

**A CASE STUDY OF THE DYNAMICS OF TRUST IN A RECONSTITUTED
URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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**A CASE STUDY OF THE DYNAMICS OF TRUST IN A RECONSTITUTED
URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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Dedication

To my wife Yudi, thank you for being my partner, cheerleader, and comfort throughout this long journey. It is difficult for me to imagine enduring this process without your love, humor, encouragement and support. I know you sacrificed so many things that you wanted to do in order to allow me the time required to fulfill this lifelong dream. I look forward to enjoying great times with you at the beach, and evenings tearing up the salsa floor! Thank you for being you – MUSH! I love you.

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Abstract

The primary purpose of this case study was to examine the dynamics and dimensions of trust as perceived by teachers, parents, and students in an urban middle school that experienced school reconstitution as a result of failing to meet adequate yearly progress as required under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. Research has documented that the quality of relationships within urban schools influences student achievement. Schools with higher levels of trust are also more likely to meet school reform initiatives. An additional aim of this study was to add to the research base on school reconstitution.

Data were collected in this study by surveys, student achievement data and interviews. Climate surveys were used in this study to measure the perceptions of student, parent, and faculty trust at the school. School level achievement data in math and reading were used in this study to compare the range of results before and after the school reconstitution. Lastly, interviews were conducted in this study with six teachers, three parents, and three students, to understand how the school reconstitution may have impacted trust relationships at the school. Interviews were also used in this study to understand what actions taken by the principal were perceived by faculty to cultivate or damage trust relationships at the school.

This study draws five major conclusions from the data: (1) the trust level was above the standardized mean score for student trust in teachers, and below the mean for parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents, (2) the school did not meet the state proficiency target the three years following reconstitution for any reporting

group, but did show slight growth in reading and math, (3) teacher trust in students and parents, and parent and student trust in teachers was perceived to improve primarily by the trust facet of benevolence, (4) The primary leadership actions perceived by teachers to cultivate trust in the leader were associated with the facets of benevolence, openness, and competence, and (5) the reconstitution initiatives were perceived by teachers to strengthen the trust relationships at the school.

These results suggest that fostering trusting relationships between teachers and students, and teachers and parents improves school culture and are important initial steps to take towards reform. However in this study, reconstitution and improved relationships between the school and constituents did not lead to substantive increases in student achievement.

**A CASE STUDY OF THE DYNAMICS OF TRUST IN A RECONSTITUTED
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Chapter 1: The Problem

In this current era of education reform, educators are being held more accountable for the academic achievement of all students. The *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA) reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), and replaced the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB; U. S. Department of Education [USDOE], 2016). NCLB required all public schools receiving federal funds to administer standardized assessment tests in math and reading to all students at selected grade levels (U. S. Department of Education, 2002). Under NCLB (USDOE, 2002), schools designated as failing due to not meeting the achievement targets of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years entered into “need of improvement” status. Progressive sanctions were imposed on schools in need of improvement by the federal government. This was of particular concern to urban schools and urban school districts. The potential sanctions for low performance on state achievement standards produced added pressure on these schools. Students attending urban schools often perform below the U.S. national averages in math and reading (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2013a, 2013b). Complex issues that characterize life in cities, and their immediate metropolitan surroundings often confound the positive intentions of educators in urban schools (Lee, 2005). Compared to rural and suburban schools, students in urban settings are more likely to drop out of high school and are less likely to attend college

(Lee, 2005). As with NCLB, ESSA requires all public schools receiving federal funds to administer standardized assessment tests in math and reading to all students at selected grade levels (U. S. Department of Education, 2016). If urban schools are to meet the achievement standards of the current era of school reform, it is necessary that they implement strategies that will allow them to overcome the prevailing obstacles typically found within their school environments.

As public schools respond to the challenge of ensuring that all students meet the academic objectives of ESSA, more attention is being directed to relational factors that contribute to student achievement. In particular, understanding social interactions in school environments is progressively becoming more recognized as an effective tool to realize achievement in schools (Crininger & Lee, 2001). Nowhere is this becoming more prevalent than in low-performing, high-poverty urban schools (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Goddard, Salloum, & Berebitsky, 2009). Relational factors that connect students, parents, and teachers are important contributors to urban school improvement. Students in urban settings perform better when they feel a sense of belonging; this is the extent to which they feel accepted, respected, included, and supported by others—especially by teachers and other adults (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010).

As researchers have established the importance of relational factors in urban school achievement (Goddard et al., 2009; Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010), I examine trust in this case within the context of school improvement. Specifically, I will examine how student and parent perspectives of trust in teachers and teacher perspectives of trust in students and parents, influence student achievement in an urban middle school

with a reconstituted staff. In addition, I will also explore how particular behaviors of school leaders influence trust among faculty and staff.

Problem Statement

Studies that examine trust as a factor of school improvement have increased sharply within the past 20 years (Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001; Tarter & Hoy, 1988; Tschannen-Moran, Bankole, Mitchell, & Moore, 2013). The findings of these studies often reveal that student achievement is influenced by trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Goddard et al., 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Hoy (2002) found that trusting others is an important part of the learning process as learning often involves some aspect of cooperation. Cooperative processes between teacher-student and parent-teacher is essential for positive student learning outcomes (Hoy, 2002). Learning is challenging in an environment of distrust, as fostering cooperation is unlikely. The overall purpose of this study is to build upon the research base in the areas of trust and urban school achievement, specifically from the perspective of trust between student and teacher, and between parent and teacher. This study breaks new ground because many of the earlier studies on trust and achievement have focused primarily on faculty trust in the principal, and on collegial trust among teachers (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Hoy, Tarter, & Witkoskie, 1992; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Studies examining urban school improvement have determined that the quality of student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships within the school community is a positive predictor of student achievement (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001). Schools with higher levels of trust experience greater

student achievement. Yet, the establishment of trustworthy relationships in urban schools has proven to be difficult. One critical factor in this occurrence may hinge on the higher poverty rate often experienced by urban schools over their rural and suburban school counterparts (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Cultivating trust in schools with substantial poor populations has proven challenging, as some teachers feel that their cultural values and ethical principles differ greatly from those of their students and parents (Goddard et al., 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Examining trust relationships in urban school settings may improve academic outcomes in this era of school reform aimed at improving student achievement through increased measures of accountability.

Supportive leadership is a key factor in cultivating trust in schools. The literature investigating school leadership maintains that trust is essential in determining the effects of leadership on followers (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hoy et al., 1992; Tschannen-Moran, 2003). School leaders are in a better position to inspire staff to meet common goals and objectives when trustworthy relationships are present. Schools without trust are less effective (Van Maele, Forsyth, & Van Houtte, 2014; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). To this end, establishing and maintaining trusting relationships should be of critical importance to school leaders. However, the relational aspects of trust and leadership are not completely understood. Research often identifies leadership styles and trustworthy qualities of effective leaders, but they seldom describe how school leaders actually foster trust among staff. In addition to investigating the perspectives of student-teacher and parent-teacher trust, I also examined how the various facets of trust are related to leadership behaviors in this study.

Conceptual Framework

High stakes testing and accountability have placed a heightened focus on student achievement in struggling urban schools. Trust is a factor that clearly resonates in school improvement. Urban schools that perform well academically are often characterized as being high trusting environments that exhibit strong cooperative efforts among the adults in the building and with parents (Sebring & Bryk, 2000). Teachers in schools with high levels of trust often feel a greater responsibility to invest themselves in the operations of the school. In contrast, urban schools with stagnant or declining achievement levels experience little adult cooperation, and are more likely to express that they do not trust one another. This would suggest that the attitude of the teacher plays an important part in improving student learning outcomes. Corbet, Wilson, and Williams (2005), in a study of urban schools, determined that the attitude of the teacher more than any specific instructional method, makes the biggest difference in student achievement. Similarly, the feelings students have towards their teachers also have an influence on student achievement (Hattie, 2009). Though the literature provides evidence that the relational dynamics experienced between student-teacher and parent-teacher impacts achievement, the specific role that trust plays among them and its influence on achievement in struggling urban schools has not been adequately explored.

Fixing low-performance schools is currently one of our nation's greatest challenges. Research conducted in such schools has the capacity to illuminate components needed to realize a sustainable fix. Low-performing schools have experienced a rise in state and federal programs aimed at school improvement since the

passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Mac Iver, Ruby, Balfanz, & Byrnes, 2003). These programs often provided monetary awards to schools that had shown significant progress in improving student achievement (USDOE, 2014). In contrast, schools identified as “In Need of Improvement” under NCLB could be subjected to corrective actions ranging from providing options for students to attend other schools to restructuring. Restructuring called for a change in governance – those that have authoritative direction and control of the organization (USDOE, 2002). The restructuring options under NCLB were as follows: (1) turn the school operations over to the state, (2) turn the operations over to a private company, (3) reopen as a charter school, (4) reconstitute the school by replacing some or all of the teachers, staff and administrators, or (5) engage in another form of major restructuring that makes fundamental reform. In this study, the school that I examined experienced restructuring and reconstituted its staff. Currently, there is little empirical evidence to know if any of the restructuring options actually improved student achievement. The limited studies examining school restructuring show no evidence that any of them result in substantially improved student test scores and learning outcomes (E. A. Hassel, Hassel, Arkin, Kowal, & Steiner, 2006; Hoff, 2009; Mathis, 2009; McClure, 2005). It may be beneficial to the body of knowledge and to struggling public schools to examine how restructuring works in practice in an urban middle school.

Establishing trust between school leaders and staff is of vital importance when undergoing school reform (Kochanek, 2005). Collaborative action that requires the contribution of the majority of a school’s staff is more effectively addressed when trust

exists between school leaders and staff (Marzano et al., 2005). Kochanek (2005) examined schools that experienced higher or lower levels of overall trust, and suggested that school leaders take the necessary actions to make the cultivation of trustworthy relationships more likely to occur. When trust is present, school leaders have a better opportunity to develop structures and processes, which can lead to improved student achievement. In this study, I used the five-facet model of trust theorized by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) which defines trust as one party's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent. While the literature is clear in maintaining that it is critical for school leaders to establish trusting relationships with faculty in order to maximize school improvement efforts; very little is known about how this is in fact achieved. Studies examining school leadership often account for trustworthy qualities of effective leaders; but often do not address the actions that school leaders can take to foster trust among their teachers. Research clearly establishes that supportive leadership positively impacts student learning. Yet, the relational aspects of trust and school leadership have not been fully examined. More studies are needed that investigate how various facets of trust are related to leadership behaviors.

Research Questions

The focus of this study was to examine the dynamics and dimensions of trust, specifically within the context of school reconstitution as prescribed by NCLB. Five research questions guided this study to examine the perceptions of trust held between student-teacher and parent-teacher who experienced school reconstitution in an urban

middle school due to not meeting AYP. The research questions further examined the school leadership behaviors perceived by the staff to foster trust, using the definition of trust as theorized by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000).

1. What is the trust level for student trust in teachers, parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents, in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff?
2. How have student achievement scores changed during the four years prior to reconstitution and the three years following reconstitution?
3. What are the perceptions of teachers, former students and former parents that experienced school reconstitution regarding the level of trust before and after reconstitution?
4. What leadership behaviors did the teachers in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff observe that cultivated or damaged trust in the school leader, teacher trust in colleagues, and teacher trust in students and parents?
5. What initiatives were undertaken as part of the reconstitution turnaround efforts at this school? How have teachers perceived these initiatives to have strengthened or weakened trust relationships in the school?

Significance of the Study

In this exploration of trust and student achievement in an urban middle school, I intended to understand how the perspectives of trustworthy relationships between student-teacher and parent-teacher impacts learning in a school with a reconstituted staff. The literature supports that trust is important to urban school improvement; however, I

found no studies that specifically examined trust in educational settings where the staff has been reconstituted. It was interesting to understand how the cultivation of trust in such an environment is fostered, or if it is even likely to occur under these conditions. The results of this study could be impactful to educational stakeholders and to the body of knowledge concerning specific ways that trust was developed and maintained in a school with a reconstituted staff. This study may also be beneficial to urban schools that are currently contending with challenges to meet the achievement standards in their states.

The attention currently being placed on schools to improve achievement requires effective school leadership. Research supports that the actions and decisions of school leaders has an impact on teaching and learning (Hoy et al., 1992; Marzano, Waters et al., 2005; Sebring & Bryk, 2000). Although the technical aspect of instruction is typically performed by the teacher, creating an appropriate school environment for teaching and learning to take place is the responsibility of the principal and school leaders. The relationship between school leaders and teachers serves as an important indicator of a school's readiness for sustained reform and improvement (Brewster & Railsback, 2003). How the relationship between school leaders and teachers develops is considerably influenced by trust. Trust in schools can be cultivated or diminished by the behaviors of school leaders. In this study, I examined how student-teacher and parent-teacher perspectives of trust influence academic achievement. In addition, I explored the leadership behaviors and actions that are perceived by teachers to have cultivated or damaged trust in the leader and other school constituents. This study could benefit

educators and the body of knowledge by identifying how the various facets of trust are related to leadership behaviors.

Definition of Terms

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). A measure by which schools, districts, and states are held accountable for student performance under Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) to determine if schools are successfully educating their students.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Federal legislation enacted in 2015 as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA; USDOE, 2016).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). NCLB supports standards-based education reform and requires all public schools receiving federal funding to administer statewide annual standardized tests to measure student proficiency levels at selected grades (USDOE, 2002).

School Reform. The attempt to improve the overall quality of public education by making changes in educational methods, systems, processes, and standards (Cuban, 1990).

School Reconstitution. A reform strategy under NCLB that replaces a large percentage of a school's administrators, teachers, and support staff, with individuals considered more capable and committed.

Trust. The willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other party is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Turnaround School. An intensive intervention initiative aimed at rapidly turning around the lowest performing public schools that fail to effectively educate a significant number of students (Herman, Dawson, Dee, Greene, Maynard, & Redding, 2008).

Urban School. A school located in an area containing 50 thousand or more people with at least one thousand people per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Urban schools typically reflect the characteristics of the environment in which they are located, and often lack the necessary resources to properly educate all students (Lee, 2005).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a context to how trust influences student achievement in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff. The primary purpose of schooling is to ensure the academic success of all students. This fundamental aim can become challenging for urban schools operating under the current era of school reform marked by standardization and accountability. At this present time, policymakers and educators have not developed a concrete approach to take in improving failing public schools. In 2011, then Education Secretary Arne Duncan expressed to Congress that 82% of the nation's public schools are in jeopardy of failing to meet the educational goals as established under NCLB by 2014. Forty-eight percent of public schools failed to meet AYP in 2011 (NCES, 2013c). In that same year, 56% of schools failed to meet AYP in the nation's three largest school districts (California Department of Education, 2012; Chicago Public Schools, 2015; New York State Education Department, 2011). Thirty-seven percent of schools did not meet AYP in New York City Public Schools (New York State Education Department, 2011), while 44% of public schools failed to make AYP in the city of Los Angeles (California Department of Education, 2012), and 87% in Chicago (Chicago Public Schools, 2015). According to the USDOE, (2001), large urban high-poverty schools were far less likely to make AYP than schools located in suburban communities. Although a great number of urban schools struggle

academically, many were still able to meet the demands of NCLB. According to the research literature, urban schools that perform well are likely to be influenced by some aspect of trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). To better understand how trust influences achievement in urban schools, I examined the following topics in this review of relevant literature: (a) trust, (b) school reform, and (c) urban schools.

Trust

Trust is the foundation for social interaction and cooperation. “Whatever matters to human beings, trust is the atmosphere in which it thrives. Trust is an essential function that is woven into the basic fabric of our civilization; cultures that function without trust are destined to fail” (Bok, 1978, p. 31). Trust exists through social interaction; however, the characteristics of these interactions are constantly changing due to personal differences and situational requirements. Whether interactions are between individuals, groups, or entire teams; trust supports these interactions by reducing uncertainty and inclining people to work together (Uphoff, 2000). Collective action is benefited by trust. Collective action, such as problem solving, decision making, and planning that requires the contribution and collaboration of all group members is more effective when an element of trust is present between members. The development of trust requires being dependent on others, because individuals have unmet needs in which other people may be able to help. By trusting others, individuals allow other people to determine their fate and outcomes.

Defining Trust

Trust as a subject of academic discussion is not new, but the way in which trust is examined has changed considerably over the past half century. The empirical study of trust began in the 1950s with Deutsch (1958) who used mixed-motive games in laboratory experiments to study trust in participants who were strangers to one another. Deutsch in his studies defined trust as a behavior, and not an attitude or judgment. Rotter (1967) studied the degree to which trust was a generalized trait resulting from one's own past. However, unlike Deutsch, Rotter described trust as an attitude. Zand (1971) expanded on the work of Deutsch by studying trust not in the context of individuals, but as organizations. He too viewed trust as a behavior, however he distinguished that trust involved actions that increased one's vulnerability to another (Zand, 1971). In the late 1970s, Frost, Stimpson, and Maughan (1978) described trust as a specific judgment about the character of a trusted person. This differed from Rotter who studied trust as a generalized trait. Frost and his colleagues viewed trust as a judgment, and regarded it as an expectation held by an individual, that the behavior of another person or group would be selfless and of personal value. Baier (1986) added to the body of research by describing trust as the reliance on others' competence and willingness to look after things that are entrusted to their care. In recent years, there have been significant developments that examine trust in order to understand its effect on social functioning (Bryan, 2005; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Ciancutti, & Steding, 2001).

Although there is no single scholarly accepted definition of trust, many definitions include some aspect of the need to be vulnerable to others. Trust is not needed in

situations where vulnerability and risk are not involved. The literature frequently asserts that trust involves a condition of vulnerability that stems from the uncertain motives and actions of others in which you may depend (Baier, 1986; Kramer, 1999). By being uncertain of the future and making oneself vulnerable to the actions of others, trust becomes a requirement in social interactions. When you are vulnerable to another, you expose yourself to the possibility of disappointment—that the other party may not fulfill the desired expectation. Since you cannot force the other party to fulfill the desired expectation, trust also involves a willingness to be vulnerable, knowing that the other party may not meet the expectation. This idea of trust requiring one to be willingly vulnerable to another was advanced by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) who conducted a multidisciplinary review of the literature on the meaning, nature, and measurement of trust in schools. Drawing on trust literature from the disciplines of psychology, sociology, philosophy, economics, organizational science, and education, their review covered four decades of theoretical and empirical literature. In their research, they defined trust as “one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open” (p. 556). This is the definition of trust that I used in this study.

The Five Facet Model of Trust

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) in their review of trust literature identified five elements of trust that led individuals to risk vulnerability—particularly in relation to schools. These elements or *facets* as termed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy are benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. These facets of trust reflect

the behaviors and actions that lead the one who trusts to risk vulnerability as there is the possibility for betrayal and harm. Each of the five facets is discussed in greater detail below.

Benevolence. The most needed and commonly recognized facet of trust is benevolence (Tschannen-Moran, 2014); meaning that the confidence that one's well-being or something one cares about will be protected by the trusted person or group (Baier, 1986; Frost et al., 1978; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Benevolence is the extent to which the one who trusts and the trusted party are believed to want to do good for one another. Trust is ground in the confidence that one can rely on the goodwill of another to act in the best interest on his or her behalf; that the other will not exploit the vulnerability of another even when such possibility exists (Cummings & Bromily, 1996; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). When we trust there is an expectation that what we care about will be protected by the trusted party, that he or she will support our interests and not impede our plans, objectives, and or purpose (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Benevolence is rooted in the perceived good intentions and motives of others. When parents drop their children off at school, they trust and have confidence that the well-being of their children will be consistently met by the staff of the school (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Conversely, when children perceive their teachers as caring, they are more likely to trust that their teachers are acting in their best interests when in school.

Reliability. Being able to always depend on another is a vital element of trust. Reliability is the facet of trust that is concerned with predictability and consistency in behavior. However being able to predict the behaviors and actions of another cannot be

viewed alone as an element of trust. For example, we can predict that someone will be consistently disingenuous based on past behavior. Reliability as a facet of trust combines predictability with an element of caring (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In situations when something is required from another, there is an expectation that he or she will consistently do what is expected or needed. Considerations are not given to determine what would be done in case of failure (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Just as teachers rely on their colleagues, students rely on their teachers individually and collectively to meet an expected standard of behavior. Perceived teacher reliability is often formed through consistent teacher actions (C. Adams & Forsyth, 2009). Students look for consistency in how teachers treat and interact with them. The degree to which a teacher acts reliably increases the perception of trust with the student. Teachers who enforce rules and regulations differently contingent on the student are likely to lessen the trust a student has in that particular teacher. In schools, teachers must earn the trust of their students through a consistent display of trust and care (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Competence. Trust requires the dependence of the competence of others (Baier, 1986). Competence involves the ability and skillset to perform what is required in order to achieve the objectives of one's job (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). A person who is benevolent and reliable may still not be considered trustworthy by others when some level of skill is required to meet the objectives of a group or organization (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Just because one means well, they may still lack the knowledge and ability to meet what is expected. A school principal may be jovial and have good intentions;

however he still may not be trusted by others if he is perceived to lack the capacity needed to help them to perform their jobs. Teachers and principals rely on some aspect of competence in order to meet the academic needs of students. For schools to successfully educate students, there has to be some sense of trust that teachers have the skill and ability to appropriately impart knowledge to the students they serve. Similarly, students depend on the competence of teachers to provide them with sound instruction that would allow them to achieve in the classroom.

Honesty. Rotter (1967) describes trust as the expectancy that the word, promise, and communications of others can be relied on. This aspect of trust is a moral judgment based on the consistency of past actions. This requires an individual to be honest if he or she is to be considered trustworthy by others. Honesty involves the character, integrity, and authenticity of an individual (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Fostering the trust of another is not likely to occur if the one who is expected to trusts feels that the trusted party lacks virtue. If trust is to develop between parties, the one who trusts needs to be able to predict the future actions of the trusted party based on that person remaining true to his word and promises (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Unethical behavior has the potential to result in distrust which undermines cooperation (Deutsch, 1958; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Distrust according to Rotter (1967) leads to relational deterioration. In schools, positive student-teacher relationships will not take shape in the presence of perceived bias behavior on the part of the teacher (C. Adams & Forsyth, 2009). Students have an expectation that their teachers are honest and will treat them equitably and fair. Likewise, teachers have an expectation

that their school leaders will maintain their integrity by keeping their word as observed by their decisions and actions.

Openness. Openness is the degree to which relevant information will be shared. Openness in information includes the disclosure of facts, alternatives, judgments, intentions, and feelings (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Candid and honest communication between parties increases trust and reinforces the facet of openness (Hoy & Tarter, 2004). When one is open to another, it creates reciprocity in trust where the other party may feel compelled to do the same. Hoy and Tarter (2004) noted that individuals who are guarded in their interactions might provoke suspicion that they have something to hide. Being open to others increases vulnerability due to the power often gained by the sharing of important information—knowledge is power. In schools with high levels of trust, academic achievement can be impacted by open communication. Teachers may feel compelled to share best practices with administration and others if they feel supported and assured that their vulnerability will not result in mistreatment or harm. Likewise, students may be in a better position to achieve if they trust that their teachers will convey honest and well-intended direction aimed at helping them to succeed. Teachers perceived by students as not being forthcoming with information are less likely to be trusted (C. Adams & Forsyth, 2009).

Relational Trust

Whereas the five facets of trust identify common conditions of trust, relational trust is the inevitable result of repeated interactions with others within an organization (Louis, 2007). Whether or not individuals within an organization trust one another can

either assist the effectiveness of the organization or create an adverse effect on its effectiveness. Trust relationships are cultivated when a cooperative and caring environment exists within in an organization (Cranston, 2011). Bryk and Schneider (2002) describe relational trust as a system and arrangement of social exchanges organized around a distinct set of role relationships within the school environment. School leaders, staff, students, and parents all have unique and fairly well defined roles within the school. Trust is developed in part by each individual having an understanding of their own obligations; as well as having some expectation and understanding of the obligations of others (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 1998). For example, the principal has an expectation that teachers will do what is needed in order to impart knowledge to students. Teachers in their role feel compelled to work appropriately to meet the expectations of the principal. In response, the principal feels obligated to provide support and resources to help teachers meet their objectives. Teachers and the principal in this example share similar views regarding their individual roles, and the roles of one other. In this situation, trust has an opportunity to develop because there is a match in assumed values (Cranston, 2011). Trust grows as each individual feels comfortable that others are doing what is expected of them. Trust is weakened if expectations are not satisfied. The need to depend on one another creates feelings of vulnerability. Efforts taken to reduce these feelings of vulnerability help to build trust (Kochanek, 2005).

The benefits of relational trust are clear. Not only are teachers energized by one another, they typically develop sound ways to work through conflict that may arise

among staff. Teachers support one another by sharing resources in order to maximize student learning. When relational trust is present, the sense of effectiveness appears infectious. Teachers often make themselves vulnerable through peer critiques and evaluations in order to help each other become more effective teachers (Kochanek, 2005). This openness frequently leads to positive discernments and allows teachers to work together to serve the best interests of students (Louis, 2007). In high relational trust environments, students often achieve at higher levels due to being exposed to highly motivated teachers who are perceived trustworthy.

Individuals are constantly discerning the intentions embedded in the actions of others as they interact (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). Bryk and Schneider (2003) described these discernments as follows: (a) respect is acquired by genuinely listening to others and by responding in subsequent actions, (b) competency is gained by fulfilling your essential role and responsibilities, (c) integrity is shown by keeping your word and by functioning ethically when serving the organization and others, and (d) personal regard is achieved by going beyond the basic fundamental requirements of your job description and responsibilities. Individuals use these four discernments to understand if trust is present within their work environments.

Trust in Schools

In organizations, one person may be able to heavily influence the direction taken to meet operational goals and objectives. Yet it is unlikely that one individual acting alone can achieve and sustain all that is needed to meet the goals and deliverables of an organization. A fundamentally accepted aim of schools is that schools are mainly

concerned with teaching and learning. However meeting this basic purpose requires the support of many individuals. Trust is needed to move schools forward because no one individual is capable of providing all that a school needs to be considered successful. The study of trust in schools has received increased attention due to it being linked to productivity and effectiveness (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hoy, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Schools with high trust levels experience increased collaboration, commit to organizational objectives, and have been found to be more likely to seek new ideas (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Increasing school effectiveness calls for the development of productive learning environments (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). This includes the roles teachers, students, parents, and school leaders play in maintaining such productivity. Being able to trust that the word of others can be depended on is an important variable in all aspects of human learning (Rotter, 1967).

The literature notes that the behaviors of school leaders and teachers also influences trust relationships in schools. Supportive school leadership and teacher trust in one another and in school leadership are predictors for school effectiveness (Hoy et al., 1992). Academic achievement is fostered primarily in the classroom between teachers and students. School leaders depend on teachers to deliver instruction; rarely do they provide academic instruction directly to students themselves. School leaders have to trust that teachers will do what is required of them to fulfill their obligations and to meet the needs of the organization. Establishing a sustained positive school climate can help school leaders to achieve this end. Teachers trust in school leadership is enhanced when they feel that the school leader values them, and seeks to create an environment that is

suitable for them to meet their goals (Hoy, 2002). Teachers who feel valued as professionals are more open to input from school leaders and tend to be more concerned with the welfare of their students and organization (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Kochanek, 2005). Teachers who perceive benevolent intentions on the part of the school leaders are more likely to feel efficacious in their job and more inclined to go the extra mile for their students (Bryk, & Schneider, 2002). The more supportive teachers are of school leaders, the greater the trust between colleagues, which largely influences student achievement and school effectiveness (Hoy et al., 1992).

Trust and Student Achievement

Student achievement has been linked to schools that established high levels of trust (Cosner, 2009; Hoy, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Goddard et al. (2001) suggested that trust creates better learning environments for students possibly by enabling and empowering productive connections between families and schools; they found that achievement was highest at schools with greater levels of trust. Bryk and Schneider (2002) reported similar findings after studying trust and academic productivity at more than 400 elementary schools in Chicago during the 1990s. They analyzed trust and achievement in math and reading from 1991 to 1997. By 1994, schools with positive levels of trust were three times more likely to be identified as improving in math and reading than those with low levels of trust. By 1997, school with positive trust levels had a 50% chance of being in the improving group compared to 14% of those with low levels of trust. In high trust schools, students may perform better as they feel a sense of belonging that contributes to motivation and effort (Goodenow & Grady, 1993).

Trust and Urban School Achievement

The nation's current era of education reform is significantly concerned with school improvement in urban schools and urban school districts. Public schools in urban areas face significant issues that are different from those in suburban and rural environments as they experience higher rates of academic failure, poverty, violence, crime, and racial inequality (Lee, 2005). These persistent risk factors make facilitating student achievement difficult. Minority students in urban schools often feel powerless in a majority-dominated school environment where language, class, and cultural differences are seen as inadequacies (Cummins, 1986; Noguera, 1996).

Students in urban schools often suffer from lower levels of resources and expectations, which substantially affect educational outcomes. Urban students are also more likely to attend high-poverty schools than their rural and suburban counterparts (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Concentrated poverty heightens the probability that students will lack access to regular medical care, live in a household headed by a single mother, become a victim of crime, have a parent who never finished high school, become pregnant, and drop out of school (Lee, 2005). Poverty does have an impact on student achievement. However, even when SES was held constant, trust sustained explanatory power above and beyond the effects of SES (Goddard et al., 2009). Goddard et al. (2009) examined trust as a mediating factor between poverty, race and academic achievement. Their research focused on teacher trust and data collected from 150 randomly selected elementary schools in Michigan. Their findings revealed a positive correlation between trust and achievement, and a negative correlation with school size, race, and poverty.

Also noted in their findings was that trust moderates the effects of race and poverty. This would suggest that poverty alone is not the reason for poor achievement levels, but that learning outcomes may be lower in schools with greater populations of impoverished students as trust relations tend to be strained in these particular settings. This positions trust as mediator of the relationship between socioeconomic status and student achievement. The literature reveals that cultivating trust in schools with substantial populations of poor and minority students is challenging as teachers feel that they do not share similar cultural values and ethical principles with those that they serve (Cooper, 2007; Goddard et al., 2009; Noguera, 1996; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). There is a common belief among teachers that low-income minority parents are more of a deficit to their children's educational development than an asset (Cooper, 2007).

Students in urban schools perform better when they feel a sense of belonging. This is the extent to which they feel accepted, respected, included, and supported by others—especially by teachers and other adults (Goodenow & Grady, 1993). Disparities in student achievement in urban schools are often related to student motivation (Noguera, 2001). Low academic achievers in urban settings risk dropping out if they do not feel valued by others (Finn, 1989). Motivation is improved when students feel a sense of belonging. Research shows that a student's sense of belonging and engagement is often dependent on the perceptions of support held by his or her teacher (Farrell, 2000; Finn, 1989). Students depict teachers that they feel care about them as being concerned about who they are as individuals (Wentzel, 1997). The literature shows a correlational relationship between caring, motivation, and achievement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003;

Wentzel, 1997). Urban schools that are effective are characterized by teachers who have confidence that their students will achieve regardless of extenuating circumstances. Conversely, urban schools that are plagued by failure often have a significant number of unqualified teachers who hold little expectation that their students will achieve (Marzano et al., 2005). The stronger the faculty trust in students, the greater the student learning outcomes (Hoy, 2002).

Teacher and Student Trust

The literature on student trust in teachers is limited. Most trust studies examine collegial trust, faculty trust, and teacher trust in the principal. However, researchers have recently begun to explore student trust. The findings from these studies often link student achievement to the perceptions students have of their teachers (C. Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Stipek, 2002). Furrer and Skinner (2003) conducted a study of 641 third through sixth grade students to examine how academic motivation and performance is impacted by their sense of relatedness to teachers, parents, and peers. The finding of their study confirmed that a student's sense of relatedness plays an important role in their academic performance. C. Adams and Forsyth (2009) in their study measured student trust by surveying 450 middle school students to evaluate the level of trust they held for their teachers. In this study based on the five facet model of trust theorized by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000), students were asked questions about their perceptions of the benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness of their teachers. Tschannen-Moran et al., (2013) explored the relationship between student trust in teachers, student perceptions of academic press, and student identification with

school and how they relate to student achievement. They found in their study of 49 urban elementary, middle, and high schools a strong relationship between the three aforementioned variables and student achievement (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2013).

Romero (2010) examined the relationship between trust and high school student achievement. In a study with data collected from 750 public, private, and Catholic high schools, the study concluded that students with high levels of trust in their teachers have better achievement than those with low levels of trust in their teachers (Romero, 2010).

In order for students to learn they must trust that their teachers are providing them with sound and appropriate instruction. Students are required to believe what they have been told by teachers void of any empirical evidence (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Trust is important in this process because it would be difficult to achieve the desired student outcomes in the face of mistrust. Students who do not trust their teachers may disengage from the learning process and create barriers that may make it difficult to establish a sense of belonging to the school. This would be harmful to disadvantaged students where motivation is closely linked to a student's sense of school belonging and achievement (Goodenow & Grady, 1993). To increase student trust in teachers, schools and teachers must focus their efforts in a more purposeful manner by actively working to eliminate barriers that limit trusting relationships (Young, 2009). Students who do not trust their teachers to be honest and to keep them safe will be disadvantaged when it comes to learning (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

When teachers believe in their students, they hold themselves more accountable for their outcomes (Goddard et al., 2001; Louis, 2007). Teachers that trust and believe in

their students focus intently on student achievement and other encouraging student outcomes (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). When trust exists, student achievement can be realized even in the face of poverty and other factors that are known to hamper student success

Teacher and Parent Trust

Students perform better in school when their parents are involved in their education (Hara & Burke, 1998; Hattie, 2009). When teachers trust in parents, they feel obligated to work in a manner that allows them to meet the expectations of the parent. When parents trust in the teacher, they feel obligated to work in a manner that is supportive of the needs of the teacher (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Tschannen-Moran (2014) expressed, “Parents who trust educators to care for their children are confident that the educators will consistently act with the best interests of their children in mind; that their children will be treated not only with fairness but with compassion” (p. 19). Parents and teachers depend on one another to act in the best interests of the child in the learning process.

Similar to the limited research on student–teacher trust, studies examining parent-teacher trust is also very limited. Most trust studies as mentioned previously tend to focus on collegial trust, faculty trust, and teacher trust in the principal. However, there are a few studies that specifically examine parent-teacher trust. K. Adams and Christenson (1998) explored the levels of trust between parents and teachers in an urban middle school. They found that parent trust in teachers was higher than teacher trust in parents. Findings of the study also revealed that parents with lower levels of trust in teachers took

part in activities made available to parents less frequently than the parents with higher trust levels. K. Adams and Christenson (2000) added to their previous work on parent and teacher trust by examining the differences of parent-teacher trust in suburban elementary and secondary schools. In this study of 1,234 parents and 209 teachers, they found parent trust in teachers again to be higher than teacher trust in parents. Additionally, they found that parent and teacher trust was higher at the elementary level than secondary. They suggested in their study that the most effective approach to build trust between parent and teacher is through effective purposeful synchronous communication. Forsyth, Barnes, and Adams (2005) using the conceptual framework of trust formation in schools advanced by Byrk and Schneider (2002) examined the consequences of relational trust; particularly parent trust and its application to school effectiveness. Collecting data from parents and teachers in 79 schools, they found that the trust perceptions of parents had a significant contributing value in predicting school effectiveness (Forsyth et al., 2005). According to Forsyth et al. (2005), patterns of school success appear to depend on a range of contextual conditions, in which parental trust is one.

As the literature shows a connection between student achievement and student-teacher trust (C. Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Louis, 2007; Stipek, 2002; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2013); there is also a link between student achievement and parent-teacher trust (K. Adams & Christenson, 1998, 2000; Cooper, 2007; Forsyth et al., 2005). The higher the expectations of parents with respect to the educational attainment of their children, the higher the student's own educational expectation (Hong & Ho, 2005). Greater levels of trust are realized by teachers and parents when they work

collaboratively (Tschannen-Moran, 2001). When teachers and parents share a sense of purpose and reveal greater levels of trust, they can work more cohesively to meet the learning needs of children.

Trust and School Leadership

There is a lack of consensus to the meaning of leadership. However, most definitions found in the literature often reflect the idea that it involves a social influence process, in which intentional influence is exerted by one person or group over other people in order to structure their actions within the organization (Bolden, 2004; Northouse, 2010; Winston & Patterson, 2006).

The importance of strong leadership in schools is clearly noted in the research (Hattie, 2009; Hoy et al., 1992; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) reviewed the literature on leadership and its influence on student achievement and found that leadership is second only to teaching in having an effect on student achievement. The literature also maintains that the behavior of the school leader is related to trust and achievement (Hattie, 2009; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Marzano et. al., 2005). Hoy et al. (1992) examined the role of the principal in influencing school effectiveness by collecting data from 44 elementary schools in New Jersey. They found that supportive leadership was related both to faculty trust and school effectiveness. The study also revealed that the impact of the principal's leadership is indirect and that it is the collective trust that faculty members hold for one another that directly influences school effectiveness (Hoy et al., 1992). This would suggest that school leaders might benefit by

demonstrating that they are benevolent, and by developing positive relationships with the school faculty and its stakeholders. In a meta-analysis covering a 30-year period, Marzano et al. (2005) examined the effects of leadership practices on student achievement. Their research involving 70 studies and 2,894 schools identified 21 leadership responsibilities that are significantly associated with student achievement. Several of the responsibilities identified in the study that school leaders should carry out to maximize achievement such as, providing intellectual stimulation to staff, developing effective relationships, establishing strong lines of communication, maintaining quality interaction with stakeholders, and protecting staff from harmful situations, foster the behaviors associated with Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's Five Facet Model of Trust (2000). More recently, Sebastian and Allensworth (2012) examined how principal leadership in high schools impacts classroom instruction and achievement based on the following factors: (a) professional capacity, (b) parent-community ties, and (c) school learning climate. Principal leadership in the study is measured by operational practices, which include (a) focusing the mission and goals of the school, (b) supporting trust and collaboration in the building, and (c) actively supporting instruction (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). Using high school data from 99 public schools in Chicago, the study found that only one of the three factors examined in this study to measure the principal's influence on achievement is directly related to the actions of the principals. The principal only had a direct influence on achievement through the factor of the "school's learning climate." The study found that schools with stronger leaders were more likely to be safe, and foster a more enriched academic culture than other schools serving like student

populations. It is suggested that the differences in school climate translates into classrooms with greater academic demand and better-behaved students. It makes some intuitive sense that the leadership of the principal has the greatest influence on instruction and student achievement through the school's learning climate. School climate affects all classrooms and therefore may have an impact on the instructional effectiveness within each classroom.

It has been demonstrated that school leadership has an impact on student achievement and school effectiveness (Hattie, 2009; Hoy et al., 1992; Marzano et al., 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). What remains unclear is how school leadership is experienced, and the goals of the leader carried out by teachers and staff. How school leaders achieve influence in the classroom and other work settings in which they are rarely directly involved can be challenging. Increasing our knowledge about what leaders do to impact the instructional behaviors of teachers may lead to a better understanding of how leadership can more directly influence student achievement and school effectiveness (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008).

Education Reform in the United States

Education in the U. S. is primarily a state and local responsibility as there is no mention of public education in the United States Constitution. It is the responsibility of the states, communities, and public and private organizations to establish schools, developed curriculum, determine entrance requirements, and promotion and graduation requirements. This is reflected in how public education is funded in the U.S. with 88% of funding being provided by sources other than the federal government (USDOE, 2015c).

The remaining 12% of public education is funded by the USDOE. The USDOE is a Cabinet-level department of the United States government, which is overseen by the United States Secretary of Education. The department's primary roles are to establish policy, coordinate federal assistance, collect school data, and to enforce federal education policy (USDOE, 2015c).

What is currently known as the USDOE was established in 1867 under the administration of President Andrew Johnson (Stallings, 2002; USDOE, 2015c; U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian, n.d.). The purpose of the department was to collect and distribute educational information to states and territories in order to help them to establish public school systems (U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian, n.d.). By 1950, the role of the DOE had expanded to also include overseeing the development of universities, vocational education, and specialized training for high school students (USDOE, 2015c). Prior to the creation of the USDOE, educational functions in the U. S. were scattered throughout various federal departments

History of School Reform

Beginning in the late 19th century, communities moved to support school consolidation movements as a way of supporting educational opportunities for children (Katz, 1988). Education centered on building schools for immigrant children in order to convey a form of social control as schools became “agents of cultural standardization” (p. 92) Reform at this time primarily focused on the societal benefits of public education in the face of rapid economic, social, and political changes taken place during this period. According to Cuban (1990), early reforms were ways to find solutions to the problem of

how to balance societal values of excellence and equity in tax-supported public schools enrolling children of different abilities, social classes, religions, and racial and ethnic groups.

School reform in the early 20th century was determined largely by the growth and development of cities and immigration. School advocates at this time were opposed to government interference in schools (Reese, 2000). Reformers sought to reshape schools in the image of corporate industries calling for centralized school systems run by high-salaried professionals. These reform efforts led to the deterioration of local school control, and the reduction in the size of school boards. This period in education also introduced the practice of intelligence and achievement testing in schools, which was used to track and group students based on their academic ability. Although there are a number of important events taking place in the 20th century related to school reform; I chose to focus on significant reform efforts imposed by the federal government in this study.

During the early 1940s, the onset of World War II brought forth a change in public education as schools became instruments of patriotism educating students to do their part to support the war effort (Stallings, 2002). Federal support in education also increased during World War II with the *Lanham ACT of 1941* (NCES, 2002) which made payments to school districts to provide social services and daycare to war-impacted areas, and with the *GI Bill of 1944* (NCES, 2002) which provided postsecondary assistance to returning war veterans. In 1954, the Supreme Court set in motion a process of dismantling a system of school segregation that had existed for hundreds of years when

they ruled in *Brown v. the Board of Education* that school segregation was unconstitutional and recommended that all schools desegregate with deliberate speed (USDOE, 2013). The 1950s also marked the beginning of comprehensive legislative acts specifically earmarked to provide education funds to improve science, math, and foreign language instruction in K-12 and postsecondary schools (USDOE, 2015c).

The 1960s and 1970s were a time of massive change in education. Encouraged by the civil rights movement, minorities were no longer willing to leave the control of education solely to high-salaried education professionals and advocated for policy changes (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Liberal reformers in the 1960s and 1970s believed that school policy makers did not move quickly enough to advance poor children, racial integration, and equal opportunities. Pressure spawned by their efforts brought about comprehensive legislative changes resulting in the passage of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, and the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. The *Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965* guaranteed a free and equal education for all students – including those students living in poverty (USDOE, 2015a). Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972* prohibits the exclusion of participation from any educational program or activity based on gender (United States Government, n.d.). Lastly, the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* prohibits discrimination in schools based on disability (United States Government, n.d.). These reforms required schools to develop processes and procedures to address issues of student rights, due process, sexism, and the mainstreaming of disabled students (Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

School reform in the 1980s shifted from educational inputs such as program funding, to educational outputs focused on student achievement outcomes after the 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. This report highlighted the conditions of public school in the U.S. and made recommendations for the adoption of more rigorous and measurable standards that they believed would better prepare students for college or the workforce (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). This was based on the commissions' assertion that public schools in the U.S. were failing to appropriately prepare students for the future and would lose its standing in the global market void of corrective action. In response to *A Nation at Risk*, many legislatures required local school districts to increase academic rigor, develop high school exit exams, and to increase the school day and school year (Reese, 2000). Although *A Nation at Risk* had a substantial impact on public schools by emphasizing the need for improvement, it did not draft legislation requiring states to establish minimum student achievement levels (Superfine, 2005).

Table 1

School Reform of the 20th Century

| Year | School Reformation Event |
|-------------|--|
| 1941 | Lanham Act of 1941: Provided schools in war impacted areas with funds to provide social services. |
| 1944 | GI Bill of 1944: Provided postsecondary financial assistance to veterans. |
| 1954 | <i>Brown v. Board of Education:</i> Supreme Court ruling that declared separate public schools for black and white students to be unconstitutional. |
| 1965 | Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965: Guaranteed a free and equal education for all students. |
| 1972 | Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972: Barred the exclusion of participation from school programs based on gender. |
| 1973 | Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Prohibits discrimination in schools based on disability. |
| 1983 | Publication of “A Nation at Risk”: Federal education report recommending the adoption of more rigorous standards in public schools. |

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

President George W. Bush in 2002 reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) with a purpose of ensuring that all children have a fair and equal opportunity to obtain a quality education (USDOE, 2002). NCLB was designed to improve K-12 education with the aid of four primary

tenets: (1) accountability for results, (2) doing what works based on scientifically-based research, (3) expanding parental involvement and options, and (4) expanding local control. Through the development and implementation of state academic standards-based assessments, NCLB required states to identify failing schools in order to implement school level reform initiatives that ensured students received a high-quality education. All public schools receiving federal funds under NCLB were required to administer state-level standardized tests in math and reading to students at selected grade levels. It was the responsibility of the state to establish rigorous and attainable levels of proficiency for each assessment that was measured by Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

AYP was a growth mechanism that schools had to achieve in order to meet the student performance targets of NCLB. Each state established its own standards and procedures for measuring AYP. Under NCLB, states were required to adjust proficiency targets in equal increments every three years until 100% of students were to have met proficiency in the tested disciplines by 2014. A school's success or failure hinged on the school meeting AYP. A school achieved AYP by successfully meeting or exceeding all established statewide performance targets. States were required to use measures that were reliable and aligned to their academic content standards (USDOE, 2002).

Reform under NCLB was guided by schools being held accountable to the academic achievement of their students. The expectation was that schools will reallocate resources in ways that will improve student achievement, which would ultimately establish the appropriate conditions for accelerated and sustained school improvement (Sunderman, 2008).

In need of improvement under NCLB. Making AYP was important for schools. Schools failing to meet AYP for two or more consecutive years in the same content area were categorized as “in need of improvement.” Schools identified as in need of improvement were subjected to progressive sanctions by the federal government if they failed to improve (USDOE, 2002). These sanctions ranged from implementing a school improvement plan to the state taking over school operations. The complete list of sanctions for schools receiving federal funds that failed to meet AYP are reflected in Table 2. The sanctions were created with the purpose of compelling state and local officials to develop processes and systems that would work quickly to improve school outcomes (IES, 2008). The U.S. Department of Education (2001) reported that a total of 19,270 schools receiving federal funds failed to meet AYP for two or more consecutive years during the 2011-2012 school year.

Table 2

Consequences of Not Meeting AYP

| Level | Sanction Applied |
|-------|--|
| 1 | Alert: School shall notify parents, prepare and implement a school plan and consult with district and department regarding reasons for not meeting AYP and to receive technical assistance. |
| 2 | School Improvement Status: School notifies parents. School shall develop and implement a school improvement plan. School must submit the plan to the district for approval. The district submits the plan to the department. The school must provide supplemental services to eligible students. |
| 3 | School Improvement Status: In addition to continuing all the requirements for Level 2, the school provides public school choice if available. |
| 4 | Corrective Actions: In addition to continuing all the requirements for Level 3, the district is required to take at least one of the following actions: replacement of staff who are relevant to the school not demonstrating AYP, implementation of a new curriculum, significantly decrease management authority at the school, appoint one or more outside experts to advise the school, extend for that school the length of the school year or school day, or restructure the internal organization of the school. |
| 5 | Restructuring: In addition to continuing all the requirements for Level 4, the district is required to prepare a plan to carry out one of the following alternative governance arrangements: reopen the school as a public charter school, replace all or most of the staff who are relevant to the school not demonstrating AYP, enter into a contract with a private management company, transfer operation of the school to the department, if agreed to by the department, or any other major restructuring of the school’s governance arrangement. If the school remains in restructuring status the following year, the district must implement the restructuring plan at the beginning of the school year following the plan’s creation. |

Note. Adapted from “No Child Left Behind (NCLB) *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA),” by U.S. Department of Education 2002.

The school improvement process began with the state identifying schools that failed to meet AYP. Though the state was responsible for identifying schools that were in need of improvement, it was local level school administrators and school leaders that were tasked under NCLB with addressing achievement and school improvement

(USDOE, 2002). When a school failed to meet AYP and was labeled in need of improvement, teachers, principals and central office administrators were required to work to improve the conditions that caused the school to miss its targets. It was their collective responsibility to identify the school's areas of weakness and strength, and to develop plans that overcome previous failure as measured by AYP.

The role of the state in the school improvement process was to support and monitor the effort and progress of those at the local level (McClure, 2005). Under NCLB, states had two central responsibilities: (1) each state had to create and sustain a statewide network of support that provided technical assistance and expertise to schools identified for improvement, and (2) states were responsible for allocating funds to school districts and schools as specified by the bill. Schools identified for improvement that received federal funds were provided additional funding under NCLB to help them institute positive changes needed to meet AYP. States were required to set-aside a portion of the federal funds they received to form a School Improvement Fund that was used to support state and local efforts of schools in need of improvement. States were required to give funding priority to lowest performing school districts and schools. Schools were removed from school improvement after they met AYP for two consecutive years.

Restructuring. The Level 5 sanction imposed under NCLB for failing to meet AYP was restructuring. Restructuring was the final consequence imposed under NCLB for schools that failed to make AYP in their state for five or more consecutive years of being "in need of improvement" status (USDOE, 2002). Restructuring in schools involved making significant changes in the organization's operational structure, including

changes in who made decisions and how (Scott & Kelleher, 2008). Research about successful change in failing organizations that need to promptly institute change indicates it is critical to replace the person charged with authoritative direction and control (Dunlap & Andelman, 2014; Zilka, 2010). The adoption of new operational structures was intended to enhance student achievement and facilitate school improvement by abandoning those structures that were no longer effective, or antiquated. This was notably different from changes pertaining to curriculum, instruction, or to the school environment, which work well in a school that is already satisfactory - where the goal is to serve students who are performing relatively well even better. Restructuring was viewed more as a school district or school's last resort to cultivate student achievement and school improvement.

According to NCLB, restructuring required that changes be made in the governance of the school. When a school entered restructuring, they were required to choose one of five options made available as specified under NCLB. The five available options were: (1) turn the school operations over to the state, (2) turn the operations over to a private company, (3) reopen as a charter school, (4) reconstitute the school by replacing some or all of the teachers, staff and administrators, or (5) engage in another form of major restructuring that makes fundamental reform. These options were intended to reshape low-performing schools considerably; however, the choices themselves were loosely defined (Scott & Kelleher, 2008). Although a federal mandate, implementation details were primarily decided by states, school districts, and schools.

When a school district or school was notified by the state that they had failed to meet AYP for a fifth consecutive year, they had a sixth year to plan for one of the five restructuring strategies. The school had to implement the restructuring plan by year seven if they failed to achieve AYP in the year of planning. As previously stated, 19,270 public schools were designated “in need of improvement” for the 2011-2012 school year. Of that number, 32% were in restructuring—this represented a 15% increase from the previous school year (USDOE, 2015b). The number of schools identified as being in restructuring varied by state. In some states, the number of schools that were in restructuring had become so large that states and districts lacked the capacity to provide financial and technical support for their improvement efforts (Center on Education Policy [CEP], 2009). Given the significant number of schools in restructuring and their subsequent costs, opposition to NCLB began to escalate, eventually leading to the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) in 2015 (Oldham, 2018).

The CEP (2009) conducted a 5-year study on restructuring under NCLB in the states of Michigan, California, Georgia, Maryland, New York, and Ohio. Their report synthesized data generated from 23 school districts and 48 schools, and was intended to address three primary research questions: (1) what have we learned to improve struggling schools, (2) what have we learned from research about the impact of NCLB on state efforts to improve schools, and (3) what advice can we offer for using funds appropriated for federal school improvement grants. The researchers found that all of the schools that raised achievement enough to exit restructuring used multiple coordinated strategies,

which they revised over time and adopted to meet new needs. The schools that failed to exit restructuring often needed more time to implement strategies or they experienced significant setbacks, which impeded the implementation process. Of the 48 schools that participated in the study, only 11 had raised achievement sufficiently to exit “in need of improvement” status. Also, 5 of the 48 schools were permanently closed by the state due to chronic failure. The findings of this study suggest that there is little evidence to support that any of the federal options significantly improved school achievement.

Reconstitution. According to the CEP (2009), reconstitution was the second most selected option chosen by schools that entered restructuring under NCLB. Only “engaging in another form of major restructuring” was chosen more than reconstitution. Reconstitution involved replacing a school’s principal and the majority of its staff with new staff members in an attempt to establish a new climate, philosophy, and school structure (Mathis, 2009). The assumption behind the practice was that things were so inherently bad at the school that no other viable option existed to turn the school around.

School reconstitution began in San Francisco, originally as a product of school desegregation. In 1982, a federal court created a consent decree to settle a lawsuit brought forward by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to end school segregation and the mal-education of Black students in the school district (*San Francisco NAACP v. San Francisco Unified School District*, 1978). The consent decree in addition to mandating desegregation also contained language to address the underachievement of Black students in schools. It maintained that schools where Black students were not achieving would be reconstituted, which involved forcibly transferring

the school's principal, teachers, and classified staff from the school (Emery, 2002). They would have the option to reapply to the school under the new administration, but if not accepted, they would be given a position elsewhere in the school district. Emery (2002) led a Federal Court appointed committee of experts who studied the effects of student achievement under the consent decree. The committee found that reconstitution worked and recommended to the court that three schools a year undergo reconstitution until the task of academic achievement for all student groups was realized. The committee also reported that providing additional funds to schools to address achievement levels of targeted groups did not significantly improve student learning outcomes.

Advocates of school reconstitution generally assumed that reconstitution would enhance a school's capacity for reform and not make matters worse. While reconstitution was becoming a more common policy response to address low-performing schools, it remained an under examined approach to reform. The limited research available comes largely from urban school districts (CEP, 2009; Kruger, Snow-Renner, & Ziebarth, 2002; Rice & Croninger, 2005). Studies suggest that reconstitution may improve school order, stability, and community involvement; however evidence supporting that reconstitution improves student achievement is mixed (Kruger et al., 2002; Rice & Croninger, 2005).

Rice and Malen (2010) examined extant data on school reconstitution that documented how it functioned or failed to function as a school improvement strategy. They found that the majority of studies did not focus on how the replacement of staff impacted or motivated the new staff to meet targets. The research provided some evidence that the new staff exerted considerable effort, but did not indicate if they were

more effective than their predecessors (Rice & Malen, 2010). In contrast, they found several studies that suggested that the new staff when compared to the previous staff were less experienced and educated, which both are factors of teacher effectiveness (Stronge, 2007). The researchers believed this was due to having a limited number of qualified applicants from which to choose. Rice and Malen (2010) concluded that the use of school reconstitution as a school improvement strategy is unlikely to produce favorable results. Rice and Croninger (2005) also explored the impacts of reconstitution by studying six reconstituted schools in a single school district. They acquired data from 431 interviews conducted with district administrators, school administrators, board members, teacher union representatives, teachers, support staff, and parents. They found in their 2-year study that reconstitution caused more disruption than meaningful reform of school policies and practices (Rice & Croninger, 2005).

When considering reconstitution as a strategy for school reform, the CEP (2009) recommended that school districts and schools have a large pool of applicants, a plan for overcoming past reputation as a failing school, and an effective hiring system that does not rely solely on the principal to recruit and interview applicants.

Turnaround schools. Kowal et al., (2009) described school turnaround as a documented, quick, dramatic, and sustained change in organizational performance. The USDOE views school turnaround as a dramatic intervention in a low-performing school that both produces significant achievement gains within three years, and prepares the school for long-term transformation into a high-performing organization (Herman et al.; 2008). School turnaround differs from school improvement. School improvement is

regarded as a gradual continuous process, whereas school turnaround involves dramatic transformative improvement in a much shorter time (Fullan, 2006; Leithwood, Harris , & Strauss, 2010). Effective turnaround strategies remove factors that inhibit school improvement and that do not support effective teaching and learning (Duke et al., 2005). The turnaround school process is noted not by orderly implementation, but by altering a lot at once in an attempt to produce rapid change. The fundamental belief is that rapid change will give way to sustained achievement and school improvement (Kowal et al., 2009). As schools across the nation struggled to meet the requirements of NCLB, the USDOE shifted its focus to turning around the nation’s lowest performing schools by providing guidance aimed at quickly improving student achievement (Herman et al., 2008).

In 2001, the USDOE published the *School Improvement Report: Executive Orders on Actions for Turning Around Low-Performing Schools*. This report is often credited for coining the label “turnaround school,” and is believed to have heavily shaped NCLB legislation (Fullan, 2006; Leithwood & Strauss, 2008). The report resulting from an executive order under the Clinton Administration presented state-by-state data on the numbers of schools identified as in need of improvement through Title I of the ESEA, and described the factors that account for the disparity in schools identified for improvement across the U.S. (USDOE, 2001). The report maintained that while there was an abundance of research to identify the characteristics of an effective school, research on the process of turning a low-performing school into an effective school was limited and not well defined. It continued by expressing that low-performing schools were incapable

of restructuring and turning themselves around without outside assistance. Ultimately, the report suggested that school districts, states, and the federal government should all play an instrumental part in assisting low-performing schools by providing research-based strategies, additional personnel, and additional funding in order to quickly turn the school around.

In 2008, the IES published *Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools: A Practice Guide*. The guide identified four practices believed to quickly improve the performance of chronically low-performing schools: (1) signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership, (2) maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction, (3) make visible improvements early in the school turnaround process, and (4) build a committed staff. These four recommendations stemmed from 10 case studies that examined turnaround practices across 35 elementary, middle, and high schools (Herman et al., 2008). The study points out that schools cannot select only one of the four recommended practices and expect to yield quick results, but that they may work well together in turning around low-performing schools. The study notes that the four practices are likely to improve student learning but does not offer proof that they will always work consistently. Also, the study found no empirical studies that reached the rigor necessary to determine if specific turnaround practices produce more favorable academic outcomes than others (Herman et al., 2008).

Stuit (2010) studied 2,025 low-performing charter and district schools in 10 states from 2003-2009 to determine whether the rates of persistent low student performance varied between charter schools and district schools. Data for the study were obtained

from grade-level reading and math proficiency rates from state DOE websites and demographic, geographic, and programmatic data from the NCES. The researcher found that of the 2,025 low-performing schools examined, only 20% exited the bottom quartile of proficiency after 5 years (Stuit, 2010). In addition, only 1% of the 2025 schools met their state's criteria for school turnaround (2010).

ESEA Flexibility. In 2012, the Obama administration began offering flexibility to states regarding specific requirements of NCLB in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans designed to hold schools and districts accountable for robust academic standards, including specific strategies to turn around the lowest performing schools (USDOE, 2015a). Though altering the structure of accountability systems developed under NCLB, the ESEA flexibility provisions still required states to offer significant resources to developing systems that support sustained effective turnaround efforts. The turnaround principles included in the ESEA flexibility guidelines required all turnaround schools to provide: (a) strong leadership, (b) effective teachers, (c) additional instructional time, (d) researched-based instruction, (e) data driven decision making analytics, (f) positive school culture, and (g) community engagement.

Progress has been made in identifying elements that make successful school turnaround more likely, yet there does not appear to be any empirical evidence that any of the identified turnaround antidotes consistently resulted in rapid dramatic change and school improvement.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) legislation, which reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), and replaced NCLB (USDOE, 2016). ESSA narrows the role of the federal government and provides for more state and local accountability. Although ESSA keeps the same testing schedule and reporting requirements for statewide testing as NCLB, requiring annual tests in math, reading, and science at selected grade levels; testing accountability now rests with states and local school districts.

Providing support to low performing schools is a central part of ESSA. Low performing schools are defined under ESSA as those in the bottom 5% of the state, or by those that fail to graduate 67% or more of its students. In the event a school is identified as low performing, the state is required under the law to intervene. States must also notify LEAs of any schools where subgroup student populations are consistently failing. In cases where subgroups are underperforming, schools are held accountable for implementing interventions before the state or school district can intervene. To restrict federal interference in this process, ESSA prohibits the Secretary of Education from proposing or mandating any specific steps states and school districts must take to improve failing schools.

Context of Urban Schools in the United States

Go into any American city, find where the poor people live, visit one of the elementary schools their children attend and the overwhelming likelihood is that you will be in a school that is struggling to teach its students (Ellis, 1975, p. 4).

Urban areas in the U.S. are classified as having 50,000 or more people with at least 1,000 people per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). They often contain a higher concentration of minorities, and encounter higher rates of poverty, violence, crime, and discrimination than their rural and suburban counterparts. The education system is usually large due to its high population density, which typically reflects the characteristics of the environment. The U.S. K-12 school-aged population is approximately 53 million, of which 35% are minority, and 25% live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012, 2014). Approximately one-third of Black and Hispanic school-aged children and young adults attend schools with a 90% or higher minority student population (Villegas, 2008). Urban schools are complex institutions that face many difficult challenges. The risk factors commonly associated with urban schools are: (a) students are more likely to drop out of high school, (b) students are less likely to attend college, (c) students are more likely to enter college unprepared, (d) schools are more likely to hire unlicensed or qualified teachers, (e) schools are more likely to experience more student behavior problems, (f) schools are more likely to experience more student absenteeism and tardiness, and (g) schools are more likely to have less access to resources (Nevarez & Wood, 2007; Noguera, 2001).

Understanding how to adequately cultivate student achievement in urban schools is critical to school improvement. Urban schools struggle academically as they perform below the national averages in reading, math and science (NCES, 2011, 2013a, 2013). Under NCLB, urban schools like all public schools were held to the same level of accountability by the USDOE. All urban school students were expected to perform at

proficient levels in math and reading as measured by AYP despite the obstacles and risk factors that characterized urban schools (USDOE, 2002). Urban schools that are successful often establish protective factors that appear to aid in student achievement (Bryan, 2005; Nevarez & Wood, 2007). Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1997) describe these factors as: (a) developing and maintaining caring and supportive adult relationships, (b) providing opportunities for meaningful student participation in their schools and communities, and (c) establishing high parent and teacher expectation regarding student performance and future success. Schools and districts must find ways to address the systemic barriers associated with urban schools if they are to have a chance of meeting the academic needs of all students.

Summary

Student achievement in schools is influenced by trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Goddard et al., 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Research posits that students attending schools with high levels of trust may perform better than those attending low trust schools, as they feel a greater sense of belonging that result in increased motivation and effort (Goodenow & Grady, 1993). While the concept of trust in education has been examined, the literature remains limited in regards to particular aspects of trust. How trust between students and teachers and between parents and teachers impacts student achievement, particularly in urban schools remains underexplored.

This study sought to add to the limited body of knowledge concerning trust and urban school student achievement. Due to the limited literature in this area, more research is necessary to determine how student-teacher and parent-teacher trust can result in

school improvement and increased student achievement in urban school settings. Unique to this trust study was that it took place in an urban school that was reconstituted under NCLB. As I noted throughout the literature review, there is a clear connection between trusting relationships and student achievement, however, I have found no studies that specifically examined trust relationships in a school that had been reconstituted. Is fostering trust different in such an environment? Therefore in this study, I explicitly explored how trust relationships were perceived to be impacted by the direction, planning, and mandates developed as a result of the school reconstitution. Lastly, this study seeks to identify the actions and behaviors of the school leader that cultivates trust among a reconstituted staff in an urban school. The research reflects that supportive leadership influences student achievement (Hattie, 2009; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Marzano et al., 2005), yet there are very few studies that detail the specific leadership actions that garner trust among staff. As previously mentioned, the majority of leadership studies tend to identify leadership qualities or styles, but not behaviors (Marzano et al., 2005; Northouse, 2010).

Fostering trust among students, parents, and staff is essential to urban school achievement. Acquiring trust is often easier said than done. Many parents and students of urban environments enter school with a different set of behavioral expectations than that of the school, and often negative feelings and baggage from their own experiences (Noguera, 2001; Parsons, 2005). This feeling of cynicism is particularly prevalent in families with limited resources. Overcoming these barriers and gaining a better understanding of the trusting relationships between teachers, students, and parents, and

their effect on achievement may improve student outcomes and enhance current school practices in urban schools.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Questions

The research study is aimed to understand the perceptions of trust in an urban middle school that was reconstituted for failing to meet NCLB for 6 consecutive years.

The study is structured to explore the research questions below.

1. What is the trust level for student trust in teachers, parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents, in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff?
2. How have student achievement scores changed during the four years prior to reconstitution and the three years following reconstitution?
3. What are the perceptions of teachers, former students and former parents that experienced school reconstitution regarding the level of trust before and after reconstitution?
4. What leadership behaviors did the teachers in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff observe that cultivated or damaged trust in the school leader, teacher trust in colleagues, and teacher trust in students and parents?
5. What initiatives were undertaken as part of the reconstitution turnaround efforts at this school? How have teachers perceived these initiatives to have strengthened or weakened trust relationships in the school?

Setting

This study took place at Madison Middle School (pseudonym), an urban school located in a large school district on the east coast. It was one of 11 traditional middle schools serving Grades 6-8 in the school district. All 266 students attending the school were African American. Ninety-three percent of students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. Twenty-eight percent of students were identified as special education qualified. The school employed 30 teachers, 17 support staff, and three administrators.

The school was in its fourth year of restructuring at the start of this study. Schools operating in the district entered restructuring after failing to meet AYP for four consecutive years. The principal, Jamal Allen (pseudonym), was hired at the beginning of the 2010 school year. Prior to his hire, the school had never achieved AYP for any tested reporting group. In the summer of 2011, Madison was deemed a turnaround school by the school district, and allowed to reconstitute its staff as established under NCLB legislation (USDOE, 2002). The 2011-2012 school year began with 10% of faculty and staff being retained from the previous school year.

Research Design

To address these research questions, I used a mixed-methods case study approach; specifically, a descriptive single-case study was employed. The case study is an appropriate methodology for this study because it aims to obtain an in-depth, contextualized understanding of a contemporary occurrence by providing intensive descriptions, analyses, and interpretations of the event within its everyday context (Merriam, 1998). A single-case study design was used in this study as the research

questions were designed to capture the everyday current conditions and occurrences that take place within the school of study. Although case study research is limited in its ability to generalize results from one case to a larger population, there is potential value in the opportunity for readers to form their own connections specific to similarities between the case and their unique circumstances. This is appropriate given the exploratory nature of the study and the lack of studies on reconstituted schools and trust. This case study focused on a single underperforming urban school four years before staff reconstitution and three years after reconstitution. The analysis included the use of three different data sources: surveys, interviews, and standardized test assessment scores.

Climate study surveys designed to measure trust were administered to students, parents, and teachers under the direction of the principal in June 2014. I used these extant data to understand the levels of trust between students and teachers, and the levels of trust between parents and teachers. Interviews with students and parents were conducted to understand how the school reconstitution might have affected their perceptions of trust. Interviews were also conducted in this study to understand what actions taken by the principal were perceived by faculty to cultivate or damage trust relationships at the school.

Participants

All participants of this study were chosen utilizing purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, respondents are chosen on the basis of the belief that their knowledge of the information desired is best suited to help understand the research problem and research questions (Creswell, 2009). The participants taking part in this

study included former students that attended the school, parents of students that attended the school, and teachers that were employed or previously employed by the school. All participants of this study were emailed invitations formally requesting their participation. In the invitation, I introduced myself, explained the nature of the study, and provided participants with the necessary safeguards. Participants taking part in this study returned consent forms to me electronically and by mail. Also, parental consent was required for all former students that participated in this study. The letter of consent can be found in Appendix A.

Teachers. Six teachers participated in the individual interviews conducted. Convenience sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994), a type of purposive sampling, was used to identify participants. A convenience sample is one in which the investigator uses individuals that are conveniently available to participate in the research study. Two teachers who were on staff at Madison that I knew from previous work experience assisted me by identifying the other four participants.

Students. Interviews were conducted with three former students who attended Madison before and after the school reconstitution. Convenience sampling was used to identify the participants. Two teachers on staff at Madison who I knew from previous work experience assisted me by putting me into contact with former students that were willing to participate in the interviews conducted.

Parents. Interviews were conducted with three parents who had children attending Madison before and after the school reconstitution. Convenience sampling was used to identify the three participants. One teacher that was on staff at the school, and

another teacher working within the same school district who I knew from previous work experience, assisted me by putting me into contact with parents that were willing to participate in the study.

Data Sources

Data were generated by surveys, interviews, and student achievement data. The triangulation of data sources is often considered a strength of case study research (Yin, 2009). I used multiple sources to collect data in this case study in order to establish greater credibility in the findings. This study relied on three major sources of data—cross-sectional surveys, interviews, and longitudinal student achievement data in math and reading. The purposes of each instrument are discussed next.

Climate Surveys

Data from three surveys that capture the perceptions of trust by organizational participants were used in this study and can be found in Appendices B, C, and D. Scoring directions for each instrument used can be found in Appendices E, F, and G.

Student Trust Scale. The Student Trust Scale measures the level of trust students have for their teachers (C. Adams & Forsyth, 2009). It is based on the five-facet model of trust theorized by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000). C. Adams and Forsyth (2009) created this measure to capture student perceptions and recollections of teacher behavior, which allow for judgments to be made about their relative benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence. The Student Trust Scale includes 10 items that have been adapted from the Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999) and Parent Trust Scale (Forsyth, Adams, & Barnes, 2002). Individual student scores were generated

for student trust in teachers by calculating the mean of the 10 survey items. The school score was generated by finding the average of all individual scores. Two hundred five enrolled students completed the Student Trust Scale in June of 2014.

C. Adams and Forsyth (2009) established content validity of the Student Trust Scale by submitting the items to a panel of eight professional educators who were asked to evaluate the clarity of items, to investigate the relevance of items to teacher-student interactions, and to identify the conceptual indicator measured by each item. This was followed by a field test in which the outcome of an exploratory factor analysis demonstrated construct validity, in that all of the items loaded on a single factor with factor coefficients that ranged from .62 to .85. The Student Trust Scale has adequate internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .90.

Sample survey items from the Student Trust Scale included:

- Students learn a lot from teachers in this school.
- Teachers at this school really listen to students.

Parent Trust in School Scale. The Parent Trust in School Scale measures parent perceptions of the benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence of school personnel. The Parent Trust Scale includes 15 items in which some have been adapted from the Parent Trust in Schools Scale and the Parent Trust in the Principal Scale (Forsyth, Adams, & Hoy, 2011). Factor analytic studies of the Parent Trust in School Scale support the validity of the measure as data from 49 urban schools demonstrated that all 15 items formed a single factor (Pennycuff, 2009). The Parent Trust in School Scale has a high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .96. The

norms of the scale are based on the responses of 2,959 parents from 64 schools. Eighty-nine parents and guardians completed the Parent Trust Scale in June of 2014.

Sample survey items from the Parent Trust in School Scale included:

- Teachers are willing to go the extra mile to help my child.
- I am kept informed of my child's progress.

Faculty Trust in Clients Scale. The Faculty Trust in Clients Scale measures the level of faculty trust in students and parents, and is a sub-component of the Faculty Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). The scale includes nine items and can be used in elementary school, middle school, and high school. Individual scores were generated for faculty trust in clients by calculating the mean of the nine survey items. The school score was generated by finding the average of all individual faculty scores. Many of the items on the survey are designed to assess each teacher's belief of the trust faculty as a whole has for students and parents. Twenty-eight staff members completed the Faculty Trust in Clients Scale in June of 2014.

Factor analytic studies of the Faculty Trust Scale support the validity of the measure (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). The reliability of the scale generally ranges from .90 to .98. Reliability coefficients for test scores that are equal to or greater than .80 are typically considered acceptable for tests of moderate lengths (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The norms of the Faculty Trust Scales are based on a sample of 97 high schools, 66 middle schools, and 146 elementary schools (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003).

Sample survey items from the Faculty Trust in Clients Scale included:

- Teachers here believe that students are competent learners.

- Parents in this school are reliable in their commitments.

Table 3

Participation in Trust Surveys

| Climate Survey | Number of Participants |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Student Trust | 205 |
| Parent Trust | 89 |
| Faculty Trust | 28 |

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 2009) were conducted in this case study in October and November of 2015 to examine the impact of trust in a school with a reconstituted staff. Interviews were also utilized to gather information on the actions taken by the principal that influence trust among faculty and staff. The interview participants consisted of six teachers, three former students, and three parents. The former students and parents interviewed were present at the school before and after the school reconstitution. I selected the semi-structured interview approach due to its inherent flexibility and fluidity (Galletta & Cross, 2013). The semi-structured design allowed me as the researcher to easily transition from opened-ended questions to questions that were more theoretically driven as the interviews progressed. By holding interviews with former students and parents, I was able to better understand how the school reconstitution impacted the levels of trust they held for the school and in its staff.

In K-12 schools, the principal is the most important person in the development of organizational climate that is needed to cultivate high trust environments (Tarter, Bliss, & Hoy, 1989). Part of this study was organized to understand how the various facets of trust are related to leadership behaviors. Interviews with teachers were used in this case study to gather information on how particular actions taken by the principal impacted trust among faculty. Specifically, I wanted to gather information on leadership behaviors that promoted the facets of trust as defined by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000). I also explored in the teacher interviews how the plans and initiatives developed to support the reconstitution were perceived to have strengthened or weekend trust relationships at the school.

The interview questions were designed to gain insight into the perspectives of each participant. The number of interview questions varied among interview groups. Seventeen questions were asked in the teacher interviews, 12 in the parent interviews, and 10 in the student interviews. The parent and student interview questions were constructed to elicit responses that compared the level of trust held with the school and staff before and after the school reconstitution. Since it has been suggested that students in urban schools perform better when an element of trust is present between student-teacher and parent-teacher (C. Adams & Christenson, 2000; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Hattie, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014), I designed questions to specifically explore how former students and parents viewed trust relationships in a school that experienced reconstitution. The teacher interview questions were constructed to elicit responses that informed which leadership behaviors they perceived as having an

impact on trust as defined by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000), and to understand what reconstitution initiatives were perceived by the faculty to have an impact on trust relationships at the school. All interview questions for each group followed the interview protocol as established by Creswell (2009).

Sample interview questions included:

- How would you describe your relationship with your child's teachers before the school reconstitution?
- How did the school reconstitution impact how you established trust with teachers and administration?

The full interview protocols are provided in Appendices H, I, J and K. Appendix L provides a categorical table illustrating how each interview question is connected to the related research question.

Student Achievement Data: Comprehensive Assessment System

Schoolwide student achievement scores for the years spanning 2007-2013 were used in this study. The principal purpose of the Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) was to annually measure the mastery of reading, mathematics, science, biology, and composition content standards of all students attending school within the district. The assessments provided the foundation for an accountability system that allowed the district to determine whether students and schools were making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on content standards required under NCLB (USDOE, 2002). I focused on reading and math achievement results in this study, as they were the only content areas

considered in determining if AYP was achieved. Students were assessed in reading in Grades 2-10, and in math in Grades 2-8 and 10.

Student achievement scores were expressed in four proficiency levels: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The CAS cut scores associated with each of the four proficiency levels for each grade and content area were established in 2006 using content, statistical, and policy-based standard setting processes¹. The content and related statistics were reviewed through standard setting workshops conducted with district teachers to determine cut scores. Since Madison is a middle school serving students from Grades 6-8; reflected in Table 4 are the cut scores for reading and math in Grades 6-8. Students needed to score in the proficient or advanced level to be considered passing.

¹ Redacted citation contained identifiable information.

Table 4

Reading and Math Cut Scores for CAS

| Reading | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Grade | Below Basic | Basic | Proficient | Advanced |
| 6 | 600 – 639 | 640 – 654 | 655 – 671 | 672 – 699 |
| 7 | 700 – 738 | 739 – 755 | 756 – 767 | 768 – 799 |
| 8 | 800 – 839 | 840 – 855 | 856 – 869 | 870 – 899 |
| Math | | | | |
| 6 | 600 – 635 | 636 – 653 | 654 – 667 | 668 – 699 |
| 7 | 700 – 735 | 736 – 751 | 752 – 769 | 770 – 799 |
| 8 | 800 – 835 | 836 – 849 | 850 – 867 | 868 – 899 |

Note. CAS = Comprehensive Assessment System.

The CAS indicated strong levels of reliability in both reading and math.

Reliability statistics using the Cronbach’s alpha, Stratified coefficient alpha, and Feldt-Raju were all above .90. The test level reliability coefficients for all three instruments are reflected in Table 5

Table 5

Reliability Statistics

| Reading | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Grade | Cronbach's Alpha | Stratified Coefficient Alpha | Feldt-Raju |
| 6 | .92 | .92 | .92 |
| 7 | .91 | .91 | .91 |
| 8 | .91 | .92 | .91 |
| Math | | | |
| 6 | .93 | .93 | .93 |
| 7 | .92 | .92 | .92 |
| 8 | .91 | .91 | .91 |

Data Collection

Three cross-sectional surveys were administered in June of 2014 under the direction of Principal Allen: Faculty Trust in Clients Scale, Student Trust Scale, and the Parent Trust Scale. The principal provided me the school scores generated from each of the three instruments. Data were also generated from the transcriptions of the 12 semi-structured interviews conducted in this case study with students, parents, and staff. All interviews were conducted by telephone and recorded for accuracy. Lastly, school level CAS results in math and reading covering 2007-2013 were obtained from the school district website, and from a contact working in the district's assessment office.

Quantitative Analysis

The unit of analysis in this case study was the school. The mean scores and standard deviations for the data obtained from the three cross-sectional surveys were calculated and are reported in the answer to Research Question 1. Standardized scaled scores comparing the scores of Madison to those of a comparison sample of schools were calculated for the faculty, student, and parent scores. CAS math and reading achievement data for the years spanning 2007-2013 are reported and discussed in the answer to Research Question 2. Table 6 reflects the data sources and quantitative analyses for Research Questions 1 and 2.

Qualitative Analysis

In qualitative research, the investigator seeks to establish validity by employing procedures that checks for accuracy of findings (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative trustworthiness is established through the meticulous documentation of procedures and steps followed in a qualitative study (Yin, 2009). In addition to taking notes, all interviews were audio-recorded. Codes were created from the transcribed data obtained in this study. To establish trustworthiness in the semi-structured interviews conducted, I reviewed transcripts for obvious errors, continually compared data with codes to ensure that code meanings remained unchanged, and employed cross-checking to authenticate accuracy. Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to descriptive or inferential information amassed during a study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Table 6 reflects the data sources and qualitative analyses for Research Questions 3, 4, and 5.

Research Question 1

What is the trust level for student trust in teachers, parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents, in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff? Data sources to answer the question included survey items from the Student Trust Scale, Parent Trust Scale, and the Faculty Trust in Clients Scale. The statistical method used to analyze the data included the means, standard deviations, and standardized trust test scores of the comparative samples.

Research Question 2

How have student achievement scores changed during the four years prior to reconstitution and the three years following reconstitution? The standardized achievement data obtained from the district's assessment website was void of the student data needed to conduct statistical analyses. Therefore I used the CAS school level achievement data in math and reading to make comparisons of the range of results before and after the school reconstitution and to discuss emergent themes and patterns.

Research Question 3

What the perceptions of teachers, former students and former parents that experienced school reconstitution regarding the level of trust before and after reconstitution? Data sources to answer this question included a priori themes, patterns, and descriptions obtained from the transcription of telephone interviews conducted with former students and parents. Member checking was also utilized to increase the validity of the data analysis.

Research Question 4

What leadership behaviors did the teachers in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff observe that cultivated or damaged trust in the school leader, teacher trust in colleagues, and teacher trust in students and parents? Data sources to answer this question included a priori themes, patterns, and descriptions obtained from the transcription of telephone interviews conducted with teachers and support staff. Member checking was also employed to increase the validity of the data analysis.

Research Question 5

What initiatives were undertaken as part of the reconstitution turnaround efforts at this school? How have teachers perceived these initiatives to have strengthened or weakened trust relationships in the school? Data sources to answer this question included a priori themes, patterns, and descriptions obtained from the transcription of telephone interviews conducted with teachers and support staff. Member checking was also employed to increase the validity of the data analysis.

Table 6

Data Sources and Analyses

| Research Question | Data Source | Analysis |
|---|--|---|
| 1. What is the trust level for student trust in teachers, parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents, in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Trust Scale • Parent Trust Scale • Faculty Trust in Clients Scale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means of comparative data • Standard deviation of comparative data • Standardized scaled trust scores of comparative data |
| 2. How have student achievement scores changed during the four years prior to reconstitution and the three years following reconstitution? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAS reading scores • CAS math scores | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare range of passing percentages before and after the reconstitution • Description of emergent themes and patterns |
| 3. What are the perceptions of teachers, former students and former parents that experienced school reconstitution regarding the level of trust before and after reconstitution? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent interview notes • Parent interview audio-recordings • Student interview notes • Student interview audio-recordings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcription of data • Member Checking • Coding of data • Description of a priori themes and patterns • Interpretation of a priori themes and patterns |
| 4. What leadership behaviors did the teachers in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff observe that cultivated or damaged trust in the school leader, teacher trust in colleagues, and teacher trust in students and parents? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher interview notes • Teacher interview audio-recordings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcription of data • Member Checking • Coding of data • Description of a priori themes and patterns • Interpretation of a priori themes and patterns |
| 5. What initiatives were undertaken as part of the reconstitution turnaround efforts at this school? How have teachers perceived these initiatives to have strengthened or weakened trust relationships in the school? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher interview notes • Teacher interview audio-recordings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcription of data • Member Checking • Coding of data • Description of a priori themes and patterns • Interpretation of a priori themes and patterns |

Ethical Considerations

This study was designed to minimize and anticipate risk for all human subjects involved. The responses of all participants will remain confidential. No individual names or identifying information were captured in surveys, assessment data, interviews, or in field notes. Parental consent was required for all former students that agreed to participate in this study. In advance of the study, details outlining all research procedures and safeguards were provided to participants. Each participant was informed that their participation was completely voluntary and that they were able to quit at any time. Given that the school of study is one of a limited number of middle schools approved by the school district for reconstitution in the summer of 2011, the name of the school district does not appear in the research. Pseudonyms were also used in this study to protect the privacy of all participants and the school.

The human-subjects protocol was followed in securing the necessary permission to conduct this research. This proposal and all consent forms were provided to the William & Mary Education Institutional Review Board for approval prior to engaging in the research. Appropriate permissions were also obtained in advance from the school district of the school of study.

Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations

Assumptions are factors in your research that are out of your control to a certain degree, but that are integral to your study (Simon, 2011). This study was intended to understand how student and parent perspectives of trust in teachers, and teacher perspectives of trust in students and parents influenced student achievement in an urban

middle school that experienced reconstitution. The study also investigated what actions of the principal were perceived by teachers to cultivate trust among the staff and other school constituents. Therefore, “trust” is assumed to play a notable role in student achievement and positive school outcomes. This theory is supported in the literature as school improvement has been linked to schools that establish high levels of trust (Cosner, 2009; Hoy, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Goddard et al., (2001) suggest that trust creates better learning environments for students, by possibly enabling and empowering productive connections between families and schools—they found that achievement is greater in schools when higher levels of trust is prevalent. This study used a mixed-methods case study approach, and relied on the participation of students, parents, faculty, and staff members, to aid in answering research questions. Therefore I assumed that the information provided by participants from surveys and interviews is reflective of their true and genuine perceptions.

This study is delimited to a single middle school in an urban school district. While meaningful data can be obtained in this investigation on trust and urban school achievement, the findings will not be generalizable to other schools and locations. Findings derived may be helpful in allowing those in similar environments to form connections based on similarities between the case study and their unique conditions. This study is also delimited by only examining trust as a factor of school achievement. The literature reveals a number of factors that influence student achievement and school improvement. I chose to focus on trust, as the need to understand social interactions in

schools is progressively becoming more recognized as an effective tool to enhance learning outcomes.

This study was limited due to the voluntary nature in which all participants were selected. Information obtained from interviews may be limited and skewed as no form of probability sampling was utilized to identify and select participants. The possibility exists that the views and perspectives of those that chose not to participate in this case study may differ greatly from those that did participate. It is also possible that the views of interview participants may differ from those that only participated in the survey portion of this study. The use of convenience sampling also limited this study, as there is a chance that the participants of the study were not sound representatives of the targeted population being investigated. This study was also limited by asking participants to recall events of the past. Details and information obtained from participants may be inaccurate as a significant length of time had passed since the events of this study originally transpired; the further you get away from the event the more difficult it may become to recall precise details and emotions experienced at the time.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this case study was to examine the dynamics and dimensions of trust as perceived by teachers, parents, and students in an urban middle school that experienced school reconstitution. Quantitative data were generated in this study by climate surveys and student achievement reports. Qualitative data were generated from interviews with teachers, parents, and students.

Extant data from three climate surveys designed to measure trust were used in this study to understand the levels of trust between student-teacher and parent-teacher: (1) Faculty Trust in Clients, (2) Student Trust Scale, and (3) Parent Trust in School Scale. All of the aforementioned surveys were administered under the direction of the principal in June of 2014.

Academic achievement is the chief goal of public education. Schoolwide reading and math results from 2007-2013 were used in this study to examine student achievement. The state assessment results used in this study allowed me to review common curricular data within the school longitudinally. However, due to factors concerning how the data were reported on the district website, I was unable to conduct the planned statistical tests of the achievement data provided in this study. As a result, I used the achievement data collected for this study to discuss trends and for the purpose of making comparisons.

Interviews with teachers, students, and parents in this study were conducted to examine the impact of trust in a reconstituted urban school. Interviews ranged in length from 30 to 90 minutes; with an average interview length of 55 minutes with teachers, and 30 minutes with students and parents. The findings of this study are presented in a format that addresses each of the research questions in numerical sequence.

All participants in this case study were selected utilizing purposive sampling. The data obtained from the climate surveys garnered responses from 28 staff members, 205 students, and 89 parents. Six teachers, three students, and three parents participated in the interviews conducted. Lastly, schoolwide student achievement data from the CAS Exam spanning school years 2007-2013 were obtained from the district website and from a contact working in the district's assessment department. Also, no identifying information was disclosed in this case study in order to protect the confidentiality of all participants and the school district.

Research Question 1: What is the trust level for student trust in teachers, parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents, in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff?

The mean scores and standard deviations for the data obtained from three climate surveys were used in this study to measure the perceptions of trust by participants. The level of student trust in teachers, parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents was measured at Madison in June 2014. Table 7 displays the range of standardized scores from 200-800 with 500 being the average. The scoring range

presented in Table 7 is used to measure the level of trust for all three climate surveys utilized in this study.

Table 7

Range of Standardized Scores

| Range of Standardized Scores |
|---|
| If the score is 200, it is lower than 99% of the schools |
| If the score is 300, it is lower than 97% of the schools |
| If the score is 400, it is lower than 84% of the schools |
| If the score is 500, it is average |
| If the score is 600, it is higher than 84% of the schools |
| If the score is 700, it is higher than 97% of the schools |
| If the score is 800, it is higher than 99% of the schools |

Level of Student Trust in Teachers

The level of student trust in teachers was measured in June 2014, using the Student Trust Scale. Table 8 reflects the standardized trust score for student trust in teachers at Madison. The grand mean was 3.405, with a standard deviation of 0.865, and a standardized score of 531, which places it above the mean of 500.

Table 8

Trust Level for Student Trust in Teachers

| Trust Variable | Range Minimum | Range Maximum | Grand Mean | SD | Standardized Score |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Student Trust in Teachers | 1 | 5 | 3.405 | 0.865 | 531 |

Note. Scale is 200-800 with a mean equal to 500. Standardized scoring scale follows normal distribution.

Level of Parent Trust in Teachers

The level of parent trust in teachers was measured in June 2014, using the Parent Trust in School Scale. Table 9 reflects the standardized trust score for parent trust in teachers at Madison. The grand mean was 3.808, with a standard deviation of 1.187, and a standardized score of 411, which places it nearly a full standard deviation below the mean of 500.

Table 9

Trust Level for Parent Trust in Teachers

| Trust Variable | Range Minimum | Range Maximum | Grand Mean | SD | Standardized Score |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Parent Trust in Teachers | 1 | 6 | 3.808 | 1.187 | 411 |

Note. Scale is 200-800 with a mean equal to 500. Standardized scoring scale follows normal distribution.

Level of Teacher Trust in Students and Parents

The level of teacher trust in students and parents was measured in June 2014, using the Faculty Trust in Clients Scale. Table 10 reflects the standardized trust score for teacher trust in students and parents at Madison. The grand mean was 3.190, with a

standard deviation of 1.076, and a standardized score of 451, which places it about a half a standard deviation below the mean of 500

Table 10

Trust Level for Teacher Trust in Students and Parents

| Trust Variable | Range Minimum | Range Maximum | Grand Mean | SD | Standardized Score |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Teacher Trust in Students and Parents | 1.44 | 6 | 3.190 | 1.076 | 451 |

Note. Scale is 200-800 with a mean equal to 500. Standardized scoring scale follows normal distribution.

Research Question 2: How have student achievement scores changed during the four years prior to reconstitution and the three years following reconstitution?

Student Achievement Results

Research Question 2 examined student achievement scores in reading and math to understand how the school performed on the state assessment before and after the 2011 reconstitution. Student achievement scores are expressed in four levels: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. Scores in the proficient and advanced levels are considered passing. In this section, I provide data indicating the passing percentages of the school and reporting groups from 2007 to 2013. However, I did not include the data from the African American and Free and Reduced Student reporting groups, as they were essentially the same as the data reported in the Schoolwide Results section.

The data obtained from the district’s assessment website were void of the raw student data and did not include the number of test takers that scored at each level of proficiency, therefore, it was not possible to calculate selected descriptive statistics (such

as standard deviation or inferential statistics. As a result, I discuss trends observed in the data and made comparisons of the range of results before and after the reconstitution, but I refrain from making any statistical claims. The test results did, however, provide noteworthy and insightful information worthy of discussion.

Figures 1 and 2 provide the passing percentages in reading and math of all students tested. The stacked column reflects the percentages of students scoring at proficient and advanced. The vertical dotted line represents when the reconstitution took effect, while the horizontal line at the top of the chart indicates the proficiency targets needed to meet AYP.

The school failed to meet the proficiency targets in reading and math for the seven years observed in this study. The schoolwide percent of students passing the reading portion of the state test remained essentially unchanged over the period observed. The passing percentage in reading ranged from 10-33% before the reconstitution, and from four to 35% after the reconstitution. However the number of students passing the math portion of the assessment improved noticeably after the reconstitution. Prior to the reconstitution, the passing range was from 10-33%. The passing percent increased after the reconstitution with pass rates ranging from 6-56%. Also in math, a few grade levels performed much better after the reconstitution when comparing passing percentages. The seventh grade in 2011, eighth grade in 2012, and eighth grade in 2013, outperformed all grade levels in any year prior to the reconstitution. Sixth grade students however performed better in reading before the reconstitution took place.

There was one noticeable trend that took place in both reading and math after the reconstitution that I found noteworthy. Sixth grade students consistently scored much lower than their seventh and eighth grade counterparts; the variance is very apparent in Figures 1 and 2. This particular disparity may result from students beginning the sixth grade distinctly behind in the content areas of reading and math. The higher passing percentages reflected by seventh and eighth grade students may be attributed to the school’s instructional practices and learning strategies. These data may suggest that it takes the school one year to address learner deficiencies and to improve the student achievement outcomes of incoming sixth grade students.

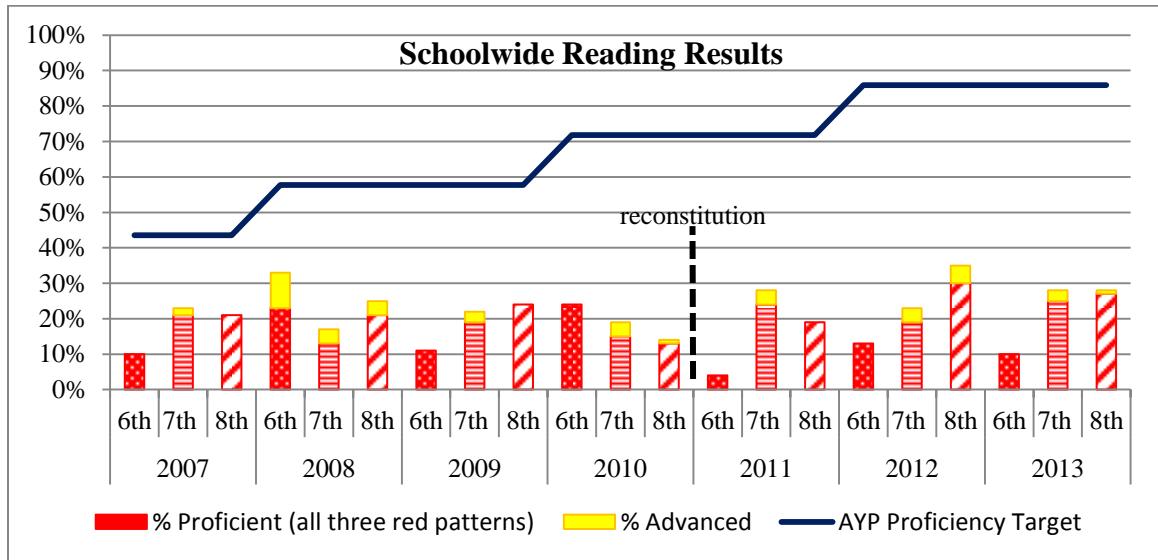


Figure 1. Schoolwide Reading Results for All Students

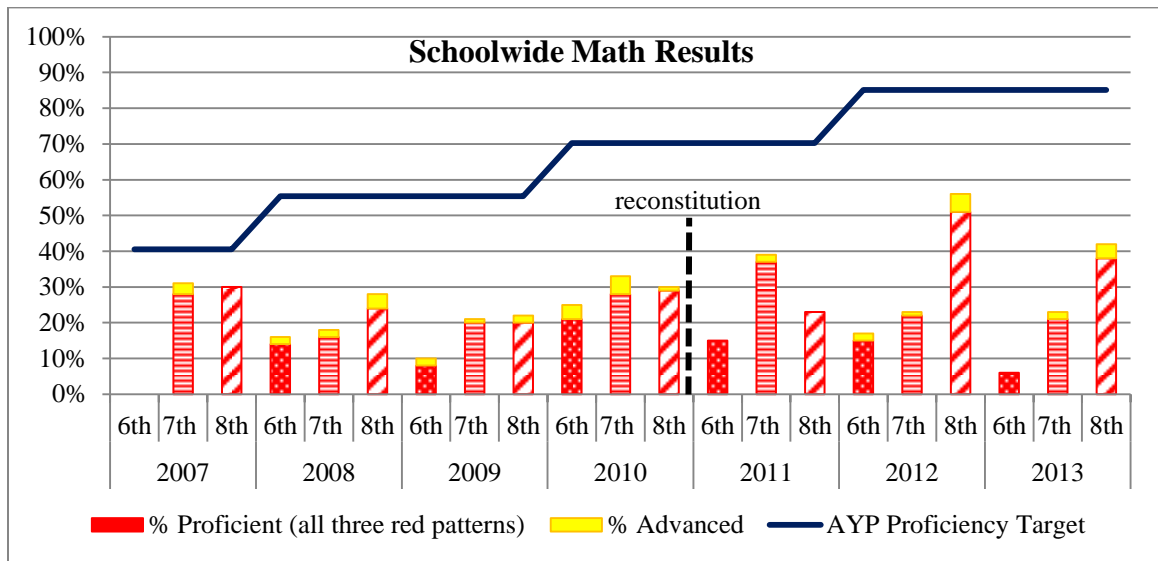


Figure 2. Schoolwide Math Results for All Students

Figures 3 and 4 reflect the testing results of Special Education students in reading and math. The mean percentage of students classified as Special Education over the seven year period observed was 28% of the total population. The mean percent of students classified as Special Education decreased after the reconstitution from 32% to 24%. This reporting group failed to meet the AYP proficiency targets over the seven years observed. Passing percentages for special education students noticeably decreased after the reconstitution in reading and math. Based on the data, the reconstitution may have had an adverse effect on the performance outcomes of special education students.

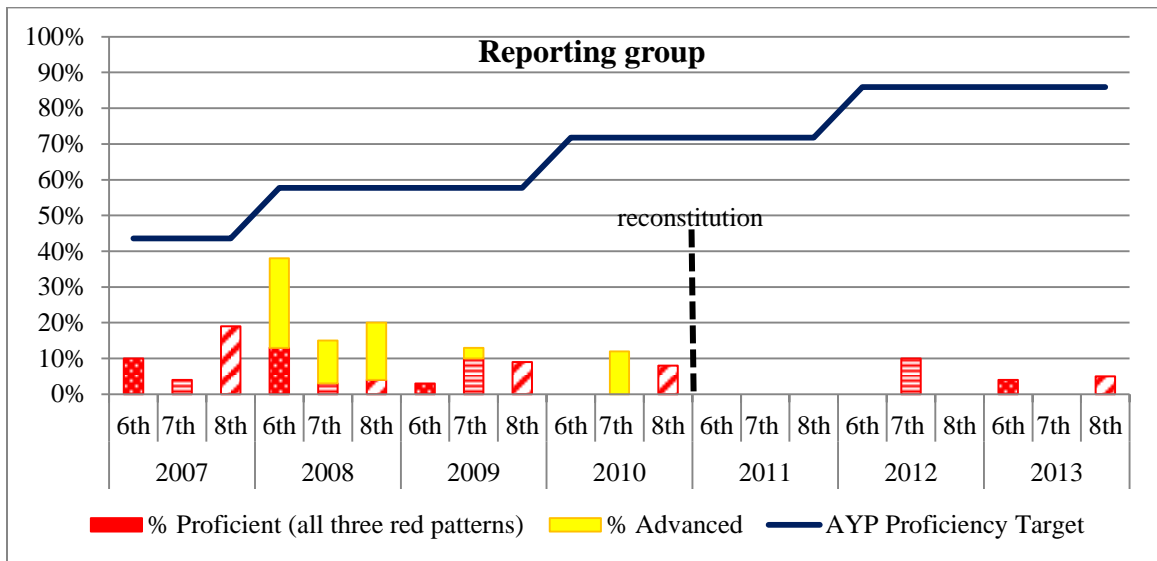


Figure 3. Reading Results for Special Education Student Reporting Group

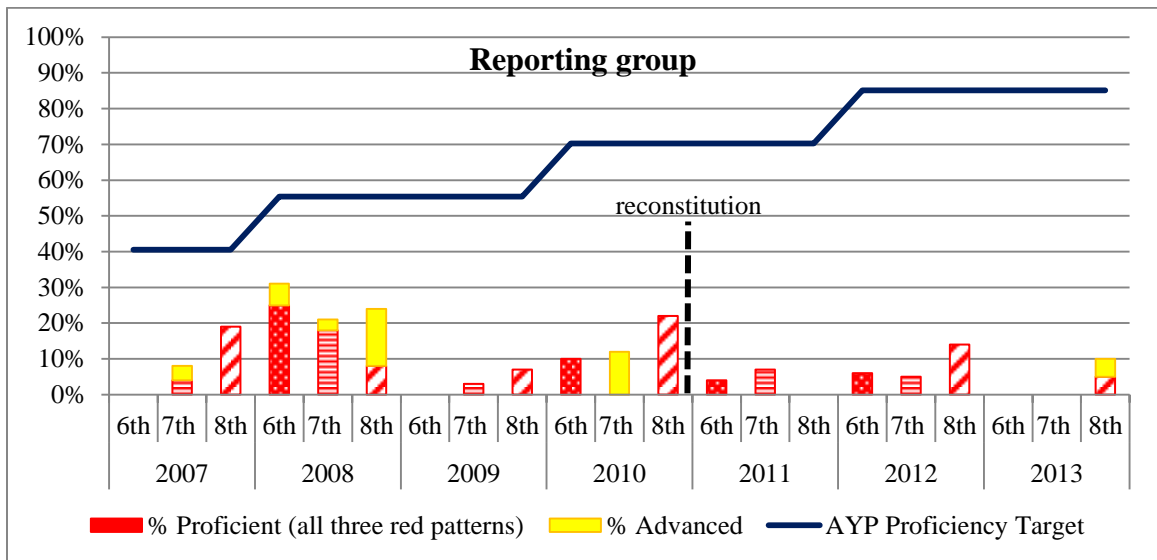


Figure 4. Math Results for Special Education Student Reporting Group

Figures 5 and 6 reflect the Male reporting group. For the 7 years observed in this study, 46% of the testing population was male. The male population did not meet the proficiency targets in reading or math for the period observed. The range of male students passing the reading portion of the exam was lower after the reconstitution than before the

reconstitution. The passing percentage in reading for male test takers ranged from 1137% before the reconstitution and from 29% after the reconstitution. Reading scores after the reconstitution did improve as grade levels progressed. For all years observed after the reconstitution, seventh grade students outperformed sixth grade students, and eighth grade students outperformed seventh grade students within each tested year. This could suggest a positive correlation between reading outcomes and enrollment; the longer a male student remains at the school, the better he performs on the reading exam.

The range of male students passing the math portion of the exam was higher after the reconstitution than before the reconstitution. The passing percentage in math for male test takers ranged from 9-40% before the reconstitution and from 4-56% after the reconstitution. However the 56% of eighth grade males that passed the exam in 2012 appeared to be an outlier when compared to the rest of the data in Figure 6. The eighth grade passing percentage decreased by 21% the following school year in 2013. This could suggest that eighth grade students performed better in math in 2012 due to the academic ability of that particular cohort, and not necessarily as a result of reconstitution initiatives and plans.

It is interesting to note is that sixth grade males performed better each tested period in reading before the reconstitution than in any tested period after the reconstitution in that same subject.

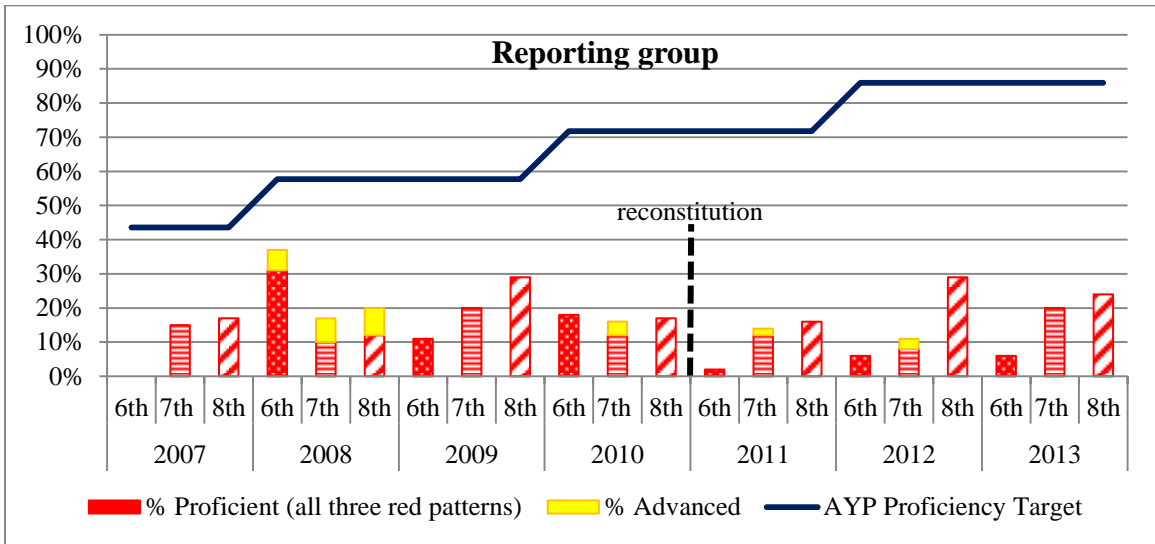


Figure 5. Reading Results for Male Student Reporting Group

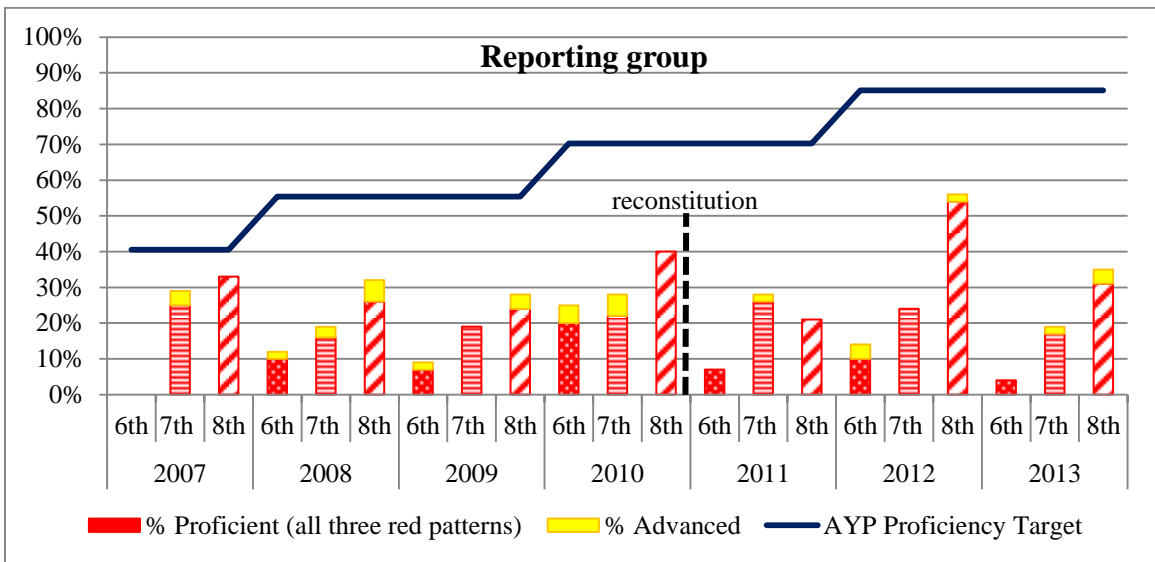


Figure 6. Math Results for Male Student Reporting Group

Figures 7 and 8 reflect the Female reporting group. For the 7 years observed in this study, 54% of all test takers were female. The number of female students tested in 2007 did not qualify as a reporting group in reading or math. As a result, no data were recorded in 2007 for sixth grade in Figures 7 and 8. The female population did not meet

the proficiency targets in reading or math for the period observed. However, the range of passing percentages increased in both subjects after the reconstitution. The passing percentage in reading ranged from 11-32% before the reconstitution and from 6-44% after the reconstitution. In math, the passing percentage ranged from 11-41% before the reconstitution and from 9-56% after the reconstitution.

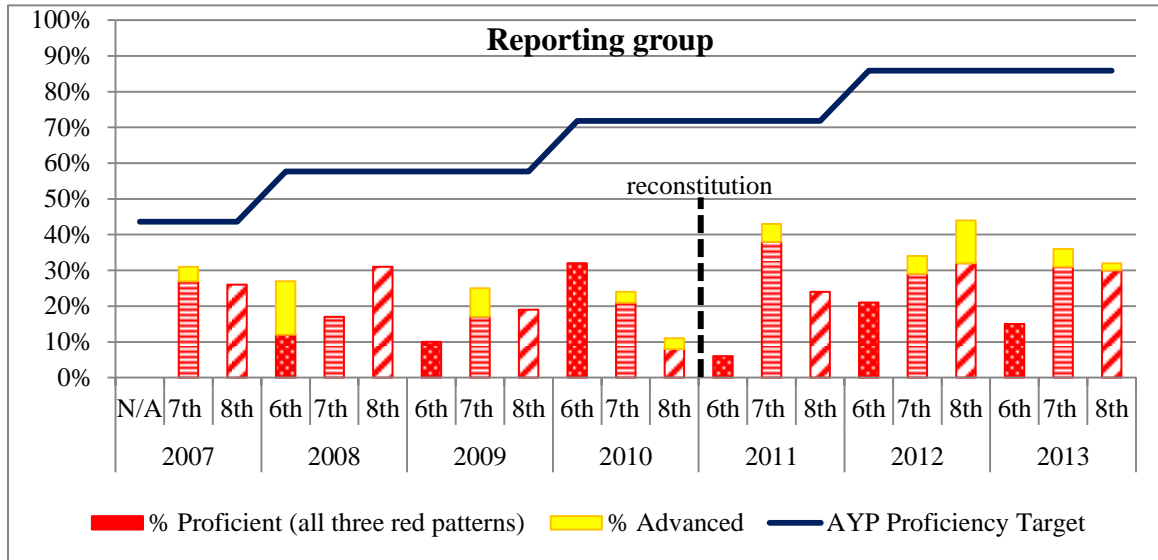


Figure 7. Reading Results for Female Student Reporting Group

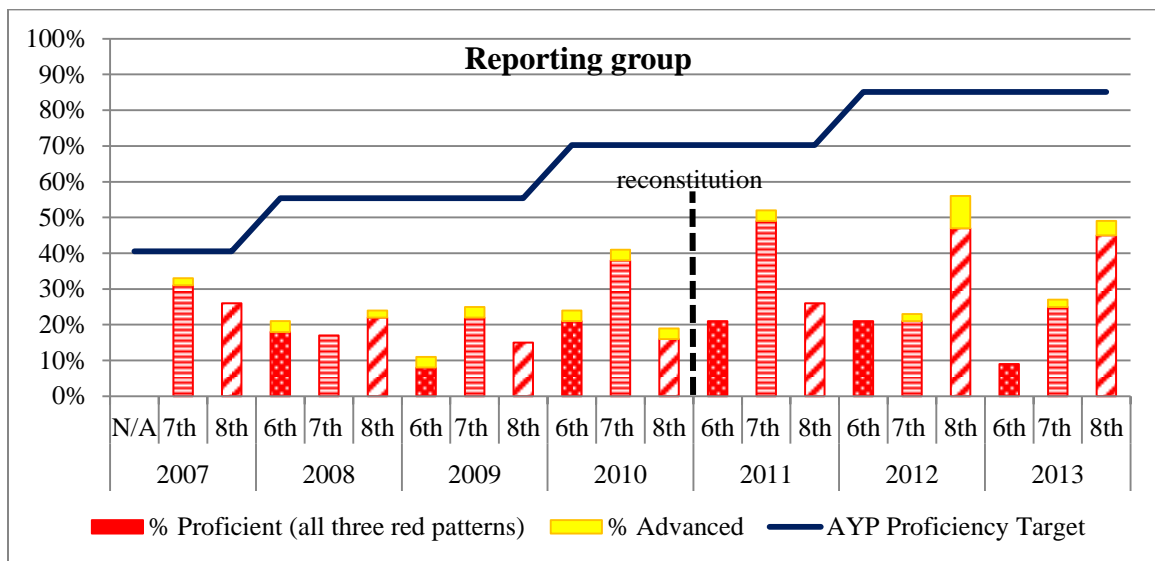


Figure 8. Math Results for Female Student Reporting Group

Figures 9 and 10 reflect the testing performance of two distinct cohorts from Grades 6-8. The 2008 cohort charts the 3-year class performance in reading and math prior to the reconstitution, while the 2011 cohort reflects the 3-year testing performance for the group that started after the reconstitution. Neither cohort met the reading and math proficiency targets over the period observed.

The 2008 cohort experienced a 3-year decline in reading decreasing from 33% proficient and advanced in 2008 to 14% in 2010. The reverse was true for the 2011 cohort. This group experienced an increase each school year improving from 4% in 2011 to 28% in 2013, with the most noticeable increase taking place between sixth and seventh grade. Although the 2011 cohort failed to meet AYP over the period observed, the data revealed a slight upward trend in math and reading for the 3 years observed.

The passing percentages for both 2008 and 2011 cohorts increased each year in math. The 2008 cohort increased from 16% of students performing at proficient or

advanced in Grade 6 to 30% in Grade 8. The increase for the 2011 cohort was more substantial increasing from 15% in Grade 6 to 42% passing in Grade 8.

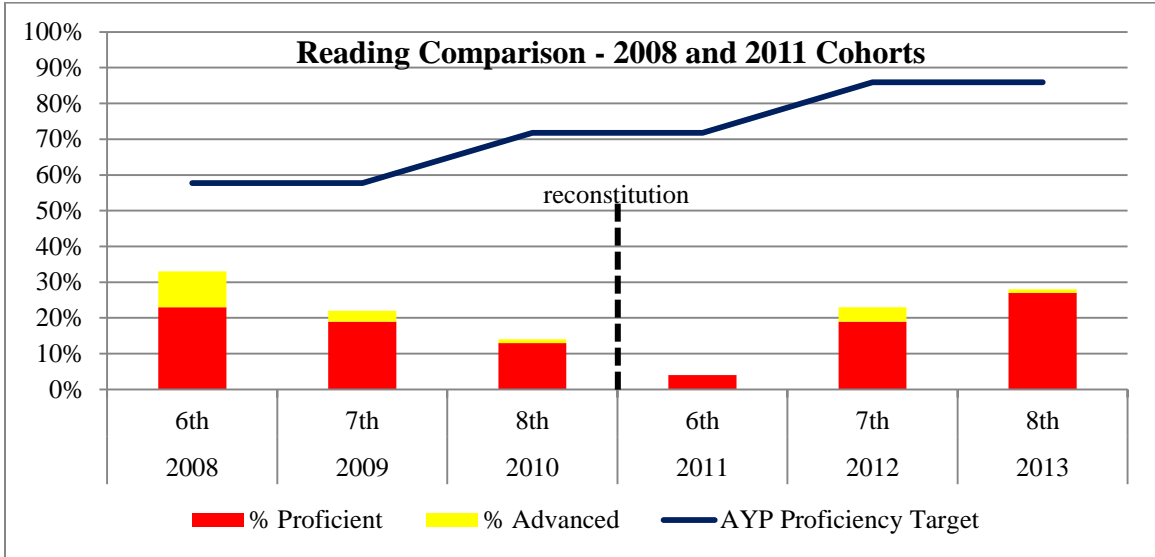


Figure 9. 2008 and 2011 Reading Cohort Comparison

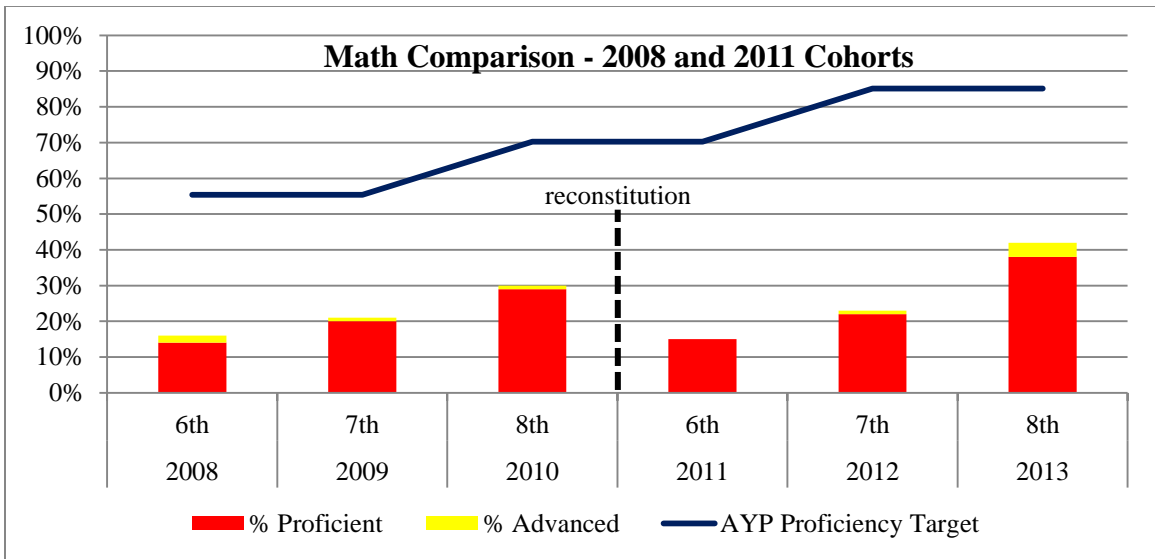


Figure 10. 2008 and 2011 Math Cohort Comparison

Figures 11 and 12 reflect the testing results of two distinct cohorts after the school reconstituted in 2011. Figure 11 shows Grades 7-8 test results in reading and math for the

2010 starting cohort. I did not include Grade 6 testing information due to it being generated before the school reconstituted. The 2010 cohort experienced an increase of 7% in reading and 17% in math between Grades 7-8. Figure 12 shows Grades 6-7 test results in reading and math for the 2012 starting cohort. Grade 8 testing information is not included due to it being generated outside of the 7 year testing period observed in this study from 2007-2013. The 2012 cohort experienced an increase of 15% in reading and 9% in math between Grades 6-7. However, both cohorts still fell significantly short of meeting AYP for the periods observed.

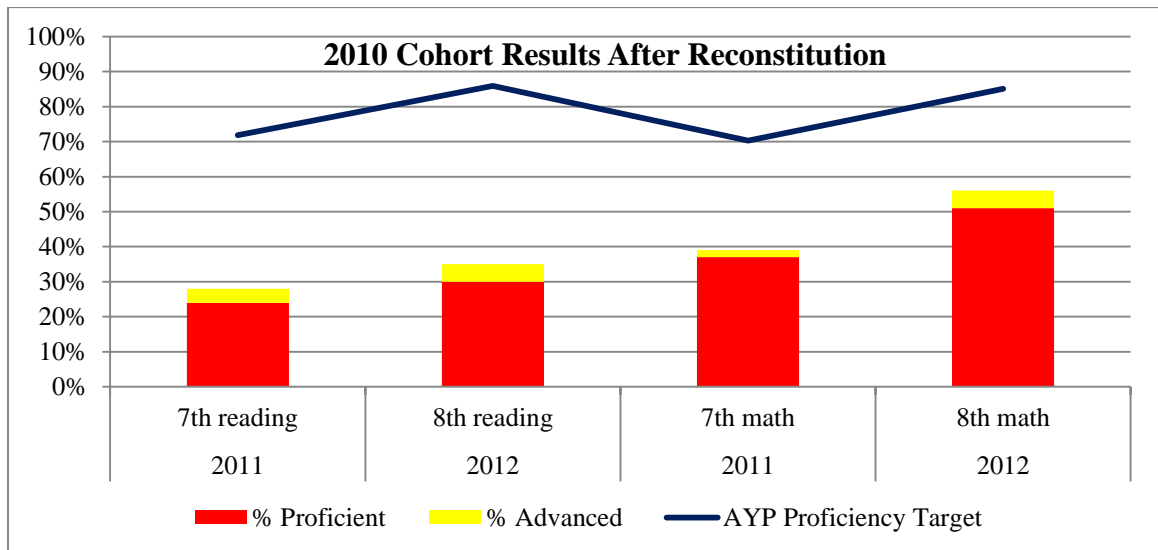


Figure 11. 2010 Cohort Results After Reconstitution

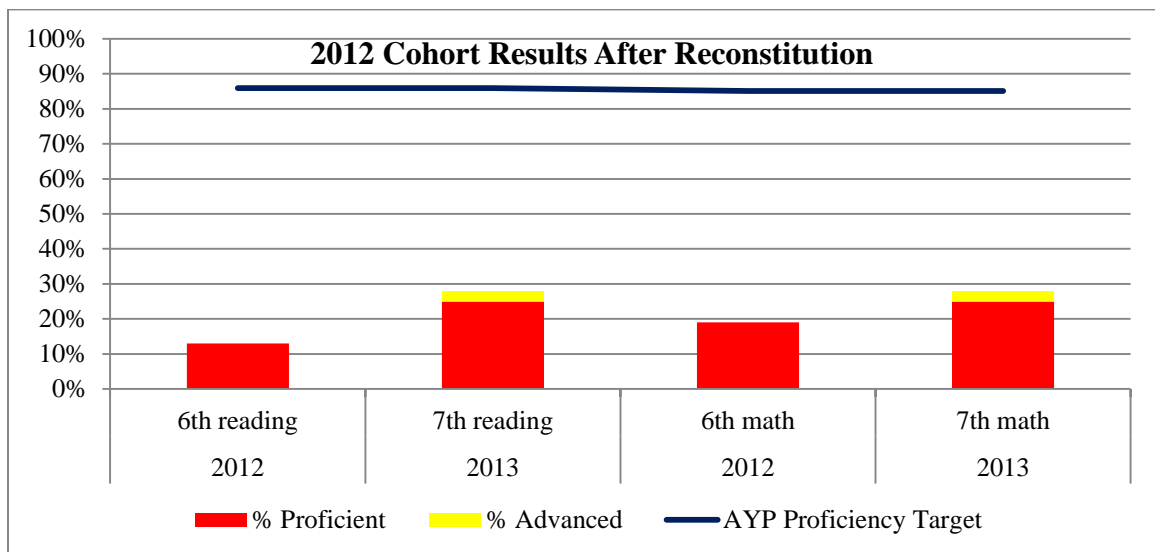


Figure 12. 2012 Cohort Results After Reconstitution

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions of teachers, former students and former parents that experienced school reconstitution regarding the level of trust before and after reconstitution?

Interview responses indicated that trust was perceived to have improved after the reconstitution by teachers, parents, and to some degree students. Student trust in teachers appeared to be influenced more by their familiarity with faculty members than other behaviors and personal qualities. Principal Allen was mentioned throughout the interviews as the catalyst behind the improved levels of trust experienced at Madison. Although Principal Allen replaced Principal Nin (pseudonym), as school leader one year before the reconstitution at the start of the 2010 school year, comments about his leadership from participants are discussed in the after reconstitution section. Interviewees mentioned that the procedures put in place by Principal Allen to address the

reconstitution resulted in perceptions of improved student outcomes and a greater sense of trust between teachers, parents, and students.

Perceptions of Trust Before Reconstitution

Using the five-facet model of trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000) to understand the perceptions of trust prior to the reconstitution revealed some commonalities and themes from the interviews conducted with teachers, parents, and students. These themes are reflected below in Table 11. Interviews conducted in October and November of 2015, revealed that the perceptions of trust held by constituents were lower before the school reconstitution.

Table 11

Key Findings Regarding Teacher, Student, and Parent Trust Prior to Reconstitution

| Participant | Key Findings |
|--------------------|--|
| Teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All indicated that they trusted the previous faculty. • All indicated that they trusted parents and their students. • All reported a high percent of student discipline issues. • Five teachers perceived that Principal Nin lacked the competency needed to improve achievement. • Five teachers expressed that they were not supportive of school leadership. • Four teachers mentioned that a number of the teachers in place prior to the reconstitution perceived that students had too many environmental challenges to overcome to be successful academically. • Four teachers perceived that the school leadership team did not work cohesively. • Four teachers perceived communication from school leadership to be inadequate under the previous administration. • Three teachers perceived that the leadership under Principal Nin did not provide appropriate direction and guidance. • Three teachers indicated limited collaboration working with colleagues. • Responses indicated low schoolwide morale and climate. • Responses indicated a lack of accountability. |
| Parents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All perceived the teachers to be nice. • All indicated they that trusted the teachers. • All perceived that the school lacked student discipline and order. • All perceived that the school was not very accessible and welcoming to them. • All perceived that the communication with them from the school was insufficient. • One parent was not supportive of Principal Nin. |
| Students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All commented that they cared for their teachers. • All perceived the teachers before the reconstitution to be nice. • All indicated that student conduct was a concern. • Two students indicated that classwork was not very rigorous and challenging. • Based on responses, student trust in teachers appeared to be influenced by familiarity determined by the length of time they have spent with teachers. |

As I listened to interview participants provide their accounts of Madison before the reconstitution; it became apparent that a number of issues described stemmed from practices and procedures that led to low morale and a negative school culture. A number of the concerns included in Table 11 can be attributed to school culture. A number of factors associated with poor school culture and climate were mentioned by interviewees and said to have an unfavorable effect on student achievement and trusting relationships.

Five teachers and one parent interviewed faulted the previous principal, Mr. Nin for the schools poor climate and past performance failures. A teacher commented further on the climate and culture of the school prior to reconstitution.

Before our school was reconstituted, the morale of everyone was noticeably low. I would say that the majority of staff, parents, and students didn't care to be at Madison; everyone seemed unhappy. Personally it was a chore to get out of bed every day, as I really didn't enjoy coming to work. I enjoyed my students for the most part; however the work environment was challenging to say the least. No one seemed to be in good spirits.

Interdependence

Some interdependent relationships appeared to be strained prior to the school reconstitution. Four teachers commented that a number of teachers in place before the reconstitution believed that students could not be successful due to the impact of contributing environmental factors outside of school. All three parents interviewed expressed that they did not feel welcomed by the school. One parent specifically noted that she felt as if the teachers did not want her visiting the classroom at any time and that she was viewed as a disruption. Trust in the previous school leader also appeared to be an area of trepidation. One teacher commented further on the relationship between teachers and the previous principal.

There was no clear direction provided by the school leader. It was as if each individual was in charge of determining his or her goals. As you can imagine, this resulted in a lack of continuity. Imagine a school where teachers and the school

administrator were doing their own separate thing to bring forth student achievement. It would be chaos and chaos is exactly what we had. If there was one thing that was consistent before the reconstitution it was chaos. It is difficult to establish trust when you feel that you are in it by yourself.

Benevolence Before Reconstitution

Each teacher interviewed specifically commented that they trusted colleagues, students, and parents before the reconstitution. Students and parents specifically commented that they trusted teachers before the reconstitution. Trust, however, was not extended to the previous school leader by some teacher and parent participants who considered Principal Nin to be untrustworthy.

Teacher, parents, and students all expressed concern regarding student conduct. Two teachers and two parents interviewed associated the school's lack of student discipline with a lack of concern for their personal regard and interests. In this section, I will report the perceptions of benevolence from teachers, parents, and students interviewed in this study.

Teachers' perceptions of the facet of benevolence before reconstitution. Each teacher interviewed spoke positively of the relationships they had with colleagues before the school reconstituted. One teacher mentioned that all of the teachers in place before the reconstitution wanted what was best for students. There were no responses derived from the interviews that would suggest otherwise. However, four participants mentioned that a number of faculty members did not believe that students could be successful in school due to circumstances outside of their control—I found this interesting. They

communicated that many of the former teachers conveyed a sense of hopelessness and frustration; that it was not plausible for their students to achieve at high levels. One respondent commented that it was a belief that there was little that could be done to improve student achievement as many of the students were grossly behind at the start of sixth grade. She continued by stating that the objective of student achievement appeared to center more on students passing to ninth grade than meeting educational standards. She expressed that teachers didn't believe that the school had a realistic chance to achieve AYP under NCLB.

The majority of teachers interviewed expressed that Mr. Nin did not appear to have high regard for their best interest or the interest of the school and students. Five teachers mentioned that they did not feel supported by Mr. Nin and faulted him for the schools past academic failures. One teacher expressed that the principal was primarily concerned with teachers maintaining classroom control; and that very little emphasis was placed on teaching and learning. There also seemed to be very little accountability placed on teachers by the school leadership—this struck me as odd since Madison had already been placed under corrective action by the school district prior to reconstituting. None of the teachers interviewed mentioned how they were held accountable, or expected to be held accountable for student achievement outcomes. Four teachers referenced that they felt isolated by the leadership team in place under Principal Nin. One respondent disclosed that she felt stagnant and overwhelmed prior to the reconstitution. Interview responses lead me to believe that instructional accountability was hampered by the inability of the past administration to provide appropriate direction to teachers. Three

teachers commented that school leaders were primarily concerned with maintaining order and not achievement. Based on interviews, three teachers expressed a lack of clarity of what was required of them from school leadership.

Parents' perceptions of the facet of benevolence before reconstitution. Of the three parent participants, two had children that enrolled at Madison one year before the reconstitution; the other parent had a child at the school two years before the reconstitution. Each parent interviewed expressed that they did not feel welcomed at Madison before the reconstitution. One parent mentioned that the school did not want to be bothered with parents. Another stated that her concerns often went unanswered or resolved causing her to believe that the school did not care about her particular needs. One parent referred to the previous principal as being distant and somewhat withdrawn from school operations. She commented further on Principal Nin.

Whenever I would come to Madison I would never see the principal. I would see the assistant principals but never the principal. It's as if he didn't work there. In my opinion he did a lackluster job. Children were constantly getting into trouble and fighting. I don't think that a good principal would have allowed this to take place in his school. He truly didn't come across as if he cared. I am not placing all of the blame on him. I also fault the parents for not disciplining their children. But I do believe that he could have done a better job.

Student conduct appeared to be a major concern of parents prior to the reconstitution. Each parent interviewed expressed that the school lacked student discipline. One parent described the school as a place where students and not the staff

were in charge. She commented that a few bad apples could spoil the entire bunch and that appeared to be what was taking place at Madison. She believed at the time that nothing could be done to curb student behavior and bring about order. She commented further on the schools ability to keep her child safe from harm.

The students were out of control. Some of them should not have been in school. They didn't come to school to learn; many of them seemed to come to school to start trouble. It's hard to do your best with this going on. I don't know why they were allowed to stay. There were a lot of fights and students doing whatever they wanted to do. I felt sorry for the teachers trying to teach them; they had it tough. This can't happen in school. If we carried on like that when I was in school they would have kicked us out.

Students' perceptions of the facet of benevolence before reconstitution. Three students participated in interviews. One student was present when Mr. Nin was principal, while the other two started the same year as Principal Allen. Each student commented that they had a positive relationship with their teachers before the reconstitution and found them to be helpful. One of the three students used the word "respectful" to describe the teachers in place before the reconstitution. This particular student commented further on the relationship with teachers prior to the reconstitution.

I liked all of my teachers; I cannot think of one teacher that I had a problem with. I liked how they spent a lot of time talking to us about life, and telling us how to keep ourselves out of trouble. They were all very nice and treated us with a lot of respect.

Although students mentioned that they cared for their teachers prior to the reconstitution; comments were made concerning the actions of teachers that were contrary to the behaviors teachers should demonstrate when attempting to establish a sense of benevolence. Two students commented that teachers did not appear to be committed to their academic success. They perceived some teachers as not putting forth a sufficient level of effort required for students to achieve at high levels. One student commented that he was often given work that he believed was intended to just keep him quiet—he mentioned that the work was so easy that he seldom asked for help. Another student commented further on instructional practices.

The old teachers did not spend as much time working with us to make sure that we understood everything that was being taught. They would give us our assignments and we would pass them in at the end of the day; that was about it. The new teachers would review all work turned in with us before the class was dismissed; all of the new teachers did this.

As with teachers and parents, student conduct and school discipline was also a concern of students. Issues around conduct garnered the most in-depth responses from students. Although the interview protocol contained no questions concerning school discipline—each student participant felt compelled to broach the subject matter. One student commented that students were always getting into trouble and that they refused to listen to teachers. One student commented further on student conduct before the school reconstitution.

Fights took place throughout my time at Madison, but mostly during sixth and seventh grades before the new teachers arrived; it was crazy. Students fought over everything every day—it was scary.

Reliability Before Reconstitution

In the interviews conducted with parents and students, nothing noteworthy was shared or implied that provided insight to how they viewed the reliability or lack of reliability by other school constituents prior to the reconstitution. However a number of teachers interviewed did make comments concerning the reliability of the school's leadership prior to the hiring of Principal Allen.

Teacher's perceptions of reliability. Three of the six teachers interviewed spoke of inconsistencies that they observed under the leadership of Principal Nin. One teacher commented that the leadership consistently provided misinformation that made her job challenging. She said that she would be told do one thing from one assistant principal, and something completely different by the school's other assistant principal. She commented, "this created a lot of confusion, I never knew who to believe or who was right." Another teacher mentioned something similar, stating, "the school had too many generals with their own marching orders running the school." This particular respondent commented that she very seldom asked the school leadership for help because she viewed it as a waste of time. She said that she felt more comfortable asking colleagues for direction than the principal. When I asked did she find the school's leadership before the reconstitution to be helpful, she stated, "they were not helpful at all when it came to helping with my classroom needs." Lastly, it was mentioned by one teacher, "if you

asked four administrators the same question, you would likely get four different answers.” She found establishing trust with the previous school leadership to be challenging as a result of their apparent inconsistencies and messaging.

Competence Before Reconstitution

In this study, the abilities of the previous principal to perform his job effectively were questioned by some teacher and parent respondents. In addition to comments made regarding the competency of school leadership, a few students expressed some concern as it related to the instructional capacity of teachers present before the school reconstituted. In this section, I will report the perceptions of competence before the reconstitution from teachers, parents, and students interviewed in this study.

Teachers’ perceptions of the facet of competence before reconstitution.

Teachers questioned the professional acumen and ability of Principal Nin. Five teachers expressed very little trust in the competency of the leader. One teacher mentioned that the principal was unfit to effectively lead Madison through the process of school turnaround; stating that he did not have the skillset to successfully navigate a school through academic turmoil. Another teacher commented that Principal Nin had no clue of what was needed to improve student achievement. Two others mentioned that he did little to boost achievement. When asked about the leadership of the previous principal, teachers often described him as being unable to provide clear “direction” and appropriate levels of “support.” Another respondent commented further on the leadership capacity of the previous administration.

I believe that the previous administration struggled to lay out a clear mission and vision. As a result we did not have a clear plan of action. I can honestly say that everyone wanted the best for our students prior to the reconstitution; however I believe that we were focused on the wrong things. We spent a lot of time addressing discipline issues and trying to control students. However I think that if our administration would have had a clear plan of action that it would have resulted in a decreased number of student referrals. First you decide where you want to go—then you put a plan into action.

Parents’ perceptions of the facet of competence before reconstitution. The one parent familiar with Principal Nin stated that she didn’t perceive him “qualified” to effectively run the school. She mentioned that he “didn’t know what he was doing” in her opinion. She added that he didn’t “have any business running a school with all of the problems associated with Madison at that time.”

Students’ perceptions of the facet of competence before the reconstitution. Two of the three students interviewed made comments in reference to the competency of teachers prior to the reconstitution. The comments made suggested that students might have held some negative perceptions of the instructional abilities of some teachers. One student said, “they may not have been the best teachers, but they were nice.” While another commented, “as far as teaching goes, some could have been better.”

Honesty Before Reconstitution

In this study, references concerning the facet of honesty were mostly focused on Principal Allen and appear in the after reconstitution section. Interviewees did not share anything noteworthy that provided insight to the honesty or lack of honesty towards any other individuals or groups prior to the reconstitution.

Openness Before Reconstitution

Communication appeared to be an area of concern before the reconstitution for both teachers and parents. There didn't appear to be a formal process in place for teachers and parents to communicate based on interview responses. The concerns regarding the level of openness experienced at Madison appeared to be limited to teachers and parents. There were no comments made by students that provided insight or perspective to how they viewed the level of openness at Madison prior to reconstitution. In this section, I will report the perceptions of openness before the reconstitution from teachers and parents interviewed.

Teachers' perceptions of the facet of openness before reconstitution.

Interviews revealed a perceived lack of communication extended from school leaders to teachers. Four of the six teachers interviewed expressed that communication was ineffective under the administration of Principal Nin. Interviewees indicated that they were often not clear why they were asked to engage in tasks they perceived ineffective. Two teachers noted specifically that you couldn't always trust that the information coming from school leaders was accurate. While another participant mentioned that the lack of clarity coming from school leaders made her job "more difficult than it had to

be.” According to two respondents, the principal seldom addressed teachers directly. Another respondent commented that his lack of involvement and communication was the catalyst for the school’s inability to achieve at acceptable levels. She continued by stating that it was difficult to develop a good relationship with him due to his limited involvement. Strained communications was not limited to teacher-principal interaction. Teachers also expressed concerns in communicating with colleagues and parents before the reconstitution. One respondent stated that the majority of her interaction with parents was dominated by negative phone calls home. Communication between colleagues also appeared to be less than ideal before the reconstitution. Two teachers mentioned that their levels of trust were impacted by the lack of time spent working and planning with one another.

Parents’ perceptions of the facet of openness before reconstitution. Parents interviewed about the school prior to the reconstitution expressed concern over the school’s lack of communication. All interviewees shared negative comments as it concerned the school communicating with parents. Based on responses, parents were most troubled by the lack of contact with teachers and staff. Parents held a perception that teachers didn’t put fourth sufficient effort in contacting them. One respondent commented that the teachers did a poor job of contacting parents. Another commented that she rarely heard from the majority of her son’s teachers outside of parent teacher conferences. One respondent commented further on the school’s communication with parents.

The old teachers didn't reach out to me too often. I was always contacting them. They wouldn't contact me even if it was for something important. At least my daughter's elementary school would send a note home. That is my main bone to pick with the old teachers. They didn't call and the school didn't send home any notes. You had to be Sherlock Holmes to figure out what was going on with your own child at school.

Perceptions of Trust After Reconstitution

Table 12 below reflects the themes that emerged from interviews conducted with teachers, parents, and students on their perceptions of trust after the reconstitution. Responses indicated that trust is perceived to have improved at Madison after the implementation of the school reconstitution.

Table 12

Key Findings Regarding Teacher, Student, and Parent Trust After Reconstitution

| Participant | Key Findings |
|--------------------|--|
| Teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All perceived the reconstitution plans implemented to have been successful. • All perceived that the principal was responsible for the success of the reconstitution efforts due to deliberate planning, enhanced collaboration, and creating an educational environment conducive of learning • Communication was perceived by five teachers to have improved between school leadership and teachers, and also between the school and parents and students • Trust in parents was perceived by five teachers to improve after the reconstitution • Five teachers perceived trust with students improved • Four teachers indicated that they felt more prepared to facilitate learning after the reconstitution. • Three teachers indicated that they began to rely more on one another to meet objectives as a result of the reconstitution. • Three teachers indicated that part of the reconstitution plan included creating positive relationships with teachers and students. • Responses indicated that collegial trust was perceived to improve as a result of the increased time spent together in various school planning forums working collaboratively. Responses also indicated that collegial trust improved as a result of having a unified commitment to improve student learning outcomes. |
| Parents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All perceived that communication between parents and teachers improved. • All perceived student conduct improved. • All perceived that school resources improved. • All trusted the teachers. • All trusted the principal. • All perceived that reconstitution had not impacted how parents established trust with teachers and school leaders. • All perceived the new teachers to be more effective and viewed them as more qualified than the previous faculty. • Responses indicated that parents perceived the reconstitution to be effective • Responses indicated that parents held a more favorable view of teachers after the reconstitution. |
| Students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All indicated that they had trust in their teachers. However one student stated that she trusted the teachers before the reconstitution more because she was more familiar with them. • All held favorable perceptions of teachers and found them helpful. • Responses indicated that all perceived that discipline improved after the reconstitution. All also mentioned that there were fewer student altercations. • All perceived teachers to be more concerned with their academic success after the reconstitution. • All perceived that the activities and programs improved after the reconstitution. • All perceived teachers to be more effective after the reconstitution. • All perceived that they learned more after reconstitution. • Two students perceived that the work was more rigorous after the reconstitution. |

Trust was perceived to be higher among teachers, parents, and students after the school reconstitution. The need to quickly turnaround the academic performance of the school appeared to unite staff, parents, and students. Throughout the interviews, all made comments about the need for the school to improve. The focus on academic improvement among staff, parents, and teachers appeared to have spawned from the efforts of the principal. Many respondents credited him with establishing a sense of urgency for the school to show academic improvement. One parent mentioned that Principal Allen was the first principal to communicate how she could help her daughter improve by reviewing performance data with her child. A student participant mentioned that the principal held a monthly assembly with students to review test data and to establish performance goals. After the reconstitution, relationships among school constituents appeared to improve. Five teachers indicated that they enjoyed a better relationship with parents and students, while each parent participant commented that relationships with teachers improved after the reconstitution. Lastly, the school appeared to embrace a more collaborative working relationship with teachers, parents, and students after the reconstitution. Four teachers interviewed expressed that the improved levels of trust resulted in support of the reconstitution initiatives and plans.

It is interesting to note that none of the parents interviewed believed that the school reconstitution impacted the manner in which they established trust with teachers and school leaders. All three parents commented that nothing changed in the manner in which they sought to foster relationships with the principal and teachers after the reconstitution.

Benevolence After Reconstitution

Teachers, parents, and students all made comments signifying an improvement in the level of personal regard extended to one another after the reconstitution. Principal Allen appeared to be the catalyst influencing this particular change. Three teachers mentioned that the principal dedicated significant time in leading conversations and plans that played a significant part in the improved relationships perceived to take place at Madison. In this section, I will report the perceptions of benevolence after the reconstitution from teachers, parents, and students interviewed.

Teachers' perceptions of the facet of benevolence after reconstitution. The single biggest factor that appeared to influence the regard teachers had in others can be contributed to working in cooperation with others to improve academic achievement. Working collaboratively was often mentioned as a positive resulting from the reconstitution. Four teachers referenced how they shared best practices and instructional strategies with colleagues more often after the reconstitution. Three specifically noted how the levels of trust improved among faculty due to sharing ideas, resources, and materials. One teacher commented that the school had a common expectation that all students would learn. She expressed having a feeling that all eyes were on Madison to see how the school would respond after the reconstitution. She stated that the reconstitution unified the staff, and that they were committed to showing the district and stakeholders that they were capable of realizing the results needed. According to three teachers, getting on the same page was intentional and part of the reconstitution plan. She stated that it would be impossible to meet objectives in such a large undertaking if the faculty

and staff were fragmented and unsupportive. Respondents also commented that the principal spoke at length at the need to improve student achievement; referring to it as his number one priority going into the school year. One teacher mentioned that the principal was very strategic in how the reconstitution would support student learning by developing trusting relationships with students and parents. Another respondent commented that the school's success concerning the reconstitution lived in its commitment to instruction. He stated that the school's overall focus on instruction and learning were paramount to the advancement in the level of benevolence experienced among the faculty. In his opinion, the intense focus on instruction to improve learning outcomes led to increased teacher interaction resulting in stronger relationships among colleagues.

Each teacher interviewed mentioned that they were more vested in student achievement after the reconstitution. The term *accountability* was mentioned 17 times in interviews by teachers—very few teachers spoke of teacher accountability when asked their perceptions of trust prior to the reconstitution. Four teachers commented in interviews that they were accountable for the success or failure of reconstitution initiatives and plans. One teacher interviewed stated that the “buck stopped” with him when concerning student achievement. He also mentioned that accountability was specifically discussed during in-service planning and faculty meetings. Another teacher commented that he believed that the majority of teachers embraced the challenge of being held accountable for student achievement. Another teacher stated that the principal was intent on holding teachers, students, parents, and the district to higher levels of

accountability. Another teacher commented that no one wanted to show that they were not improving and progressing in an acceptable manner. She mentioned that she would work twice as hard to ensure that her students were progressing appropriately. One teacher commented further on accountability.

For some, reconstitution provided an opportunity to teach outside of the box and to showcase their teaching abilities; almost in a competitive manner. As I reflect, it was quite odd. Teachers literally would pull one another into their classroom to show new teaching strategies. I had never experienced that before in all my years as an educator. As a result, you would feel compelled to step-up your game instructionally; it was crazy.

Parents' perceptions of the facet of benevolence after reconstitution.

Respondents spoke positively about the performance of the principal and teachers. One parent expressed that Principal Allen “truly cared about the students” and that she “admired” him for what he did for the school and for parents. She continued by saying that the principal made her feel as if she really mattered. Another parent commented that the principal was a good guy that improved the school after the reconstitution.

Prior to the reconstitution, parents interviewed didn't address their roles in the learning process. However that changed in the responses provided concerning the level of trust after the reconstitution. Two parents expressed that teachers appeared more concerned with the success of their children after the reconstitution. One parent contributed the success of her daughter to the care that teachers extended to her. Two of the three parents interviewed specifically noted that they did what they could to support

their child's teacher. Another communicated how she assisted her child's teacher from home by helping with reading assignments. When I asked what inspired her to assume that particular responsibility as a parent, she responded, "the school said it was important for our kids to read one novel a month."

Parents appeared to have a higher regard for the school and staff after the reconstitution. All three parent participants expressed at one point or another that they respected the teachers and principal. There was a very noticeable change in the perception parents held for the faculty and staff after the reconstitution. Each parent interviewed made a positive comment concerning the resources provided by the school to families. One parent connected the resources extended to parents by the school to a sentiment of caring. She mentioned that the actions taken by the school to provide parents with much needed resources confirmed that the school cared about her and her child. One parent commented further on resources extended to parents.

I could tell from these changes that the school was serious about getting better.

They were spending money on things that really mattered in my opinion. They were putting their money where their mouth is as the old saying goes. I think most parents could see this and were happy with what was taking place at Madison.

Improvement in student conduct was mentioned more than any other area of improvement identified by parent participants. One respondent commented that students were more obedient and no longer getting fighting each other every day. Another commented that the school appeared safer after the reconstitution. He mentioned that he was relieved because school safety and the number of student altercations concerned him

before the reconstitution. Each parent interviewed connected the improvement in student conduct to the success of the reconstitution. All parents cited the reduction in student infractions as a factor to illustrate the success of the reconstitution. Some parents associated the reduction in student infractions with a display of benevolence from the school. One parent commented that “getting the behaviors under control showed that the school cared about the children and wanted them to learn.” Another parent commented further on the improvement in student conduct.

I don’t know how, but the new teachers had students under better control.

Students used to be rude, but that stopped with the new teachers. Not only did it stop, but students were actually pleasant and nice; they had me doing a double take. I couldn’t believe they were the same kids. You can tell that the school spent a lot of time with students showing them how to behave.

Students’ perceptions of the facet of benevolence after reconstitution. Based on responses, the actions taken by the school to improve student achievement were viewed positively by interview participants. Students noted that teachers appeared more vested in their educational outcomes after the reconstitution. All three interviewees made comments suggesting that the school improved after the reconstitution as a result of the new activities and programs. One student commented that his classes improved due to the online classes implemented; while another respondent stated that the online courses taken with students from other schools made learning fun. He continued by saying what he liked most about the reconstitution was that it “was all about us—we got a lot of cool stuff for class.”

According to one respondent, one of the greatest tangible changes that occurred after the reconstitution was the improvement in student conduct. All three students interviewed referenced the improvement in student behavior. One respondent commented that all of the fighting between students essentially stopped after the reconstitution. Another respondent stated that he felt safer after the reconstitution. Interview responses also lead me to believe that the principal sought to improve behaviors through positive strategies. One respondent mentioned that the principal held assemblies with students to discuss how their behaviors at school played a part in how the school was perceived by the general public. Another student shared that he was excited to return for his eighth grade year because eighth grade students set the examples for the sixth and seventh grade students to follow. I asked if it was expected that eighth grade students set the example for students in the lower grades. He said yes, the principal expected that all eighth grade students set the appropriate example for sixth and seventh grade students to follow.

Reliability After Reconstitution

In the interviews conducted, both teachers and students made comments that were associated with the trust facet of reliability. Parents interviewed did not make any comments that provided insight to how they viewed the reliability or lack of reliability of other school constituents after to the reconstitution. Teachers commented that the principal encouraged faculty and staff to depend heavily on one another, while students appeared to find teachers more dependable after the reconstitution. In this section, I will report the perceptions of reliability after the reconstitution from teachers and students interviewed.

Teachers' perceptions of the facet of reliability after reconstitution.

Throughout the interviews, teachers expressed how they relied on one another while going through the reconstitution process. Of the six teachers interviewed, one had experienced reconstitution at another school. I mention this to note that this was a new experience for the majority of teachers interviewed. Three teachers commented that they did not know what to expect at the beginning of the reconstitution process; yet they found comfort in the manner in which the principal wanted to proceed. According to interview responses, the principal stressed the need for all teachers to depend on the performance of one another in order for the reconstitution to be successful. One teacher mentioned that the “culture of dependency” established by the principal cultivated trusting relationships among colleagues through performance. He stated that teachers “trusted one another to perform as expected.” Teachers also considered the principal to be reliable and trustworthy. Four teachers specifically noted that they could always count on the principal to be helpful and supportive of their needs. One teacher stated that Principal Allen was the person needed to lead a school through challenging times. Another teacher mentioned that principal was consistent. He commented further on the reliability of Principal Allen.

For me his reliability was based on his daily routines. He was very reliable from that vantage point. I knew what he was going to do at a given time, and I knew what he expected of me. He was reliable because I could depend on him all of the time. If I asked him questions that caused him to think, I could count on him to get back to me with factual information and not BS. He knew when I needed help

and was able to provide assistance without coming across upset or disappointed. By his decision-making, by his daily routines, by his expectations, by the consistency of all of these things—I developed a degree of reliability for him because I could depend on him all of the time.

Students’ perceptions of the facet of reliability after reconstitution. There was a noticeable change in the manner that students spoke about teachers after the reconstitution. It was clear from interview responses that students viewed the teachers in place after the reconstitution to be reliable and helpful. When students interviewed were asked to compare the teachers before and after the reconstitution—all three referenced that they found the teachers in place after the reconstitution to be more helpful. Two students specifically noted that they could always count on the teachers after the reconstitution to address their needs. One student commented, “I could count on all of my teachers to help me.” Another student commented further on the reliability of the teachers after the reconstitution.

They worked harder to make sure we got it. Whenever you needed them they were there. I think knowing that I could always go to them for help actually made me a better student in seventh and eighth grade. My grades improved a lot when the new teachers came. I liked the old teachers but they were not the best teachers. They also spent more time with us if we didn’t know something.

Competence After Reconstitution

Principal Allen was perceived to be a competent leader. Teacher and parent respondents described him as being “intelligent,” “skilled,” and “knowledgeable.”

Interview responses also revealed that parents and students perceived teachers to be more capable and effective. Both parents and students spoke positively about the skillset and abilities of the teachers hired after the reconstitution. In this section, I will report the perceptions of competence after the reconstitution from teachers, parents, and students.

Teachers' perceptions of the facet of competence after reconstitution. The capacity of the principal was believed to improve with the hiring of Principal Allen. Interviews revealed that the faculty relied on the competency of the principal during the reconstitution. Based on responses, each teacher interviewed appeared to trust that he had the skillset and capacity needed to lead the school through reconstitution. When asked about the capacity of the principal, one teacher said "he was always the smartest person in the room." He continued by stating that the principal "showed me things I hadn't seen before and could backup his position with reliable and valuable information." Two other respondents expressed that they seldom questioned the direction of the principal as they observed him to be right most of time. Another teacher expressed that she found comfort in the fact that "the principal knew what he was doing." One teacher commented further on the competence of the principal.

Mr. Allen was able to articulate an effective plan for student achievement and the rationale behind it. He also had a clear understanding of management and school operations. Personally, I just want to have faith that the school leader actually knows what he or she is talking about. That they appear to have a good handle on what it takes to not only produce student achievement, but also to command and direct a staff, and to respond to the needs of parents and stakeholders in a manner

that makes sense. That sounds simple, but many school leaders struggle to convey these principles; however Mr. Allen thrived in all facets.

Parents' perception of the facet of competence after reconstitution. Parents commented that they viewed the reconstitution as successful and credited Principal Allen for much of its success and achievement. One parent interviewed commented that the “principal brought Madison out of the dark ages and into the new age of school.” Another parent interviewed about the school after reconstitution stated that Principal Allen was the “right fit” for the school. He continued by saying that principal set the school on the right course after the reconstitution. He commented further on the competence of the principal.

The school had a lot of work to do when Mr. Allen started. The kids were getting into a lot trouble and a lot of parents were not satisfied with the school. But all of that changed pretty quickly after Mr. Allen got started. My daughter would tell me that Mr. Allen changed this and that he changed that. What he was doing seemed pretty good to me. You can tell he had some kind of plan to deal with the mess. You can just tell at the time that he knew what he was doing.

Parents interviewed in this study all concluded that the teachers in place after the reconstitution were more effective than those present before the reconstitution. This is evidenced by the comments made throughout the interviews by each parent participant. The primary reason parents perceived the new teachers more effective was contributed to the improvement observed in their children. Two of the three parents interviewed stated that their children improved academically after the reconstitution. One respondent

commented that she believed that the teachers hired after the reconstitution were better and appeared more qualified and skilled than the previous faculty. Another respondent communicated that the new faculty engaged in more innovative and effective instructional practices than those teachers present before the reconstitution. One parent commented further on teacher competence after the reconstitution.

I think the reconstitution was successful because the teachers hired seemed to be better teachers. If the reconstitution didn't take place, the teachers that my son had in the seventh and eighth grades would not have been there. I think that's the only thing that I can judge the reconstitution on - that my son did well and the school did better. I liked the old teachers, but I'm glad that my son had the new teachers.

Students' perceptions of the facet of competence after reconstitution. Each student interviewed referenced that the teachers after the reconstitution were better teachers than those present before the reconstitution. The three students interviewed referenced improvements in instructional ability 10 times over the course of interviews. One respondent commented that the teachers after the reconstitution appeared to be more creative—he mentioned that classes were no longer boring. A second respondent addressed instructional methodology, commenting that the use of small group instruction aided him greatly in his learning. Another student commented further on instructional capacity after the reconstitution.

The new teachers were better teachers. They knew how to explain lessons better and made classes way more fun and interesting. I would actually look forward to

going to class on most days. They knew their stuff and were beyond helpful. I miss them.

Honesty After Reconstitution

When commenting on Madison after the reconstitution, both teachers and parents remarked that the principal was a person of integrity whose word could be trusted. All comments made by teachers and parents concerning the trust facet of honesty were in reference to the principal – they did not provide any meaningful perspective regarding honesty as it pertained to other school constituents. In addition, nothing significant relating to honesty was discovered from student interviews to include in this section.

Teachers’ perceptions of the facet of honesty after reconstitution. All teachers interviewed perceived the principal as being an honest person. Over half of the respondents mentioned specifically that he was “always” truthful in his conversations with faculty, parents, and students. A number of teachers also referenced that the word of the principal could be trusted. One teacher stated that she always took him at “face value” commenting that she believed that he would never do anything to place her in “harm’s way.” Another respondent implicitly remarked that he was encouraged to champion the initiatives of the principal because he believed that he would deliver on what he promised. Teachers also frequently referenced that they never found the words of the principal in his discourse to be disparaging. This was expressed by four of the six teachers interviewed. One respondent commented further on the integrity of the principal.

Mr. Allen gave it to you like it was; but he did so with respect and always from a positive point of view. When he said that he was going to do something for you,

you knew that he would. However I grew to trust him not necessarily for what he said to me, but what he did. After the reconstitution, he made a lot of promises; pie in the sky stuff. He said that he would get us more money for technology. He said that he would get us more money for after school projects—all things that I had heard before by other administrators. However he got it done just like he said he would. I could see that he was more than just talk. After that, I pretty much believed whatever he said.

Parents’ perceptions of the facet of honesty after reconstitution. Parents perceived the principal to be honest after the reconstitution. This appeared to be shaped largely as a result of the principal delivering on what he promised to parents. One parent mentioned how the principal executed plans in the precise manner as decided during parent meetings. Another parent specifically noted that he could count on the principal to keep his word and hold true to his commitments. One parent commented further on the word of the principal.

I experienced a transitional period, so I saw things changing. But when I left, the school was better. Mr. Allen did everything he said he would do and more. He improved the issues with the kids. He hired great teachers. He made the school a really nice place. You should see the school now; they have a new library, new windows, a new basketball court out back—it looks great. You can’t tell me that would have been possible without Mr. Allen. I had no issues with my son going there.

Openness After Reconstitution

Next to benevolence, behaviors associated with the trust facet of openness were the most prevalent in this study. Open communication appeared to be one of the biggest changes resulting from the reconstitution. Comments made by teachers and parents interviewed suggested that the school improved significantly in its communication. Nothing noteworthy concerning openness emerged from the interviews conducted with students.

Teachers' perceptions of the facet of openness after reconstitution.

Throughout the interviews, a number of teachers referenced how important effective communication was to improving student achievement at Madison. Five of the six teachers interviewed mentioned that communication improved greatly after the reconstitution. One teacher mentioned that she found the communication with colleagues and school leadership to be more effective after reconstitution. She stated that information flowed more freely in order to put students in the best position to be successful. Another teacher mentioned that improved communication with colleagues and parents was the best development resulting from the reconstitution. She added that the improvement in teacher-parent communication “allowed both teachers and parents to see one another as human beings playing.” Another respondent mentioned that before any new initiatives were rolled out that they were first communicated to parents in order to obtain their feedback and thoughts. She continued by saying “this opened the door to what I considered to be a more effective form of communication between teachers and parents.”

A number of teachers interviewed also commented on the effective communication of the principal. Three participants mentioned that the principal created a culture where ideas and opinions were valued. One teacher commented that Principal Allen improved the manner in which the faculty communicated due to his transparency. Another teacher commented further on the openness of the principal.

Mr. Allen believed in the team concept, and expressed that a collective effort was needed to accomplish our goals. He put individuals in positions to be a part of driving school goals. He was helpful to team members and provided them with what was needed to accomplish goals. He also allowed a certain level of autonomy and limited micromanagement while understanding that some mistakes may occur along the way. When mistakes did occur, he worked constructively with us to resolve them. What was most important was that he was open to new ideas and to tackling things in a manner that hadn't been done before. This is the core of what we were doing at Madison and it couldn't take place with a closed-minded administrative team.

Parents' perceptions of the facet of openness after reconstitution. Improved communication between parents and the school was mentioned throughout the interviews. All parents interviewed stated that communication with their child's teachers improved after the reconstitution. One parent commented that the teachers in place after the reconstitution kept her "more abreast" to what was taking place at school; while another commented that teachers did a good job of keeping her informed. Interview responses also suggested that communications improved between parents and the school.

Two respondents mentioned that they found the information provided during parent meetings to be valuable. Another respondent commented that she was more informed of what was taking place as a result of the increased correspondence. One parent commented further on communication following the school reconstitution.

The relationship with the teachers after the reconstitution was great. Unlike the previous teachers, communication went both ways. This was a blessing to me as an involved parent. I had a hang-up with the lack of communication with the previous teachers. It was nice to see the contrast between the old and new teachers. They knew that I was involved in my daughter's education and contacted me all of the time to tell me what was going on in her class.

Research Question 4: What leadership behaviors did the teachers in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff observe that cultivated or damaged trust in the school leader, teacher trust in colleagues, and teacher trust in students and parents?

In this section, I will present the leadership actions and behaviors observed by teachers that are considered to have encouraged or damaged trust at Madison.

The leadership behaviors observed by the faculty to cultivate trust are reflected below in Table 13. The interviews revealed a number of leadership behaviors that were perceived by teachers to have encouraged trust. Behaviors associated with the facets of benevolence, openness, and competence were mentioned the most often by respondents. Leadership behaviors related to each facet of trust were not mentioned by teachers interviewed concerning the influence of trust in colleagues and in students. As a result,

each facet of trust does not appear in the trust in colleagues and trust in student and parent sections.

Table 13

Leadership Behaviors Observed by Teachers to Influence Trust

Behaviors that Influence Teacher Trust in the Leader

All teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was compassionate.

All teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was supportive.

All teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was knowledgeable in key operational areas of the education program.

All teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader encouraged collaboration.

All teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader focused on student achievement and improvement.

All teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was caring towards students and parents.

Five teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was helpful and available to faculty.

Five teachers interviewed indicated the school leader exercised good judgment.

Four teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader kept his word.

Four teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was ethical.

Four teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was transparent and candid.

Four teachers interviewed indicated that school leader empowered others.

Four teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was informative.

Four teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader held others accountable.

Three teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader effectively managed faculty.

Three teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was determined.

Three teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was consistent.

Three teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader made them feel valued.

Three teachers interviewed indicated that the school leader was innovative.

Leadership Behaviors Influencing Teacher Trust in the Leader

Teachers shared a number of behaviors exhibited by the leader that are sensed to have developed faculty trust in the principal. The behaviors frequently mentioned were associated with the trust facets of benevolence, openness and competence. Each interviewee referenced that the transparency exhibited by the principal helped to establish teacher trust in the leader. Trust in the principal also appeared to take shape largely due to the belief that the principal cared about the faculty and staff.

Behaviors demonstrating benevolence that influence trust in the leader.

Behaviors and actions demonstrating benevolence were mentioned by all respondents concerning trust in the leader. Behaviors representative of compassion were cited by all participants, and appeared to have a significant impact on teacher trust in the leader. When respondents were asked what the leader did to convey that he was compassionate, six teachers referenced that he supportive, and five referenced that he was helpful. The help and support provided to faculty by the principal appeared unique to each participant. One respondent commented that he felt supported and protected from harm by the principal; trusting that he would do what was necessary to keep him safe from interference by the school district. Another respondent expressed how the principal went out of his way to help her to secure housing when she moved into the area. She mentioned that his assistance appeared genuine, and that trust developed in the principal, as she believed that he went beyond what was necessary to help. She stated that the kindness he displayed inspired her to perform at high levels for the principal and school. Two others also commented that they felt compelled to work harder for the success of the

school due to the benevolence exhibited by the principal. One respondent commented that he respected Principal Allen because he showed genuine concern and compassion to others. Another respondent commented further on trust in the leader.

He always fought for us. I can recall a number of times when he went to bat for us. When the district would attempt to have us go in a different direction, he was firm in arguing why his direction was more important; often his argument boiled down to what was good for the students and for Madison. It's easy to trust and support someone who you see as supporting you. I would have run through a brick wall for Mr. Allen. Respect is given to those that deserve it.

Treating faculty with dignity, and valuing their professional contributions to the school also appeared to foster trust in the leader. Three respondents mentioned that trust developed in the principal due to interactions and exchanges that made them feel valued. Two teachers mentioned that he would often express how everyone at the school was critical to the school's success. One respondent mentioned that the principal made her feel like she "really mattered."

Behaviors demonstrating reliability that influence trust in the leader. One of the more frequent mentioned leadership behaviors influencing trust in the leader was helpfulness. Five of the six teachers interviewed mentioned that the principal helped them professionally or personally. It appeared from responses that trust in the leader developed as respondents believed that they could always turn to him for help and his assistance. One respondent commented that he never turned her away, or showed a lack of interest whenever she approached him for assistance. Another commented that the principal was

dependable because he understood what she required and always was available when needed.

Consistency in the behaviors and actions of the principal are perceived by participants to have cultivated trust. Three respondents specifically mentioned that the principal seldom engaged in decisions or actions that they found surprising. Two teachers interviewed specifically noted that they knew what to expect from him due to the processes and systems that he followed. One respondent viewed the principal to be reliable based on the daily routines that he kept. He mentioned that he knew “exactly” what the principal would do at a given time based on the patterns he followed. He also mentioned that the consistent behavior exhibited by the principal allowed him to understand what the principal “expected” of him.

Behaviors demonstrating competence that influence trust in the leader.

Leadership behaviors demonstrating competence were referenced by all participants and appeared to have influenced teacher trust in the leader. Respondents used words such as “exceptional,” “smart,” “knowledgeable,” and “tactical” to describe the principal. Three teachers interviewed referenced that trust in the principal was partly contributed to the principal demonstrating that he was academically fit to manage the school. One teacher commented that after getting to know Principal Allen, he believed that he possessed the academic intangibles to effectively lead and direct the school. Another mentioned that he viewed the principal as effective due to his ability to demonstrate that he was knowledgeable in all key operational areas of the school.

All of the teachers interviewed made positive comments concerning the principal's involvement in the reconstitution process and knowledge of the school's educational program. One respondent connected the competence of the principal to the learning strategies that he implemented to support the reconstitution. She stated "the plans he came up with for the reconstitution were remarkable." Two other teachers expressed that the principal's ability to work alongside teachers strengthened their trust in his ability to lead. Four respondents referred to Principal Allen as an instructional leader. One teacher commented further on the principal as an instructional leader.

Mr. Allen demonstrated that he could do your job. He even subbed a few times for teachers. As the school leader, if he delegated something to someone and they struggled, he was able to step in and show that person how the work should be done. Mr. Allen was actually able to perform what he was asking others to do.

Behaviors demonstrating honesty that influence trust in the leader. Of the six teachers interviewed, four mentioned that they could count on the principal to act in accordance to his word. One teacher commented that the principal could be depended on to do what he said. Another respondent mentioned that the word of the principal could be trusted, and that he would not mislead others. She mentioned that she found the level of honesty demonstrated by the principal comforting—saying that she never had to discern if he had any "ulterior motives" behind his words and actions. Not having any "ulterior motives" was used by one other respondent interviewed to describe Principal Allen. This respondent commented further on the principal keeping his word.

I cannot be certain, but I can't recall anything that he said that was not true. I can't recall anything that he said that he was going to do that he didn't try. If you were to talk to other teachers and parents, I am sure that they would agree.

Behaviors demonstrating openness that influence trust in the leader. All teachers interviewed mentioned leadership behaviors representative of openness. Based on responses, trust in the leader developed as they considered him to be informative, transparent, and empowering. Four respondents noted that they found the information provided by the principal to be a valuable part of the reconstitution process. One teacher mentioned that reconstitution was a new experience for most of the faculty. According to her, the principal presented information and engaged teachers in a manner that provided confidence that they were progressing adequately. Another respondent commented further on the openness the principal.

He made sure that we were extremely informed. He made sure that all of us were totally aware of how to perform our jobs and responsibilities. There was no lack of information. If you were not informed, he wanted to know the reason for not being informed; he would then provide assistance to where to go to obtain the appropriate information needed to fulfill what was required of you.

Four of the teachers interviewed mentioned that the principal was transparent and shared information freely with the faculty. Over the course of interviews, four teachers used the word "transparent" 13 times when describing the leadership behavior of the principal. One teacher referred to the principal as an "open book," commenting that he openly shared "his emotions, frustrations, and passions." The transparency embodied by

the principal appeared to compel teachers to make themselves vulnerable to one another. One teacher expressed that the candor of the principal during an off-campus retreat resulted in teachers freely sharing emotionally charged anecdotes with one another, which resulted in greater faculty trust.

Four respondents mentioned the delegation of power from the principal to staff. Two teachers mentioned that the principal placed them in charge of important decisions. Another shared that he developed as a leader due to being “empowered” by the principal to lead the schools’ cultural improvement efforts. Trust appeared to develop in the leader due to the sharing and relinquishment of some inherent positional power. One respondent commented that the trust shown by the principal to empower subordinates was reciprocated with their trust in him. Another teacher commented further on the principal empowering teachers.

He is good at sharing power; he wanted us to be leaders and understood that we are unable to be effective if he did not relinquish some control. I think being able to do that - being comfortable enough to give up some control also speaks volumes as it relates to trust. I think it would be difficult to give up trust if you actually don’t trust those individuals you seek to empower. Seeing him do this allowed me to trust him more. Knowing that he trusted me with important matters of the school made it a lot easier to trust him. I believed that by doing this, he showed that we were all in this together.

It is interesting to note that one respondent mentioned that the principal did not share control, but that he “delegated control” to only those in his “toolbox.” He stated

that the principal was very careful in determining whom he would place in charge of particular areas. And that control would not be delegated to those that he distrusted or viewed as not being team players. I asked this participant what he believed would cause the principal to distrust a teacher based on his experience and knowledge. He said that the principal did not trust anyone that he believed was incapable of performing to his satisfaction.

Leadership Behaviors Influencing Teacher Trust in Colleagues

Teachers shared behaviors and actions exhibited by the leader that are perceived to have developed faculty trust among colleagues. Many of the responses provided indicated that collegial trust was shaped in part by the principal's commitment to academic achievement. A few respondents noted that they were motivated to work with colleagues due to the principal's commitment to improve student achievement. Based on responses, the behaviors and actions of the principal appeared to unite the faculty in a collective effort to improve academic outcomes.

Behaviors demonstrating benevolence that influence collegial trust. Four of the six teachers interviewed referenced that the principal often spoke passionately about the need for students to succeed. One respondent commented that he believed that the principal cared about the students and wanted them to perform well in order to remove the negative stigma associated with the school. Another respondent commented that leadership starts at the top. She stated that the compassion held by the principal for students to succeed encouraged the faculty to work diligently together to improve student outcomes. Of the six teachers interviewed, four referenced that they felt encouraged to

work closely with colleagues as a result of the concern shown by the principal for students to improve. I would like to note that I found the comments made by one respondent particularly interesting. She referenced that the fear of failure and possible job loss cultivated collegial trust by encouraging the faculty to work collaboratively in order to avoid school failure.

I think the situation of going through reconstitution helped to encourage trust. We knew that we were involved in something that was pretty high stakes. Love it or hate it; the situation made us work together. I think it was easy for us to uplift colleagues because everyone was a little vulnerable. People were afraid that they would be let go if the school continued to fail—not failing was our mission.

Interview responses indicated that support received from the principal contributed to the working dynamic between colleagues. Two teachers noted that the principal would reassure the faculty that they were capable of accomplishing the goals of the reconstitution. According to one respondent, some teachers were hesitant about instruction at the beginning of the school year following the reconstitution. She stated that the uncertainty was due to the new instructional strategies introduced as part of the reconstitution. According to her, some teachers were uncomfortable implementing the new strategies as many of the plans were multifaceted and somewhat difficult to incorporate into the school's curriculum. She stated that the principal was instrumental in addressing the concerns and reservations regarding the implementation of plans. According to this particular respondent, the principal would provide the support needed to assist faculty through the implementation phase when required. She mentioned that the

principal's assistance gave teachers the confidence to move forward with plans and to work collaboratively with colleagues. Lastly she added that once teachers were clear on initiatives that they would assist colleagues experiencing similar issues.

Behaviors demonstrating reliability that influence collegial trust. Based on interviews responses, the principal encouraged the faculty to rely on one another in order to increase achievement. Four teachers mentioned this specifically. One respondent commented that the principal convinced the faculty that goals were best achieved by working together. She stated that the student achievement goals and objectives introduced by the principal required grade level teams to depend on other teammates in order to accomplish. She commented further on teachers depending on one another.

If one person didn't complete his or her part the final product would be held up.

For example, there was no way to complete the weekly report that grade level leaders submitted to the principal without each content area teacher meeting their responsibility.

Behaviors demonstrating competency that influence collegial trust. Viewing the principal as a competent leader not only influenced teacher trust in the leader, it also influenced collegial trust. Colleagues willingly worked together to bring the plans engineered by the principal to fruition. Working collectively to address the reconstitution appeared to cultivate collegial trust. One teacher commented that Mr. Allen was intelligent and that he believed that he intentionally constructed plans that would require the faculty to work together in order to build cohesiveness among teachers and the staff.

Another respondent commented further on how the competence of the principal encouraged collegial trust.

I remember being in team meetings discussing ways to move forward with his plans because we all were confident that he knew what was best. I have been a part of teams that didn't trust the decisions of the principal, and would spend time debating about if what we were being asked to do made sense. However at Madison, we spent more time supporting each other in what was needed, as there was no debate about the decision making of Mr. Allen.

Behaviors demonstrating openness that influence collegial trust. Four of the six teachers interviewed mentioned that the faculty performed more effectively as result of the transparency exhibited by the principal. One respondent mentioned that his actions gave teachers more comfort in expressing themselves and bringing ideas to the table. She commented that the principal was open to any suggestion that would benefit students. She mentioned that teachers felt free to bring ideas to the table during staff and planning meetings. Two other respondents made similar comments regarding the sharing of ideas. One teacher mentioned that because of the openness established by the principal that faculty began to engage in more difficult subject matter with one another. She stated that trust grew as teachers came together to discuss ideas and strategies that may have benefitted students and teachers. Another respondent commented that “teachers worked together to address issues or potential issues” resulting from reconstitution due to the principal being open to new ideas. Collegial trust appeared to develop at Madison as a

result of the openness exhibited by the principal. One teacher commented further on how the transparency of the principal influenced collegial trust.

The faculty began to adopt his candid approach in their interactions, which resulted in honest conversations. The frankness of those conversations allowed us to grow and perform better as a unit.

Teacher accountability also appeared to influence collegial trust at Madison. Four teachers interviewed mentioned that the principal held them accountable to meeting the objectives of the reconstitution. Responses suggested that teachers grew to depend more on one another as a result of the accountability measures put in place by the principal. The principal established a weekly data analysis meeting with faculty to review and discuss student performance. One respondent mentioned that it was “important to show that you were performing as expected in these meetings.” Based on comments, the data analysis meetings influenced teachers to work collectively in an attempt to support each other’s needs. One teacher mentioned that after the data meetings, teachers would assist those that failed to meet the appropriate benchmarks so that they may possibly show improvement at the following meeting. I would like to note that one teacher commented that some new teachers found the degree of accountability levied by the principal to be challenging and ill received. She commented further on the difficulties experienced by one teacher concerning accountability.

The data meetings would indicate if your students were trending the right way. Engaging in these meetings brought us together and developed trust among teachers. This was however a double-edged sword. I recall that some of the new

teachers transferred to other schools the second year of the reconstitution. One teacher that I spoke to told me that Mr. Allen was too focused and rigid when it came to data; and that he used the data too much to make decisions about their teaching abilities. She said that she left because it was too stressful to meet all that he required week-in and week-out. I agree that it was a stressful time. But I think that those that were there before the reconstitution felt more of a need to turn the school around because we felt more of an ownership to the school. We viewed ourselves as part of the original school struggles and felt a need to make a change.

Leadership Behaviors Influencing Teacher Trust in Students and Parents

Interviews revealed actions of the principal that were perceived to have influenced faculty trust in students and parents. The school leader mostly impacted teacher trust in students and parents by helping faculty to understand just how important that particular relational dynamic was to student achievement and the reputation of the school within the community. To this end, the principal developed school initiatives specifically structured for the purpose of fostering improved relationships between the school, and student and parents. The positive manner in which the principal interacted with students and parents also appeared to help establish a greater sense of teacher trust in students and parents.

Behaviors demonstrating benevolence that influence teacher trust in students and parents. Each teacher interviewed expressed that the principal demonstrated respect and goodwill to students and parents. They mentioned that he treated both with high regard and used terms such as “sincere,” “forthcoming,” and “caring” to describe the

principal's interactions with students and parents. One teacher commented that she observed how the principal interacted with students and parents and was motivated by his actions to treat them with the same level of respect. She mentioned that he set the tone as the leader, and that the faculty somewhat "modeled" his behavior. Based on responses, the actions of the principal appeared to improve the culture by encouraging the staff to establish a more welcoming school setting for students and parents. By making an effort to engage students and parents more positively, one respondent described the school environment as being "family oriented." Another respondent mentioned that students opened up more to teachers as a result of the positive connections established. Based on responses, teacher trust in students and parents developed as trusting relationships were fostered as a result of an increase in positive interactions and exchanges that were motivated under the direction of the principal.

Behaviors demonstrating reliability that influence teacher trust in students and parents. All teachers interviewed mentioned addressing the needs of students and parents as being an important priority of the principal. One respondent mentioned that the principal discussed with the faculty and staff the importance of responding quickly to the needs of students and parents. She mentioned that students and parents often shared how the principal resolved their concerns. He is described by one respondent as someone that "sought to keep students and parents happy" as he considered both to be the "clients" served by the school. According to this participant, the principal created structured forums that allowed students and parents to voice their concerns and needs to administration and faculty.

The focus extended by the principal to address student and parent concerns appeared to influence faculty trust in students and parents. Interviews revealed that the actions of the principal motivated the faculty to focus more intently on responding to the needs of students and parents. One respondent specifically noted that they prioritized addressing the needs of students and parents because it was a priority of the principal. He continued by stating that trust developed as he spent time working with students and parents to support their needs. Another respondent commented further on how he was inspired by the principal to improve relationships with students and parents.

Mr. Allen responded to their needs and always tried to address their concerns. If he was not able to resolve their issues or give them what they wanted, he would be upfront and tell them so—along with the reasons why. To me, he was someone that everyone could count on. He changed the tone in the level of care that we extended to parents and students, and the way we tried to support them.

Behaviors demonstrating openness that influence teacher trust in students and parents. Interviews revealed that teachers established trust in students and parents due to the openness of the school leader. Four teachers referenced that the principal openly discussed his concerns with the faculty regarding the relationship between the school, and students and parents. One respondent mentioned that the principal viewed the relationship as being “poor” prior to the reconstitution. Another expressed that the principal was disappointed with the “lack of parent support” and “low student morale.” According to interviews, the principal held strategy meetings with the faculty aimed at improving the culture of the school and relationships with students and parents. One

respondent interviewed noted that the candor expressed by the principal in these meetings led to the development of strategies that she perceived effective in improving teacher trust in teachers and parents. She mentioned that the principal “made it unquestionably clear” that the school must improve its relationship with families.

Four teachers interviewed referenced that the principal involved them in the school’s decision making process. This is perceived by teachers to have also encouraged a better sense of trust between teachers and families. Three respondents referenced that they felt more compelled to improve relationships with students and parents due to being involved in the initial planning discussions with the principal. One teacher described being included in the preparation as “having a stake in the game.” He stated that he was more inspired to improve student-parent relationships as a result of playing a role in the development of plans and strategies.

Research Question 5: What initiatives were undertaken as part of the reconstitution turnaround efforts at this school? How have teachers perceived these initiatives to have strengthened or weakened trust relationships in the school?

All of the initiatives included in this section were provided by teachers during interviews conducted in October and November of 2015. Three specific questions on the teacher interview protocol asked participants to identify the reconstitution initiatives that they perceived impacted trust relationships at Madison. The majority of the initiatives described by teachers focused on the delivery of instruction, evaluation of student performance, family support, and enrichment activities. Respondents mentioned these

initiatives to be effective, and perceived to have strengthened the relationships at Madison by encouraging trust between teacher-student, teacher-parent, and colleagues.

All teachers interviewed identified specific initiatives that they perceived as having a direct impact on improved school relationships. The initiatives and frequency of responses are reflected in Table 14. According to four teachers interviewed, all of the plans were developed collaboratively and supported by the faculty. There were no negative comments made in reference to any of the reconstitution initiatives employed by the school to support the reconstitution efforts. All teachers interviewed in this study referenced that the reconstitution plans were thoughtfully developed and well implemented.

Table 14

Initiatives Employed to Support Reconstitution

| Initiatives | Response Frequency |
|--|---------------------------|
| Instruction | |
| Blended Learning | 6 |
| Block Schedule | 4 |
| eBooks | 2 |
| Evaluation of Student Performance | |
| Weekly Student Assessment | 5 |
| Data Analysis Meeting | 4 |
| Pass the CAS Student Assembly | 4 |
| Family Support | |
| Parent Liaison | 6 |
| Technology Grant – Parent Laptops | 5 |
| Home Visits | 4 |
| FAR Southeast Collaborative Partnership | 3 |
| Community Meeting Venue | 3 |
| Enrichment Activities | |
| STEM | 4 |
| Sports Teams | 4 |
| Ski Club | 4 |
| Robotics | 3 |
| Dance Team | 2 |
| First in Math Club | 1 |

Reconstitution Initiatives and Trust Relationships

Based on the information provided by interview participants, the plans and initiatives implemented to support the reconstitution improved relationships at the school largely through the trust facets of benevolence, openness, and competence. Although the study showed that the reconstitution plans had an effect on all five facets of trust, the initiatives establishing a greater sense of benevolence, openness, and competence were referenced by all respondents as making the biggest impact on the school’s trust

relationships. In this section, I will discuss the initiatives as provided by teachers interviewed as having the most significant influence on trust relationships at Madison.

Reconstitution Initiatives and Benevolence

Part of the initiatives developed to support the reconstitution was centered on establishing trusting relationships with students, parents, and colleagues. There were a number of parent and student initiatives introduced after the reconstitution that appeared to strengthen trust relationships by conveying a sense of care and goodwill. The initiatives mentioned by all teachers interviewed to improve relationships with students and parents were, the parent laptop grant, parent liaison, home visits, community meeting venues, family-based resources, and student enrichment activities. Teachers interviewed indicated that these particular initiatives resulted in greater interaction with parents and students resulting in improved levels of trust.

Parent laptop grant. Five teachers interviewed mentioned that trust between families and the school improved due to parents being provided laptops. Based on comments, a number of families attending Madison did not have access to a computer and Internet at home before the reconstitution. This concerned the principal greatly according to one teacher interviewed. He stated that the school had five laptops available to loan parents the year Principal Allen arrived at Madison. He commented following the reconstitution, the school secured a grant earmarked for technology that provided all of the teachers and parents with laptops. He also stated that the school was able to secure low cost Internet service for families as well. He mentioned that this act demonstrated to the parents and staff that the principal was capable of providing what the school needed.

He continued by saying that he believed parents became advocates of the faculty and staff because they viewed the school as acting in their best interests. Another teacher interviewed recalled a parent meeting where a number of families expressed how pleased they were to have received the laptops from the school.

Parent liaison. The school established a parent liaison position after the reconstitution for the sole purpose of engaging parents, and getting them involved with the school according to one respondent. This was mentioned by all teachers as playing an instrumental part in the cultivation of trust relationships between the school and parents. Two respondents specifically credited the individual serving in this capacity with improving trust between parents and the school by keeping parents informed, and by seeking their assistance when required. One respondent stated that the efforts of the parent liaison resulted in more opportunities for teachers to spend time with parents and families.

Home visits. Trust also appeared to improve due to the faculty making home visits, and by the school's use of alternative locations to conduct parent meetings. Four respondents commented that both of these reconstitution initiatives lead to better communication and improved trust. One teacher mentioned that the home visits provided her with an opportunity to engage in a "wide array" of topics with parents that never would have taken place by phone. She recalled talking to one parent for an hour after realizing that she and the parent attended the same elementary school. She mentioned that her relationship with this particular parent flourished as a result of the home visit. Another teacher responded that barriers often experienced in urban school settings were

reduced due to the implementation of home visits. He commented that the “home visits forced teachers to face the realities of poverty directly.” As a result, he expressed that parent-teacher trust improved as the home visits allowed both factions to see “one another as people, and not stereotypes.”

Community meeting location. Three teachers mentioned that they developed better relationships with parents as a result of the school conducting parent meetings at locations more convenient for families other than the school. Based on responses, the alternative meeting locations allowed teachers to speak with parents who were unable to attend meetings held regularly at the school. One teacher commented further on providing families with alternative meeting locations.

I often thought that parents did not attend parent meetings because they simply had no interest in coming. I figured if parents really wanted to attend meetings, and found them important, that they would find a way to get to the school.

However I realized that was not the case after we started having meetings closer to where some parents lived. I would always have a few of my parents present at these meetings that were never present for parent meetings held at Madison.

Resources. Teachers also perceived that parent trust in the school improved as result of resources extended to families. Three teachers mentioned the Far Southeast Collaborative Partnership listed in Table 14 as strengthening trust relationships at the school. According to one teacher, the Far Southeast Collaborative Partnership is a nonprofit organization that provides various social services and resources to families. One respondent commented that parents viewed the school in a more benevolent manner

as a result of being able to take advantage of the services extended by this organization. She stated that trust developed as families perceived that the school cared for them based on the resources they were provided. Another respondent commented that the resources made available to parents improved parent-teacher communication. She commented further on establishing trust with parents.

Mr. Allen more than any principal that I've ever worked for really involved parents in the decision-making of the school. This was a part of our plan to improve relationships with parents. Shortly after he would rollout possible initiatives to the staff, he would roll them out to parents—he truly wanted their feedback and input. I'm sure that just as this was something new to me, that it was also a new experience for parents as well.

Student enrichment activities. Student academic and non-academic enrichment activities were included in the school's reconstitution plans according to four teachers interviewed. The majority of enrichment activities took place after the regular school day with the exception of STEM according to one teacher interviewed. Based on respondents, the enrichment activities introduced were well received by students. All students interviewed mentioned that the school improved after the reconstitution due to the addition of enrichment activities. One student interviewed commented, "the extra-curricular activities were the best part of the reconstitution." One teacher interviewed commented that the enrichment activities helped to "build" a better connection with students. Another teacher commented further on the enrichment activities added after the reconstitution.

We added a bunch of extracurricular activities. Mr. Allen was really good at providing afterschool activities for students. This is something that still is growing even though he's no longer at Madison. When we started we just had a boys' basketball team. However the following year Mr. Allen added robotics, dance, First in Math, and ski club. He took the kids skiing; they were so happy. When they came back that's all they were talking about. Many of us liked the clubs because it gave us an opportunity to connect and grow relationships with students outside of the classroom. Doing this ultimately improved relationships within the classroom. We also added many more sports teams. I liked the sports teams because students had to maintain a minimum GPA to participate; they also couldn't play if they got into trouble at school – this helped cut down on suspensions and referrals a lot.

Reconstitution Initiatives and Openness

During interviews, teachers often alluded to interactions they had with various school constituents in support of the reconstitution. Four teachers interviewed specifically noted that the reconstitution was successful due to the amount of time the faculty and staff dedicated to planning. One teacher commented, “we spent a lot of time as a team discussing what the school needed to do in order to increase achievement.” She went on to say that these discussions often became very contentious, but that they felt confident in the decisions reached when the discourse concluded.

I got the impression from interviews that the faculty and staff spent significant time together evaluating student performance outcomes. Teachers mentioned three

initiatives instituted after the reconstitution to assess student performance: (1) data analysis meeting, (2) Pass the CAS assembly, and (3) weekly assessment meeting. Based on interview responses, these three initiatives were perceived by teachers to influence trust relationships at the school due to increased interaction between school constituents. Based on interview responses, the extent of interaction taking place to plan and discuss the results from these three particular initiatives strengthened the trust relationships at the school. One respondent commented that teachers were working with each other because they knew that you had to perform in the data analysis group. He continued by stating that collegial trust “stemmed from performance.”

Data analysis meeting. A number of decisions made concerning the reconstitution appeared to be based on data. Five teachers referenced that they used some form of data to evaluate how they were performing individually and collectively. However teachers used the term “data” most often when mentioning student achievement. Principal Allen appeared to be the catalyst for the school’s utilization of data in decision making. Three teachers specifically connected the schools reliance on data in the decision making process to the principal. One respondent commented that the principal “opened his eyes” to data stating, “not only did he have a firm grasp of data – he was able to teach me.” He continued by commenting that the principal through his use of data “brought about a new sense of performance at Madison.” Another teacher mentioned that data had become so important to the school, that even students were encouraged to understand performance reports.

Weekly data analysis meetings were included in the reconstitution plans according to four participants. The principal facilitated weekly meetings with the faculty to review student achievement data, and other performance measures linked to improvement. According to two teachers interviewed, these meetings were taken extremely serious by the principal. Teachers with students performing below expectations were asked to provide the reasons for not meeting objectives and a plan for improvement. One teacher commented that you didn't want to be the teacher at the meeting performing below expectation. I got the feeling from her that these meetings could produce some level of anxiety. However, the data meetings also appeared to bring teachers together. Two respondents commented that teachers supported colleagues who failed to meet their performance objectives by assisting them with lesson plans and instructional strategies. She referenced that the concern shown for one another helped to cultivate collegial trust.

Pass the CAS assembly. Four teachers interviewed credited Pass the CAS Assemblies for improving trust relationships at Madison. Pass the CAS was a monthly grade level assembly held by the principal and faculty to review performance data and goals with students. According to one teacher interviewed, Pass the CAS Assemblies were included in the reconstitution plans to review assessment data with students. In this meeting, the principal reviewed the previous month's assessment data with students so that they could understand how they performed. The principal would also provide the student performance targets for the upcoming month. Another teacher commented that Pass the CAS Assemblies were similar to a "pep rallies." She stated that students would cheer and chant as data were revealed to the groups gathered. She continued by

commenting that the rallies served not only to make students aware of where they stood as a class, but that the meetings also motivated both students and teachers to meet performance goals. Based on responses, these rallies were perceived to improve the teacher-student relationship by uniting the two groups in working towards a common goal. One teacher mentioned that students were more focused and more willing to learn as a result of the assemblies. She added that students were excited to prove that they “had what it took” to pass the state test. She also mentioned that grade level teams came together after PAS the CAS Assemblies to develop interdisciplinary units and activities.

Weekly assessment meeting. Five teachers interviewed indicated that the weekly assessment meeting played a part in shaping trust at Madison. According to three teachers, the reconstitution plans required that students be assessed weekly. The mini assessment used by the school was aligned to the Common Core Curriculum and state standards according to one teacher interviewed. She mentioned that grade level teams met weekly to review and discuss the assessment results prior to the data analysis meeting. Based on the information that she provided, grade level teams used the data to make instructional decisions impacting lesson planning, small group instruction, online learning, and student schedules. One teacher described this process as a very “arduous” undertaking—but expressed that the experience brought her closer to colleagues and students. She commented further on the weekly assessment process.

We had to turn information around quickly. We would assess students every Thursday and have to have everything aggregated and ready to go on the following Monday. The program we used did a lot of the work for us, but mounds

and mounds of work still remained for us to address in a very short window. However we got it done week after week after week. We knew what we were doing would benefit our students in the long run, so we just pulled together as team and pushed through. It was hard, but the weekly assessment allowed us to personalize instruction for each student.

Reconstitution Initiatives and Competence

After the reconstitution, teacher trust in the principal appeared somewhat connected to the initiatives and plans put in place to support the turnaround efforts of the school. One interview question in this study asked teachers if the reconstitution initiatives put in place at Madison were effective. All teachers interviewed were consistent in their response that they found the initiatives to be very effective and well planned. I can tell from the interviews that a number of teachers were exceptionally proud of the plans developed as they spoke with great passion and reverence. One teacher referred to the plans as “groundbreaking,” adding, “no other school in the district was doing what we were at Madison.” The reconstitution initiative mentioned the most frequently by teachers interviewed was the blended learning program; it was referenced by all respondents as being effective, and having an impact on student achievement. One teacher referred to it as the primary change resulting from the reconstitution. Teachers also referenced other curriculum initiatives such as block scheduling and eBooks. However it appeared to be the addition of blended learning that teachers perceived as being the most significant to the reconstitution.

All respondents credited Principal Allen for the plans and initiatives used at the school to support the reconstitution. One teacher commented that as long as Mr. Allen was the principal that she felt confident that the school would continue to lead the district in educational innovation. Another teacher expressed that he believed the plans created by the principal would yield the desired outcomes as long as teachers did what was required of them in the process. Based on responses, I believe relationships were strengthened at Madison due to the belief by school teachers that the plans constructed by the principal would greatly improve the standing and status of the school. One teacher commented further on the effectiveness of the reconstitution initiatives.

I believe the principal was very strategic in how the initiatives used for reconstitution would support our curriculum and learning in the building. At every step, teachers and staff were included in the rebuilding process of the school. This got all of us on board with the plans being laid out. He really approached the plans for instruction sensibly, using all researched based strategies. The way he went about this process helped build trust with Mr. Allen, teachers, and with students—all stakeholders to be exact.

Summary

This chapter examined data to understand the perceptions of trust held between student-teacher and parent-teacher in an urban middle school that experienced reconstitution as a result of failing to meet AYP for 6 consecutive years. This chapter also examined the leadership behaviors as perceived by teachers to have encouraged or damaged trust in the leader, colleagues, students, and parents.

Climate surveys completed by students, parents, and teachers were analyzed to measure the level of trust for each of the three groups. Survey results with standardized scores falling between 400 and 600 represented the average range of scores with a mean equal to 500. The level of trust for the three groups surveyed was average: (1) Student Trust in Teachers: 531; (2) Parent Trust in Teachers: 411; and (3) Teacher Trust in Students and Parents: 451.

Interviews indicated that the level of trust at the school is perceived to improve after the reconstitution mostly due to the leadership of the principal and the trust facets of benevolence, openness, and competence. Teachers expressed in interviews that trust in students and parents improved after reconstitution, while parents commented that they trusted the teachers hired after the reconstitution more than those in place prior to the reform. It was interesting to note that student trust in teachers may be more influenced by the familiarity a student has with a particular teacher than his or her instructional ability and capacity. Interview responses suggested that student trust in teachers may be more connected to teacher familiarity than the competence of the teacher. Familiarity is associated with the facet of benevolence. It is reasonable to assume that student bonds with teachers are likely to improve as more opportunities become available for the two parties to engage in discourse and interaction resulting in an increased sense of student benevolence in teachers. The one student who spent two years with teachers prior to the reconstitution commented that she trusted them more even though she performed better under the teachers hired after the reconstitution. She expressed that the teachers in place before the reconstitution understood her better than the teachers after the reconstitution.

The other students interviewed also indicated that they trusted the teachers more that they were more familiar with. I found it interesting that none of the students interviewed associated trust in teachers with instructional ability, teaching methodology, or learning outcomes.

Student achievement is linked to schools with high levels of trust (Cosner, 2009; Hoy, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Although the levels of trust were perceived by participants to improve after the reconstitution; the climate surveys measuring trust were in the average and not above average range. Student achievement data did reveal a slight growth increase after reconstitution; however the school did not meet AYP proficiency targets for any reporting group in the three subsequent years following the reconstitution.

Interviews revealed a number of leadership behaviors that were perceived by teachers to have encouraged trust in the leader, colleagues, students, and parents; with the most notable being the facets of benevolence, openness, and competence. Teachers expressed that their trust in the principal was heavily influenced by the level of care that he extended to them. They mentioned that he genuinely cared about them and that he had their best interest at heart. Teachers also commented that the level of care the principal imparted to all stakeholders inspired them to do the same. Teacher trust in students and parents developed as they intentionally worked to cultivate trusting relationships. The transparency embodied by the principal also influenced collegial trust. They mentioned that trust in the leader developed as he allowed them to play integral roles in the development of reconstitution initiatives. Interviews revealed that the openness of the

principal also influenced teacher trust in students and parents by encouraging them to improve student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This study aimed to examine the dimensions of trust in an urban middle school that was reconstituted due to failing to meet AYP under NCLB for six consecutive years. Meeting the demands of NCLB was a struggle for a number of urban schools as many performed below national averages (NCES, 2011, 2013a, 2013b). In the midst of school failure, urban school districts and schools aggressively pursue operational approaches and ideologies that may improve student achievement outcomes. One factor that is considered to improve learning outcomes in urban schools is trust (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Goddard et al., 2009; Hoy, 2002; Nevarez & Wood, 2007). It was my intention that the knowledge gained from this case study may serve beneficial to urban schools and districts facing similar challenges and circumstances.

In addition to studying teacher, parent, and student trust in the principal, I examined trust from the perspective of parent-teacher trust and student-teacher trust as these relationships have been underexplored in studies examining trust in schools. Current studies on parent-teacher and student-teacher trust have shown evidence that the relational dynamics between the two groups does impact achievement (Farrell, 2000; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Noguera, 2001); however the context in how trust is fostered among them, and their influence on urban school achievement is limited. I also found no evidence in the literature that exclusively examined the dynamics of trust in an urban

school that had been reconstituted. One primary goal in school reconstitution is to improve the culture of the school by introducing new faculty and staff (Mathis, 2009). Currently, there is little empirical evidence to know if school reconstitution actually works. The limited studies conducted on school reconstitution have garnered mixed results (Kruger et al., 2002; Rice & Croninger, 2005). Another area of interest in this case study was to investigate if the initiatives and plans developed to support the reconstitution had any impact on school relationships. I believe that the knowledge gained from this study will be useful to schools and districts considering reconstitution as a restructuring option.

Discussion of Findings

The need for low-performing urban schools to meet AYP under NCLB was discussed in the conceptual framework of this study. In studying the characteristics of urban schools that have improved, investigators have theorized that the quality of the relationships within the school makes a difference. Successful schools are characterized in the literature as exhibiting high levels of trust and cooperation among the leadership, faculty, staff, and parents (Farrell, 2000; Finn, 1989; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Goodenow & Grady, 1993). School achievement scores obtained in this study for the 3 years following reconstitution revealed a year-to-year increase in reading and math growth for the 2010, 2011, and 2012 cohorts observed. This is a positive takeaway from this study, as it does reveal some degree of improvement. However, the level of growth experienced fell significantly short of the state's proficiency targets—AYP was not met as a school or by any unique reporting group for the 3 years following reconstitution.

Data were collected in this case study to measure the level of student trust in teachers, parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents in a reconstituted urban middle school. Student achievement data were obtained to understand how the school performed on the state assessment before and after the 2011 reconstitution. Data were also gathered from teacher, student, and parent interviews. The information provided in interviews underlined factors that are perceived to have contributed to improved relationships between student-teacher and parent-teacher trust. The most significant factors were influenced by the trust factors of benevolence, openness, and competence. Additionally, teacher respondents provided a number of leadership behaviors and actions that encouraged faculty trust in the leader, students, and parents.

The initiatives developed to address the reconstitution required that teachers work collaboratively with students, parents, and colleagues in order to be implemented successfully. Trusting relationships between colleagues, student-teacher, and parent-teacher appeared to develop as a result of the increased interaction generated by the reconstitution plans. This is consistent with the literature that suggests that trust is influenced by the number of positive social exchanges experienced between groups and individuals (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Cranston, 2011). Relationships at Madison were perceived by participants to have improved after the reconstitution.

Levels of Student, Parent, and Teacher Trust

Studies examining student-teacher trust and parent-teacher trust are limited. Although the research base is narrow, there are related theories that have been studied that have been found to influence student-teacher trust and parent-teacher trust. Tschannen-Moran (2014) theorized that parents who trust teachers to care for their children believe that teachers would consistently do what is right on their child's behalf. Goddard et al., (2001) proposed that trust creates better learning environments for students by enabling and empowering productive connections between families and schools.

In this study, trust was measured using three climate surveys with: (1) Faculty Trust in Clients Scale (2) Student Trust Scale, and (3) Parent Trust in School Scale. Standardized scaled scores comparing the scores of Madison to those of a comparison sample of schools with a mean score of 500 were calculated for the faculty, student, and parent scores. The standardized score for the level of student trust in teachers was 531, while the scores fell below the mean on the other two surveys. The standardized score was 411 for the level of parent trust in teachers, and 451 for level of faculty trust in students and parents. Each parent interviewed mentioned that they trusted their child's teacher. Likewise, five teachers interviewed mentioned that they trusted students and parents. Based on the comments teachers and parents provided, the standardized scores below the mean on these two particular surveys contradicted my expectation.

Level of student trust in teachers. According to the student trust in teacher scale used in this study, the standardized score of 531 placed the level of student trust in

teachers at Madison slightly above the mean score of 500. This is important because the average level of student trust in teachers may have had an effect on student achievement outcomes and school improvement. Bryk and Schneider (2002) indicated that while trust alone does not guarantee success, schools with higher levels of trust have a better chance of improving than those with low trust. Romero (2010) concluded in her study of trust and achievement that students with high levels of trust in teachers perform better than those with low levels of trust in teachers. Students who do not trust their teachers may disengage from the learning process and create obstacles that may make it difficult to establish a sense of belonging with the school. It is not known if the level of student trust in teachers was impacted by the reconstitution due to not having data on student trust in teachers before the school reconstitution took place in 2011.

Level of parent trust in teachers. According to the parent trust in teacher scale used in this study, the standardized score of 411 placed the level of parent trust in teachers at Madison nearly a standard deviation below the standardized mean score of 500. This may have impacted student achievement as the literature maintains that students perform better when parents and teachers work collaboratively to support the best interest of the child (Cooper, 2007; Hong & Ho, 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2001). Students feel compelled to perform well when their parents hold their educational outcomes in high regard (Forsyth et al., 2005). By working in conjunction with teachers, parents send a signal to their children that they are concerned and committed to their educational success (Haystead & Marzano, 2009; Marzano, 2007). When parent trust in teachers is present, parents are described as working collaboratively with teachers (Bryk

& Schneider, 2002). Since we know that the level of parent trust in teachers was below average at the school, one might deduce that the level of parent-teacher collaboration was also low which may have negatively impacted student performance outcomes. As with student trust in teachers, I am unaware if the level of parent trust in teachers was impacted by the reconstitution due to not having data on the level of parent trust at Madison prior to the reconstitution.

Level of teacher trust in students and parents. According to the faculty in clients scale used in this study, the standardized score of 451 placed the level of teacher trust in students and parents at Madison below the standardized mean of 500. This may have impacted student learning outcomes and school climate. The literature has shown that teachers play a significant role in cultivating high quality relationships among students and parents. The actions taken by teachers to encourage high quality relationships with students, parents, and colleagues, are mentioned in the literature to have improved student achievement (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hoy, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Teacher trust in students and parents has been shown to play an important part in influencing student achievement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Noguera, 2001; Goddard et al., 2009; Goddard et al., 2001). When teachers have trust in students and parents, they hold themselves more accountable to the success of the student (Goddard et al., 2001; Louis, 2007). Trust then serves as a precondition that encourages meaningful student engagement, which subsequently influences student achievement (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003). This suggests that student achievement outcomes may be lessened in schools where teacher trust in students and parents is not present. The below average

level of teacher trust in students and parents at Madison may have resulted in less than ideal student achievement outcomes which had the potential to negatively impact AYP results.

Student Achievement Before and After the Reconstitution

In this study, I reviewed school achievement data to understand how test scores may have changed before and after the 2011 reconstitution. Cohort test data revealed that growth in reading and math increased each year after the reconstitution; but the school still failed to make AYP in any tested area or reporting group. The range of students passing the reading portion of the assessment improved slightly when compared to the range before the reconstitution. There was a more noticeable change in the range of students passing the math portion of the assessment when compared to the testing results prior to reconstitution. Yet, students did not come close to meeting the passing percentages required in reading and math to meet the state's proficiency targets. This is important because the primary purpose of reconstitution is to meet the state standard by changing the school's culture in order to influence achievement. Based on interview responses, the culture of the school did appear more positive after the reconstitution. Teachers commented that they experienced a more open relationship with colleagues and families; while students and parents spoke positively about improvements in student conduct, and instructional ability after the reconstitution. But even with the progress made in the school's culture, climate, and standardized testing after the reconstitution, a significant number of students continued to perform well below the performance targets established by the state. Based on the criteria of AYP, this still represented school failure

and served as evidence that the removal of faculty and staff does not guarantee that a school will meet the academic standard. This is similar to previous studies (CEP, 2009; Mathis, 2009; Rice & Malen, 2010; Scott & Kelleher, 2008) concluding that reconstitution alone is not the sole factor in improving student achievement. Reconstitution may be more effective when paired with other methods of school reform.

Teacher, Student, and Parent Perceptions of Trust Before and After the Reconstitution

Perceptions of trust before the reconstitution. Principal Allen was hired 1 year before the school reconstituted at the start of the 2010 school year. Prior to his tenure, school morale appeared to be low based on comments made by teachers, students, and parents. The general sentiment shared by participants described a school that was not operating effectively to meet the academic standards of the state. Teachers perceived the previous principal as inadequate, and considered him to be instrumental in the schools past failure. Students to a degree trusted the teachers in place before the reconstitution, but made negative remarks concerning their instructional abilities. Parents felt excluded from their child's learning and maintained that the school lacked appropriate oversight of student discipline. Organizational concerns of this nature complicate the formation of trust if staff and stakeholders perceive the environment to be insensible to their particular needs (Bryson, 2011; Cosner, 2009; Eley & Adendorff, 2011; Fulmer, 2006). Interview responses revealed a number of instances where the school and the staff did not demonstrate actions and behaviors associated with the formation of trust.

Candid communication reinforces the facet of openness (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). However, teacher and parent participants indicated communication was an area of concern. Teachers mentioned that Principal Nin seldom communicated with the faculty, while parents commented that the school did not keep them adequately informed. Trust is less likely to develop if one feels that another is not being forthcoming with information (C. Adams & Forsyth, 2009). It would have proven challenging to cultivate trust at Madison if the interaction among teachers, staff, and parents were insufficient or restricted.

Competence is the ability to perform a job as expected. The competence of the school's previous leadership emerged in this study as a concern before the reconstitution. Teachers interviewed about the school prior to the reconstitution spoke of various issues related to the professional capacity of the past principal. One teacher commented that Principal Nin lacked the ability to function as the school's leader. School leaders help to facilitate academic achievement by articulating a clear organizational vision, and by establishing suitable learning conditions for teachers and students (Leithwood et al., 2008; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). However, teachers interviewed for this study criticized the previous principal for his failure to establish an appropriate learning environment. Over half of the teachers interviewed condemned the principal for having a lack of vision. It was mentioned by a number of teachers that the principal appeared incapable of operating the school. This is important because teachers that trust the principal are more likely to work together to support his or her operational goals and objectives (Leithwood et al., 2008; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). Concerns regarding

competence were not all in reference to the previous leadership. Students interviewed made comments concerning the competence of teachers in place prior to the reconstitution. Based on responses, I believe that students were fond of the teachers in place before reconstitution; however they did not see them as being the most capable collection of instructors. In order for students to be successful in the classroom, teachers have to demonstrate that they have the knowledge needed to provide students with appropriate instruction and support (C. Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Stipek, 2002). One student referenced that the instructional abilities of teachers before the reconstitution were less than ideal. This is important as students who do not have trust in teachers may disengage from the learning process all together (Young, 2009). It is possible that a lack of competence may have had a negative impact on school improvement and academic achievement.

Urban schools that struggle academically are often overwhelmed with teachers that hold little expectation that students will learn (Farrell, 2000; Marzano et al., 2005). One teacher interviewed asserted that the majority of faculty before the reconstitution didn't believe that students were capable of achieving at appropriate levels. Three other teachers made similar comments. If these views are true, it is likely that teacher-student trust may have been adversely impacted prior to the reconstitution. The facet of benevolence involves the need to do what is considered right for the wellbeing of another. When one individual views another of not caring for him, trust is impaired as he may feel the need to protect himself, rather than engage in productive activity (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Reliability is the facet of trust that is concerned with predictability and consistency in one's behavior. Knowing what to expect from others is central to establishing trusting relationships. Trust requires an element of dependability—confidence that you can consistently count on another to do what is required of him or her. We often do not trust individuals that we view as unpredictable and undependable. Based on interviews, Principal Nin did not always conduct himself as expected by others. One teacher interviewed expressed that she found developing trust with Principal Nin difficult as a result of inconsistent messaging. This is important because the formation of trust is jeopardized when one is unable to predict the actions of another.

It is possible that the aforementioned factors experienced by teachers, students, and parents before the reconstitution not only had a negative impact on the formation of trust and school effectiveness, but that these factors may have also contributed to a culture of distrust.

Signs of distrust. Information shared in interviews revealed factors associated with distrust. Trust cannot take shape in the presence of distrust (Cosner, 2009; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Kochanek, 2005). Distrust results when the one we trust damages our expectations (Goddard et al., 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). In the absence of trust, individuals often feel a need to protect themselves. Schools operating with severe levels of distrust are described as being ineffective and unproductive (Marzano et al., 2005). Tschannen-Moran (2014) expressed that “the consequences of distrust in a school include deterioration of the quality and effectiveness of

communication and shared decision making, as well as a decline in the citizenship and commitment of the teachers” (p. 87).

Challenges to productivity emerged in a variety of forms based on interview responses. Teachers questioned the principal’s ability to articulate a clear and concise vision for the school. Teachers deemed communication with colleagues, parents, and school leadership to be inadequate. Teachers noted in interviews that they seldom worked collaboratively with colleagues. Based on interview responses, there did not appear to be much sense of a connection between teachers and school leadership. A few respondents mentioned that they felt as if they worked in isolation. All of these factors may have adversely affected the school’s academic performance as distrust often leads to feelings of suspicion, which negatively impacts student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005).

Prior to the reconstitution, teachers, students, and parents all made comments describing the school’s morale as low. School morale is often low in educational settings that experience extensive levels of distrust (Smith, Hoy, & Sweetland, 2001). When the morale of an organization is pervasively low, individuals often fail to take corrective action to improve matters (Solomon & Flores, 2001). One teacher interviewed referred to the morale and climate of the school as “toxic.” Other teachers interviewed about the school before the reconstitution expressed a sense of hopelessness as it concerned school improvement.

In schools where distrust exists, cultivating trust is difficult as individuals may be hesitant to extend trust to others due to their insecurities, bias, and apprehensions (Shelby, 2016). For trust to be restored in distrustful environments, it is incumbent for

school leaders to put systems in place that address the fractured relationships of those parties involved (Solomon & Flores, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Perceptions of trust after the reconstitution. Based on interview responses, teachers, parents, and students perceived that trust at Madison improved after the reconstitution. The need for the school to quickly show improvement appeared to unite the staff, parents, and students in a common goal. Teachers and parents expressed that they experienced a more open relationship with one another after the reconstitution. Students expressed that teachers appeared to be more invested in their academic outcomes. Students and parents referenced that the school took action after the reconstitution that demonstrated goodwill, and personal regard to students and families. From interviews, I sensed that the culture improved, and that relationships were strengthened among constituents. Student achievement data also reflected year-to-year growth after the reconstitution in reading and math. Although the school did appear to develop more trusting relationships after the reconstitution; unfortunately the improvements experienced still were not sufficient to meet the academic standards imposed by the state. During interviews, teachers spoke in-depth of the many research-based initiatives and strategies employed to boost student achievement. But what were often void from many of the conversations with teachers were discussions and examples that addressed the role that academic rigor played in school improvement planning. According to Marzano (2007), rigor is pushing yourself beyond what is easy. Rigorous curriculums in schools are often described as being focused, logical, and aptly challenging. Even in the presence of trust, students are unlikely to show academic

progress without some element of rigor present (Brewster & Railsback, 2003). Based on interview responses, I believe that the school attempted to improve culture and achievement by establishing trusting relationships. However, when you are a failing school, it is also essential to build appropriate levels of rigor into the academic program.

Based on interview responses, the school appeared to establish a greater sense of interdependence with staff, faculty, students, and parents after the reconstitution. This is important, as interdependence is critical to the cultivation of trust. Trust is required when the interests of one cannot be met without the aid of another. Several teachers noted in interviews that they felt more connected to colleagues, students, and parents, after the reconstitution took place. Student and parent interviews also lead me to believe that they too had established a more interdependent relationship with teachers and school leaders. Based on the literature, it is likely that a greater sense of trust was realized between groups as they risked vulnerability to work together in an attempt to improve student achievement.

The principal appeared to be the catalyst for the improved relationships experienced between constituents after the reconstitution. Teachers, students, and parents all made comments stating that Principal Allen played a significant role in guiding decisions aimed at improving trust relationships and the culture of the school. This is consistent with the literature that purports the behaviors and actions of the principal have a significant influence on the culture and climate of the school (Hattie, 2009; Hoy et al., 1992; Leithwood et al., 2008; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). The leadership demonstrated by Principal Allen appeared central to many of the school improvements noted by

participants of this study. Based on interview responses, the principal appeared intentional and deliberate about implementing researched based strategies targeted at improving school achievement and culture. Three teachers interviewed specifically noted how Principal Allen sought to improve school culture by intentionally engaging students, parents, and staff. Based on the reconstitution initiatives provided by teachers, the principal believed that trust was important to the school's success. It was mentioned in teacher interviews that the principal stressed the importance of relationships to the school's culture and improvement. Although the school failed to meet AYP after the reconstitution, there did appear to be improvements in areas related to trust that were credited to Principal Allen. Teachers mentioned that they worked more collaboratively after the reconstitution with colleagues, students, and parents. This is positive because working collaboratively is connected to the trust facet of benevolence. Communications, which is connected to the trust facet of openness, was mentioned by teachers and parents interviewed to be more effective after the reconstitution. Students and parents referenced that teachers were more competent after the reconstitution, while teachers expressed great confidence in the competence of the principal. Based on comments made during interviews, the leadership of the principal appeared to be highly related to the improvements in culture considered to take place after the reconstitution.

The literature maintains that school leaders are central to school improvement and achievement (Hattie, 2009; Hoy et al., 1992; Leithwood et al., 2008; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). The leadership of Principal Allen appeared to have a significant influence on the culture and climate of the school after the reconstitution. One teacher commented that

“Mr. Allen was the most capable, intelligent, and compassionate” school leader that she ever encountered in her professional career.

The literature informs us that one of the primary functions of reconstitution is to help the school establish a new cultural identity by employing new teachers and school leaders (Mathis, 2009; Rudo, 2001). This appeared to take shape after the reconstitution. Interview participants from each group indicated that the culture of the school improved significantly after the reconstitution. Trust between colleagues, student-teacher, and parent-teacher appeared to develop as the school instituted practices designed to improve academic achievement.

Teachers mentioned throughout the interviews that communication with faculty and staff became much more transparent after the reconstitution resulting in better school relationships. Parents also expressed that communication coming from the school had improved after the reconstitution. This is consistent with the literature which suggests that candid and effective communication between parties encourages trust and leads to a greater sense of openness (Hoy & Tarter, 2004; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). When one is open to another, you are more willing to freely share ideas and resources that may benefit organizational outcomes and goals. Based on interviews, teacher communication with students and parents centered more on student achievement after the reconstitution. According to interview responses, the relational dynamic between teachers and parents was strengthened as a result.

I sensed that the operational changes occurring after the reconstitution expressed to students and parents that the school cared about them—two parents interviewed made

comments to this effect. I believe parents felt more obligated to support their child's teacher due to the level of regard they perceived the school to extend to their children. Similarly, students appeared motivated to perform well for their teachers after the reconstitution. Each student expressed in his or her own way the need to show improvement. Based on responses, I believe that students viewed the school as making an investment in their success by equipping classrooms with upgraded technology, resources, and materials. In turn, I believe students reciprocated by working diligently to meet the expectations of their teachers, the principal, and the school. According to one teacher interviewed, parents and students reciprocated the trust extended to them, by working with teachers and staff to help the school meet its objectives. This is consistent with the literature which suggests that when one trusts in the benevolence of others, there is an expectation that they will act in accordance to what is in your best interest (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Cranston, 2011; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). The fundamental tenet of the facet of benevolence involves the desire to do what is right for one another. I believe that parents and students viewed the school's actions to focus on achievement as doing what was right for children.

The manner in which the reconstitution was approached appeared to inspire confidence in the faculty and staff, and is perceived to have improved trust relationships at the school. Interview responses suggested that teachers had trust in the abilities of the principal, and that students and parents had trust in the abilities of their teachers. This is important because teachers need to depend on the competencies of others to adequately influence student achievement (Baier, 1986; Hattie, 2009; Marzano et al., 2005;

Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Likewise, student and parent trust in teachers is partly shaped by their beliefs in the teacher's ability and skillset (Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). The more comfortable students and parents are with the competencies of teachers, the more likely they are to engage and participate in activities that advance student learning (Pennycuff, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Leadership Behaviors that Cultivate or Damage Trust in the Leader

Interviews revealed a number of leadership behaviors that were perceived by teachers to have encouraged trust in the leader, colleagues, students, and parents. Although all five facets of trust were demonstrated by the leader based on interview responses; behaviors expressing benevolence, openness, and competence were mentioned the most often. The majority of teachers interviewed mentioned that their trust in the principal was largely attributed to the level of care he extended to them and others. Two teachers mentioned that they were motivated to develop caring relationships with students and parents due to observing how the principal interacted with school constituents.

The transparency of the principal was often mentioned by teachers as being instrumental in developing trust in him and in others. Transparency is associated with the trust facet of openness. It was the openness of the principal that inspired a few teachers to build better relationships with parents. According to three teachers interviewed, the principal spoke candidly about the poor relationship that existed between teachers and parents. After the principal expressed his concerns with teachers regarding this matter, the three stated that they felt obligated to establish better relationships with parents. This

is supportive of the literature suggesting candid conversations have the potential to give schools strategic advantages when honest information flows freely (Haystead & Marzano, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

The level of competence exhibited by the leader also appeared to play a role in the cultivation of trust between teachers and families. Interviews revealed teachers believed in the intellectual capacity of the principal. It was clear from speaking to teachers that many of them followed his direction because they trusted that he knew what he was doing. Teacher trust in student and parents was partly shaped due to teachers having confidence in the reconstitution plans developed by the principal. A number of teachers mentioned in interviews that they acted to improve the relationships with students and parents due to the belief they had in the principal, and in the plans he constructed to support the reconstitution. If this is true, teachers to degree established relationships with students and parents as a result of the confidence they had in the competence and decision making of the principal. Had they not trusted the principal, it is possible they may have challenged reconstitution initiatives, which could have had a negative impact on student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships.

How Reconstitution Initiatives Strengthened or Weakened Trust Relationships

The reconstitution initiatives and plans targeted the areas of instruction, student evaluation, family support, and student enrichment. Teachers considered the plans effective and perceived them as strengthening relationship in the school mainly by the trust facets of benevolence, openness, and competence. Improved relationships appeared to take shape mostly through increased interaction between the school and its

constituents. According to teachers interviewed, the majority of the plans constructed required teachers, students, and parents to work closely together.

Three teachers specifically noted that one objective of the reconstitution plans was to establish a better relationship with students and parents. A number of the initiatives developed focused on the needs of parents and students. The parent initiatives provided families with social services, technology, and improved communication with the school. The majority of student initiatives focused on academic and after school programs. Teachers indicated that they established better relationships with students and parents as result of the initiatives implemented. Benevolence is rooted in the perceived good intentions and motives of others (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). When one is benevolent, there is an expectation that he will act in goodwill and not bring undue harm to another. Trust at Madison likely developed as parents and students genuinely viewed the school as acting in their best interest.

The reconstitution initiatives appeared to strengthen trust between colleagues by establishing opportunities for open and honest discourse. The primary focus of the reconstitution was to improve student achievement outcomes. To this end, the school developed reconstitution initiatives focused on monitoring and analyzing student performance data. As a result, teachers met often in different forums to review and discuss student data. According to interview responses, the data meetings encouraged honest dialogue and the sharing of resources and ideas. A number of teachers indicated that they grew closer and more supportive of one another as a result of these particular initiatives. This is not surprising considering that when one is open to another; it creates

reciprocity in trust where the other may feel encouraged to do the same (Hoy & Tarter, 2004).

The plans and initiatives developed to support the reconstitution appeared to have an impact on teacher trust in the principal. All of the teachers interviewed supported the school's reconstitution plans. Some teachers became excited in interviews when speaking of the initiatives developed by the principal to support the efforts of the reconstitution. A few teachers interviewed enthusiastically celebrated the blended learning program and instructional block schedule. Respondents also spoke about the competence of the principal with just as much admiration. Some remarks made in the interviews conducted indicated that trust in the principal partly contributed to the initiatives developed to support the reconstitution. Based on interview responses, I believe that teachers perceived that they could depend on the intellect of the principal to successfully guide them through the reconstitution process.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Over the past 20 years, the study of trust in schools has received increased attention due to it being linked to school effectiveness (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Cosner, 2009; Hoy, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Fostering trust seems to be an important first step towards reform, but in this school did not lead to substantive increases in test scores. The results of this study contribute to the growing body of literature investigating trust and achievement by examining the behaviors of teachers, students, and parents that may encourage student-teacher and parent-teacher trust. This study is unique because it examined trust and improvement in an urban school that chose to reconstitute due to

having restructuring sanctions imposed under NCLB. The results of this research also contribute to the limited literature on school reconstitution. There are several implications that can be gathered from the findings of this study that would be beneficial to educational policymakers, district leaders, and school level leaders interested in cultivating trust in urban schools. Table 15 lists the general findings and related recommendations.

Table 15

Study Findings and the Related Policy and Practice Recommendations

| Findings | Related Recommendations |
|--|--|
| The trust level of student trust in teachers was slightly above the mean, and below the mean for parent trust in teachers, and teacher trust in students and parents. | Implement strategies that have been found to cultivate the growth of high trust relationships in schools, such as fostering an environment that demonstrates regard for others, working collaboratively, engaging in open communication, keeping your word, conveying professional competence, and being dependable to others. |
| Students did not meet AYP for any year following reconstitution; however 2010 to 2012 cohort data shows improvement each year following the reconstitution in math and reading, although sixth grade scores were glaringly low when compared to the passing percentages in seventh and eighth grades for each of the three cohorts observed. | Introduce early benchmark assessments for incoming six grade students in order to address potential learning challenges prior to state testing. Incorporate a growth model into the formula used to determine student proficiency levels in order to potentially increase the number of student meeting the state academic standard. Work in cooperation with the district and elementary feeder schools to explore if connections or gaps exists that may negatively impact grade six test results. |
| The most significant factor of student and parent trust in the teacher was attributed to the perception that the teacher’s actions and behaviors demonstrated care and goodwill to the student and parent. The most significant factor of teacher trust in students and parents was attributed to school initiatives explicitly developed to improve achievement and school culture by cultivating trusting relationships with students and parents. | Help teachers to express personal regard and goodwill to students by describing distinct actions that can be taken to achieve this end. Develop plans and initiatives specifically targeted to cultivate teacher trust in students and parents. |
| The primary leadership behaviors and actions perceived by teachers to cultivate trust in the leader and constituents are associated with the facets of benevolence, openness, and competence. | Present school leaders with behaviors and actions that demonstrate they are caring, transparent, and knowledgeable. |
| The reconstitution plans and initiatives were perceived by teachers to strengthen relationships at the school by encouraging goodwill between the school and families, fostering openness among the staff, and by developing thorough and well-intended initiatives. | Strengthen school relationships by developing initiatives that are thorough and well planned which call attention to personal regard for students and parents, and encourage a culture of openness among the staff. |

Recommendation 1. The findings of this study revealed that the level of student trust in teachers was slightly above the mean, but below the mean for parent trust in

teachers and teacher trust in students and parents. The literature suggests that urban schools considered to be successful are often characterized as being high trusting environments (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Hoy, 2002; Sebring & Bryk, 2000). Although climate and culture appeared to improve after the reconstitution according to respondents, the standardized results for all three climate surveys administered at Madison were below the higher range of scores. To this end, it would be prudent for urban schools to support improvement efforts by establishing educational settings with high trust levels. District and school level leaders should establish processes and structures that focus on creating the appropriate social conditions necessary for cultivating high trust relationships. Practices that have been found to encourage trust in this case study include but are not limited to establishing a welcoming environment, expressing a sense of benevolence to all constituents, developing educational initiatives that create dependency through collaboration, and focusing on schoolwide academic achievement.

Recommendation 2. One part of this study examined the student passing percentages on the state assessment before and after reconstitution. The findings revealed the passing percentages after the reconstitution in Grade 6 reading and math to be considerably low when compared to subsequent scores in seventh and eighth grade. Policy makers and school level leaders may want to consider introducing a new benchmark assessment that may be more effective in predicting testing outcomes for incoming sixth grade students. The use of effective benchmarking may allow the school to rapidly identify students who may benefit from unique interventions and lesson plans. In this case, the school may likely benefit by having as much time as possible to work

with Grade 6 students before standardized testing. Also, if students perform better in Grade 6, it is possible that the cohort learning gap is somewhat reduced in subsequent years.

Recommendation 3. The findings revealed that 4% of students in the 2011 cohort passed the reading section in grade six compared to 28% in Grade 8. Similarly, in math, 15% of students in the 2011 cohort passed the math section in Grade 6 compared to 44% that passed in Grade 8. The low passing percentages experienced in Grade 6 would require students to show significant growth in subsequent years in order to meet the state standard in math and reading. Policy makers may want to consider incorporating a growth model into the state formula used to determine student proficiency levels. In the case of Madison, students showed significant progress between sixth and seventh grade; however, their efforts and the efforts of their teachers went unnoticed in the proficiency model used by the state. In the 2011 cohort, 19% of test takers reached proficiency in reading between Grades 6 and 7. Although they fell short of the state's target percentage, the growth was substantial and displayed a positive trajectory. Growth models are particularly valuable in districts and school's like Madison that historically score below the proficiency cut scores (Herman et al., 2008). By employing a growth model, students would be allowed additional time to progress toward the targeted goals.

Recommendation 4. The findings revealed that Grade 6 passing scores in reading and math after the reconstitution were significantly low, when compared to Grades 7 and 8 results in the same years. In the 3 years following reconstitution, 13% was the highest Grade 6 passing percentage in reading, while 19% was the highest math passing

percentage achieved—both scores were realized in 2012. Based on these findings, school district and school level leaders confronted with similar concerns should work with elementary feeder schools, for the purpose of reviewing student assessment data, grade level benchmarks, and curriculum, to determine if any connections or gaps exists that may explain why grade six students consistently perform below their seventh and eighth grade counterparts on state tests. In this study, understanding how grade six students performed on the state test prior to attending Madison, may have aided school and district level leaders, by determining if the concern should have first been addressed at the elementary or middle school.

Recommendation 5. The information obtained from interviews identified behaviors associated with benevolence and personal regard as the most critical facets influencing student and parent trust in the teacher. This is consistent with studies that have shown behaviors associated with benevolence to be the most salient factor in the cultivation of student and parent trust (Byrk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Student trust in teachers appeared to take shape largely due to the familiarity students had with the teachers and the sense that teachers wanted what was best for them. Similarly, parent trust in teachers was fostered when the behaviors and actions of the teacher demonstrated that they cared about the parent and their child. Based on these findings, it would behoove school leaders to address strategies found in this case study with teachers that have been expressed to demonstrate personal regard for students and parents. Student and parent trust in teachers has the potential to improve student

achievement in urban school environments (Goddard et al., 2009; Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010).

Recommendation 6. It is necessary that parent trust in teachers and teacher trust in parents exist collectively; if not, the benefits of trust are not likely to fully develop (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Cranston, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). While personal regard for students and parents appeared to be valued by the teachers interviewed, teacher trust in parents and students took shape largely due to the development of specific plans and initiatives aimed at improving school culture and achievement by fostering trusting relationships with students and parents. In this study, the development of teacher trust in students and parents was intentional. Teacher trust in students and parents appeared to develop due to increased interaction and social exchanges. Once positive teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships were cultivated, teachers appeared to be more invested in meeting the academic needs of their students. Based on these findings, district and school leaders should take measures to develop unique initiatives and plans for the purpose of cultivating teacher trust in students and parents.

Recommendation 7. The findings of this study revealed that the leadership behaviors and actions associated with the facets of benevolence, openness, and competence had the largest impact on teacher trust in the leader, collegial trust, and teacher trust in student and parents. As a result, district level leaders should be motivated to take measures that encourage leaders to exhibit behaviors that demonstrate that they are caring, transparent, and knowledgeable. A number of behaviors and actions

demonstrating these qualities can be found in this study. Understanding what leaders do to garner trust and influence instructional behaviors may help school leaders to play a more critical role in the student achievement process. If a school is to benefit from the advantages that result from high trust environments, it is the responsibility of the school leader to cultivate and sustain trustworthy relationships with constituents (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998).

Recommendation 8. In this study, teachers provided a number of initiatives developed to support the efforts of the school reconstitution. The findings revealed that the plans employed are perceived to have strengthened relationships at Madison primarily by the trust facets of benevolence, openness, and competence. Many of the plan initiatives implemented to support the reconstitution appeared to be thorough, and viewed by teachers as being capable of producing the desired outcomes. Teachers interviewed mentioned that most plans were researched based and well vetted for effectiveness by the staff and other stakeholders. Their belief in the initiatives developed to support the reconstitution encouraged teachers to work collaboratively with others to ensure that the plans were effectively carried out. To this end, it may prove beneficial for school leaders to advance trust relationships by intentionally incorporating well planned initiatives into the curriculum that express goodwill to students and parents, and provides opportunities for teachers to engage openly with colleagues. Doing so has the potential to enhance the school's level of trust, which may lead to improved academic outcomes. These findings may be particularly useful for district and school level leaders in urban settings that are interested in developing school initiatives supportive of school improvement.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this case study contributes to the current body of knowledge examining trust in urban schools by identifying particular actions and behaviors that can be taken to cultivate parent-teacher trust, student-teacher trust, and teacher trust in the leader. The findings of this study also add to the limited body of knowledge examining school reconstitution by identifying the initiatives taken by one school to support reconstitution efforts. Although important work on the cultivation of trust in urban schools has been conducted (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Goddard et al., 2009; Goodenow & Grady, 1993; Noguera, 2001, Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Wentzel, 1997), there are areas that emerged from this case study which could benefit from further research.

Parent-Teacher Trust and Student-Teacher Trust

Further investigation on parent-teacher and student-teacher trust is needed as a result of the lack of empirical studies conducted on the topic. Given the positive but limited implications of parent-teacher and student-teacher trust evidenced in the literature, it would be beneficial to school districts, school leaders, and educational practitioners to gather a better understanding of how trust is best cultivated within this particular dynamic. Future research needs to investigate the qualities and antecedents that lead students and parents to trust in teachers, and teachers to trust in student and parents. Are there specific teacher behaviors and actions that have a greater influence on the development of parent and student trust in teachers? Are there particular instructional practices impacting the formation of parent and student trust in teachers? What are the chief barriers impacting the cultivation of parent-teacher and student-teacher trust? Does

family structure (married, divorced, single mother, single father) impact the formation of parent-teacher and student-teacher trust? Having answers to these questions could provide strategies to school districts and schools that could be used to improve instruction and school climate.

Effectiveness of School Reconstitution

Although research has been conducted on school reconstitution, the number of empirical studies remains limited. My study examined student performance before and after the reconstitution process. Findings revealed an improvement in school culture and year-to-year growth in reading and math scores after the reconstitution. However, the school still failed to meet the achievement goals of NCLB 3 years after reconstituting. Given the urgency of many low-performing schools to meet the academic standards of the state, it would behoove policy makers, school districts, and school leaders to acquire extensive data on the execution and sustaining phases of the reconstitution process. There are questions concerning reconstitution in which the body of knowledge and practitioners can benefit from future research. Does school reconstitution have a greater impact in one achievement content area than another? Do a school's physical components (class size, teacher ratio, student demographic, grade level, experience of the teacher) influence achievement outcomes in reconstituted schools? Having answers to these questions could provide educational decision makers with valuable information needed to determine if school reconstitution is appropriate to meet their unique objectives and requirements.

Final Thoughts

The results of this case study indicates that cultivating trusting relationships between teachers and students, and teachers and parents improves school culture and are essential early steps to take towards school improvement and achievement. Although improved relationships and school reconstitution were not sufficient in this study to meet the academic standards imposed by the state, the school appeared to operate more effectively after the school reconstitution. Improved levels of trust experienced by teachers, students, and parents in this study were perceived to improve school culture and trust relationships at the school. All three cohorts observed after the reconstitution showed increased reading and math growth on the state assessment. Many of the school initiatives and plans introduced to support the school reconstitution efforts lead to improved relationships between parent-teacher, student-teacher, and faculty. This is important because the attitudes of teachers, students, and parents influence student achievement (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Corbet et al., 2005). Improved levels of trust at Madison created a more pleasant school climate and culture, allowing the school to focus more intently on teaching and learning. This is noteworthy because the many risk factors associated with urban schools result in learning conditions that are often not ideal for optimal teaching and learning to take shape. If urban schools are to achieve, they must establish learning conditions that are well suited to this end. Based on the findings of this case study, I would suggest that low-performing urban schools incorporate into their improvement plans, initiatives that are uniquely constructed to advance trusting relationships between the school and its constituents. As the pressure mounts for urban

schools to show significant improvement, district and school level leaders of low-performing schools must be willing to embrace social and relational factors that contribute to student achievement and school improvement.

Appendix A

Letter of Consent

Dear

As a doctoral candidate at The College of William and Mary, I am seeking your permission to participate in my dissertation research study examining the influence that trustworthy relationships have on student achievement. I am interested in understanding how student and parent perspectives of trust in teachers and teacher perspectives of trust in students and parents, influence student achievement in an urban middle school with a reconstituted staff. In addition, I also explore in this study the leadership behaviors that staff and teachers consider important to cultivate trust in the school leader, staff, and in students and parents.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and is limited exclusively to being interviewed. The interview will be conducted by phone and will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The information gathered will contribute to the knowledge concerning trust and student achievement in public schools. Risks to you in this study are minimal. You may feel a sense of inconvenience or obligation in relation to the completion of the interview. The results of this research study may be published, however all data obtained will be kept in secured files in accordance with the standards of the university and all required regulations. Your responses from the interview will not contain any identifying information. Also, you as a participant are not required to answer all questions asked and hold the right to withdraw your consent and participation from this study at any time. The full results of the study will be provided to you electronically. If you prefer a mailed copy, please forward your request to ldmoses@email.wm.edu.

You may indicate your interest in participating in this study by signing below. Also note by signing this form that you acknowledge that you are at least 18 years of age or older. If you have any questions or concerns pertaining to your participation in this research study, please contact LaMarr Moses, researcher at 954-864-7714 (email: ldmoses@email.wm.edu) or Dr. Megan Tschannen-Moran, Dissertation Committee Chairperson at (757) 221-2187 (email: mxtsch@wm.edu).

Please read the Consent Agreement before proceeding with the interview. Thank you very much for your time and consideration of my request.

Date

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Appendix B

Student Trust Survey

| Student Survey | | | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------|-----|----------------|-----|-----|
| <i>Directions:</i> Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each of the statements about your school by filling in the bubbles on the right, choosing from (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (4) Agree, or (5) Strongly Agree. | | Strongly Disagree | | Strongly Agree | | |
| 1. | Teachers are always ready to help. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 2. | Teachers are easy to talk to at this school. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 3. | Students learn a lot from teachers in this school. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 4. | Students at this school can depend on teachers for help. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 5. | Teachers at this school do a terrific job. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 6. | Teachers at this school really listen to students. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 7. | Teachers always do what they are supposed to do. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 8. | Students are well cared for at this school. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 9. | Teachers at this school are good at teaching. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 10. | Teachers at this school are always honest with me. | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |

Appendix C

Parent Trust Survey

| Parent Survey | | Strongly Disagree | Strongly Agree |
|---|--|-------------------|----------------|
| <p>Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of your perceptions of your child's school. Your answers are anonymous and you may skip any item you are uncomfortable answering. Please indicate the extent that you agree or disagree with each of the statements about your school, marking in the columns on the right, ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (6) Strongly Agree.</p> | | | |
| 1. | Teachers at my child's school are good at teaching. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 2. | Students can depend on teachers for help. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 3. | This school keeps me well informed. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 4. | Teachers are willing to go the extra mile to help my child. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 5. | Teachers at this school are trustworthy. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 6. | Teachers at my child's school are helpful. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 7. | I trust that the school's personnel are looking out for my child's best interests. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 8. | School personnel listen to me if I have a concern. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 10. | People at the school care about my child. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 11. | Teachers at my child's school are fair. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 11. | My child has access to extra help at school if needed. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 12. | Teachers at my child's school do a terrific job. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 13. | I am kept informed of my child's progress. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 14. | I can get help for my child from the school if needed. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |
| 15. | I can reach my child's teacher(s) easily. | ① | ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ |

Appendix E

Student Trust in Teachers Scoring Directions

The Student Trust in Faculty Scale (Adams & Forsyth, 2009) measures the level of trust students have for their teachers. It is based upon the five-facet model of trust described in this book. Adams and Forsyth developed this measure to “capture student perceptions and recollections of teacher behavior, which allow for judgments to be made about their relative openness, benevolence, reliability, competence, and honesty.”

Scoring Directions for Student Survey

Step 1: Calculate the average score for each survey participant by taking the mean of all 10 items of the Student Trust in Faculty survey.

Step 2: Calculate the Grand mean score of Student Trust in Faculty for your school by taking an average of all of the participants’ individual scores.

Step 3: Compute the Standardized Scores for the Student Trust in Faculty: In this step you will convert your school score to a standardized score with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100, making comparison with other schools possible. First compute the difference between your school score on student trust in the school (STF) and the mean for the normative sample. For a middle school, this would mean $(STF - 3.142)$. Then multiply the difference by one hundred $[100(STF - 3.142)]$. Next divide the product by the standard deviation of the normative sample (.861). Then add 500 to the result. You have computed a standardized score Standard Score for Student Trust in Teachers.

For Middle Schools, calculate standardized trust scores using the following formulas:

Standard Score for Student Trust in Faculty (STF) = $100(STP - 3.142)/.861 + 500$

Appendix F

Parent Trust in Teachers Scoring Directions

The Parent Trust in School Scale is a 15 item measure that assesses parent perceptions of the benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence of school personnel. Items that compose this scale were adapted from a ten-item measure of Parent Trust in Schools and a ten item measure of Parent Trust in Principal developed by Forsyth and Adams (Forsyth, Adams, & Hoy, 2011), with some alternate items included to capture additional aspects of parents perceptions of schools and school personnel.

Scoring Directions for Parent Trust in School Survey

Step 1: Calculate the average score for each survey participant by taking the mean of all 15 items.

Step 2: Calculate the Grand mean score for your school by taking an average of all of the participants' individual scores.

Step 3: Compute the Standardized Scores for the Parent Trust in the School: In this step you will convert your school score to a standardized score with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100, making comparison with other schools possible. First compute the difference between your school score on parent trust of the school scale (PaTS) and the mean for the normative sample. For a middle school, that would mean (PaTS – 4.687). Then multiply the difference by one hundred [100(PaTS – 4.687)]. Next divide the product by the standard deviation of the normative sample (.988). Then add 500 to the result. You have computed a standardized score Standard Score for Parent Trust in the School.

Middle Schools, calculate standardized trust scores using the following formulas:
Standard Score for Parent Trust in School (PTS) = $100(STP - 4.687)/.988 + 500$

Appendix G

Teacher Trust in Students and Parents Scoring Directions

The *Faculty Trust in Clients* (students and parents) scale includes 9 items. It can be used at the elementary, middle school or high school levels. It is interesting to note that when teachers were asked about their trust of students and parents separately, the results were so closely aligned that they were statistically indistinguishable and had to be combined for analysis.

Scoring Directions for Faculty Survey

Step 1: Calculate the average score for each survey participant by taking the mean of all 9 items.

Step 2: Calculate the Grand mean score for your school by taking an average of all of the participants' individual scores.

Step 3: Compute the Standardized Scores for the Faculty Trust in Students and Parents: In this step you will convert your school score to a standardized score with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100, making comparison with other schools possible. First, compute the difference between your school score on faculty trust of the students and parents (FTSP) and the mean for the normative sample. For a middle school, this would mean (FTSP – 3.420). Then multiply the difference by one hundred [100(FTSP – 3.420)]. Next divide the product by the standard deviation of the normative sample (.466). Then add 500 to the result. You have computed a standardized score Standard Score for Faculty Trust in the Students and Parents.

For Middle Schools, calculate standardized trust scores using the following formulas:
Standard Score for Faculty Trust in Clients (FTSP) = $100(\text{FTSP} - 3.420)/.466 + 500$

Appendix H

Parent Interview Protocol

1. To what extent do you feel that your child has received a quality education at Madison? What have been the specific areas in which you have been pleased with the quality of your child's experience? What have been areas in which you have been disappointed?
2. To what extent have you felt welcomed as a parent to the school? Can you provide an example that illustrates how the school welcomed or failed to welcome you?
3. How would you describe your relationship with your child's teachers before the school reconstitution?
4. How would you describe your relationship with your child's teachers after the school reconstitution?
5. How would you describe your relationship with administration before the school reconstitution?
6. How would you describe your relationship with administration after the school reconstitution?
7. To what extent did you consider the teachers and administration to be trustworthy before the school reconstitution? Can you give an example that illustrates why you felt the way you did?
8. To what extent did you consider the teachers and administration to be trustworthy after the school reconstitution? Can you give an example that illustrates why you held the level of trust that you did?

9. How did the school reconstitution impact how you established trust with teachers and administration?
10. To what extent do you feel that the school reconstitution had an effect on the quality of education your child received? How so?
11. To what extent do you feel that the school reconstitution was successful? Which elements would you consider successful and which not?
12. Is there anything else that you would like to share concerning the school reconstitution that took place at Madison?

Appendix I
Student Interview Protocol

1. How would you describe the quality of the education you received at Madison?
2. How would you describe the relationship you had with teachers before the school reconstitution?
3. How would you describe the relationship you had with teachers after the school reconstitution?
4. To what extent did you feel that your teachers were helpful before the school reconstitution? Can you give me an example for why you felt as you did?
5. To what extent did you feel that your teachers were helpful after the school reconstitution? Can you give me an example about how things changed?
6. To what extent would you say there was a difference in the teaching abilities of your teachers before and after the school reconstitution?
7. Do you feel that you learned more before or after the school reconstitution? Please explain.
8. To what extent did you trust your teachers before the school reconstitution? Can you give me an example of why or why not?
9. To what extent did you trust your teachers after the school reconstitution? Can you give me an example of why or why not?
10. Is there anything more you would like to share concerning the school reconstitution that took place at Madison?

Appendix J

Teacher Interview Protocol – Leadership Behaviors

1. What behaviors do you associate with someone who is considered trustworthy?
2. What actions of your school leaders did you feel encouraged or failed to encourage trust among students, faculty, staff, and parents? How have you seen those dynamics evident at Madison since the reconstitution?
3. Can you give me some examples of the behaviors of your school leaders that expressed or failed to express benevolence, kindness, and compassion?
4. Can you give me some examples of the behaviors of your school leaders that expressed or failed to express honesty and integrity?
5. Openness is a process by which people make themselves vulnerable to others by sharing information, influence, and control. How did your school leaders demonstrate or not demonstrate openness?
6. What actions did your school leaders take or not take to demonstrate dependability or reliability?
7. What behaviors of your school leaders conveyed or failed to convey a sense of competence? Is there anything that you would like to share concerning trustworthy leadership behaviors?

Appendix K
Teacher Interview Protocol – Reconstitution Initiatives

1. What plans, programs, or activities were developed to support the reconstitution efforts of the school? To what extent do you feel they were effective? What would you say contributed to their success or lack of success?
2. To what extent do you believe that the plans, programs, or activities developed to support the reconstitution efforts of the school encouraged trust between teachers and students? How did these efforts manifest greater or less trust?
3. To what extent do you believe that the plans, programs, or activities developed to support the reconstitution efforts of the school encouraged trust between teachers and parents? How did these dynamics play out?
4. To what extent do you believe that the plans, programs, or activities developed to support the reconstitution efforts of the school encouraged faculty trust? How did this play out?
5. In what ways did you find developing trustworthy relationships in a school with a reconstituted staff to be challenging? How so?
6. How would you describe the level of trust between teachers and students prior to school reconstitution? How did these dynamics play out?
7. How would you describe the level of trust between teachers and parents prior to school reconstitution? How did these dynamics play out?

8. How would you describe the level of trust between colleagues prior to school reconstitution? How did these dynamics play out?
9. Is there anything that you think the school can do to improve the level of trust at Madison?
10. Is there anything more that you would like me to know about the effects of the reconstitution on Madison?

Appendix L
Interview Protocol Categories

| Interview Question | Relationship | Behavior | Performance | Concluding |
|--|--------------|----------|-------------|------------|
| Parent Interviews | | | | |
| 1. To what extent do you feel that your child has received a quality education at Madison? What have been the specific areas in which you have been pleased with the quality of your child's experience? What have been areas in which you have been disappointed? | | | X | |
| 2. To what extent have you felt welcomed as a parent to the school? Can you provide an example that illustrates how the school welcomed or failed to welcome you? | X | X | | |
| 3. How would you describe your relationship with your child's teachers before the school reconstitution? | X | | | |
| 4. How would you describe your relationship with your child's teachers after the school reconstitution? | X | | | |
| 5. How would you describe your relationship with administration before the school reconstitution? | X | | | |
| 6. How would you describe your relationship with administration after the school reconstitution? | X | | | |
| 7. To what extent did you consider the teachers and administration to be trustworthy before the school reconstitution? Can you give an example that illustrates why you felt the way you did? | X | X | | |
| 8. To what extent did you consider the teachers and administration to be trustworthy after the school reconstitution? Can you give an example that illustrates why you held the level of trust that you did? | X | X | | |
| 9. How did the school reconstitution impact how you established trust | X | X | | |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| with teachers and administration? | | | | |
| 10. To what extent do you feel that the school reconstitution had an effect on the quality of education your child received? How so? | | | X | |
| 11. To what extent do you feel that the school reconstitution was successful? Which elements would you consider successful and which not? | | | X | |
| 12. Is there anything else that you would like to share concerning the school reconstitution that took place at Madison? | | | | X |
| Student Interviews | | | | |
| 1. How would you describe the quality of the education you received at Madison? | | | X | |
| 2. How would you describe the relationship you had with teachers before the school reconstitution? | X | X | | |
| 3. How would you describe the relationship you had with teachers after the school reconstitution? | X | X | | |
| 4. To what extent did you feel that your teachers were helpful before the school reconstitution? Can you give me an example for why you felt as you did? | X | X | X | |
| 5. To what extent did you feel that your teachers were helpful after the school reconstitution? Can you give me an example about how things changed? | X | X | X | |
| 6. To what extent would you say there was a difference in the teaching abilities of your teachers before and after the school reconstitution? | | | X | |
| 7. Do you feel that you learned more before or after the school reconstitution? Please explain. | | | X | |
| 8. To what extent did you trust your teachers before the school reconstitution? Can you give me an example of why or why not? | X | X | | |
| 9. To what extent did you trust your teachers after the school reconstitution? Can you give me an example of why or why not? | X | X | | |
| 10. Is there anything more you would like to share concerning the | | | | X |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| school reconstitution that took place at Madison? | | | | |
| Teacher Interviews | | | | |
| 1. What behaviors do you associate with someone who is considered trustworthy? | | X | | |
| 2. What actions of your school leaders did you feel encouraged or failed to encourage trust among students, faculty, staff, and parents? How have you seen those dynamics evident at Madison since the reconstitution? | | X | | |
| 3. Can you give me some examples of the behaviors of your school leaders that expressed or failed to express benevolence, kindness, and compassion? | | X | | |
| 4. Can you give me some examples of the behaviors of your school leaders that expressed or failed to express honesty and integrity? | | X | | |
| 5. Openness is a process by which people make themselves vulnerable to others by sharing information, influence, and control. How did your school leaders demonstrate or not demonstrate openness? | | X | | |
| 6. What actions did your school leaders take or not take to demonstrate dependability or reliability? | | X | | |
| 7. What behaviors of your school leaders conveyed or failed to convey a sense of competence? Is there anything that you would like to share concerning trustworthy leadership behaviors? | | X | | X |
| 8. What plans, programs, or activities were developed to support the reconstitution efforts of the school? To what extent do you feel they were effective? What would you say contributed to their success or lack of success? | | | X | |
| 9. To what extent do you believe that the plans, programs, or activities developed to support the reconstitution efforts of the school | X | X | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| encouraged trust between teachers and students? How did these efforts manifest greater or less trust? | | | | |
| 10. To what extent do you believe that the plans, programs, or activities developed to support the reconstitution efforts of the school encouraged trust between teachers and parents? How did these dynamics play out? | X | X | | |
| 11. To what extent do you believe that the plans, programs, or activities developed to support the reconstitution efforts of the school encouraged faculty trust? How did this play out? | X | X | | |
| 12. In what ways did you find developing trustworthy relationships in a school with a reconstituted staff to be challenging? How so? | X | | | |
| 13. How would you describe the level of trust between teachers and students prior to school reconstitution? How did these dynamics play out? | X | X | | |
| 14. How would you describe the level of trust between teachers and parents prior to school reconstitution? How did these dynamics play out? | X | X | | |
| 15. How would you describe the level of trust between colleagues prior to school reconstitution? How did these dynamics play out? | X | X | | |
| 16. Is there anything that you think the school can do to improve the level of trust at Madison? | | | | X |
| 17. Is there anything more that you would like me to know about the effects of the reconstitution on Madison? | | | | X |

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