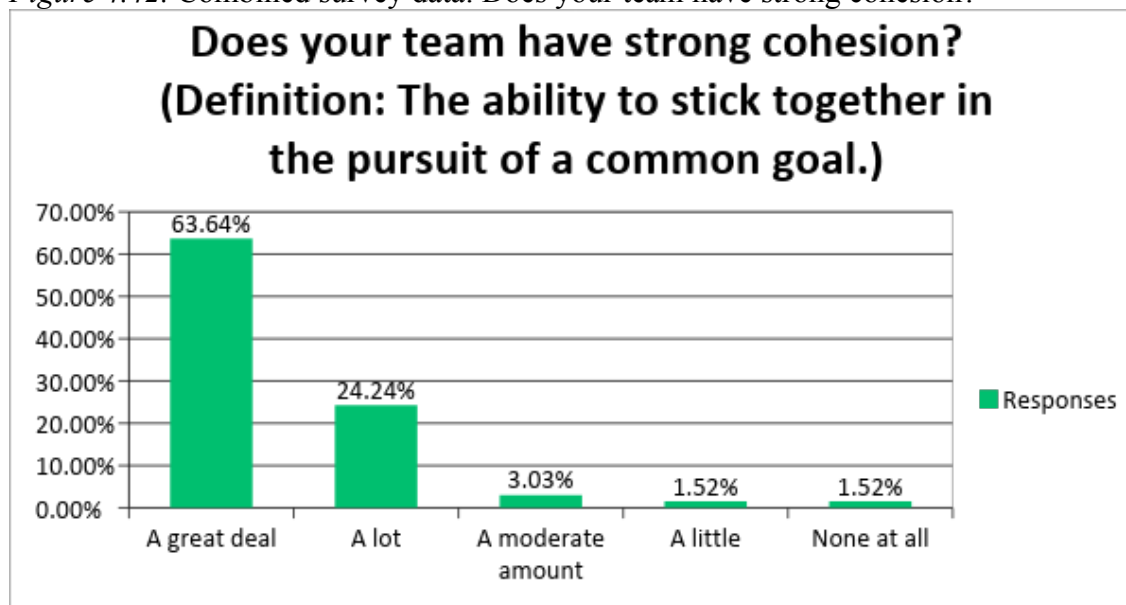
Thompson (2008) also states that team performance improves when the team learns together. From the combined survey data (Table 4.12), many teams learn together daily (13.64%). Almost half of the respondents stated they learn together weekly (48.48%) and over 30% stated they learn together monthly.

Table 4.12. Combined survey data: How often does your high school administration team learn together?

Answer	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
Response	13.64%	48.48%	31.82%	6.06%

One aspect in Thompson's (2008) Integrated Model of Teamwork is team performance, and one of the most critical components for team success is cohesion. To understand if individuals believe they have cohesion, the survey asked respondents to reflect on their team cohesion. The principals and the associate/assistant/vice principal believe they are on teams that are cohesive. Figure 4.42 shows the combined data from the principal's (question 28) and the associate/assistant/vice principal's (question 27) survey. Only a small number of respondents believe their team has little or no cohesion.

Figure 4.42. Combined survey data: Does your team have strong cohesion?



The main question this research is studying is: “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” From the literature review Leithwood et al. (2004), the National Association of Secondary School principals (NASSP) (2018) and Oshry (1994) believe that high school leadership (principals) function on multiple levels by supporting individuals at the district level, at the school level, and other stakeholders. This research also proposes that high school leadership teams are equivalent to and need to function as a single unit. To understand how high school administration teams support integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization, the survey asked respondents to reflect on how their team is motivated to support tasks provided to them by district personnel and by teachers in their school. Table 4.13 has combined survey data from the principal and associate/assistant/vice principal survey. Table 4.13 includes data from question 24 on the principal survey and question 23 on the associate/assistant/vice principal survey. These questions asked respondents to reflect on

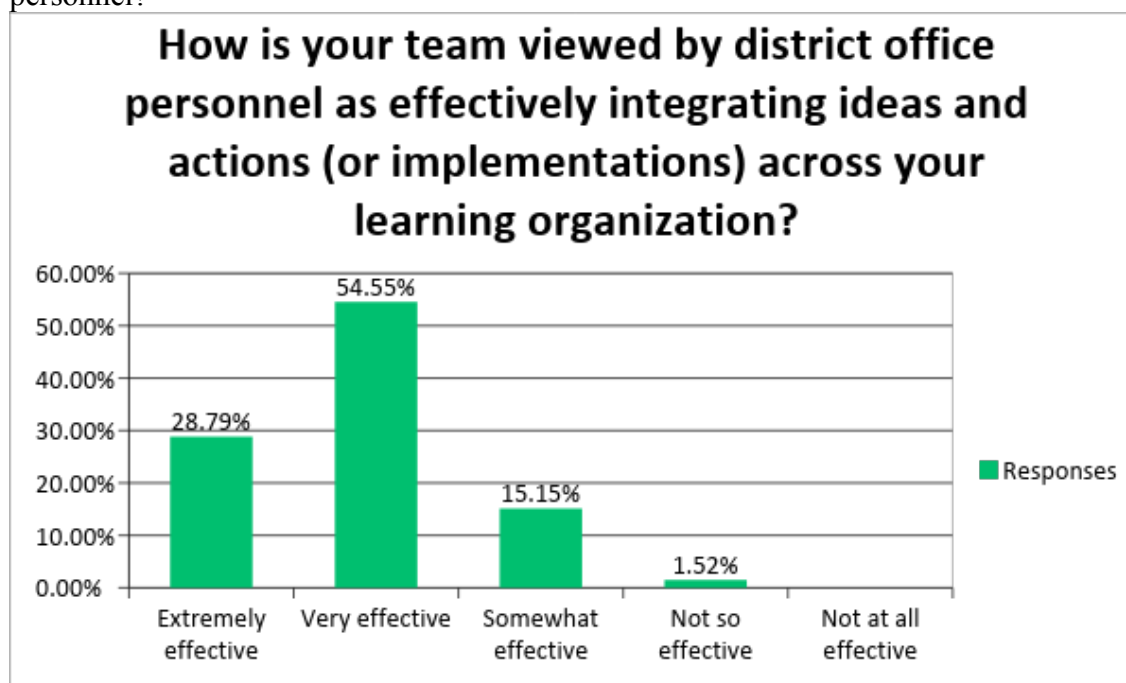
their motivation to accomplish tasks provided to them by district personnel. The data shows that the respondents believe they have the motivation to partner with their districts to complete tasks that are provided to them.

Table 4.13. Combined survey data: My team has the motivation to accomplish tasks provided to them by district personnel.

Answer	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Response	51.52%	45.45%	3.03%	0.00%

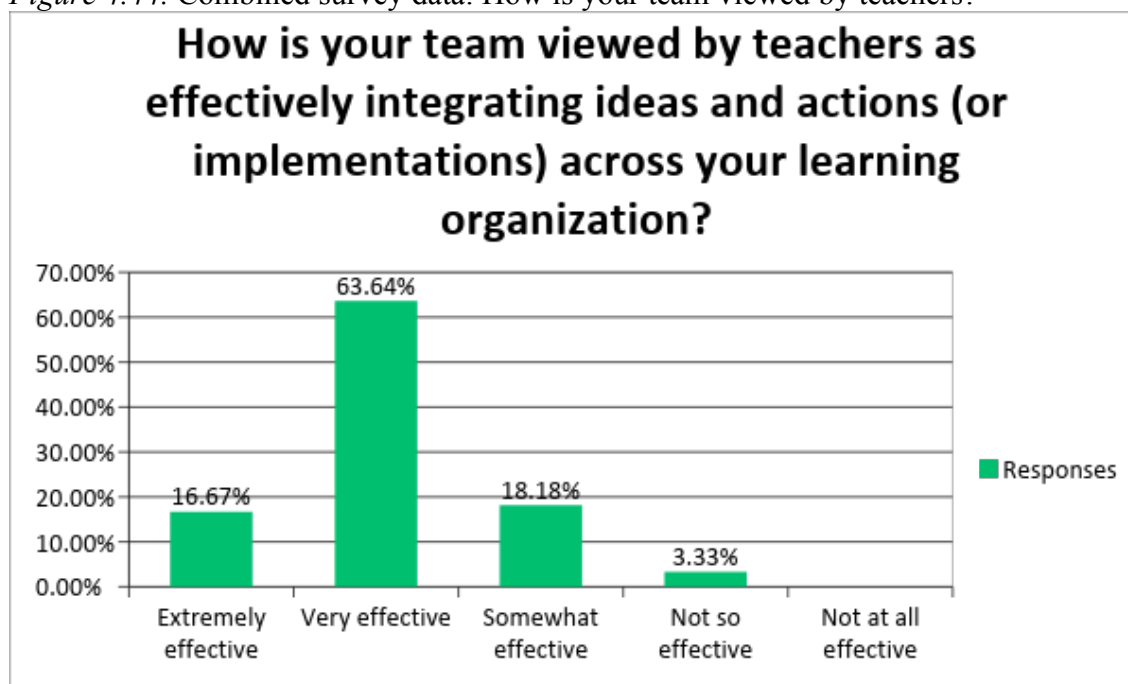
Respondents were also asked how effective they believe their team is viewed by the district personnel and by teachers. Figure 4.43 is taken from question 29 on the principal survey and question 28 on the associate/assistant/vice principal survey. The combined data from both surveys shows that 83.34% of the respondents believe they are extremely effective or very effective in the eyes of their district personnel.

Figure 4.43. Combined survey data: How is your team viewed by district office personnel?



In education, high school administration teams support the ideas and initiatives from their districts. High school administration teams also support teachers and staff. Question 30 in the principal survey and Question 29 in the associate/assistant/vice principal survey focused on how effective respondents believe they are by their teachers. Figure 4.44 shows the combined survey data that asked respondents to reflect on how effective their teachers believe they are at integrating ideas and actions across their learning organizations.

Figure 4.44. Combined survey data: How is your team viewed by teachers?



To fully answer my research questions, the survey data has shown to be a valuable method to understand the leadership traits that individual high school principals and the associate/assistant/vice principals state they have. Respondents believe they have the skills, structures, motivation and are able to effectively integrate ideas across their learning organization. It also allowed the respondents to share the leadership traits their team members possess. The survey was also useful in understanding how principals and

the associate/assistant/vice principals rate themselves on the components from Thompson (2008) Integrated Model of Leadership. To understand how teams develop strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions, communication to all stakeholders and which leadership traits strong teams possess, the next section will focus on interviews from 11 principals and the associate/assistant/vice principals from three high schools in Minnesota.

Interview Data

The research for this study was a mixed methods sequential explanatory design consisting of two distinct phases: collection of quantitative data followed by qualitative data. This portion of the research was focused on going deeper with high school principals and associate/assistant/vice principals. There were 11 interviewees who participated in this research. Three principals and eight associate/assistant/vice principals. Each interview was one-on-one at the participant's schools. The three schools that participated in the interviews had a student population that ranged from 1,600 to 2,200 students. Two of the schools were suburban high schools located near the Twin Cities of Saint Paul/Minneapolis in Minnesota. The third school was a large high school in a more rural area. The above survey data was sent to each of the participants, and eight out of the 11 completed the survey before our interview. The interview questions can be found in Appendix A. The following pages will document the details of the thoughts, feelings and beliefs of the individual principals and associate/assistant/vice principals. To keep the individual's personal identities undisclosed, I will be using numbers and letters as identifiers. The building principal's quotes will be *initialized*, so readers will understand who is the lead principal for each site.

After collecting and analyzing the survey data, I utilized interviews to deeply understand my three research questions. The primary research question is: “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” The secondary research questions are: “Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams?” and “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?”

Demographic Data

The first two questions, on the survey, asked interviewees to give some details about their role at the high school and their background. Question one states, “Describe your role at your high school.” Question two states, “What is your background?” A.) Years as a licensed teacher?, B.) Years as a principal (principal is used for both main principal or associate/assistant/vice principal)? and C.) Years with your current team?

High school A.

I interviewed each member of the high school leadership team at High School A in person. This team has three members 1, 2, and 3. To help the reader understand the team structures, I have italicized the head principal. In High School A the head principal is *Team Member 3*. To understand this team and how they construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization, I wanted to understand their journey to this point in their career. This team had a wide range of experience and years as building leaders. The team ranged from four years as a principal or associate/assistant/vice principal to over 12 years. This team has been working together for the past two years. The team also has a variety of great background

experiences of teaching, supporting student learning and a variety of departments, initiatives and programs they have overseen.

High school B.

I was able to interview each member of High School B's leadership team in person. This team has four members 1, 2, 3, and 4. To help the reader understand the team structures I have italicized the head principal. In High School B, the head principal is *Team Member 2*. Similar to team A, this team has a great depth of experience. The members range in experience from five years to sixteen years as school administrators. Three-fourths of the team have been working together for the past four years, and they recently hired one new team member. The team has a vast background in supporting student learning and teacher success. The school has implemented many best practices that have led to student success, including PLCs, flexible learning environments and a strong leadership team.

High school C.

I was able to interview each member of High School C's leadership team in person. This team has four members 1, 2, 3, and 4. To help the reader understand the team structures, I have italicized the head principal. In High School C, the head principal is *Team Member 3*. High School C is similar to the previous high schools in that the high school administration team has various backgrounds in their personal educational experience. The team has an experience range from having a new administrator to also having an administrator with over 16 years as a principal or assistant principal. This team has one of the longest tenures as a team with three out of the four members working with each other, in various administrative capacities, for over 11 years. This team recently had

a new member join them who is working as a half time administrator at High School C and administrator at an alternative learning center.

Leadership Traits for Self

To further understand the individual strengths of each team member, I asked them to look at Northouse's (2013) leadership traits. This is the same list of traits that was used in the survey. The question asked them: "What leadership traits do you feel are the most important for your success in your current role?" The secondary question was: "Why do you feel those are important?" To support a deeper understanding, I asked each participant to pick two or three traits that are really important to their success. Please see Appendix B for the full list of Northouse's leadership traits.

High school A.

In table 4.14, you will see the order in which the participants chose. This might not mean it was their rank order, although it was the order they verbal stated each trait. I have added Northouse's description behind each trait. This team had some interesting results for each member's choices. During the interview, the interviewees were also asked why they picked each trait. Team Member 1 picked persistent, because it is the "ability to get things done." Team Member 2 picked persistent based on getting goals accomplished. Team Member 2 stated "you need to make sure that you stay fixed on the goals, and continue to do that, even when other noise is popping up." *Team Member 3 did not pick persistent, but chose dependability. Team Member 3 stated, "They also need to know if you say you're going to do something, you're gonna do it because you will lose trust real quick if you don't."*

Table 4.14. High School A's Self-Reflected Leadership Traits

Team Member 1	Team Member 2	Team Member 3
Dependable (is consistent and reliable)	Articulate (Communicates effectively with others)	Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)
Persistent (Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference)	Persistent (Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference)	Dependable (is consistent and reliable)
Determined (takes a firm stand, acts with certainty)	Dependable (is consistent and reliable)	Empathic (Understands others, identifies with others)
Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)		

High school B.

Similar to High School A, the members in High School B looked at Northouse's (2013) leadership traits and reported which two or three they feel are the most important to their success in their current role. Table 4.15 displays the leadership traits as the individual chose them during the interview. During the interview, I did not ask the interviewees to rank the descriptions. I did ask them to tell me why the leadership trait was important to them. Members of High School B's leadership team have focused on supporting each student and staff member, and the results from the interviews show that they have aligned their collective beliefs with their actions. Team Member 3 states, "Empathy is all about taking care of people, we're in the people business. We're the biggest people business on the planet. We're customer service on steroids." Echoing Team Member 3, *Team Member 2* also believes empathy is important. *Team Member 2* says, "For me, it's really being able to be empathetic with others, and understanding others."

Table 4.15. High School B's Self-Reflected Leadership Traits

Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4
Friendly (shows kindness and warmth)	<i>Empathic</i> (understands others, identifies with others)	Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)	Self-confident (believes in himself/herself and his/her ability)
Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)	<i>Outgoing</i> (talks freely, gets along well with others)	Self-confident (believes in himself/herself and his/her ability)	Dependable (is consistent and reliable)
Conscientious (is thorough, organized, and controlled)	<i>Persistent</i> (stays fixed on the goals, despite interference)		Conscientious (is thorough, organized, and controlled)

High school C.

One observation that I made as a researcher was how each high school administration team could articulate their beliefs through similar language and stories. High School C was not different from the other two teams. Table 4.16 details the leadership traits each member chose during the interview. Each team member focused on empathy and being Trustworthy. Each member of the team was able to articulate why empathy is extremely important to them. Team Member 2 says,

(E)mpathetic...For me, personally, I think that's one of the reasons, when I was a teacher, that I think I made an impact. As a coach, I think I made an impact, and in the role as an administrator. I think even as I continue to get away from kids age-wise, I still have the ability to really connect with them, and identify, like it says, with others and help navigate those waters with them.

Team Member 3 echoes this statement, "*Empathy means understanding and identifying with others. Kindness without intent and effort, becomes artificial. Empathy creates*

purpose to your friendliness, in my mind.” Team Member 4 sums up the feelings that each team member spoke to around choosing the empathetic trait.

Empathy, I think the members of this team are very empathetic. I think the team is Empathic and Perceptive. They have good insight on, regarding the staff, and students, and families, and of the larger community. They have great insight as to what’s going on here. They are also insightful as to what’s going on in the outside (local community) and what’s that bringing in.

Table 4.16. High School C’s Self-Reflected Leadership Traits

Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4
Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)	Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)	<i>Friendly (shows kindness and warmth)</i>	Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)
Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)	Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)	<i>Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)</i>	Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)
Perceptive (is discerning and insightful)	Dependable (is consistent and reliable)	<i>Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)</i>	Articulate (communicates effectively with others)

The individual’s personal responses were incredible to hear. They gave great insight into how they think as administrators. The themes from the individual self-reflection on Northhouse’s (2013) leadership traits show that many of the interviewees are extremely empathetic and are looking to build systems where they can trust and depend on their colleagues. The following table (Table 4.17) shows the number of times the interviewees chose a specific leadership trait.

Table 4.17. Self-Reflected Leadership Traits of Interviewees

Self-Reflected leadership traits of interviewees	Number of times chosen by High School A, B, and C Team Member
Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	8
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	6
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	5
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	3
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	2
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	2
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	2
Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	2
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	1
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	1
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	1
Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	0
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	0
Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	0

Interviewees leadership traits for teams

The next question in the survey asked the members to look at Northouse (2013) leadership traits and answer the secondary questions: “What leadership traits do you feel are the most important for your team?” and “Why do you feel those are important?”

High school A.

Table 4.18 display’s High School A’s answers to which leadership traits are the most important for their team, which somewhat mirrors the leadership traits they chose for themselves. Team member 1 believes that Self-confident is a trait that is important for their team. When you get in front of staff you, “need to be confident in what you are saying.” Team Member 2 selected Trustworthy. Member 2 articulates this in the following statement,

I need to know that I can trust Team Member 3 and Team Member 2 are doing what they say they're gonna do, and they need to know that I'm gonna follow through with what I'm going to do. The same things go back to the teachers. I'm not a micromanager. I trust them to get the job done. If things don't get followed up on, I'll follow up with them, always assuming positive intent."

Team Member 3 chose two of the same traits, but flipped the order. *Team Member 3* states,

Dependability is just really really important. With Member 1, the thing I really like about Member 1 is he gets things done. And in this job and the pace that we move, you gotta get things done because if you don't, you fall short, things will get missed.

Table 4.18. High School A's Team Leadership Traits

Team Member 1	Team Member 2	Team Member 3
Self-confident (believes in himself/herself and his/her ability)	Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)	<i>Dependable</i> (is consistent and reliable)
Persistent (stays fixed on the goals, despite interference)	Articulate (communicates effectively with others)	<i>Trustworthy</i> (is authentic and inspires confidence)

High school B.

The team was really aligned in their thinking. Table 4.19 shows High School B's results from question number four. At first glance, at their chosen leadership traits, it seems that one individual is an outlier compared to the choices of the other team members. However, this would be a wrong assumption, as her answers were really focused on empathy and building trust. Team Member 1 chose the trait friendly for both

the self-reflection and her team. She says, “I would still say, friendly, again because of the relationship building piece of it.” Team Member 1 continues by saying, “We’re a really good collaborative team that also builds relationships, supports each other, and we’re all very driven.” A theme that is consistent with High School B is how important dependability and trust is to the team members. *Team Member 2* states,

Dependable, I think we as a team have to be Dependable and Trustworthy, right there, are the two that stand out. When you’re working as a team, you have to be able to trust one another, be authentic, and just be yourself. I think that’s one thing we work on as a team really every week when we meet, is just being able to just be how you are, be vulnerable. It’s okay.

This thought is echoed across the team. Team member 3 portrayed Dependable and Trustworthy in the following quote,

I think for our team, I think it’s important to have trustworthiness and dependability. Can I trust you? Can I depend on you? Can I count on you to carry your weight? Because we do, here at High School B (School’s Name omitted) everything is team, we are a very team driven admin team.

High School B was very articulate and an aligned administration team. Even though their leadership trait choices did not align perfectly, they all spoke with similar beliefs and norms.

Table 4.19. High School B's Team Leadership Traits

Team Member 1	Team Member 2	Team Member 3	Team Member 4
Friendly (shows kindness and warmth)	<i>Dependable (is consistent and reliable)</i>	Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)	Self-confident: (believes in himself/herself and his/her ability)
Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)	<i>Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)</i>	Dependable (is consistent and reliable)	Dependable (is consistent and reliable)
Conscientious (is thorough, organized, and controlled)			Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)

High school C.

High School C's focus on the team leadership traits had a different result than I was expecting. From their individual self-reflection (Table 4.16), High School C's team was very uniform in their choices. Each member picked both Empathic and Trustworthy as choices for leadership traits. The results for the leadership traits they believe are valuable for their team to be successful, in Table 4.20, are more mixed. *Team Member 3* picked Empathic and Trustworthy as two of the choices. *Team Member 3* stated, "I would say empathy for sure, and Trustworthy for sure, would stay with our team (*Team Member 3* was connecting this question to the previous question)." *Team Member 2* did not pick Empathic or Trustworthy as leadership traits for their team. This individual picked Friendly and Outgoing. *Team Member 2's* thoughts on Friendly are, "I think when we step out in the hallways, I think that kids gravitate towards us, and we emulate that with our staff, and I think our staff connection to us and with our kids are based on our behaviors (being friendly). I think it makes an impact on learning."

Table 4.20. High School C's Team Leadership Traits

Team Member 1	Team Member 2	<i>Team Member 3</i>	Team Member 4
Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)	Friendly (shows kindness and warmth)	<i>Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)</i>	Dependable (is consistent and reliable)
Dependable (is consistent and reliable)	Outgoing (talks freely, gets along well with others)	<i>Trustworthy (is authentic and inspires confidence)</i>	Empathic (understands others, identifies with others)
		<i>Persistent (stays fixed on the goals, despite interference)</i>	Perceptive (is discerning and insightful)

The interview results for leadership traits that each team believes are valuable for their team to be successful are very fascinating. The team members gave great insight into how they think as administrators. The themes from the individual's reflection on team leadership traits from Northouse (2013) show that many of the interviewees believe their teams are extremely Trustworthy and Dependable. From their responses, they are looking to build systems where they can trust and depend on their colleagues. The following table, Table 4.21, shows the number of times the interviewees chose a specific leadership trait based on what makes their team successful.

Table 4.21. Team Leadership Traits of Interviewees

Leadership traits, from interview, that each team believes are valuable for their team to be successful	Number of times chosen by Team Member
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	7
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	6
Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	3
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	2
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	2
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	2
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	1
Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	1
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	1
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	1
Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	0
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	0
Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	0
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	0

Team context and essential conditions

The next question in the interview connects to how teams function. From the literacy review, Thompson's (2008) Integrated Model of Teamwork, it focuses on three areas: team context, essential conditions and team performance. The following questions asked members of each high school to articulate how their teams are designed and how they function. Question number five asks team members to describe how their team functions and what are the shared principles, beliefs, values and/or norms. This question is focused on understanding more about the team context and the essential conditions the team creates to be successful.

High school A.

Each team member in High School A talked about how they start their week. Every Monday, the team meets for about two hours. *Team Member 3* explained that they have a, "running agenda that anybody can add to throughout the week." The work for

High School A started in the summer. The team spent time discussing roles and responsibilities. Team Member 2 discussed how the team looked at their “strengths” and “provide roles within that we’re going to excel in.” A common theme that was apparent in High School A was collaboration and shared responsibility. Team Member 1 said “our principles, beliefs, values and norms are pretty set and I think they’re set on being honest with each other.” Team Member 2 articulates this, “if we have any norm, it would just be collaboration, and then another norm we say is, “workhorse, not show horse.” *Team Member 3* expressed the norms for the team, “*Our norms for our building leadership team are: Open and Honest Communication, Presented and Engaged, Open Minded and Flexible, Follow through, and then work in a collaborative and professional manner.*” Each member was able to articulate how their team functions and the overall focus was on utilizing each other when needed. *Team Member 3* articulated this belief well, “*We do not work in silos in this building. It is a shared responsibility.*”

High school B.

High School B meets every Monday and includes the athletic director in their meetings. The meeting schedule is for one hour, but as Member 1 states, “we end up going over despite our protocol.” The team also has multiple standing meetings throughout the day. Each team member articulates the four pillars that are their focus. They include excellence, diversity, positive relationships and futures. The team members also discussed the importance of mindfulness. *Team Member 2* describes that,

First and foremost you have to take care of yourself. I’m a big believer in self-care, and so we talk a lot about that... if you’re not taking care of

yourself, you're going to be no good to our team, and you're going to be no good to everybody else.

Out of the three teams interviewed, this team could articulate their shared beliefs and norms the strongest. This team actively worked on their team's values. Team Member 4 describes it as, "We did activities where we had to describe our values." The other focus this team has is based off the Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz. Three of the team members connect the Four Agreements to their day to day work. *Team Member 2* commented, "We talk a lot about the Four Agreements, be impeccable with your work, don't take anything personally, don't make assumptions, and always do your best...anytime we start a meeting, those are our protocols."

High school C.

High School C has collectively been together the longest, even though they have a new team member. This team has spent many hours norming together and meeting every morning to focus on aligning their beliefs and moving the school towards their collective goals. Team Member 1 gives great insight into their morning process.

We come to work every morning, we're here at 7:30. It's funny because people go, 'you guys meet every day?' Yeah, every day. Every day for about a half hour. I could stay in there for two hours because it feels like that time does go quickly. It's a mixture, it's a little bit of BS'ing because you work hard, you need to play a little bit with people too and be able to whatever.

This has not always been easy as Team Member 2 states, "It's interesting and we've been all over the board in my number of years in regards of what we look like as far as the way

we function. It seems like often times we're dysfunctional even when we're together, because we are all over the place." Team Member 2 then discussed how they all finally aligned all of their arrows. "It shows how important it is for you to be able to find time to connect to stay on the same page. When *Team Member 3* came in with our core values 11 years ago, they were something that really resonated with me...so ultimately I think at the end of the day even though I described us as dysfunctional, I think we are high functioning...because we always come back to our core values to be nice, be proud, work hard, and model positive behaviors."

To develop a strong sense of team, this team has also created times during the week to go deeper into their work. They meet twice a week to focus on teacher growth and development. As *Team Member 3* says, "*We sit down as a team, and we actually created a...a professional development guide for each one of our staff members.*" The administrator's meeting aligns with their norms, beliefs and values. The school's core values are to be proud, work hard, model positive behaviors and be nice. The hard work is shown in the value they place meeting about teacher success, and as *Team Member 1* states, "One of the coolest things that we can do that sets us apart in helping our staff members grow and to know that we care about them is to all be on the same page (All administration team members knowing the strengths and areas of focus of each teacher)."

Essential conditions

Question 10 focuses on how teams diagnose and resolve disagreements. The question asks individuals to think about a time where they had a disagreement. The follow up questions focus on how the team addressed or identified the disagreement and how the team resolved the disagreement.

High school A.

Each member of the team was able to state when they had a disagreement with a team member or a decision the team was making. The issues were all connected to a behavior or a procedure. For example, an issue from the student's handbook, such as hats or dress code or student behavior. The team members were able to walk me through the issue and what they did to fix it. One team member stated they are able to have disagreements because of their open communication. *Team Member 3* illustrates this, "Member 1 came in here, and this speaks to the relationship that we have, he came and sat right in that chair, and he said, 'here is what I think.' And I said, 'here is what I think.'" After a lengthy conversation, they both agreed to support the decision even though Team Member 1 did not fully approve of the outcome. In this situation, the compromise was not the decision, but the support of the team member.

High school B.

Teams have different ways to work through disagreements, and High School B uses its beliefs and protocols to work through any disagreements. As *Team Member 2* states,

Disagreements, that's healthy. We talk about that at our meetings, is that conflict doesn't have to be bad. Conflict can be good, and it can be a way for individuals to grow, individuals to look at things from another perspective, another way. I really believe it helps teams grow as well too, as long as it's done in a health way...sometimes it is uncomfortable, but if everybody feels like they can share with what they need to share, at the end of the day, we will figure it out.

As *Team Member 3* said, "We disagree a lot. To be honest that the biggest thing that we do is number two of the four agreements, don't take anything personally." The norms

and protocols are entrenched into the team's daily conversations. The team has created the conditions for trust and openness. The team also understands that their role is to provide a united front. Team Member 4 describes this in the following quote, "So, when we have a disagreement, we address it, we open pros and cons, we agree to support each other. I mean it's kind of one of the things we've become better at. Whatever we decide, we're all going to support it publicly, you may not like the idea, but you will support it."

High school C.

As stated earlier, High School C has been working together in different capacities for over eight years, and as the interviewees explained, they are very honest with each other. As Team Member 1 explains, "This fall, when I went into *Team Member's 3's* office, and said 'we got to figure this out because I hate looking stupid, and we are not on the same page, and it's pissing me off.'" This conversation comes from a place of clarification and knowing how each team member functions. *Team member 3's* answer to this question connected directly with Team Member 1's quote.

We fight all the time in a good way. Team member 1 and are like brother and sister. We argue all the time about stuff, and the way we resolve it is we work through it. We commit to the fact that it is okay if we don't see eye to eye on this, sometimes we gotta sit down and grind it out a little bit. Not to win or lose, but to say, 'What are you thinking'?

This open approach to communication and the ability to talk together has been made possible by the time the team spends together. They meet every morning and communicate throughout the day. This has created a situation where every team member is working in partnership and not in a vacuum.

Team performance

From the literacy review, Thompson's (2008) Integrated Model of Teamwork, team performance has four components: Productivity, Cohesion, Learning and Integration. Interview questions six through nine and 11 focus on these components to answer the primary research question, "How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?" and one of the secondary leadership questions, "How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?"

Question six asked respondents to look at data from the survey data. It states many high school secondary teams believe they have a great deal of cohesiveness (67% of Principals and 59% of Associate Principals). The question asks individuals to describe how their team is cohesive? (Definition: The ability to stick together in the pursuit of a common goal.)

High school A.

Each member of High school A stated they feel very comfortable with each other. Team Member 2 said, "We're just very comfortable with each other." Member 2 believes that feeling comfortable comes from being vulnerable.

I think vulnerability is really important. And realizing not everybody's perfect, and we're just, you know, we try to be happy healthy human beings that thrive together. Yeah, I think that's kind of what keeps our team together and everybody works hard...from time to time somebody

might say something or do something that's not perfect. And at that time we just say. Take a knee and just move on with it.

Team Member 3 believes that trust is at that cornerstone of cohesion, “*I think that goes to trust. You can't take that for granted, and I would say our admin team, at the end of the day, we really trust each other.*” *Team member 3* states trust takes time to build and comments, “*that's something you have to invest in.*” A very insightful *Team Member 2* connects cohesion to marriage.

I think that it is giving and taking, a little bit like marriage. There is a balance when making decisions, the first is discussing the issues and looking at multiple perspectives. There are also times that you do not push your own agenda, for example, if *Team Member 3* really feels strongly about it and I'm like, Whoa, whoa, whoa, time out...we can have a discussion and there's no hard feelings...so cohesion starts and ends with being honest with each other.

High school B.

Team members in High School B are supportive and have built structures to make sure they are successful. One method of creating cohesiveness that they have found to be successful is creating a one-page document with all their norms, strategies and priorities. This document keeps the team focused and aligned. A second theme from the interviewees is the bond that struggling together created. This site had a death of a co-worker, and through that process they were able to rely on each other. *Team Member 2* sheds light on the tough process of moving on,

We've continued to be able to stick together through the loss of a teammate, and bringing somebody on, so that was tough. I think the people, Team member 3 and Team member 4 and myself are just good people, Empathetic people, Dependable, Caring and Trustworthy and that keeps us together.

The final theme is the team spends time outside of the school day. Team Member 3 explains that, "We do outings together where it's just us, where we get together socially. It's things like that, that keep us together." High School B's cohesiveness is in partnership to each other by the processes and shared beliefs they have cultivated together.

High school C.

A very insightful Team Member 4 answered question six, and described how their team is cohesive, with the following statement, "I think our team is cohesive given that we use kids as our lens and always do. And that does bring us back, especially when we are looking at a larger context situation with a lot of moving parts." Team Member 2 echoed Team Member's 4 description by describing how their team is cohesive.

We need to be really on point with being cohesive towards our teachers and be able to give direction as to what it should look like, but also allow our teachers to have ownership in where we're going with that (current school focus omitted)...I think it's super important to make sure we're on the same page with (current school focus omitted), and then even going backwards to the day to day stuff in regards to...knowing what's going on.

This understanding of direction and knowing each teacher as an individual is present in how High School C functions as a team. Their cohesiveness comes from the time they spend with each other. As *Team Member 3* describes, “*If you do not spend time together, you cannot effectively communicate what each other is thinking.*” *Team Member 3* makes a great connection to cohesion and communication. To be an effective team you must have cohesion and to have cohesion your team must have strong inter-team communication skills.

Team goals

Question seven asks interviewees to share an example where their team had a goal and how their team supported the goal.

High school A.

When I asked question seven to High School A, two of the team members focused on a school culture goal they have been working on for the past year. The goal stemmed from multiple deaths in the school’s community. These events caused the team to think about the day to day experiences in the school. They reached out to an outside consultant team to give them some guidance. *Team Member 1* described the experience the outside consultant provided to the team, “The consults did a nice job of really focusing us. They did not tell us anything we did not know, but it put it in a nice perspective and some nice verbiage.” This process also allowed all stakeholders to have a voice in the process. The outside consultants ran focus groups with staff and students to understand their perspective. This is a timely process that many administrator teams cannot do. The process also led the administration team to find opportunities to learn about the school’s culture. *Team Member 3* stated this, “*process led to us inviting every single senior to a*

class meeting...small group of about 15 seniors.” In the end, this process gave valuable insight into the team’s goal of improving culture. Each member of the high school administration team was involved in all the steps of the process.

A secondary goal, also connected to the school culture goals, was brought up by all three of the team members and described the focus on student achievement, including how student learning is assessed, and the system and structures to look at data. High School A has a robust support system focusing on the building’s goals. It starts in the spring/summer with the administration team looking at student and staff data. The administration team aligns their building’s goals to the district’s priorities. Then, the team cascades the goals to their building leadership team, which consists of instructional coaches, teachers and the administration. Finally, the building leadership team reviews progress on the goals multiple times during the year.

High school B.

When question seven was asked to the team members, they all focused on a Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) project. Member 1 describes, “Just like any school, all of our collaborative teams are in a very different spot.” The teams worked with their district offices to roll out a one-stop space where teachers can enter their data from their PLCs. *Team Member 2* describes the process.

We met with them (admin team and district personnel) over the summer, and then we put together a blueprint for last year, kind of identified what we’re about, our mission, our expectations, what are the big core pieces of our building.

From the initial conversations, the goals were set for the building. A second goal was to support student learning. The team created a flexible time for students. Team Member 3 describes how the team all supports each other and moving their goals forward, “So *Team Member 2* got the flex seating, Team Member 1 helped design the furniture and layout, and Team Member 4 crunched data, and we all looked at the numbers and created the system together. So yeah, that was a big team effort.”

High school C.

High School C has developed a road map of where they are going and where they have been. This roadmap is displayed in the team’s conference room. This road map displays the team goals and different priorities. The team's focus is similar to the other schools. The focus is to improve student and staff achievement and implement a school or staff priority. They also use this roadmap to divide up administration duties. They look at each of their strengths and areas of growth. This understanding helped the team hire a new team member. As Team Member 4 describes:

One of the things that we started talking about at the beginning of the year, and I think part of the reason why they chose me for this position...My background is very instructional, and they needed a little more of that.

One major goal of this school is supporting their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and the professional learning for their teachers.

How teams foster integration

Question eight and nine ask the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals to reflect on how their teams operate in their school system. From the literature review, Oshry (1994) and Thompson (2008) state that individuals on teams need to be able to

integrate with each other and others in the organization. Question eight and nine ask teams to think about how they operate in their social systems. The difference between question eight and nine is the who. Because all three high school teams function extremely well, the lines between the two questions became really blurred. Since the lines are hard to distinguish, this section will cover both questions.

Question eight asks team members to describe a time when your team had to make a decision that affected your school's staff. Question nine asked team members to describe a time when they had to make a decision that impacted their district office. Both question eight and nine had secondary questions of: How did your team approach the decision? and What did your team do to design, implement, communicate and partner with the teachers or district office?

High school A.

Collectively, the team believes that they partner with their teachers and district office personnel effectively. Each member was able to discuss a situation where the team made a decision that affected their teachers. They also explained that during their Monday morning meeting, they discuss strategy around implementation of their goals and priorities. This means that they all have a similar understanding of who is doing what and communicating timelines on each project. Team Member 2 discussed that when our team is clear, "it creates a lot more trust. It creates a lot more commitment. It creates a lot more buy-in from our teachers." High School A has a robust system that supports new projects and initiatives. This system includes the high school administration team, instruction coaches, teacher leaders and others. When a decision needs to happen, the administration team will get together to discuss, as Team Member 2 articulates, "When

we're making decisions, if there's things that are happening in the building that *Team Member 3*, Team Member 1 and I felt are our responsibility, we talk about that together." Team Member 2 then discussed how the team decides who to talk with about the decision and next steps, "These people influence these people to influence these people." The team is strategic and purposeful in how they work with their staff.

Team Member 1, 2 and 3 all stated they have a great relationship with the district office. They are able to call the assistant superintendent or the superintendent any time they want. Member 1 articulates this by saying, "Well, what's nice about our district is I can dial (superintendent's name omitted) and talk to our superintendent just like you and I are having a conversation."

To move initiatives forward, High School A is aware that they need to be high functioning. The team was able to articulate a theme of clear communication and how it is critical to supporting success at their building. As Team Member 2 stated, "The biggest thing with them (teachers and district office personnel) is they say we would rather have you over communicate with us than under communicate, and so that's what we just try to do."

High school B.

As I listened to the administration team members of High School B, they were all aligned in how they described the process for implementing and communicating new initiatives. The examples the team provided were focused on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), processes for recognizing student speakers at graduation, school safety, and other topics germane to the secondary world. The process they used for supporting new initiatives with teachers was to first get the administration team all on the

same page. Team Member 4 articulates this well in the following statement, “We’ve been getting our norms and processes together, so we have to be on the same page, ‘cause we will have teachers that are confused, we wanna just make sure that we’re on the same page first.” The process High School B uses to cascade their message to the staff is to work with their PLC Leadership Team. These are individuals that support the department and the various PLC’s. Team Member 4 details how they partner with staff,

How does our team design, implement, communicate? God every which way. The design for the grading was with teacher leaders. We always have a team of teachers we work with. It’s always about 10 to 20 teachers across the school. We also have a faculty senate. That is one of the culture groups. We meet once a month. We also have a pedagogy group and the climate group. So, we can consult with them periodically, monthly, tri-monthly. We have them help deliver the message.

Sometimes, it’s better if colleagues are saying, ‘here’s what we are going to do.

High School B also has a strong partnership with the district office. Team Member 1 states, “My experience here so far, is that we are very well supported by our district level administration. We have an assistant superintendent who works directly with the principals. She listens, she’s authentic. I mean she’s amazing...if there’s other things that are coming down the pipeline from the district, she communicates really well with us too.” This partnership was expressed by every member of the team. Team Member 3 elaborates, “We get a lot of stuff top down to be honest. But they’re real receptive to some ideas.” When the team works with the district, they also make sure

they are prepared when they are partnering with their district leaders. *Team member 2* states,

So, that was a big project (attendance) working with the district on that. That definitely impacted the district office because that ultimately was a change in some practices and some guidelines and some policies. So, that was good. Again, it's having a little bit of that persistency, looking at research, coming in, making sure everybody's voice is heard and working through all of that. Being clear, communicating it, and getting the information to everyone not just once, but again and again, so everybody hears it.

Team member 2's answer helps address one of the secondary questions asked in this research, "How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?" They not only partner with their district through constant communication, but they also constantly communicate with teacher leaders and other stakeholders.

High school C.

When this question was asked to the team members of High School C, all of them discussed school start time. This was a major initiative that required the high school administration team to work with the district office, teachers, parents and other stakeholders. *Team Member 1* explained that *Team Member 3* did a really good job of keeping the superintendent informed. One of the major issues in this initiative was athletics and getting field or ice time. For this challenge, the high school administration, as stated by *Team Member 1*, understood that it took a lot of communication and

listening to move the initiative forward; “We communicated with the superintendent, trying to find some middle ground between our staff and our parents and him. It was messy.” The team also knows that each of them have different roles in communicating to different groups. As *Team Member 3* states, “*It’s about communication, how it matches the district’s goals and the practical idea of what we’re going to do, and then looking from feedback from them.*” The whole team communicates to teachers, students and parents. Many times they develop the communication as a team, so they all understand what will be said. The team also knows that the head principal usually communicates directly with the superintendent. While the other members have good relations with the district office, they understand that a clear message from the building principal is usually how they function, and they understand it is the role of their building leader. Team Member 2 describes this,

I think *Team Member 3* spends a lot of time over at the district office working with the teaching and learning staff and our superintendent. I think they really trust him and where his vision is and where he wants our school to go.

How teams learn together.

In my literature review a critical component of strong and dynamic teams is the ability to learn together. National Association of Secondary School principals’ (NASSP) (2018) and Thompson (2008) believe team learning or developing self and others is a critical component to strong teams and strong school leaders. The last question of the interview focused on a time when the interviewees learned together and how they applied the learning to their school or district.

High school A.

High School A is a well-oiled machine. Each member talked about how they are constantly learning from each other. The team also explained that learning is one of the district norms and that they read multiple books each year as a district leadership team. When the team reads a book, they have a discussion on how it applies to the work they are doing at their school. The team members also participate in other leadership opportunities at local universities. These opportunities are not as a team, but they bring back the learning to the team. To summarize the amount of learning this team does I will quote Team Member 2.

So before one year (first year on the current team) was up, when I got into this district, I had received 13 books and before I started the job I received four books...the books are kinda like the core principles of the teachers and principals, but more than anything this district is a learning organization.

This team also utilizes outside support. *Team Member 3* states, “*We used (name of consultant omitted) to support our understanding our students experience.*” The outside consultant helped build the team’s understanding of the issue in their school and helped them create an implementation plan.

High school B.

When I asked *Team Member 2* about a time High School B learned together, *Team Member 2* provided the following,

A time when our team learned together was at the end of the summer. We had (person’s name omitted) from the University of Minnesota come out

and work with our whole team, just on the whole understanding of our role as leaders and what that is, and how it begins with us and that whole mindfulness piece in taking care of self. So, we had a couple opportunities to learn with somebody as a team. I thought it was very valuable. That has helped us now. We are in a book study now, trying to continue our learning on our own, and we'll come back to some of that stuff this spring and this summer.

Team Member 3 stated they, “are currently doing a book study.” This team member also articulated that the team members will attend different conferences and it is expected they bring the learning back to the team. Another fascinating norm of this school was to share their learning with other administrators throughout their district. Team Member 3 explained that, “I went to the (Name of the National Conference omitted). It was super fascinating, and I brought it back and presented to each other (High School “B” Administration Team names omitted). We will also present it to the district. I present it on Tuesday to all the other principals.” High School B’s team uses communication from their personal learning to support teachers and other staff members. This integration of information to their team supports their learning, and when they share the learning with teachers or other principals they are creating the conditions that foster strong group dynamics across their learning organization.

High school C.

Similar to High School A and B, High School C is a learning school. As Team Member 2 jokingly states, “You don’t just grab the principal book and open up to page 70, and it tells you what to do.” High School C has done some deep learning around

vulnerability. This work was in response to multiple deaths in the school's community. The team partnered with an outside consultant and the high school administration team would get together with the consultant and do the learning together. The team took this learning and started to insert it into their professional development and into their everyday experiences. One of the administrator's models is the belief of vulnerability and sharing with all the students during one school assembly. Team member 1 explained, "Team Member 2 got up in front of our student body and shared...it all came out of our work (team learning)."

Summary of findings connecting to research questions

The data from the interviews and survey clearly answer the research questions posed in chapter one. My primary question was, "How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?" My secondary questions were, "Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams?" and "How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?" The data provided in the research shed light on the multifaceted roles and experiences within secondary leadership teams.

Teams Constructing Strong Group Dynamics and Communication

The data shows three areas that need to be present to build strong high school administration teams that can foster the integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization. These three areas are: (1) structured team meetings, (2) well-defined norms, and (3) clear and concise communication. To create strong group dynamics, teams need to have a structured meeting schedule where ideas, concerns and relationships

can be shared and built. Teams also need to have strong norms that support the team when disagreement arise. From the data, teams need to have structures, formal and informal, where team members can disagree and talk with each other. Each team interviewed described a formal weekly meeting where they had a running agenda. They also described multiple informal mini meetings throughout the week to create group understanding of what was happening in their schools. Then, the structures and norms created within the leadership team need to be cascaded to the other stakeholders in the district. It is the responsibility of every member of the leadership team to understand and be able to clearly communicate the goals, priorities, and practices of the high school leadership team. Every interviewee articulated the need for clear cascading of communications to teachers and district personnel.

The answer of how teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions are found in the survey's and interviewee's responses connected to Thompson's (2008) Integrated Model of Teamwork. There are three areas in the Integrated Model of Teamwork that were present in the surveys and interview questions, which include: essential conditions, performance and team contexts. The survey data showed that a high level of respondents believe they are able to understand the essential conditions and the performance indicators to having a strong team. One of the strongest indicators that a team will have success is if they have cohesion and the ability to communicate effectively (Thompson, 2008, Lencioni, 2013). The interviews showed that the teams believe they are cohesive, and 87.88% of the survey respondents state they have a great deal or a lot of cohesion on their teams. This was strongly articulated by the interviewees. Each individual I spoke to shared how they need to be cohesive and have

clear communication to support each other. A very insightful Team Member 2, from High School A states,

There is a balance when making decisions, the first is discussing the issues and looking at multiple perspectives. There are also times that you do not push your own agenda, for example, if *Team Member 3* really feels strongly about it and I'm like, Whoa, whoa, whoa, time out...we can have a discussion, and there's no hard feelings...so cohesion starts and ends with being honest with each other.

The data from the survey shows that high school administrators feel they have the motivation (96.97% agree or strongly agree), requisite skills (96.92% agree or strongly agree) and knowledge (95.46% agree or strongly agree) to create success in their schools. The survey data shows that 93.94% of the respondents learn with their team at least monthly and 62.12% learn together at least weekly. This data was reinforced and deepened by the interviews.

The research data obtained from my surveys and interviews describe a complex picture of success. Having a successful team varies from team member to team member and from school to school. The components that were distilled from the data was that for teams to integrate ideas to teachers, students, parents, district staff or other stakeholders, they need clear and concise communication. This communication starts with the high school administration team. The ability to clearly communicate was shared in all 11 interviews. Communication was also threaded through almost every answer, from the meeting structures, to team learning, and every other aspect of their work that individuals described in the interviews.

Leadership Traits

The second secondary question for my research was, “Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams.” The summary data from both the survey and the interviews have many similarities and some differences. The individual’s personal responses were incredible to hear. They gave great insight into how they think as administrators. The themes from the individual’s self-reflection on Northhouse’s (2013) leadership traits show that many of the interviewees are extremely empathetic and are looking to build systems where they can trust and depend on their colleagues. The following Table 4.21 shows a comparison of data for leadership trait self-reflection from the survey results (data from table 4.9) and the interview results (data from table 4.17). As seen in Table 4.21, the top choices are similar. The major difference was that many survey takers ranked Perceptive as one of their top choices versus the interviewees who chose Empathic as the leadership trait most stated. In the interviews, only one individual picked Perceptive as a leadership trait that would describe them.

Table 4.21. Self-Reflected Leadership Trait comparison data between Survey and Interview

Rank	Self-Reflected leadership traits of principals and associate/assistant/vice principals, from survey data	Self-Reflected leadership traits of interviewees	Number of times chosen by Team Member
1	Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	8
2	Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	6
3	Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	5
4	Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	3
5	Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	2

Table 4.22 shows the team member leadership trait data from the survey results (data from table 4.9) and the interview results (data from table 4.21). As seen in Table 4.22, the top choices are very different. Survey respondents picked Self-confident and Diligent as the top choices of team leadership traits, while interviewees chose Trustworthy and Dependable. One interesting note is that even though Trustworthy and Dependable are not the top choices in the survey data, they are in the top four choices from the survey. The reverse can be said for Self-confident and Diligent. Neither of these leadership traits can be found at the top of the list for interviewees.

Table 4.22. Team Leadership Trait comparison data between Survey and Interview

Rank	Team member leadership traits, from survey, of principals and associate/assistant/vice principals	Team member leadership traits, from interview, that each team believes are valuable for their team to be successful	Number of times chosen by Team Member
1	Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	7
2	Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	6
3	Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others.	3
4	Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	2
5	Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	2

The data collected from the survey data and interviews painted an intriguing picture of the leadership traits that principals and associate/assistant/vice principals report for themselves and report for team members. From the survey data, principals and associate/assistant/vice principals reported that the top four leadership traits were: Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful, Dependable: Is consistent and reliable, Articulate: Communicates effectively with others, and Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence. When comparing the self-reflected leadership traits to the leadership traits individuals believe their team has, it paints a different picture. The top four team

leadership traits from the survey were: Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability, Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking, Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence, and Dependable: Is consistent and reliable. From the survey data, individual leaders believe their teammates to be Self-confident as compared to seeing themselves as being Perceptive. One similarity was that Trustworthy and Dependable were in the top four for both the individual and team survey data.

The leadership trait data from the survey also showed a slight difference between individual leadership traits and team member traits. The top four individual self-reflected traits identified in the research were: Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others, Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence, Dependable: Is consistent and reliable, and Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference. The team leadership trait data from the research showed that Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence, was the trait that was mentioned the most, and Dependable: Is consistent and reliable, was second. The other traits in the top four were Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others and Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference.

Many of the interviewees said every leadership trait on Northouse's (2013) list of leadership traits is a strong trait. The data from both the interviews and surveys showed that the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals believe, Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence and Dependable: Is consistent and reliable, are the two traits that they believe are critical to high school administrators to create effective leadership teams. The third leadership trait that is viewed as essential is Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others. It is exciting to understand the leadership traits that high school administrators state are important to their teams and themselves.

By understanding these critical leadership traits, high school administration teams can support their group dynamics.

Summary

As stated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, high school leadership can be a complex and multifaceted position. The data in this chapter shows the complexity of high school administration teams. This research answers my questions presented in chapter one. This mixed method study had two phases. The first phase focused on participants completing a survey. To gather the data on leadership traits and how high school administration teams' function, one survey was sent to Minnesota Principals and another sent to Minnesota Associate/Assistant/Vice principals, who work on a high school administration team of three or more. The second phase of this research interviewed 11 principals and associate/assistant/vice principals from three Minnesota high schools with administration teams of three or more. This data showed that respondents selected being Perceptive and Dependable as the self-reflected leadership traits and Self-confident and Diligent for team leadership traits. The survey data differed from the interview data on leadership traits. The interviewees stated that Empathic and Trustworthy are the top choices as individual leadership traits and Trustworthy and Dependable for teams.

The survey and interview data provided an answer to my primary research question: "How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?" The answer to my primary research question has three components: (1) structured team meetings, (2) well-defined norms, and (3) clear and concise communication. The research data in

chapter four has a direct connection to the literature in chapter two. In chapter five, I will expand on the data found in this chapter by connecting the results to my literature review. I will also discuss the limitations based on my structure of research methodology, recommendations for future research and how I will communicate the results.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Study Findings

The research that took place, during the course of this study, was a result of my desire to understand what makes a strong high school leadership team. I had the pleasure to research and study individual principals and associate/assistant/vice principals and how they contribute to their team. The participants were able to articulate how they foster growth, support their educational systems and make it enjoyable to work in a challenging and ever-changing profession. The first area of the summary will share the research design. The second area will summarize the primary research question, “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?”, and the secondary question, “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?” The third area of this section will discuss the last question, “Which individual leadership traits of high school administrators are viewed as most essential to creating effective leadership teams?” The summary will state the leadership traits that respondents of the survey and participants in the interview believe are critical for individual leaders and team members.

Research Design

To answer my research questions, I used an explanatory sequential, mixed methods design, starting with quantitative data collection and analysis in phase one followed by qualitative data collection and analysis in phase two (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The quantitative portion of the research consisted of two electronic surveys. One

version was sent to principals, and the other version to associate/assistant/vice principals. The surveys were sent to principals and associate/assistant/vice principals in Minnesota by the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP). To understand high school leadership teams, I asked survey respondents to only complete the survey if they were on a high school leadership team of three or more. The second phase of this dissertation focused on interviewing principals and associate/assistant/vice principals, all of whom were on high school leadership teams of at least three administrators. A total of 11 principals and associate/assistant/vice principals were interviewed from three Minnesota High Schools.

Group Structures and Communication

The results from the research answered the research questions: “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” and “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?” The research identified three components that relate to group dynamics that foster work in the organization: 1.) structured team meetings, 2.) well-defined norms, and 3.) clear and concise communication. There is a deep relationship between the third component, clear and concise communication, and administration teams constructing strong group dynamics. Additionally, there is a connection between the research question, “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?” and the first two components: structured team meetings and well-defined norms. Because of the interplay found in this study, the primary question, “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and

actions across a learning organization?”, and the secondary question, “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?” will be discussed together.

The results, from the data collected to answer the research questions in the surveys and interviews, align with the literature regarding team conditions, essential conditions, team performance and communication. From the literature review and according to Thompson (2008), teams must have shared goals, be interdependent, be bounded and stable over time, and the members have the authority to manage their own work. The research from my survey and interviews show that strong high school administration teams have these characteristics. The high school administration teams I interviewed, and the survey respondents’ answers echo the literature review for this research. The following section will connect the literature to the findings of this research.

Team context

The teams I interviewed and the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals that completed the survey have detailed the different contexts, conditions and how their team’s performed in this research study. My data identified three components that relate to group dynamics that foster work in the organization; those include: 1.) structured team meetings, 2.) well-defined norms, and 3.) clear and concise communication. These components are complex and, as the research shows, each team I interviewed had different organizational context, design, norms and culture. These components are identified in Thompson’s Integrated Model of Teamwork (2008) under Team Context.

When looking for similarities from each team, one theme stood out. The three teams who were interviewed each designed a system to have a weekly formal meeting.

The meeting structures were different in each school, but they had multiple similarities. Each team had meetings scheduled weekly or monthly. The other expectation was that each team member would be able to discuss their projects and duties. Each team had an accountability measure built into their team meetings. The survey data presented similar findings as the interviews. The survey data disclosed that every respondent meets weekly, with the highest range of two to three hours. The survey data showed that 50% of associate/assistant/vice principals and 55.56% of principal respondents stated they spend two to three hours a week meeting with their administration colleagues.

The second component identified that each team had its own set of norms which contributed to creating a team culture. The teams understood the importance of culture. They understood that the culture of the school building started with the culture of the leadership team. Each team's norms were different, but they all focused on supporting student achievement, creating trust, and supporting their team's culture. High School A self-developed their norms from various research sources. High School B utilized the Four Agreements from Don Miguel Ruiz and other resources. High School C utilized norms that were self-developed that focused on empathy and student success.

The final component is clear and concise communication. Thompson states that communication is a strategy that supports the essential conditions within the team's organization. The research shows that the team context supports the ability to communicate effectively to all stakeholders. Every interviewee discussed the importance of communication to build inter-team cohesion and to support the messages cascading from the high school administration teams to all stakeholders. As stated above, each team took time together formally every week, and High School C meets every day. The

connection for the interviewees between team meetings and norms is creating the conditions to have strong communication between team members. The strong communication between team members was then created during their meetings where they utilized their norms. Each team used this time to plan, design, and to discuss and understand each other's points of view. The three components found in this research include: 1.) structured team meetings, 2.) well-defined norms, and 3.) clear and concise communication are critical for high school administration teams to understand how to create conditions for their teams and construct strong group dynamics, so they can foster integration of ideas and actions across their learning organization.

The essential conditions, from Thompson's Integrated Model of Teamwork, are present in the research data. Thompson discussed that teams need to have three areas that create the essential conditions for teams, ability, motivation and strategy. The first is ability, which includes, knowledge, skills, education and information to make decisions and support the team members. The second is motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic. The final area is strategy that is composed of communication and coordination.

Ability.

For teams to be able to perform effectively, each member must have the ability to be successful. This includes the requisite skills to analyze information. The surveys asked respondents if they have the requisite skills and ability to analyze and create success in their school. Of participants, 96.92% stated that they agree or strongly agree their team has the skills and ability. According to Thompson, teams also need to have the knowledge to successfully support their systems. The survey asked participants if they believe their teams have the requisite knowledge to analyze to create success in their

schools. Of the respondents, 95.46% stated they agree or strongly agree they have the knowledge to create success in their schools. These findings from the surveys align with the amount of learning and experience that principals and associate/assistant/vice principals have in the state of Minnesota, including multiple degrees and licenses. The data from the survey also show that many of the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals have many years of administration practice. The data from the interviews align to the participants of the surveys. Each team member interviewed at the three high schools has the requisite skills and knowledge to support all aspects at their high schools. Each interviewee has multiple years as an administrator and has had many years of higher educational learning experiences. The experiences include multiple degrees, including different Masters degrees and Minnesota Principal Licensures.

Motivation.

The data from the surveys shows that 96.97% of high school administrators feel they agree or strongly agree that they have motivation to accomplish tasks provided to them from their district personnel. The data from the interviewees shows the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation each team has to support student learning. The principals and associate/assistant/vice principals interviewed were not specifically asked if they have motivation to complete their duties. There were a lot of inferences to the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation each of them have. The teams took time to create norms, belief statements, blueprints, and team and personal goals. These components are driven by the individual's and team's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to support staff and student achievement.

Strategy.

The interview data shows how teams can have multiple goals, and they accomplish them by dividing up the tasks. Multiple teams look at each other's strengths and areas of growth when they manage their projects and their portfolios. These performance components support the team's ability to integrate ideas and actions across their learning organization. When survey participants were asked about their effectiveness of communicating team strategy, 66.67% of associate/assistant/vice principals stated they agree they are effective. Over 94% of the principals who took the survey stated they strongly agree or agree they are effective at communicating with staff and others to support their team strategy. One of the major focuses of each team interviewed was communication. Many interviewees stated that communication is critical between the team members and other stakeholders. The following quote given by Team Member 3, from High School C, summarizes the collective belief for all interviewees, "*It's about communication.*"

Team Performance

Thompson's Integrated Model of Teamwork has four team performance indicators: productivity, cohesion, learning and integration. From the literature, team performance does not happen in isolation. As noted previously, successful teams have the following components 1.) structured team meetings, 2.) well-defined norms, and 3.) clear and concise communication. These components can only happen when the team is performing well. To have strong team performance, the team must be able to adapt and change, be unified, take opportunities to learn and have clear communication to all stakeholders.

Cohesion.

The research findings show cohesiveness is built on strong communication skills and trust within the teams. As seen from the interview above, teams have structured team meetings with well-defined norms. These two components support clear and concise communication. These components also create strong team cohesion. Team Member 3, from High School C, believes their cohesiveness comes from the time they spend with each other. As Team Member 3 describes, “If you do not spend time together, you cannot effectively communicate what each other is thinking.” This takes time, but as every team has new team members, the norms and processes that have been built, although they may be different by school, allow the new team member to understand the norms and be a productive member of the team. The findings in the interview align with the findings from the survey. The interviews show that the teams believe they are cohesive, and 87.88% of the survey respondents state they have a great deal or a lot of cohesion on their teams.

Integration.

Cohesion has a direct correlation to high school administration teams and their design strategy to communicate and coordinate the success of their goals. Team Member 2, from High School B, spoke about how, “Partnership and communication can support high school leadership teams.” The surveys detail that high school administration teams need to partner with district leadership and staff through clear communication. As stated by both Thompson (2008) and Oshry (1994), integration of knowledge is a critical indicator of team performance. As stated in the literature review, integration of

knowledge is the ability of teams and individuals to disseminate and diffuse knowledge throughout the organization.

From the literature, teams must have the ability to communicate from the team level to multiple stakeholders (Thompson, 2008; Lencioni, 2012). To understand participant's understanding of integration, the survey asked two questions that focused on effectively integrating ideas and actions. The survey data asked respondents how their team is viewed by their district office at effectively integrating ideas and actions across (or implementations) across their learning organization. 54.55% of the respondents stated they are very effective and 28.79% as extremely effective. Teams not only need to communicate to their district office, but also need to communicate to their staff. The second question that focused on effectively integrating ideas and actions asked survey participants to reflect on how their teachers believe they effectively integrate ideas and actions across the learning organization. The respondents stated 63.64% are very effective and 16.67% as extremely effective at effectively integrating ideas and actions to teachers.

It is critical that teams understand how to integrate knowledge from multiple areas into a concise message to their stakeholders. As Team Member 2, from High School B's quote illustrates, "Being clear, communicating it, and getting the information to everyone not just once, but again and again so everybody hears it." This is repeated by Team Member 2, from High School A, "The biggest thing with them (teachers and district office personnel) is they say we would rather have you over communicate with us than under communicate, and so that's what we just try to do." Team Member 4, of High School C, aligns with the other two schools in stating, "We also really work hard to

communicate. There's a lot of messaging, texting, email and face-to-face whenever we can. Communication is really consistent. Which I also think is a major function of this team, that everyone tries really hard to communicate everything from things that are going on during the day." A theme throughout the interviews was that high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams. The interviews highlight the fact that teams need great communication with each other first. In every interview, the team members stated that communication was also how they solved disagreements or communicated new learning or integrated ideas to teachers or district personnel.

Learning.

One interesting finding, from the interviews and survey data and also reinforced in the literature review, was how successful leadership teams learn together. Senge (2006), Leithwood (2004) and Lencioni (2010 and 2012) all state that strong leadership teams need to have experiences that support learning. A team performance indicator in Thompson's (2008) Integrated Model of Teamwork states, "Teams should represent growth and development opportunities for the individual needs of the members." (p.41) The survey data shows that 93.94% of the respondents learn with their team at least monthly, and 62.12% are learning together at least weekly. This data was reinforced and deepened by the interviews. One insight from the interviews was how each team utilized the support of an outside consultant to grow. The consultant supported both the learning of the team and how the learning can be integrated into the school. Each team spent time together in the summer learning from the consultant and each other. The learning did not stop in the summer. It continued in multiple different forms, including team Professional

Learning Communities. From the survey and interview data, many teams participate in book studies, attend principal association events, like Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, and learn with their district leaders.

Leadership Traits

To answer the question, “Which individual leadership traits are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators to create effective leadership teams?”, I asked principals and associate/assistant/vice principals to reflect on Northouse’s Leadership Traits (2013). Northouse’s Leadership Traits and his Questionnaire, that was used in this study, shows an “individual’s traits and points the individual to the areas in which that individual may have special strengths or weaknesses”. (p.37) This gave great insight into the traits that are viewed as the most essential by high school administrators, and the interviews gave insight into how they apply the various leadership traits to individuals and teams. Understanding personal leadership strengths, responsibilities, minds, or traits can help leaders communicate, lead, and support individuals and teams. The data from the interviews and surveys showed that the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals state Trustworthy and Dependable are the two traits that they believe are critical to high school administrators to create effective leadership teams. The third leadership trait that they viewed as essential was Empathic.

Summary

The research that took place, during the course of this study, shows the components that Minnesota High School Principals and Associate/Assistant/Vice Principals utilize to create strong high school administration teams. The participants were able to articulate how they foster growth, support their educational systems, and

make it enjoyable to work in one of the toughest professions in the world. The research from the literature and the data from the surveys and interviews answer research questions. The primary research question, “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” and the secondary question, “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?” The answer to the primary and secondary research questions show that high school principals and associate/assistant/vice principals need to have the leadership traits of being Trustworthy, Dependable and Empathic. These leadership traits support strong teams. The research concluded that successful teams have the following components 1.) structured team meetings, 2.) well-defined norms, and 3.) clear and concise communication.

Biases and Limitations of the Study

Biases

To understand my biases, I had to turn the mirror inward. It is important to note that my current role is an Associate Principal, working in a medium sized suburban high school. My background is also very different from many of the interviewees. All of the interviewees taught at the high school level and now lead at the high school level. I started my educational career as a paraprofessional and taught Kindergarten, first and second grade. My plan was never to be a high school administrator, but I was given the opportunity to become a high school administrator. My educational experiences have given me insight from early childhood to 12th grade and beyond. My personal approach to education is to focus on the whole child. This approach is similar to my leadership approach of focusing on the whole teacher, adult learner and human. This has led me to the desire to understand what the human/leadership characteristics of strong leaders and their leadership teams are. The final bias is my own experience that I have had on teams. I have had the opportunity to be on really strong administration teams and also dysfunctional teams. These experiences have constructed a story about teams and team members and how they should function at the secondary level.

Limitations

There were two limitations to the research methodology that I utilized. The first limitation was the small size of the survey respondents compared to all the principals in the state of Minnesota. The second limitation was the selection of the interview teams. These two limitations do not have a major impact on the conclusion of the research. Both limitations were based on the design of the study.

The first limitation was the relatively small number of principals (36) and associate/assistant/vice principals (30) that completed the survey. The design of this study created this limitation. To understand leadership teams, in high school administration teams, this study focused on teams of three or higher. Based on the various models in leadership at high school's across Minnesota, the language I used to define an administration team caused this limitation. This limitation was also caused by using the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, which only sent the survey to principals and associate/assistant/vice principals in the State of Minnesota. The research defined the leadership team as a principal, associate/assistant/vice principals. I understand that there are models where deans, instructional coaches, and other positional titles occur, and the individuals are acting in a capacity as an associate/assistant/vice principal. I also understand that the title of principal and associate/assistant/vice principal could vary in private, charter or parochial schools, and this limited these individuals from the survey. In the structure of the survey, it also excluded athletic and activity directors, an extremely important position in schools, but not a focus of this research. When looking at the number of high school principals on teams of three or more in the State of Minnesota, my survey had a high representation of individuals. The limitation above acknowledges that there are many principals and associate/assistant/vice principals that were excluded based on team size.

The second limitation involves the interviews. The literature review defined the leadership team in the literature review as a Principal, Associate, Assistant or Vice Principal. In two of the three high schools where the interviews took place, the administration team members included their Athletic Director in their leadership team.

During the interviews, these teams talked in-depth about the role of their Athletic Directors on their team. This limitation was caused by the design of this study. I believe the research was not affected by not including the Athletic Director in the interviews, but this would be a possible implication for future study. Another limitation was that this research was done in the state of Minnesota. The individuals that took the survey and participated in the interviews work in the same profession in the same state as the researcher. Many of the individuals work in a similar position as me. I did not personally know any of the interviewees, but I have met two of the interviewees in the past. I do not believe that this influenced their answers, but I am not sure if my meeting them in the past had any impact on the research results.

One position that is critical to my everyday work experience is the Athletic Director. I think critical future research would be to understand the role of the Athletic Director within high school leadership teams. From my interviews, two of the three schools talked in-depth about the strength of their athletic director. It would be extremely interesting to understand the leadership traits of athletic directors and how they complement and support their high school administration team. I also understand how the athletic and activities director in my high school helps our leadership team create a positive and safe school learning environment and gives students opportunities to get involved at the high school.

The final limitation of this study was who is on a leadership team. For future study, I would like to understand who principals believe are on their leadership teams. I would like to see the diversity of positions from principals across the state of Minnesota. It would be extremely interesting to understand the different combinations of leadership

teams, and then study to see which structures are the most effective by looking at size, roles, temperaments and traits, and educational backgrounds.

Plan for Communication and Future Use

The research in this dissertation fulfilled important research that focused on high school leadership teams. The current educational leadership literature focuses on the individual leader or shared leadership models in professional learning communities and in school settings. There are many leadership styles that are present in school leadership. While there is information on teams in the nursing profession and business world, I realized during the research for the literature review that there was limited information on secondary administration teams in an educational setting. I plan on taking the research from this study and first and foremost apply it to my current leadership team. My secondary plan is to share this research with other educational leaders. I hope to be able to share the research at a variety of conferences, including the Minnesota Association of Secondary Principals and Learning Forward. The study focused on high school administration teams, but the research can be used for any teams. The findings and supporting literature can support teacher teams, district teams, and any other groups of individuals who are working together.

Final Conclusions

The research that took place, during the course of this study, communicates the team components and leadership traits that Minnesota High School Principals and Associate/Assistant/Vice Principals utilize to create strong high school administration teams. As stated in chapter one, high school leaders are in a critical position to create strong administration teams that can support the achievement of students and staff. The role of a high school administrator is complex. This complexity is multiplied when multiple leaders need to work in unison as an administration team. The research questions were developed to understand the dynamics and traits of high school leadership teams. The primary question, “How do high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics that foster integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization?” and the secondary question, “How do high school administration teams utilize communication to support effective leadership teams?”, were answered in the data collected in chapter four and supported by the literature reviewed in chapter two.

This study illustrates the components and leadership traits of high school administration teams. The participants in the interviews and surveys were able to articulate and quantify how they foster growth, support their educational systems, and make it enjoyable to work in one of the toughest professions in the world. The research from the literature and the data from the surveys and interviews answer the research questions. From the data collected, the most important leadership traits for High school principals and associate/assistant/vice principals were Trustworthy, Dependable and Empathic. The research also concluded that successful teams have the following components: 1.) structured team meetings, 2.) well-defined norms, and 3.) clear and

concise communication. This study has shed light on how high school administration teams construct strong group dynamics through the following: meeting structures, communication practices and partnership between team members, teachers and other stakeholders, which in turn, fosters integration of ideas and actions across a learning organization.

Personal Reflection

The results from this study were extremely interesting to me, and my hope is for individuals who get an opportunity to read this in the future find the results interesting. The first recommendations for further study would come directly from the limitations of this study. It was great to see the research results from the principals and associate/assistant/vice principals on teams of three or more. Another interest for me is what leadership traits other principals and associate/assistant/vice principals would state they have. I also want the reader to understand the limitations of the research and any biases. Even with the limitations, the final results from the data and the supported literature review details the components of leadership teams and the leadership traits they possess. There are many other areas of future research within high school administration teams. Hopefully, education will follow business and the medical field by not just focusing on leadership traits of individual leaders, but focusing on building strong leadership teams. Judging by the limited number of school leadership teams that focus on leadership, this may be a great area of future research for districts, educational journals, and national education associations.

One of the biggest reflections for me, is that change does not happen at the system level. Change happens individually first. I have personally been on a team that was very

energetic and reflective, and I enjoyed every moment. My experience has ranged from teams of excellence to teams that are unproductive or even toxic. For the experiences with unproductive and even toxic teams, I believe these teams were not functional, because we focused on changing the system. We refused to allow our personal beliefs to change. For me, when teams are successful, they are utilizing norms, developing and understanding common beliefs and implementing structured procedures that have been provided in this research.

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APPENDIX A

Principal Survey

1. Statement of Electronic Consent: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that - You have read the above information - You voluntarily agree to participate
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

Portion One: Demographic Data

2. What is your age?
 - a) Under 25
 - b) 26 to 35
 - c) 36 to 45
 - d) 46 or older
3. What is your Gender?
 - a) Female
 - b) Male
4. Years in leadership (As Principal)?
 - a) 0 to 3 years
 - b) 4 to 7 years
 - c) 8 to 11 years
 - d) 12 to 15 years
 - e) 16+ years
5. Total years in leadership (as a Principal and/or an Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal)?
 - a) 0 to 3 years
 - b) 4 to 7 years
 - c) 8 to 11 years
 - d) 12 to 15 years
 - e) 16+ years
6. Number of members on your administration/leadership team? (Please count yourself as a member. Example Principal and two Associate Principals would be a team of 3.)
 - a) 3
 - b) 4
 - c) 5
 - d) 6+

7. What best describes your high school?
- K-12 Schools
 - Combined Grades 7-12
 - Senior Highs Grades 9-12
 - Senior Highs Grades 10-12
 - Other
8. What is the current enrollment of your high school?
- 0 to 500 students
 - 501 to 750 students
 - 751 to 1000 students
 - 1001 to 1500 students
 - 1501 to 2000 students
 - 2001 to 2500 students
 - 2501+students
9. What is the current number of licensed teachers in your high school?
- 0 to 40
 - 41 to 60
 - 61 to 80
 - 81 to 100
 - 101 to 120
 - 121+

Portion Two: Leadership Traits

Northouse (2013) Leadership trait chart

Key:	1 = Strongly disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neutral	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly agree
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	Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	1	2	3	4	5
	Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	1	2	3	4	5
	Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	1	2	3	4	5
	Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	1	2	3	4	5
	Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	1	2	3	4	5

	Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	1	2	3	4	5
	Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	1	2	3	4	5
	Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	1	2	3	4	5
	Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	1	2	3	4	5
	Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	1	2	3	4	5
	Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	1	2	3	4	5
	Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	1	2	3	4	5
	Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5
	Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others	1	2	3	4	5

10. Please self-reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes you best. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
11. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 1: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
12. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 2: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
13. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 3: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice

Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.

14. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 4: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
15. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 5: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
16. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 6: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.

Portion Three: Team

17. How often does your High School Administration team meet weekly to plan, design, analyze, make decisions or other reasons?
 - a) 0 to 1 hours
 - b) 2 to 3 hours
 - c) 4 to 6 hours
 - d) 7+ hours
18. How often does your leadership team learn together?
 - a) Daily
 - b) Weekly
 - c) Monthly
 - d) Yearly
19. What type of learning opportunities does your team experience. These are experiences that your whole team participates in.
 - a) Administrative PLC
 - b) Administrative Book Study
 - c) Attend Principal Association Events
 - d) District leadership training
 - e) National professional development events (Examples: Learning Forward, iNACOL, NASSP or others)

20. My team has the requisite knowledge to analyze and create success in my school?
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
21. My team has the requisite skill and ability to analyze and create success in my school?
22. My team has the resources analyze and create success in my school?
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
23. My team has the support, from the district, to analyze and create success in my school?
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
24. My team has the motivation to accomplish tasks provided to them by district personnel.
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
25. My team has the motivation to accomplish tasks given to them by teachers in the school.
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
26. My team can coordinate our activities to effectively enact team strategy.
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
27. My team can coordinate our communication to effectively enact team strategy.
- a) Strongly agree

- b) Agree
 - c) Disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
28. Does your team have strong cohesion? (Definition: The ability to stick together in the pursuit of a common goal or the bonds between members of a community or society and life.)
- a) A great deal
 - b) A lot
 - c) A moderate amount
 - d) A little
 - e) None at all
29. How is your team viewed by district office personnel as effectively integrating ideas and actions (or implementations) across your learning organization?
- a) Extremely effective
 - b) Very effective
 - c) Somewhat effective
 - d) Not so effective
 - e) Not at all effective
30. How is your team viewed by teachers as effectively integrating ideas and actions (or implementations) across your learning organization?
- a) Extremely effective
 - b) Very effective
 - c) Somewhat effective
 - d) Not so effective
 - e) Not at all effective

Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal Survey

1. Statement of Electronic Consent: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that - You have read the above information - You voluntarily agree to participate
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

Portion One: Demographic Data

2. What is your age?
 - a) Under 25
 - b) 26 to 35
 - c) 36 to 45
 - d) 46 or older
3. What is your Gender?
 - a) Female
 - b) Male
4. Years in leadership (as an Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal)?
 - a) 0 to 3 years
 - b) 4 to 7 years
 - c) 8 to 11 years
 - d) 12 to 15 years
 - e) 16+ years
5. Number of members on your administration/leadership team? (Please count yourself as a member. Example Principal and two Associate Principals would be a team of 3.)
 - a) 3
 - b) 4
 - c) 5
 - d) 6+
6. What best describes your high school?
 - a) K-12 Schools
 - b) Combined Grades 7-12
 - c) Senior Highs Grades 9-12
 - d) Senior Highs Grades 10-12
 - e) Other
7. What is the current enrollment of your high school?
 - a) 0 to 500 students

- b) 501 to 750 students
- c) 751 to 1000 students
- d) 1001 to 1500 students
- e) 1501 to 2000 students
- f) 2001 to 2500 students
- g) 2501+students

8. What is the current number of licensed teachers in your high school?
- a) 0 to 40
 - b) 41 to 60
 - c) 61 to 80
 - d) 81 to 100
 - e) 101 to 120
 - f) 121+

Portion Two: Leadership Traits

9. Please self-reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes you best. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.

Northouse (2013) Leadership trait chart

Key:	1 = Strongly disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neutral	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly agree
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	Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	1	2	3	4	5
	Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	1	2	3	4	5
	Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	1	2	3	4	5
	Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	1	2	3	4	5
	Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	1	2	3	4	5
	Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	1	2	3	4	5

	Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	1	2	3	4	5
	Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	1	2	3	4	5
	Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	1	2	3	4	5
	Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	1	2	3	4	5
	Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and controlled	1	2	3	4	5
	Diligent: Is persistent, hardworking	1	2	3	4	5
	Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5
	Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others	1	2	3	4	5

10. Building Principal: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes your building Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
11. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 1: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
12. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 2: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
13. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 3: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Assistant/Associate/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.

14. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 4: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.
15. Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal 5: Please reflect on the following leadership traits. For each adjective listed below, indicate the degree to which you think the adjective describes the Associate/Assistant/Vice Principal. Please select one of the following responses to indicate the strength of your opinion.

Portion Three: Team

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- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
20. My team has the requisite skill and ability to analyze and create success in my school?

21. My team has the resources analyze and create success in my school?
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 - d) Strongly disagree
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 - c) Disagree
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 - b) Very effective
 - c) Somewhat effective
 - d) Not so effective
 - e) Not at all effective

Interview Questions

1. Describe your role at your high school?
2. What is your background?
 - a. Years as a licensed teacher?
 - b. Years as a principal?
 - c. Years with your current team?
3. (Showed list of leadership traits) What leadership traits do you feel are the most important for your success in your current role? Why do you feel those are important?
4. (Showed list of leadership traits) What leadership traits do you feel are the most important for your team? Why do you feel those are important?
5. Describe how your team functions? What are your shared principles, beliefs, values and/or norms?
6. From the survey data, many high school secondary teams (67% of Principals and 59% of Associate Principals) believe they have a great deal of cohesiveness.
 - a. Describe how your team is cohesive? (Definition: The ability to stick together in the pursuit of a common goal.)
7. Please share with me an example where your team had a goal and how the team supported the goal.
8. Teams operate in a social system. Describe a time when your team had to make a decision that affected your school's staff.
 - a. How did your team approach the decision?

- b. What did your team do to design, implement, communicate and partner with the teachers about the decision?
- 9. Describe a time when your team had to make a decision that impacted the district office.
 - a. How did your team approach the decision?
 - b. What did your team do to design, implement, communicate and partner with the district office about the decision?
- 10. Describe a time where your team had a disagreement.
 - a. How did your team address or identify the disagreement?
 - b. How did your team resolve the disagreement?
- 11. Tell me about a time that your team learned together. How did your team apply that learning to the school or district?