Guiding Site Leaders to Effectively Lead Change

by

Jennifer S. Baldwin

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved April 2022 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Eugene Judson, Chair
Bobbie Plough
Carl Hermanns

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2022

ABSTRACT

Leading change is one of the most daunting tasks for K–12 site leaders. It is well established that the site leaders' influence on student learning is profound, and the importance of implementing changes to improve practice is paramount. This action research study aimed to examine how a research-based professional development and coaching program could impact site leaders' attitudes, beliefs, practices, and the teachers' perceptions. The study occurred over 14 weeks at a public elementary school. The intervention contained two professional development sessions, which included learning and planned implementation of research-based strategies and weekly coaching sessions once the school year started. The theories that supported this study included change leadership, distributed leadership, transformational leadership, social cognitive theory, sensemaking, and literature on veteran teachers.

A mixed methods action research design using quantitative and qualitative data was gathered simultaneously through a pre- and postintervention collection. Data was gathered from Monday Memos, a staff meeting observation, staff meeting agendas, coaching field notes, the Staff Perception Survey, and interviews which were all used to analyze then address the research questions. During the qualitative data analysis, the codes were categorized, and themes were examined to determine any shifts from the initial data compared to the postintervention data. Due to the small sample size and lack of data normality on the Staff Perception Survey, instead of a conventional t test, the more conservative nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was applied to assess pre-to-post differences. Results indicated no statistically significant differences between the pre- and

postintervention survey among individual items or collective construct items (i.e., teacher voice, shared vision, removing obstacles, and building culture).

The results suggest that there was a shift in how the site leaders conceptualized their role as a leader of change through the coaching program intervention. It was expanded, hopeful, and the site leaders saw the increased weight of their role in the impact of leading change. Further, through the research-based coaching program, site leaders changed their practice regarding their consistency and both expanded and shifted change strategies. In conclusion, limitations give perspective while implications for practice and research provide for an exciting future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation is dedicated to Keri Billings for supporting me each step of the way. Your patience and belief in me are more treasured than you know. And to all the educators that have devoted their journey to making a difference, including those in this project, the world is grateful for your dedication.

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CHAPTER 1

LEADERSHIP CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE ACTION

"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future" (Kennedy, 1963, para. 1). Change is part of our existence, our evolution, and our improvement. Change or the need for it permeates our world and, in turn, our educational system. With change becoming commonplace in our world of technology and the educational arena, it is imperative to discern better how to lead change.

Hargreaves (2009) suggested a new era of change where he integrates the modern elements of technology, effervescence or increased professional engagement, and the connection to ideals beyond oneself. "What ultimately bears the weight of sustainable educational change is not an overarching set of government policies and interventions, but people working together as partners around shared and compelling purposes" (Hargreaves, 2009, p. 22). How can a leader engage people in participating in this modern vision of change?

Introduction to the Problem

My research focused on uncovering how best to lead change in a K–12 educational setting. This study sought not to uncover the latest reform or model for improvement, but rather the purpose here was to discover the most effective way to lead change. In this chapter, I explore the larger context that demands research into change. This is followed by the local context and change expected from leaders in the Martin School District (MSD). Finally, I describe the innovation where I planned to implement research-based change strategies to guide site leaders.

Larger Context

Educational reform and the focus on improvement has become an urgent cause across the globe with such programs as Race to the Top in the United States, Investing in the Future in Germany, Students First in Australia, Dignified Schools in Mexico, and Pupil Premium in England (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017). The pressure to raise and meet targets for student performance has increased through these programs. Ultimately, implementing these demands for improvement must occur at the school site. School leaders are key contributors to leading and implementing these improvements (Aladjem et al., 2006; Herrmann, 2006; Newmann et al., 2001; Rowan et al., 2004; Wong; 2019).

Research shows instructional coordination leads to improved and increased student performance (Bryk et al., 2010; Rowan et al., 2004; Wong, 2019). Coherence and coordination of the implementation of improvement initiatives have been shown to increase the effectiveness of a reform effort (Wong, 2019). Leaders provide this coherence and coordination.

> Education research shows that most school variables, considered separately, have at most small effects on learning. The real payoff comes when individual variables combine to reach critical mass. Creating the conditions under which that can occur is the job of the principal. (Wallace Foundation, 2011, p. 2)

The importance of school site leadership is undeniable. Principal leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning (Leithwood et al., 2004). There is an empirical link between school leadership and improved student achievement, which increases the importance and pressure on the principal (Wallace Foundation, 2011).

This contributes to an increasingly complex task for site leaders to manage, navigate, and implement these changes (Fullan, 2014; Fullan & Hargreaves, 2009). Further, principals are often held responsible or accountable for student performance in their schools (Ganon-Shilon & Chen, 2019). This pressure to implement new ideas or programs and be successful in doing so can be overwhelming.

Change leadership is challenging no matter the arena, but research repeatedly shows how "organizational leaders directly impact the climate that enables change" (Gilley et al., 2009, p. 38). Research also demonstrates that many change initiatives fail, and the failure is attributed to ineffective leadership (Fullan, 2014; Gill, 2003; Gilley et al., 2009). If leaders are so influential in guiding the implementation of change, then it is imperative that they understand and grow their capacity to be effective change agents.

Understanding how to lead change effectively becomes an ideal worth pursuing. However, despite the numerous theories and frameworks that evolved over the past 50 years, leaders continue to lack a clear understanding of change and how to lead it (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Gilley et al., 2009). Therefore, it is necessary to understand change theories better and guide leaders in reflexively implementing those changes.

The challenges for implementing change in schools are especially difficult because of the complexity of and interplay between stakeholders, ideologies, budgets, policy changes, regimented characteristics of the school system, and limited time (Starr, 2011). Many of these barriers to change are outside the influence of a school principal, which further intensifies the challenges for site leaders.

Despite these complications to change, in the world of education, there has been constant change. Changes have been advocated at various levels, including federal, state,

and district. As a result, change in an educator's world of professional practice has been frequent (Fullan, 2015). Lack of knowledge, information, and guidance can create resistance or hesitancy patterns. Fullan (2007) claimed it was important for the success of any change effort to have the buy-in of teachers and for the change to be aligned to personal visions or philosophies. To take ownership of these changes, teachers must have created their own meaning and understanding of the change at hand (Ganon-Shilon & Chen, 2019). This process to translate new ideas and shifts in behavior relies on the principal (DeMatthews, 2015; Drago-Severson et al., 2018; Ganon-Shilon & Chen, 2019).

Arguably, the myriad of changes in our educational sphere makes effective leadership imperative (Gilley et al., 2009). Accordingly, the challenge of leading change is one of the most fundamental and enduring roles of leaders (Ahn et al., 2004).

Local Context

This study's setting is Martin School District (MSD), which was founded in 1851 and was one of the first school districts in California. Serving students at the ages of three and four in prekinder or preschool through eighth grade, it consists of seven schools with an enrollment of 4,670 students. Martin School District is located in the Bay Area, specifically the South Bay. The primary employment in the area is in the high-tech industry. Our district border is very near the Apple campus, and a significant number of Martin's parents work in the tech industry. According to the federal reporting of free and reduced lunch, schools within MSD range from 19% to 98% socioeconomically disadvantaged across the district schools. Results from the standardized California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) achievement assessments

show MSD students exceeding state standards in mathematics and English and generally surpass or perform comparably to students in schools with similar demographic variables.

After being a high school principal in a neighboring district for seven years, I moved into MSD as assistant superintendent of human resources to start the 2019–2020 school year. All seven MSD schools have fed students into my previous district. Thus, I was fairly familiar with the community prior to arriving.

My role has changed from being a principal in which I fostered change by leading teachers directly into a role in which I work with leaders to nurture change more indirectly. In human resources, the role of change agent has been limited to evaluations, employee discipline, supporting principals, and dealing with union issues. Luckily, my MSD superintendents believe in bringing the executive cabinet into the district's core leadership, which has enabled me to explore leading in powerful new ways. The executive cabinet consists of the public information officer, three assistant superintendents, and the superintendent.

My first MSD superintendent intended the executive cabinet to support site assistant principals and principals, referred to as site leaders, through our joint leadership at our site leadership monthly meetings. She introduced "improvement science" as a means to guide site leaders toward improving their schools. Improvement science requires users to implement various changes based on data, which guide the development and continued use of tools and processes to create improvement (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, n.d.-a). The superintendent had been trained in the improvement science initiative from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching at Stanford University.

The focus in the 2018–2019 school year was for site leaders to choose an area for growth based on data, write an aim statement around it, identify what changes could be made, and finally, what actions are needed. The aim statement's purpose is to point a leader and their team toward the goal each hopes to achieve. Aim statements are specific in terms of time and degree of achievement and ultimately demonstrate what success will look like (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, n.d.-a). By identifying the changes that could be made, also called levers, the stage is set to take action or implement those levers. The superintendent was disappointed by the broad focus and lack of measurement in the site leader's improvement models. This was due in part to their being new to the concept and a greater need to be directly coached through the process. As a result, during the 2019–2020 school year, leaders were required to establish a new statement, which depended on data for their assessment and create levers and change actions that connected directly to the aim statement. The difference between the two years was specificity and a greater connection to the data. In 2020–2021, the improvement science work was put on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic and distance learning.

During the 2019–2020 school year, my role in this work was to instruct the site leaders on how to lead and manage change. The superintendent, assistant superintendent of educational services, and I planned leadership meetings for site and district leaders. Our primary focus with the improvement science initiative was to improve teaching and learning at each of the school sites, which the site leaders led. In our monthly leadership meetings, we guided the site leaders through working on establishing their aim statements. Given my background as a principal and change leader, the superintendent

asked me to support the site leaders in making their aim statements a reality. For this, I relied on my personal experience of taking an underperforming school and leading extensive changes, including staff changes. The MSD site leaders were aware of my background, which afforded me some credibility in that arena. Further, I utilized knowledge from the Arizona State University (ASU) Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) doctoral program on change leadership to facilitate professional development. The leadership meetings included time to work on planning aim-related activities and professional development from me to lead those changes. My second cycle of research for the MLFTC doctoral program examined the effects the change leadership learning had on their ability to implement their aims and levers.

My focus for this project was on leading change at Enterprise Elementary. Enterprise Elementary indicates on their website through their mission statement that students come first. Faculty members at the school site utilize the district-adopted curriculum of Eureka mathematics, Benchmark Advanced in ELA (English Language Arts), Stemscopes in science, Houghton Mifflin in social studies, and Kimochis and Second Step for social-emotional learning.

Nevertheless, achievement on the statewide standardized CAASPP test showed the school lagged behind with their English Learners. The last time Enterprise Elementary was named a California Distinguished School was in 2002. Each year California has honored the most exemplary schools, in part, based on the performance on the standardized test for all demographics. Yearly, approximately 5%–10% of California schools are chosen for this award.

Enterprise Elementary has a large proportion of veteran teachers; over half of the staff have been there for more than 10 years, a quarter of them for over 20 years, leaving only a quarter under 10 years. According to the Enterprise site leaders, some of their teachers demonstrate a reluctance to adapt to changes of all types, including classroom practices. For example, the principal of Enterprise Elementary, Principal Muscat, shared that all kindergarten and first-grade teachers in the district were to begin guided reading in September. Enterprise teachers rarely started before December, and some never participated in the pedagogy of guided reading. I personally observed resistance among the faculty members at their frustration with changing the "back to school night" format, which had not changed in 10 years. Back to school night occurs one evening early in the school year to welcome parents onto campus to hear what is happening in their school and hear an introduction from their child's teacher about what will be occurring in the classroom that year. Principal Muscat and past practice before his tenure usually had kindergarten through second grade (K–2) meet with parents during the first half-hour and then third through fifth grade (3–5) meet the latter half hour. Because he was concerned about fairness and equity among staff, he flipped the two time periods so that grades 3–5 met first and K–2 met in the later half-hour. Several faculty members voiced their concerns verbally and in writing, which I was able to read and which Principal Muscat relayed to me. They argued that the younger students' parents should be first because the students should not be "up late." Further, they felt like this was an expectation and their rights were being disrespected.

The principal at Enterprise was beginning his seventh year when I began the intervention for this research and had been a middle school teacher and assistant principal

prior to holding this position. Though never serving in an elementary school prior to Enterprise, he had learned a great deal about elementary curriculum. The assistant principal had taught seven years at the primary level at Window Elementary, served three years as a teacher on special assignment (TOSA), and three years as assistant principal at Colton Elementary, all within Martin School District. Assistant Principal Fence was new to Enterprise this year. Both site leaders were eager and willing to learn and try new things. They have made efforts to hold the staff accountable for contractual obligations, but both acknowledged the challenges of moving their staff forward. During the second cycle of my action research, I interviewed the site leaders. Both leaders expressed frustration with leading change.

Innovation—A Brief Introduction

The innovation for this research included two parts. The first portion, professional development of the site leaders, took place before the second portion, coaching them. Prior to the start of the 2021–2022 school year, I provided two professional development sessions to the Enterprise site administrators. This professional development included a foundation of theoretical-based change theories and time to plan their implementation based on those theories.

I reviewed with them the steps in Kotter's (2012) change theory supported by several other aspects of change theory, such as sensemaking. For example, we started with creating and implementing a vision with a brief instructional set followed by planning how site leaders would implement it. The series included tools and considerations such as Hall and Hord's (2006) innovation configuration maps and Heath and Heath's (2010) strategies to move the emotional elephant in individuals.

Additionally, I introduced them to several theoretically researched concepts specific to Enterprise. These included research on veteran teachers, social cognitive theory (SCT), and unconscious bias.

After this introductory professional development (PD) and the school year started, I coached the site leaders at Enterprise to lead the changes at their site with consideration of the professional learning and planning they made during the PD. We focused on their vision and aim statement for improving English language learning. Then we worked through the steps to enable that change to be enacted effectively with their staff. For example, the site leaders conducted one-legged interviews to not only assess where a teacher was in the stages of concern but also understand their context (Hall & Hord, 2006; Snyder, 2017). By learning about their teachers' context and perceptions, those ideas could be integrated into the change effort.

Researched and theoretical-based coaching models further assisted my guidance of the Enterprise Elementary site leaders. In their study, Wise and Cavazos (2017) discovered that principals found coaching beneficial and largely believed receiving coaching contributed to their capacity to improve student learning (Wise & Cavazos, 2017). The frameworks I based my coaching intervention on support the ideas of developing shared understandings, demonstrating or showing visual examples of change, and brainstorming ideas together (Woulfin & Rigby, 2017). Details of this framework are explained more thoroughly in Chapter 3.

In order to maximize their potential of coaching and harness the site leaders' commitment to the process, it was important to develop a deeper relationship between the

site leaders and myself(Aguilar, 2017; Robertson, 2016). To achieve those relationships, I created social and professional opportunities prior to the actual intervention.

Throughout the coaching process, I kept shared field notes to examine the progress and reflect on what was needed for the next session. While I maintained a general structure, part of the importance of coaching is its ability to be reflexive, reflective, and reactive. By continuing to tie the theory to the moment and time the site leaders were experiencing, I expected that the coaching innovation would be more relevant and effective in impacting the change leadership.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

This project's purpose was to increase school leaders' ability to implement change at their school sites through learning change strategies and receiving coaching that focused on research-based interventions. Further, I strove to understand how to facilitate change among teachers more effectively, and in the case of Enterprise Elementary, that included veteran teachers. This coaching was grounded in theoretical frameworks and literature as well as lessons learned from previous cycles of my action research. Given the purposes of the study, the following research questions guided its trajectory.

Research Questions

RQ1. How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the attitudes of school leaders?

RQ2. How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the practice of school leaders?

RQ3. In the context of change initiatives, to what degree does such a coaching program affect teachers' perception of (a) contribution of teacher voice, (b) alignment of shared vision between teachers and leaders, and (c) leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs?

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH GUIDING THE PROJECT

In this chapter, I outline the theories and research supporting my investigation and my innovation for this action research project. I have broken the chapter into three distinct yet interrelated parts: leadership, change leadership, and the necessary pieces to support the leadership innovation. The first section briefly examines of applicable leadership theories, specifically distributed leadership and transformational leadership. This evolves into the second focus, change leadership. Within change leadership, there is a blend of business-oriented models from which I adopted particular pieces and change leadership literature in the realm of education. Finally, the last portion of the literature review explores theories guiding my innovation to support and coach the site leaders to lead change more effectively with their staff. Within this section, I delved into the context of leading staff, specifically, the staff at Enterprise Elementary. The needs of veteran teachers and the theories to support them were considered. These include social cognitive theory (SCT), learning theory as it is related to influencing change, and related studies in education regarding teacher adaptation to change.

Leadership Theory

Leadership as an area of study has grown tremendously in the last three decades and has become quite expansive (Alvesson, 2020; Avolio et al., 2009; Bryman, 2011; Jones, 2014). Leadership theory began with a focus on transactional models prior to the latter 20th century (Avolio et al., 2009; Bass & Bass, 2008). Bass et al.'s (1990) *Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications* served as the encyclopedia for all things leadership with its 617-page summary of leadership literature.

Bass (1985) shared these tenets of transactional leadership through chapters focused on traditional topics such as power and legitimacy, leader and follower interactions, management, and situational aspects of leadership. While Bass (1985) briefly touched on the ideas of new genre leadership, including charisma and transformational leadership, the role of structures and processes took center stage. The new leadership genre emphasizes charisma, vision, inspirational, ideological, moral, transformational, and distributed leadership (Avolio et al., 2009). This evolution in leadership research and theories has implications for the social science models of leadership and specifically educational leadership (Bryman, 2011). For this inquiry's purpose, I focused on distributed leadership, transformational leadership, and collectively, leadership's role in influencing an innovative climate.

Distributed Leadership

Shared, collective, or distributed leadership indicates a joint organizational responsibility to influence the processes and decisions (Day et al., 2004; Jones, 2014; Nguyen & Hunter, 2018; Spillane, 2006; Woods & Gronn, 2009). Its theoretical underpinnings come from distributed cognition and sociocultural activity theory (Gronn, 2000, Spillane et al., 2004). Initially, the focus of distributed leadership was on the collective and fully engaged joint leadership, proposing a new structure to labor (Gronn, 2000; Jones, 2014). As distributed leadership evolved, there is a realization that a hybrid model of individual leadership and collective leadership is more probable than either leadership model independently (Gronn, 2000; Jones, 2014; Nguyen & Hunter, 2018). Distributed leadership research requires the adaptation to local contexts and culture (Jones, 2014; Printy & Liu, 2020). For example, when sharing leadership with teachers, it

provides a bottom-up leadership that embraces the school's existing culture versus a canned, top-down, sometimes irrelevant model. It has been criticized as empirically lacking in part because of the diversity of implementation and the challenge to actually initiate the collaborative environment (Harris, 2009; Jones, 2014). Regardless of these criticisms, distributed leadership is likely to build internal accountability for success and sustain school improvement efforts (Harris, 2004; Printy & Liu, 2020).

Distributed leadership, though a fairly recent concept in the past 20 years, is well-suited for application and research in the educational context (Spillane et al., 2001). Leithwood et al. (2007) suggested a framework of four categories for school-level distributed leadership, which includes setting the vision, designing the school structure, building social accountability, and managing instructional practice (Printy & Liu, 2020). Within the school's context, the degree and focus on one of these categories will differ.

Trust is an important ingredient in distributed leadership. To construct trust, leaders must share collective goals, collaborate, and find ways to show the value of all participants (Avolio et al., 2009). Not only should there be trust between the leaders and followers but also between the those distributed leaders and their followers (Printy & Liu, 2020). If this trust is developed and interactions increased, then there will be positive outcomes for developing teacher skills and school culture (Printy & Liu, 2020).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a leader's ability to create an understanding of a common purpose and then motivate members to be committed to growing success in the organization (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Marks & Printy, 2003; Moolenaar et al., 2010). The turn of the 21st century was the peak of transformational leadership popularity and

research; however, it continues to evolve, especially with a focus on innovation (Dionne et al., 2004; Moolenaar et al., 2010). Bass (1985) established the underpinnings of transformational leadership by studying the concept of transactions between leaders and followers where they were motivated to go above and beyond. From these beginnings, it found its way into the educational realm and has been a pillar of educational leadership since then (Kwan, 2019). Transformational leadership cannot singularly be the solution for leading change; instead, it must be paired with other models such as distributed leadership or instructional leadership to prompt change (Kwan, 2019).

Bass and Avolio (1995) created a commonly used scheme to measure transformational leadership. It has four areas that examine a leader's capabilities.

1. *Idealized influence* refers to acting as a role model to teachers for high ethical behaviors.
2. *Individualized inspirational motivation* refers to a leader's capacity for articulating appealing and inspiring visions to followers.
3. *Intellectual stimulation* relates to supporting and developing followers' creativity.
4. *Individualized consideration* is attending to followers' individual needs and concerns (Bass & Avolio, 1995; Kwan, 2019).

These key ideas also make up the core of transformational leadership and lend themselves to qualities leaders should aspire to attain.

Li et al. (2016) found a strong relationship between the innovative outcomes of both individuals and teams when using a transformational leadership model. Their study found that training in these leadership styles offered increased performance in

transformational leadership, which then led to the positive outcomes of innovation (Li et al., 2016). Centrality to the network or organization provides the leader the most familiarity with the individuals they are working with (Moolenaar et al., 2010). Having relationships with teachers and being available are keys to having centrality. Creating an innovative climate can be challenging, but transformational leadership and concepts like centrality construct an environment conducive to it. Moolenaar et al. (2010) found "leadership behavior is important for nurturing and stimulating a climate in which teachers are more likely to engage in risk-taking and the development of novel solutions" (p. 655). By embracing and enacting transformational leadership behaviors, principals can significantly impact the degree of innovation in the organization's environment.

Change Leadership Theories

While distributed leadership and transformational leadership theories have a direct connection to change leadership and leadership in schools, it is also necessary to look at specific research-based models and theories that support change innovations. Core ideas from general research on change leadership and those devised specifically for education are explored here. Change leadership models, such as Kotter's (2012) *Leading Change*, Heath and Heath's (2010) *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, and Sutton and Rao's (2014) *Scaling Up Excellence: Getting to More Without Settling For Less* are preceded by the original change leadership model by Lewin (1947). In addition to these, I explored the realm of sensemaking in leading change. Finally, in the jurisdiction of education, I reviewed the concerns-based adoption model (CBAM) change theory.

Universal Change Leadership Models

Lewin was one of the earliest change theorists, and his model entailed three stages of change, including unfreezing, transition, and freezing again (Lewin, 1947). In the unfreezing step, the need for change must be realized and then the focus becomes preparing the organization to realize this change. During the transition phase, the initial adjustment is over and there is movement toward embracing the change and adapting to it in a proactive way. The final step, freezing again, involves ensuring stability by regular use of the changes. The goal is to have these changes become the official way of doing business. Lewin's theory is based on the premise that people and systems naturally "seek equilibrium, safety, control, and stability" (Sullivan, 2009, p. 1). Thus, change requires a thoughtful process of unlearning, motivating to embrace change, steadying the implementation process, and finally establishing the change as the new habit.

Lewin must be noted because he is the pioneer in the field; however, he has been criticized by academics for oversimplifying the change process, essentially that it is much more complex than the three steps (Cummings et al., 2016). Since Lewin's 1947 work, there have been many other change theorists who have utilized elements of his work: Kotter's (2012) *Leading Change*, Heath and Heath's (2010) *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard,* and Sutton and Rao's (2014) *Scaling Up Excellence: Getting to More Without Settling For Less.* Additionally, Karl Weick's 1984 *Small Wins: Redefining the Scale of Social Problems* supplements Lewin's 1947 work and fills in some of the complexities that are needed. Lewin's theory is foundational and significant in the change leadership theories field, which I will explore next.

John Kotter's (2012) eight steps to leading change model strengthened and extended Lewin's theory. The first step in Kotter's model is to create a sense of urgency. Leaders often will show a piece of data or set a goal, but to actually create the movement within a resistant cohort needs a sense of urgency. If urgency is low, then it is challenging to find a group to commit to the vision, and even if they do, if many others do not feel the same sense of urgency, the momentum for change will probably die before the change is implemented fully (Kotter, 2012). Complacency in organizations is the gravest threat to successful change efforts. Some sources of complacency include low overall performance standards, too many visible resources, too much happy talk from senior management, human nature's capacity for denial, and a lack of sufficient performance feedback (Kotter, 2012). If people in an organization are complacent, they do not see the need to change and will not cooperate. Kotter (2012) suggested several ways to increase urgency, including creating a financial crisis, exposing weaknesses to competitors, eliminating examples of excess (cutting back), confronting the realities of unhappy customers, being honest in publications or communications with staff, and dangling potential in front of employees to show the current inability to pursue that future. This sense of urgency must be sustained throughout the change process to eliminate potential complacency from rising back to the surface.

Sutton and Rao (2014) similarly saw the need for continued urgency and suggested methods to avoid complacency: name the enemy, communicate publicly, breach assumptions, create rituals, and be wary of "people prone to cognitive rigidity" (p. 92). Naming the enemy consists of not only naming the problem as Kotter (2012) suggested but also rallying the team against that problem. Communicating publicly and

demonstrating these values publicly push the behavior of others to be consistent (Sutton & Rao, 2014). Breaching assumptions by breaking the mold serves to embrace new values and establish new methods. An example might be a chief executive officer (CEO) sitting in a receptionist area because the organization's value is communication over hierarchy. Similarly, new rituals that embrace the change and the values desired can point people in the right direction. Lastly, it is important to choose leaders and employees in an organization that will jump at the chance to be part of a new change (Sutton & Rao, 2014).

After instilling urgency, the next step is to build a guiding coalition that involves creating a team with diverse positional power, expertise, credibility, and leadership capacity (Kotter, 2012). These individuals should have expertise in their area and exemplify the culture necessary to lead the change process. This concept ties to distributed leadership and provides opportunities for joint decision-making and empowerment for teachers.

Creating a vision and spreading it encompasses the next two steps. An effective vision is "imaginable, desirable, feasible, focused, flexible, and communicable" (Kotter, 2012, p. 74). A vision should be created by a single individual and then the guiding coalition models and molds it. Kotter described the process as messy and implored leaving room for flexibility. This vision should be communicated in multiple ways and places. Kotter (2012) suggested using simplicity, metaphors, repetition, and most importantly, leading by example. This vision should empower stakeholders to enact it themselves through their own sphere in the organization.

The next step is to remove roadblocks, which Kotter (2012) titled empowering employees for broad-based change. Structural barriers can undermine the change process, especially when employees are in structural silos. Sutton and Rao (2014) proposed the guardrail strategy to use regarding silos and suggested understanding the dynamics of the change and people's needs. The guardrail strategy is "specifying as few constraints as you possibly can–picking those precious few that matter most and pack the biggest wallop, and then leaving people to steer between and around them as they see fit" (Sutton & Rao, 2014, p. 63). Depending on the situation, needed training could also be an ingredient to take down roadblocks for forwarding progress. Sutton and Rao (2014) cautioned when more is added, something has to be subtracted. Overload or too many things on a teacher's plate can be overwhelming when facing change thus taking something off of that plate benefits the change process. However, cutting something beloved to the employee could also create further frustration. Therefore, a leader must understand their people. Leaders and others often blame people for not being willing to change. Heath and Heath (2010) claimed this is an attribution error and point to situations as the real barrier, suggesting that paving the path clearly and creating a more feasible situation for people to adjust to can allow for change. Heifetz et al. (2009) suggested the best way to work through this is adaptive change leadership, where the collective intelligence of the employees is used to find solutions.

Heath and Heath (2010) labeled this tweaking the environment, Sutton and Rao (2014) using guardrails, and Kotter (2012) removing roadblocks, yet the intention is similar, for the leader to alleviate issues that may cause the change to fail.

Kotter (2012) stressed the importance of celebrating short-term wins. Short-term wins provide evidence that the change is working, celebrate those who have bought in, and build momentum, especially against resistors (Kotter, 2012). Karl Weick (1984) first theorized this concept and redefined the scale of social problems in his article *Small Wins: Redefining the Scale of Social Problems*. Weick (1984) argued that massive scale social problems cannot be addressed because of their ominous size. Rather, taking on small wins is both feasible and psychologically more amenable. By making problems smaller, a person can have controllable opportunities to produce visible results. Psychologically, small wins incur motivation, more manageable outcomes, and create less stress. The key part of creating small wins is its impact on both the individual psychologically and the group socially. It moves people. Small wins coincide with Kotter's (2012) version, where he emphasized widely acknowledging short-term wins to get people on board and create momentum for their vision. Small wins create a perceived capability to cope with demands and a sense of control. This could be a factor among teachers who feel overwhelmed by the size of the changes.

Finally, Kotter (2012) concluded his model by anchoring the change in the organization's culture. Change needs to be embedded in the culture to make the change sustainable. These are needed alterations in norms and shared values that depend on results, communication, and possible turnover (Kotter, 2012). Lewin (1947) also captured this concept in re-freezing the change. Making this change part of the organization is key to its sustainability. It is important to find ways to reinforce change continually to keep the change going. A leader can do this by providing continual directions, reiterating the goal, providing support on the path, and further motivation (Heath & Heath, 2010). The

key is to have a leader "who is patient and focused and reinforced every step of the journey" (Heath & Heath, 2010, p. 253).

In other change leadership models, there are ideas to extend change leadership beyond Kotter's (2012) steps. One of those is dealing with emotional intelligence and the ability to motivate people. Heath and Heath (2010) applied the metaphor of a rider atop an elephant to explain the plight of humans engaged in change. The rider is the rational side of us where the actions are deliberate, and decisions are made quite reflectively. The rider looks into the future and balances all of its decisions. On the other hand, the elephant operates on the emotional side. It is motivated by instant gratification, oftentimes moving forward without the thought of consequences. The key here is the struggle between the two, the elephant and the rider. Both can work against a person in the face of change, but they also can be the key to success if the rider supplies planning and direction and the elephant the motivation (Heath & Heath, 2010). The key here is being aware of the willpower of the elephant. If it is weak, it will easily overpower the rider. Additionally, if the elephant is not motivated, then the rider will not be able to move forward. The elephant is moved by the urgency, by short-term wins, and a moving vision. The rider will be moved by facts, processes, and clear communication. In essence, the rider needs a data-based sense of urgency.

Sutton and Rao (2014) furthered the elephant and rider argument, explaining that "communicating a hot cause entails creating and sharing stories, symbols, language, reasons–the beliefs and emotions that flow from a mindset" (p. 70). Emotions are also captured in communities where people feel empowered together, which leads to the next important piece of building culture.

Heath and Heath (2010) also included the idea of rallying the herd that coincides with Kotter (2012) in creating a sense of urgency and overlaps with small wins but extends the area of emotional intelligence and building culture. Rallying the herd refers to the fact that most people are influenced by the people around them and that encouraging the herd to do the positive things the majority are doing would be more effective. As Heath and Heath (2010) said, "Peer perception is plenty. In this entire book, you might not find a single statement that is so rigorously supported by empirical research as this one: You are doing things because you see your peers do them" (p. 227). Cascading excellence, where the falling domino creates the energy to topple the next, furthers this concept of rallying the herd (Sutton & Rao, 2014). The key ingredient added here is excellence and spreading a high-level vision of excellence beyond just gathering support. Rallying the herd and cascading excellence are important ways to gain traction from the elephant and build its momentum.

Sensemaking

Karl Weick (1995) coined the term sensemaking as an organizational leadership process to structure the unknown, essentially creating a map of the change to navigate it better. The process of sensemaking involves data collection and conversation with stakeholders to establish this map. Sensemaking takes into account the organization's social context and tries to frame the change through these mental models or maps (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017). There are three steps in the process: *creation*, *interpretation*, and *enactment* (Weick, 1995).

To enact this three-part process, one must begin with the creation or understanding of the existing frames. Interviewing people on the frontlines, gathering

data points, and observing provide opportunities to grasp these frames fully (Ancona, 2012; Weick, 1995). Understanding the existing culture allows a leader to see new trends and engage with their constituents to shape the frame together. Ancona (2012) warned of oversimplifying and stereotyping, explaining the importance of understanding each particular situation's nuances. Interpretation, step two in the process, involves framing the change given the understandings gleaned in step one. A leader can create order and structured ways of knowing for their staff by providing metaphors, stories, and images to capture the change (Ancona, 2012). The final step in the process, enactment, warrants experimenting with the new change in small doses and analyzing how it impacts the environment and outcomes. Taking time to reflect on these initial actions provides learning opportunities for the next steps (Weick, 1985).

Ganon-Shilon and Chen (2019) summarized educational sensemaking as the "process by which educators assign meaning to new information, working habits, and arrangements in the face of ambiguity, confusion, and misunderstandings" (p. 78). These cultural-cognitive understandings are often misunderstandings or assumptions that are often supported by the ongoing culture of a school (Wong, 2019). Changing these deep-rooted cultural-cognitive understandings is one of the most challenging aspects for a leader to change (Scott & Davis, 2007; Wong, 2019). Site leaders can work with their staff to make a map of the change and plan with them how to enact it. Educational research has shown the relationships, modeling, and interactions between the principal and the teachers are important factors in educational sensemaking (Coburn, 2005; Ganon-Shilon & Chen, 2019; Weick et al., 2005; Wong, 2019). Coburn (2006) explored how the dynamic of sensemaking occurs in a school between different positions of authority. She

found that positionality shapes framing and conversely shapes authority, which could be with a site leader or a teacher leader. In order to navigate the authority dynamic, leaders must respect all of those within the school and collaboratively work with their staff through the sensemaking process (Coburn, 2006; Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017). The culmination of this process for a site principal is a learning process, providing direction and insights on how to lead the change.

A leader can work with staff to build the map of the change and also provide sensegiving guidance. Sensegiving can occur through written and verbal communication, activities, rituals, symbols, and interactions (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017; Wong, 2019). Sensegiving strategies produce a shift in the cultural-cognitive understandings and the frames through which teachers perceive themselves and their schools (Wong, 2019). An example of this would be the content, spirit, and frame a principal sends in their weekly memo.

Sensemaking reiterates more deeply pieces of leadership theory such as collective decision-making or, as titled in my research, distributed leadership, but it also extends the depth of my study for key strategies to shift mental frames. Jäppinen (2014) demonstrated through her research how the "distribution of explicit and tacit knowledge; mediation of multi- and inter-professional knowledge; discerning relevant issues; sharing cognition; sharing creativity; and exercising deep reflections" (p. 81) led to the collaborative leadership to become richer and more diverse.

Educational Change Frameworks

Hall et al. (2011) created the concerns-based adoption model (CBAM) to provide an implementation bridge for change. The concerns-based adoption model includes three

dimensions: stages of concern, levels of use, and innovation configurations. Each of these will be useful in planning and implementing the change innovation.

For the stages of concern, Hall and Hord (2006) submitted the idea that humans go through stages during change implementation and that with the knowledge of those changes, leaders can intervene proactively to support the process. The first level is at 0 or *unconcerned*, where there is no information and no interest (Hall et al., 2011). The stages step from *personal impact* to *managing details*, *consequences for students*, *collaboration with others*, and finally *refocusing*. While Hall and Hord (2006) discussed how an individual could be at many stages at the same time, called conglomeration, generally, participants do step through the process linearly. This process is important because it addresses the personal and emotional aspects of change (Hall et al., 2011). The relevance of the stages of concern is finding ways to identify concerns and then address them. Failure to do so can lead to resistance and even outward rejection of change (Hall et al., 2011).

The levels of use are behavioral profiles that categorize different approaches to using an innovation (Hall et al., 2011). While these seem similar to the stages of concern, they are more focused on the actual use of the innovation. It is a way to identify and categorize participants' usage. Level 0 is nonuse, where participants do not even bother to have knowledge of the innovation. Level I orientation is basic inquisition by attending meetings and asking questions. Level II is preparation to plan and set aside time for implementation. Level III, mechanical use, includes disjointed use with regular regrouping to ensure they are on the right track. Level IV, routine, is where a participant can efficiently use the innovation and can actually predict what is next. The final three

levels of use, Level V refinement, Level VI integration, and Level VII renewal went beyond the three month timeline of this project but would be important to consider for other interventions. The value of the levels of use helps the innovator know how to support participants better by knowing what they need.

The final piece of the CBAM implementation bridge is innovation configuration. One of the most significant challenges with all change efforts is implementing them with fidelity from classroom to classroom and school to school. While it can be valuable to have adaptations, it is also important to ensure an expectation of what successful implementation looks like. Innovation configuration addresses the ideal, the leader's expectations, and the contextual needs of the school community (Hall & Hord, 2006). The innovation configuration map (IC Map) comprises word picture descriptions that show where and what the ideal implementation would look like. The primary benefit of IC Maps is the consensus-building that occurs and the ambiguity that it removes (Hall & Hord, 2006). In my innovation, IC Maps promoted support in learning, feedback, and reflection. These are all important ingredients to shape the environment and build agency and self-efficacy.

Guiding Site Leaders Work With Teachers

Given the pieces of both transformational and change leadership, it is imperative to know a herd and determine how to reach them emotionally and cognitively (Heath & Heath, 2010). The focus then becomes understanding teachers at Enterprise Elementary and how to support them best through change. To do this, I examined social cognitive theory, focusing on modeling, self-efficacy, and agency. Then I provided an overview of literature pertaining to veteran teachers to provide further insights into how to support

them through leadership. This is followed by learning theory and how it influences change. Finally, I examined coaching literature to support the innovation design. These concepts and theories have a dual asset in their support for me to lead the change with the site leaders as well as coaching them to lead the change with their teachers.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory (SCT) lends insights into motivation for change in this study. Albert Bandura (1986) sought to explain how cognition occurs and was influenced by individuals' context or environment. Social cognitive theory addresses how individuals acquire knowledge and competencies, how they are motivated, and how they regulate their behavior while creating social systems that organize and structure their lives (Bandura, 2012). Social cognitive theory is used to describe how individuals acquire behaviors, specifically through interacting with their environment and by modeling from their social peers, which is reflected in imitation.

Modeling and Imitation

To imitate social modeling, individuals must observe the behavior or action, retain the information observed, and translate it for themselves (Bandura, 1971). Moreover, there is also a motivational aspect to imitating the model, which includes the desire to act. Modeling determines the socially acceptable behavior or emotions and behaviors that ultimately shape the reality of the context (Bandura, 2012). Through observing models, individuals develop knowledge, attitudes, values, emotional proclivities, and competencies (Bandura, 2002). Further, Bandura (2012) suggested that observers who closely identify with the model adopt behavior more quickly. Bandura (2002) explained that observers often construct their own meanings and priorities based

on the modeling. When research subjects drew upon this selective modeling, it allowed them to adopt effective functions and synthesize them into greater innovations (Bandura, 2012). The reverse was also true. In the Bobo doll studies, Bandura et al. (1961) demonstrated children who had observed the aggression of an adult either verbally or physically toward the Bobo doll then imitated the aggressive styles of conduct.

Agency

Notably, SCT also suggests that individuals are able to exercise a high level of agency with regard to choosing what to do. Although the environment shapes individuals, they control the personal aspects of intentionality, development, self-regulation, and reflection (Bandura, 1986). By understanding the power of agency, we are able to gain a greater understanding of how humans evolve, adapt, and ultimately change (Bandura, 2002). Bandura described three types of agency, including individual, influential, and collective agency. Further, Bandura (2012) claimed these agency types could be combined and had a mutual benefit in doing so.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as a judgment of personal capability (Bandura, 2012). Self-efficacy serves as a key determinant of human motivation and action. Self-efficacy sources include prior mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1997; Gregoire, 2003).

The prior mastery of experience pertains to the success one feels when mastering a task. This direct sense of building expertise fuels the sense of accomplishment and thus provides an increase in self-efficacy. Similarly, a failure to control a sphere or task will

undermine a sense of self-efficacy. Thus, a key to becoming a resilient teacher is to overcome those failures and regain a sense of mastery again.

Another source of self-efficacy is labeled verbal persuasion because it refers to increasing an individual's perception of their abilities by coaching and persuading them. This also works in reverse, socially discouraging an individual by decreasing their self-efficacy.

Finally, physiological influences impact self-efficacy negatively by inhibiting it. For example, emotional states such as depression or anxiety would lessen an individual's perceptive capacity to accomplish something. Similarly, an adrenaline rush might have a greater motivating factor. This is of particular importance regarding researching individuals who plateau or become resistant because of an emotionally charged event in their lives.

Self-efficacy influences the degree of challenge individuals embrace. Individuals who possess high levels of self-efficacy take on greater challenges and are more resilient throughout these difficulties. By comparison, those with low self-efficacy are less likely to engage in challenging situations and fear they will not be successful. Motivation can be high when performance-focused outcomes occur under high self-efficacy but demoralizing under low self-efficacy, which inhibits production of the required performance (Bandura, 2012).

Extensions of SCT in Education. Gregoire (2003) examined the relationship between attitude and behavior. Specifically, he explored Fazio's model in which attitudes influence perception in the sense that once the attitude was activated, there was a selective perception that influenced interpretation (Gregoire, 2003). Such a set of events

could influence educators' attitudes toward professional development, leadership, or even collaboration. Moreover, if a negative attitude develops because of past experiences, it will likely influence perceptions of a related current event. This follows Bandura's notion that the environment and context have shaped the individual and their beliefs. Gregoire went on to explain that individuals either perceive situations as being a threat or not. Gregoire (2003) concluded that increasing teachers' subject matter knowledge, allowing time and freedom to implement change, and building self-efficacy were key ways to encourage teachers to view change in a nonthreatening way.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) continued to link education and self-efficacy. They explained how Bandura's self-efficacy theory had been repeatedly proven to connect to education, particularly teachers. Teachers' perceptions of their ability and effectiveness would be related to the "effort teachers invest in teaching, the goals they set, their persistence when things do not go smoothly, and their resilience in the face of setbacks" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007, p. 944). Mastery experiences have played the greatest role in teacher efficacy, namely when they create success for their students (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Additionally, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) found that leaders have a significant impact on teachers' self-efficacy when they create a common vision and purpose and eliminate negative distractions as much as possible. Their research showed that teachers perceived their self-efficacy did not hinge on administrative support in the classroom but rather through the administrators' encouragement.

Supporting Veteran Teachers

Goodson et al. (2006), Hargreaves (2005), and Snyder (2017) suggested that leaders must be cognizant of resistance to change due to a veteran teacher's career stage. There are factors that impact a long-time teacher because of the context they have been in. While determining personality type or personal context could help a leader better discern working with a veteran teacher, it is also imperative to understand a veteran teacher's organizational and sociological dimensions.

Hargreaves (2005) suggested teachers' work was carried out in three stages: early-, mid-, and later-career. Although he argued there was never a one size fits all approach to defining teachers' behaviors, he found there were certain determining factors that influenced behaviors. Specifically, he claimed later-career teachers generally fit into four categories: negative focusers, positive focusers, disenchanted, or those who participated in continual renewal (Hargreaves, 2005). Disenchanted teachers had experienced failure with previous change efforts, which shaped their attitudes. These teachers were the most resistant and actually opposed change. They often were nostalgic for the past and felt marginalized by new administrations. In Hargreaves (2005), veteran teachers or later-career teachers were stymied by greater expectations, less energy, and attractions from commitments in their personal lives (Hargreaves, 2005). Veteran teachers demonstrated high levels of self-efficacy with respect to student relationships but not with regard to implementing change strategies. Importantly, it was also found that midcareer teachers were most relaxed and comfortable in their positions; nevertheless, they were still enthusiastic and flexible enough to respond to change in a positive way (Hargreaves, 2005).

Snyder (2017) examined the plight of veteran teachers. He insisted that understanding their perspectives would validate their past and present and thereby move them toward implementing new actions. Snyder (2017) pointed out that leaders of change actually see the participant as the problem; however, the problem could actually lie within the leader themselves. When leaders take this perspective, it is called a change-centric view. Further, Snyder claimed resistant teachers usually do not see their behavior as resistant; rather, they view it as trying to preserve the organization.

Veteran teachers frequently act in ways that preserve personal relationships, also called social nostalgia and autonomy, known as political nostalgia (Goodson et al., 2006; Lortie, 1975; Snyder, 2017). Social nostalgia is defined as the sense of family in a staff that can be activated when changes take time away from or change relationships with colleagues and students (Snyder, 2017). Political nostalgia "arises from a loss of autonomy stemming from mandated, top-down initiatives. These initiatives particularly result in the loss of independence, creativity and status that veteran teachers once knew" (Snyder, 2017, p. 5).

Snyder's interviews supported the idea of social nostalgia when teachers expressed frustration with a bell schedule, decreasing their time with students, or how technology has taken away from interpersonal interactions. Political nostalgia was also addressed in the interviews with veteran teachers who expressed frustration with the amount of time devoted to district-mandated formative assessments. This lack of time curtailed creativity and professional freedom from the veteran teacher's perspective (Snyder, 2017). This loss of autonomy and marginalization of the veteran teachers'

expertise had a negative impact on their belief that they could make a difference due to these constraints.

According to Lortie (1975), teachers chose educational careers for the psychic rewards resulting from influencing students' lives. Therefore, he argued they would resist efforts that appeared to be at odds with their purposes in choosing the teaching profession. Similarly, teachers valued an experience where their purpose was satisfied and their identities were nurtured and developed (Carrillo & Flores, 2018; Snyder, 2017). When a change effort potentially or actually interfered with a veteran teacher's psychic rewards, a resistant reaction to the change effort was significantly more possible. Lortie and Snyder's work was consistent with Ajzen and Madden's (1986) theory of planned behavior, where attitudes, self-efficacy, and norms influence intentions to engage in a behavior.

Snyder's conclusions and implications for practice focused on leaders taking a more investigative stance rather than a judgmental one. Snyder (2017) advocated for leaders to make efforts to understand the political and social nostalgia affecting veteran teachers. Similar to Hall and Hord's (2006) one-legged interviews, Snyder (2017) suggested utilizing clarifying conversations to provide insight into the teacher's wants and needs. Secondly, he recommended incorporating veteran teachers' leadership and involvement into change efforts akin to distributed leadership. By validating these teachers' experiences and having them participate as leaders in the change effort, more effective and positive engagement would be likely (Goodson et al., 2006; Hargreaves, 2005; Snyder, 2017). It is important that leaders not group all veteran teachers into a

category; however, it is an effective strategy to understand their needs and best utilize their talents through the change process.

Understanding Resistance

Resistance to change is a primary barrier in change leadership. Understanding what provokes resistance could enable a leader to proactively overcome potential barriers. By looking at research and literature, it becomes clearer what are potential pitfalls for leaders.

For example, Oriji and Amadi (2016) examined teachers in Nigeria who were skeptical about the use of technology. Specifically, the inquiry asked why they were resistant to change. Oriji and Amadi (2016) focused their investigation on methods to engage teachers in these changes. They found teachers were reluctant to use technology because it negated cultural practice, prompted fear that their practice would be replaced by computers, induced embarrassment for inadequate expertise, showed lack of support, contributed to a loss of control in the classroom, and elicited uncertainty of what would come next. From Oriji and Amadi's research (2016), social and political nostalgia were evident in why the teachers resisted. In another study in Scotland, Priestley and Minty (2012) explored the implementation by teachers of the new curriculum for excellence (CfE). At first glance, it was assumed that teachers were proponents and fully implementing the CfE curriculum. Nevertheless, the authors found a reluctance to implement CfE. The results showed several factors that contributed to resistance among teachers. The factors included lack of clarity, concern about the risk of not being successful with students, funding or resource issues, teacher workload and morale, teacher attitude and confidence, and needs about collaboration, leadership, and school

factors (Priestley & Minty, 2012). Similarly, political and social nostalgia, as well as psychic rewards, were threatened.

Zimmerman (2006) identified several factors that motivate teachers to resist change, including habits, failure to recognize the need for change, threats to power or resources, fear of the unknown, and previous reform failures. Zimmerman (2006) pointed to mental models as the source for much of this apprehension. She explained how the mental models are maps that help an individual navigate and perceive their world. These mental models set a person's reality. While a mental model can support change, it can also prevent an educator from adapting positively to the change, especially when it involves their identity (Zimmerman, 2006). Zimmerman (2006) suggested several solutions for leaders, including honing skills, developing culture, enhancing teachers' self-efficacy, and promoting professional development.

In other work in this area, Gitlin and Margonis (1995) pointed to the reform movements of the 1980s and 1990s in which proponents of change viewed resistance as obstruction. They insisted reformers should look at resistance to change as more of an indicator to leaders to adjust interventions to account for teacher autonomy and workload concerns (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995). Similarly, Zimmerman (2006) pointed to the importance of leaders considering any underlying systemic issues that may need to be resolved to clear the path for the teacher facing change. Therefore, focusing energy on removing barriers may enable a clearer path to change.

Overbay et al. (2009) explored the relationship between learning style, level of resistance to change, and teacher retention in schools while implementing a large-scale technology change model. The researchers found personality-type preferences affected a

learners' assimilation of new knowledge (Overbay et al., 2009). Their findings showed that teachers with sensing-feeling (SF) and sensing-thinking (ST) learning style preferences were the most resistant to change. Sense-feeling learners have sensitive feelings and also care about other people's feelings, and thus they take a personal approach to learning juxtaposed to impersonal facts. Sense-thinking learners are much more structured, organized, and driven in their learning, thriving with complexity.

The ST and SF teachers were less adaptable and reacted negatively to contextual shifts (Overbay et al., 2009). Based on findings of other studies coupled with their results, Overbay et al. (2009) predicted these teachers needed more structure during the change effort. Further, they needed opportunities to observe technology use modeled in lessons. While one cannot change an individuals' biology or personality, a leader can facilitate change by setting up scaffolds or removing obstacles that seem especially troubling for some individuals.

Unconscious Bias

Research around implicit or unconscious bias has shown that humans absorb bias and are often unaware of its occurrence (Fiarman, 2016). Further, research shows that people tend to favor their identity or the culturally valued group (Morin, 2015). For educators to address unconscious bias, they must first become aware it exists (Tatum, 2008). Leaders can anticipate where bias will arise in their schools and create systems to counteract it or reduce it while also working to build empathy in their staff (Fiarman, 2016).

Learning and Its Influence on Change

Change theories often neglect the importance of learning and the capacity to learn, specifically the skills and competencies that enable people to do things differently (Beer et al., 1990; Hendry, 1996). Change and learning are intertwined and must be considered when guiding change.

Alexander et al. (2009) suggested nine principles of learning theory based on the fundamental concept that learning is change and change is learning. Change can be very small or extreme, and it can occur immediately or over a substantial period. Additionally, the environment and the individual are sculpted as learning occurs (Alexander et al., 2009). This is a foundational concept to lead teachers in change. Over time, their learning and change have shaped them as individuals. To follow this logic, the final principle stated that learning was interactional. Specifically, learning was shaped by an intertwined set of forces that were molded by culture, biology, and human actions (Alexander et al., 2009). Further, there was an iterative process where learning from the past and the present co-influenced each other, but this also influenced the learner and the context or environment. Thus, there is mutual, reciprocal influence occurring between teachers and their environments; they were shaped by it, but they also molded the environment.

Mezirow (1978) introduced a theory of adult learning called transformative learning to explain how adults adapted to changes in their world. Transformative learning is a process of using prior understandings to interpret new ones and provide a basis for the next potential learning opportunity (Mezirow, 1996; Taylor, 2017). Mezirow (1990) introduced the concept of transformative perspective, where learning or change in perspective evolves through a process of phases. Initially, after the onset of change, there

is a self-examination period where common feelings of inadequacy and lack of confidence occur (Taylor, 2017). This is followed by a critical assessment of assumptions where the learner assesses their previous understandings and makes efforts to rectify them with the new ones. After the learner begins to rectify these differences, there is a period of exploration and experimentation with new roles and ideas, even developing an action plan (Taylor, 2017). The final phase is taking the acquired skills and knowledge and applying it to the new situation with stronger self-efficacy levels, which can ultimately create a more inclusive worldview (Mezirow, 1990; Taylor, 2017).

Alexander et al. (2009) claimed that learning could be resisted. "As inevitable, essential, and ubiquitous as learning is, a curious corollary is that there are instances when humans resist learning (and the change it implies), even finding it painful" (Alexander et al., 2009, p. 178). The ability to resist learning does not indicate learning does not occur; rather, what was actually learned may have been different from what was anticipated. Alexander et al. (2009) suggested resistance was the end result if the learning effort required was too great, the rewards too small, success too unsure, or the individuals' culture, deeply held beliefs, or habits were put into question.

In this study, it is important to look at the leader and the teacher as a learner, which is also akin to change. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1993) examined learning as a complex process that involves continual reinvestment in learning by building on what was learned but approaching each problem as a new one that may require new learning. If the later career learner settles into a pattern of routine performance and non-reinvestment, they are likely not to become an expert (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993). Bereiter and Scardamalia (1993) further argued that the philosophy of reinvestment and progressive

problem solving creates an expert. If educators are not pushed out of a routine pattern, they cannot develop the expertise, which in turn provides the self-efficacy to grow and adapt to change.

Coaching Literature

Educational research related to coaching leaders mostly centers around new administrators rather than guiding established administrators on theoretically based coaching strategies (Goff et al., 2014; Huff et al., 2013). However, there are studies that are beneficial in creating a model from which to coach. Each of these models provides an idea or concept that can contribute to my coaching.

Several specific strategies are recommended across these studies for coaching site principals. Mayer et al. (2015) utilized the community of practice framework and creating self-efficacy to perform coaching in two urban schools. Further, Mayer et al. (2015) found that reforms were the most effective when the coaching was based on an adaptive-assistance relationship. Goff et al. (2014) argued that feedback coupled with performance-based coaching around that feedback is the key ingredient. Based on leadership coaching literature, Goff et al. (2014) developed a five-phase model that includes (a) groundwork, (b) assessment and feedback, (c) goal setting, (d) action planning, and (e) ongoing assessment and support. Though focused on new site leaders, Gray (2018) suggested that effective coaching focuses on leadership development based on theoretical principles and provides room for collaborative problem-solving. Wittmer and Hopkins (2018) argued that the trend to increase emotional intelligence in leaders should also be coupled with diversity intelligence coaching. Aguilar (2017) maintained that coaching leaders should be voluntary, allow for their independence, and maintain

confidentiality. She goes on to share her model, called transformational coaching, where the focus is on behaviors the school leader needs to do well, the beliefs from which the leader operates, and their ways of being, such as communicating.

Each of these models and strategies has possibilities for my research; however, none fully reflect the work I am trying to accomplish. There are pieces from each of them to tie into my coaching practice. The concept of gathering feedback and then coaching the site leaders on that feedback falls perfectly in line with my goal of applying sensemaking and one-legged interviews (Goff et al., 2014). Aguilar (2013) provided a basic set of coaching tools for sessions that could be useful to incorporate.

Since a model does not fully exist that applies to my research efforts, I created a map and coaching framework for the innovation. It utilized some of the ideas the coaching literature set forth and ideas from transformational leadership, distributed leadership, change theories, and methods to support teachers.

Implications

The theories, models, and research literature presented in this chapter provide constructive concepts of leading change. Instructive threads are woven throughout this literature that rise to prominence for my research. These include navigating or proactively removing resistance, utilizing one's understanding and connection to their environment to guide the change effort, and building a guiding coalition to grow the capacity to tackle the change. These threads complement one another and provide guidance for my innovation.

By knowing that a learner may resist learning when the effort required is too great, the rewards too small, success too unsure, or the individuals' culture, deeply held

beliefs, or habits are called into question, the leader can proactively counteract some of these issues. Essentially, a leader can remove the roadblocks.

Because individuals' contexts and experiences are intertwined, it is important for leaders to understand their teachers. Sensemaking and CBAM focus on the importance of interviewing and interacting with those who are engaging in the change. Leaders must grasp and be interested in these nuances that potentially could defeat the change effort and instead intervene to frame them in a positive way.

Collaborative or distributed leadership enables these positive frames to be constructed. By having a collective guiding coalition, trust is built, and the investment in the change is shared. Through this new frame and from this collective leadership, an urgency to act must be created. A common vision or purpose develops, and the leader can emphasize the vision or new frame by providing sensegiving to their teaching staff. This action of sensegiving also helps to embed the change within the culture for sustainability. Additionally, the importance of the leader's authentic relationships and modeling behavior can set the tone and further shape an adaptive change culture.

Developing agency in leaders and teachers to aid them in controlling intentionality, development, self-regulation, and reflection helps foster engagement in innovative enterprises. Supporting and encouraging them through small wins and opportunities to grow self-efficacy could streamline the change. Understanding the veteran teacher's unique situation in terms of social and political nostalgia will further increase the capacity to make decisive interventions for the site leaders.

These aforementioned change leadership theories and literature guide the steps a leader should take to work with their staff. These provided a foundation for this action research project and, specifically, my innovation.

For my innovation, the Enterprise site leaders needed to understand how to build capacity for change within a school structure through their leadership. They had the opportunity to establish distributed leadership, tap into their transformational leadership qualities, and enact change leadership theories, such as sensemaking and establishing a guiding coalition. Coaching them through these concepts and their daily actions helped to transform the environment and the ability of the staff to change. The goal was for these leaders to become change agents, armed with research-based theoretical foundations and strategies to enact change.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Action research, the basis upon which this inquiry is founded, provides the potential to improve practice. “It requires not only the critical reflection on practice and theory–practice conversation, but it also designates ongoing and evolving action as part of that process” (McAteer, 2013, p. 5).

Becoming a steward of practice and realizing the avenues of potential improvement are the building blocks of action research (Zambo, 2011). What makes action research powerful is that it is meant to make a difference (Elliot, 1991). When researchers embrace difficult challenges and simultaneously utilize their research, experience as a practitioner, and passion, they make an important difference in enacting change (Zambo, 2011).

Action research continually adapts to new circumstances and change in part because of its cyclical nature. These steps include study and plan, take action, collect and analyze evidence, and reflection. These steps are repeated as the research continues to the next cycle. Moreover, because cycles are iterative, action research continually improves and creates change.

Setting

Martin School District was one of the first school districts in California. It was assigned the label District Number Two in 1851. The original schoolhouse remained a place to learn until 1949 when it was removed shortly thereafter. Times have changed significantly as the area transformed from a farming orchard-based economy to the well-known Silicon Valley in the latter 20th century. The digitally driven industry was

influenced heavily by famous computer entrepreneurs like Bill Hewlett, Dave Packard, and Steve Jobs, who made fortunes developing high-tech products (Whiteley, 2020). Martin's boundaries are flanked by the new Apple Park, Netflix, and eBay, and within its boundaries are primarily residential and retail. There are seven total schools, including four elementary schools, two K–8 schools, and one middle school. Enterprise Elementary is one of the four elementary schools serving transitional kindergartners (TK) to fifth grade in the Martin School District.

Enterprise Elementary is ranked second in the district in state standardized test scores behind Colton Elementary and ranks better than 91.2% of elementary schools in California. The student population is 41% Asian, 29% Caucasian, 20% Hispanic, 5% Black, and 5% other. About 17% come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (i.e., eligible for free and reduced lunch), which is the second lowest in the district. Between 1990 and 2000, the demographics were quite different and averaged 75% Caucasian, 21% Asian, and 4% Hispanic students. During that decade, the student population averaged 408 compared to the current 671. Of the 24 Enterprise teachers, almost half were teaching at Enterprise during that decade.

From the most recent California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) test data available, the proportion of Enterprise Elementary students in grades three through five who reached a level of proficiency and above was 73% in English Language Arts (ELA) and 72% in mathematics. The state average is 50% in ELA and 32% in mathematics. However, the English Language Learners (ELL) perform at 43.55% in ELA and 48.49% in mathematics. This is far above the state's ELL performance for ELA of 12.81% and 12.58% for mathematics. Enterprise's scores are well above the state

average test scores, as evidenced by the school ranking 427th out of 5,772 elementary schools across the state. Hispanic students have been disproportionately disciplined through referral or suspension in the 2014–2018 school years. In the 2017–2018 school year, Hispanic students made up 20% of the population but 50% of the suspensions. Since 2018, there has been a decrease in referrals and suspensions for Hispanic students and overall due in part to a new statewide accountability system.

The schedule is structured with early release on Wednesdays so that teachers can collaborate. The principal expects teachers to collaborate weekly, but no parameters are set for that time in terms of expectations or outcomes. During the 2018–2019 school year, the union bargained to shorten staff meetings by a total of 30 minutes a month. Thus, they have 90 minutes available for staff meetings monthly. Three times a year, teachers have data days where they are released to study their data. At Enterprise, the teachers are expected to look at the Fountas and Pinnell, as well as Study Island scores, and plan accordingly during data collaboration release days. Fountas and Pinnell is a reading inventory score that indicates the progress of the student reader. Study Island is similar but instead assesses for math and writing.

Participants

Kaiden Muscat was beginning his seventh year as principal of Enterprise Elementary School at the onset of this intervention. Prior to becoming principal, he was an assistant principal at Martin Middle School for two years and had been a math teacher, athletic director, and activities director in a nearby school district for 15 years. Principal Muscat comes from a family of educators. I had his father, Marcelino Muscat, as a professor in my master's in educational leadership program from San Jose State. While

Principal Muscat never taught elementary school, he has worked to learn guided reading, small group instruction, and manipulative-based mathematics. He enjoys supervising students at recess, talking with them, and even playing games with them. He produces weekly videos for the students and families to provide information but also to inspire them to be better "Bobcats," which is their mascot. He has achieved several positive feats at the school, such as the mural project and developing a technology infrastructure. When asked what his vision for Enterprise is, he replied, "For students to learn, isn't that what we all want?" He is noticeably passionate about the Enterprise students.

Kristin Fence is the assistant principal at Enterprise and is in her first year there. Before serving as an Enterprise administrator, she was an assistant principal at Colton Elementary. She also taught in Martin School District for eight years at Panther Elementary in the primary grade levels. Between her teaching and her work in administration, she served as a teacher on special assignment at the district coordinating data and organizing professional development. Fence serves as a supporting role to Muscat; however, she is a part of most decision-making and planning. Because of her expertise in the primary levels, she helps bridge the areas in which Muscat has less experience. Together, the two administrators organize yearly functions like the walkathon and the assemblies.

This case study focused on both Muscat and Fence and their abilities to adjust their attitudes and practices around leading change for their teachers. For this study, I refer to them as site leaders. I have worked with both of them through the early cycles of my action research and planned the entire innovation around teaching and coaching them.

My interest in Enterprise Elementary as a place for my research is in part because of its high percentage of veteran teachers. In all, 19 of 24 teachers (80%) have taught 10 or more years. Of those 24 teachers, 12 have taught 20 or more years. Teachers who have taught more than 10 years, my delineation as a veteran teacher, have taught a total of 508 years, and 420 of them have been served at Enterprise. These are important statistics to consider when looking at the shift in student demographics to a higher population of English Language Learners from when most of these teachers began teaching at Enterprise Elementary. Asking them to shift to serve these students is a clear departure from their original practices. The ethnicity of the staff is 78% Caucasian, 17% Asian, and 5% Hispanic.

All 24 teachers at Enterprise Elementary are female. The average number of years teaching is 20.3 and ranges from five to 39 years. Only one teacher has taught outside of California. All the teachers are permanent teachers. Except for two teachers on staff, they have all received effective or exemplary evaluations.

The site leadership team meets monthly and is comprised of at least one teacher per grade level. The members are usually volunteers, but some grade level teams have individuals take turns participating. In the past it primarily has been a body to distribute information and discuss issues.

My innovation was not directly dealing with these teachers; however, it was important to keep in mind who they are and what dimensions or perspectives they add to the school's social framework. In coaching Muscat and Fence, considering how veteran teachers consequently respond and perceive their administrators was important to consider.

Role of the Researcher

Within this research, my role as a researcher was an active participant through coaching and a participant observer watching Muscat and Fence lead the change. I conducted or administered the interviews, observations, and surveys. Moreover, I led the professional development and coaching innovation.

I am fairly new to the district—serving my first year as assistant superintendent of human resources in the 2019–2020 school year. My role as assistant superintendent is supportive of the Enterprise Elementary School community but on the periphery, which signifies my outsider status. I have visited their classrooms in my role for the district or interacted with them if circumstances warrant. My first encounter with the site leaders was at the summer leadership retreat in 2019; however, my interactions with them have been ongoing through leadership meetings and guidance around employee or evaluation issues.

My position as an outsider creates a level of openness to trust me because there is no past, shared history, but it also leads to a level of suspicion of being taken advantage of. “Positionality as a member of the district hierarchy could potentially imply a particular agenda” (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 13).

My role as the researcher consisted of minimal interactions with the staff, such as sending surveys by email and observing staff meetings.

Personal Statement

The complexity of leadership to lead change has been a challenge I have faced personally. More and more, administrators are expected to be instructional leaders who will lead their schools to great academic success, or in other words, increase student

learning. Having been both a teacher and currently a public school administrator, I have a vested interest in strengthening the skills of school site leaders to lead change. My role here was to support the site leaders' work by coaching them with theoretically based change strategies.

My research is grounded in theoretical perspectives, uncovered ideas, and my own experiences. I am a realist, and I believe I am a part of the ideas and people being explored, and I have an impact on them either through my own leadership or my just being there. My research is action research. While there are empirical measures that I set forth in the process, it does not necessarily take me out of that process. I am grounded in the quest to improve student learning, and my focus on utilizing leadership to improve the skills of teachers mirrors that. My 25 years in education allow me to more aptly offer experiences that could enable leaders to embrace change better. The theoretical framework for my quest included leadership theories, change leadership theories, and research done with veteran teachers. These theories supported the direction of my innovation and epistemology. The data derived from my research provided a constructed set of facts in which to weave the answers to the story.

Innovation

Site Leaders' Plan for Improvement

Given the lower achievement of ELLs at Enterprise Elementary, the site leaders narrowed their plan for improvement around this achievement disparity. Specifically, their goal was to close the learning gap for ELLs by changing teacher practices. The site leader's plan was situated in the Martin district-level improvement science work. The focus of improvement science is to apply a structured inquiry process to real problems of

a particular site that the data has uncovered, then the school people work to improve that situation (Schwartz, 2018). This allows each site to develop ideas that fit needs at the school, grade, and individual level. As the improvement change ideas are implemented, data is gathered regarding their success or lack thereof. This is the core framework of improvement science called the plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycle, with the goal of producing learning quickly from examining immediate practice (Lewis, 2015). The PDSA cycle has three key questions that drive improvement work (Lewis, 2015):

1. What are we trying to accomplish?
2. How will we know that a change is an improvement?
3. What change can we make that will result in improvement?

Prior to the year of my innovation, the site leaders provided change ideas that involved getting to know their ELL students, such as a picture wall, denoting the ELL students on their roll sheets, and tracking the specific data for those students. For the year of my innovation, Principal Muscat and Assistant Principal Fence led the implementation of instructional strategies and practice changes with their staff to support ELL students more effectively. They did this through developing designated English Language Development (ELD) time which began in August of 2021.

My Innovation to Support Enterprise Elementary Site Leaders

My innovation was to guide Enterprise Elementary site leaders to support teachers better through this change. The structure of my innovation included two sessions of preplanning professional development during the early summer and late summer and trimonthly coaching sessions once school began. The preplanning and professional

development were four hours each, and the coaching was one-hour weekly sessions. These occurred at Enterprise Elementary in Principal Muscat's office.

I supported site leaders' abilities to lead the change in ELD instruction at their school using change theory as a basis. The initial professional development sessions consisted of a presentation of leadership theories, a refresher of Kotter's (2012) change model, reading articles on transformational and distributed leadership, and planning how to support the site leaders in implementing those ideas as well as integrate sensemaking at their sites. In these sessions, the site leaders created a plan for what changes they wanted to make to their practice and specifically for the start of the school year. Here, I created a Learning Template for the site leaders to plan actions corresponding to each theoretical concept (see Appendix A).

Once the school year began, I continued to coach the site leaders weekly and supported them with tools to enhance the change theory, like the innovation configuration maps (IC Maps; Hall et al., 2011). In previous cycles of action research, the site leaders learned how to use the IC Maps to help their staff visualize and formulate what the change or shift in instruction would look like. They did not implement this with their Enterprise staff prior to the innovation but did so during this research. Further, the site leaders were coached on the one-legged interview, which was combined with sensemaking to determine the collective efficacy of the staff. What they learned from those interviews, in turn, helped shape the implementation of their practice.

The weekly coaching sessions assisted the site leaders in navigating their ELD focus with their staff. Even if the site leaders tried to adhere to the change theory taught through professional development, the site leaders needed continued guidance in

implementing these ideas. The goal of the coaching innovation was to take a variety of input, learning, and understandings and make it actionable (Goff et al., 2014). Each week we would plan actions corresponding to the theory, debrief those they had planned previously, and record it on a template similar to the Learning Template. After the third coaching session, I changed the template to help me be more organized and to track their actions more effectively in the Coaching Template (see Appendix B). Each theoretical concept was still highlighted in a bar at the top of the Coaching Template. All templates and slides were shared and editable by the site leaders.

The research helped guide my work with the Enterprise site leaders as well as my own experience in change leadership as a site administrator for the past 13 years.

Research Design

A mixed methods action research design using quantitative and qualitative data collection was used. The goal was to gather as much information as possible regarding the research questions concerning the innovation. There was a total of one quantitative data tool (used twice) and five qualitative data tools utilized throughout the study. Data was collected and analyzed in an ongoing fashion to inform and adjust the study iteratively; however, the primary data analysis occurred at the end of the innovation. Essentially, I followed Lewin's (1947) four-stage action research model beginning with planning, then acting, followed by observation through data collection, and then finally reflection.

The potential threats to this design's internal and external validity centered on the case study's limitations. Larger studies are able to use statistical methods as controls, which strengthens external validity (Blatter, 2008). Thus, case studies lack an aspect of

empirical completeness and a limited scope in terms of causal goals (Bhattacharya, 2017; Blatter, 2008). However, the purpose of a case study is not to find a correct truth, rather to find the clearest interpretations and understandings possible (Bhattacharya, 2017).

In the following, I describe each data source and its purpose, its administration, and analysis. These instruments aided in addressing my research questions:

RQ1. How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the attitudes of school leaders?

RQ2. How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the practice of school leaders?

RQ3. In the context of change initiatives, to what degree does such a coaching program affect teachers' perception of (a) contribution of teacher voice, (b) alignment of shared vision between teachers and leaders, and (c) leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs?

Quantitative Instruments

In a small case study such as this, it is more common to have qualitative sources rather than quantitative ones. My research questions primarily focused on the two Enterprise Elementary site leaders. The Enterprise staff is secondary in this design; however, to answer the third research question regarding the degree of willingness to engage in the change led by the school leaders, it was beneficial to conduct a quantitative analysis.

Survey

Description and Purpose. A pre- and postinnovation staff perception survey was used to address RQ3. This survey was designed to reveal personal thoughts about

changes in teachers' perceptions about the site leader's practice. The survey was comprised of six-point Likert scale items, ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The four constructs of the staff perception survey are *voice* (RQ3a), shared *vision* (RQ3b), *removing obstacles* (RQ3c), and *creating a culture of collective growth* (RQ3b). Two open-ended responses were included in the postinnovation survey.

Table 1 shows those constructs in relation to their supporting theory along with a sample item (see Appendix C for more information on constructs).

Table 1

Staff Perception Survey Constructs

Construct	Supporting Theory	Sample Item
Voice	• Distributed Leadership • Sensemaking	When I contribute ideas, I feel those ideas are valued by my school administrators.
Shared Vision	• Transformational Leadership • Change Theories	When my school administrators share ideas about how we work with students, they make the objectives and outcomes very understandable.
Removing Obstacles	• Change Theories • Sensemaking	My school administrators have a clear understanding of what obstacles are in the way when implementing change.
Culture of Collective Growth	• Transformational Leadership • Change Theories • Self-Efficacy	I feel I am part of making a difference for the greater school team.

Pre-to-post comparison of the survey's outcomes were intended to indicate if teachers at Enterprise perceived a shift in the practice and attitudes of their site leadership or RQ3. Further, it offered an opportunity to see if these practices shifted their own perceptions and behaviors. The survey results provided a glimpse into how participants were reacting to their site leaders (see Appendix D for the survey).

The Administration. The staff perception survey was administered to the Enterprise teaching staff prior to the start of the 2021–2022 school year and at the end of the innovation, early November. The survey was sent through a Google form notification. The survey had an identifier of the last four digits of the teacher's social security number to retain anonymity.

Data Analysis. The pre- and postsurvey were linked to this identifier as they took both surveys. This was intended to create statistical alignment between the two surveys. The results were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The intent of this survey was to observe any changes in teacher perception from before and after the innovation. Because I was examining the relationship between two tests over time and due to the small sample size and lack of data normality, instead of a conventional *t* test, the more conservative nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was applied (Salkind & Frey, 2020). Because only six teachers participated in both surveys, the identifier was not used to compare pre- and postsurvey results. However, the participants were deemed a representative sample of the whole and worthy of data analysis.

Qualitative Instruments

This study's qualitative research data included documents, observations, interviews, and field notes. The purpose of the qualitative research was to learn more

deeply about how the site leaders changed their own attitudes and practices because of their exposure to coaching and professional learning. Each qualitative instrument is described, and the analysis procedures are explained next.

Artifacts

Internal work products produced by the site leaders provided insights into their practices and attitudes toward change. When examining artifacts from before the innovation and then during, there was an opportunity to determine if there was an impact on those attitudes and practices.

The Description and Purpose. Monday Memos and staff meeting agendas or slides were examined to aid in addressing RQ1 and RQ2. Monday Memos are Principal Muscat's weekly message to staff. They also included information from the district office. Principal Muscat and Assistant Principal Fence prepared the staff meeting agendas or slides for staff meetings.

The outcomes of document analysis are multifaceted. Analyzing the documents prior to the innovation and then during provided the opportunity to determine if leadership theory or change theory-based practices were implemented. Further, it also provided an opportunity to see if Principal Muscat's practices shifted their own perceptions and behaviors. There was the ability to see evidence of the professional development and the productivity of coaching.

The Administration. The Monday Memos were collected from the year prior, August 2020 through October 2020, and from the beginning of the school year 2021 until the end of the innovation, October 2021. Principal Muscat shared his Google Folders

with me. Similarly, the staff meeting agendas or slides were shared from the beginning of the school year until the end of the innovation and for the prior year.

Data Analysis. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating documents, which requires examination and interpretation to elicit meaning (Bowen, 2009). The process involved an initial superficial examination of the documents followed by a more focused re-reading where I applied both emergent and a priori coding for category construction (Barbour, 2014; Bowen, 2009). The a priori codes included *removing roadblocks*, *sense of urgency*, *vision*, and *small wins*. These were chosen based on the change leadership theory. Then, I determined if commonality existed in codes and thematic categories with other qualitative data sources. Besides providing qualitative data, I was able to quantitatively compare the documents to the prior school year during the same period from August to October. For example, this content analysis provided a simple numerical comparison between pre- and postintervention coding.

Interviews

To fully understand the attitudes and practices of the site leaders, it was imperative to record their perspectives. Interviewing them before, during, and after the intervention enabled me to gather evidence of the coaching's influence on the innovation.

The Description and Purpose. Interview questions connected to RQ1 and RQ2 involved strategies to support change and if the leaders perceived they were able to make an impact on teacher adaptability. The interviews were "designed by formulating a purpose of investigation around the research questions" (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015, p. 128). Interviews and subsequent analysis uncovered truths and meanings, both explicit and implicit.

Interviews were performed to examine how site leaders interacted, responded to, and engaged in their practice and their attitudes surrounding these elements. The purpose of a semistructured interview is to obtain descriptions of the interviewee's life or context in respect to their perspective and produce the meaning of a phenomenon (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015). In this case, I sought to understand the leaders' perspective of change, their practice, attitudes, and strategy implementation (see Appendix F). Interviews at three different times allowed me to measure change over time while the innovation was implemented.

The one-on-one interviews were semistructured with several base questions, with the option to ask follow-up questions (Mertler, 2019). I asked open-ended questions, which promoted discussion and the freedom of a participant to explore thoughts (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015; Mertler, 2019). Interviews included a base of 10 questions, which were scripted in advance. These questions were followed up with probing questions. Examples of qualitative interview questions included the following:

- Do you usually find yourself successful in leading a change effort? Please, give an example.
- From your perspective, how did the change strategies impact your teachers?

These questions connected to RQ1 and RQ2 regarding the site leader's attitudes and practice.

The Administration. Interviews were conducted with the site leaders prior to the start of the innovation in the spring of 2021. They were interviewed again in September 2021 as a midway check-in and finally in early November 2021 at the conclusion of the

innovation process. The interviews took place in Principal Muscat's office and Assistant Principal Fence's office to increase their comfort levels. The interviews took between 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

Data Analysis. The interviews were audio recorded. They were transcribed using the web-based service Rev.com (n.d.). This provided a verbatim transcript and was used for coding; however, I added Jeffersonian-based observations of body language nuances and intention from the interview itself (Paulus et al., 2014).

While I had a theoretical framework and inclination to produce codes prior to examining the documents, I still wanted to approach these documents with an open mind (Charmaz, 2014; Gibbs, 2007). As I moved through the data, I determined the applicability of a priori codes based on leadership theoretical frameworks. The a priori codes included removing roadblocks, sense of urgency, vision, and small wins. These were chosen based on the change leadership theory. Additionally, I used the computer software program HyperRESEARCH to support coding and analyzing the data. Thematic analysis was the key to my initial open coding process, and the computer software helped enable me to derive themes and sort the data.

Field Notes

As I moved through the innovation coaching every week, it was important to record my reflections of those sessions. This was an opportunity to track the innovation and progress as it occurred.

The Description and Purpose. This qualitative data source included a concurrent and reflective record of the site leaders' professional development and coaching sessions. I was an active participant during these sessions and thus was only able to record brief

observations during the time with the site leaders. In a reflective field journal, I replayed the session relating to my insights, ideas, or themes that resulted from my observations (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). This was a summary and a place to record quotes or synopsis of verbiage from the site leaders.

The potential outcomes of field notes are diverse; however, the intention was to address RQ1, RQ2, and possibly RQ3. The field notes showed changes over time, an opportunity to see the site leaders' practices shift their own perceptions and behaviors. I was able to see evidence of practice and attitude as well during the coaching sessions. The field notes reflected the effectiveness of the change effort. These notes allowed me a reflective space to examine the progress of the innovation and the emerging themes as I moved through the process.

The Administration. The field notes were collected from the beginning of the innovation until the end of the innovation. I recorded notes within 24 hours following each session with the site leaders.

Data Analysis. Like document analysis, I first got a sense of the whole and then noted a few underlying meanings (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The coding process ensued wherein text segments and labels were assigned, followed by the categorical or theme narrowing process. Because this qualitative source was recorded from my perspective, it was important to realize the propensity to align with a priori themes.

Staff Meeting Observations

The staff meetings were an important piece of evidence because it was an observable practice of the site leaders. Observing a staff meeting provided a dimension to observe changes.

The Description. Staff meetings, primarily for teachers, occur twice a month. Staff meetings can have a variety of purposes. They often serve a mandatory function, for example, about how to operate during an earthquake. For this research project's purpose, I observed a routine meeting where the site leaders led their site in their goals for ELL students and shared what is important for the staff to know or be a part of. I observed everything that the leaders said and did and how the staff interacted with them.

This was an opportunity to gather first-hand information on people within their environment who may not be able to communicate their progress in a survey (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The focus of this observation was on the site leaders. In connection with the research questions, I tried to assess if theoretically based professional development and coaching changed their attitudes and practice. There was potential to see evidence of several parts of the professional development and coaching. For example, I observed distributed leadership during the meeting through their collaboration on designated ELD time.

The Administration. The staff meeting observation was performed once at the end of the innovation. I observed a 60-minute meeting. I planned with Principal Muscat to set the observation dates, and the staff was informed of my presence ahead of time. I sat in the back of the library at Enterprise Elementary, where they meet.

I observed and took notes to observe these nonverbal and verbal interactions (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p. 227). A form was used to record the participants' activities, including quotes, the layout of the setting, and verbal and nonverbal interactions. I also digitally recorded the meeting from my phone and transcribed the data using Rev.com (n.d.).

Data Analysis

The data from this observation was unstructured in nature. Nevertheless, I followed a similar open coding process then tried to find commonality or thematic categories. By using HyperRESEARCH, I was able to store, manage, code, and retrieve data.

Table 2 outlines the overall data sources with their respective research questions. The data analysis column further defines how those data sources were analyzed.

Table 2

Research Plan

Research Questions	Data Sources	Data Analysis
RQ1. How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the attitudes of school leaders?	● Field notes ● Semistructured interviews	● Content analysis ● Open coding
RQ2. How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the practice of school leaders?	● Monday Memos ● Staff meeting agendas and presentations ● Field notes ● Semistructured interviews ● Observation	● Content analysis ● Open coding
RQ3. In the context of change initiatives, to what degree does such a coaching program affect teachers' perception of (a) contribution of teacher voice, (b) alignment of	● Survey ● Observation ● Semistructured interviews and open-ended response ● Field notes	● Pre- and postsurvey analyzed with nonparametric Whitney Mann U test and comparing means ● Observation notes

shared vision between teachers and leaders, and (c) leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs?	open coded ● Interviews and field notes open coded with themes developed

Trustworthiness, Credibility, Reliability, and Validity of Data Sources

Measuring change in the site leaders' attitudes and practices was a challenging task. To overcome this obstacle, I made efforts in this research design to collect a variety of data that presented indicators over time. The data collected was intentional, with a direct connection to the research questions, and provided diversity in how the data was gathered. Tracy (2010) has labeled this as meaningful coherence.

This research is relevant to the questions at hand and applicable to a broader challenge in education, meeting the criteria for being a worthy topic (Tracy, 2010). Though this is a case study derived from a small sample, it has the transferability, applicability, and confirmability that trustworthiness requires (Birks, 2014). I believe this study has made a significant contribution to the site leaders, the staff at Enterprise Elementary, and to myself as a growing researcher. It has the propensity to extend the learning opportunity conceptually to a wider audience in the realm of educational change leadership.

To further ensure quality, special attention was needed to interpret the interview responses and observations accurately. Reflective notes were included to record my perceptions as a researcher in the context of the transcriptions. Additionally, the survey and interview questions were analyzed for construct validity. Also, to enhance this study's trustworthiness, I checked in with the site leader participants and shared my

findings with them. They provided feedback and any possible corrections to help eliminate bias and increase credibility (Birks, 2017; Freeman et al., 2007; Tracy, 2010).

By triangulating data sets, a clearer picture emerged. Convergence forms a more comprehensive view of the research questions (Mertler, 2019). By considering the different results together, certain truths rose to the top, which established the study as more credible. These strategies were derived from open coding, where this to-and-fro movement ensured better interpretations of data.

Timeline and Procedure

The first interaction was the qualitative semistructured interviews of the site leaders, followed by an introduction to the key leadership change ideas through the professional development coupled with the site leaders' developed plan for implementation. Prior to school starting, the pre-Staff Perception Survey was administered to the teaching staff. Simultaneously, the coaching of the site leaders at Enterprise had begun. The weekly coaching sessions provided guidance, feedback, and planning for the site administrators and an opportunity for me to record field notes of my observations. These sessions provided an accountability focus for the site leaders to track their implementation of the change efforts. During this time, I observed a staff meeting and recorded field observations accordingly. Post-Staff Perception Survey and postinnovation interviews were conducted after the innovation, along with the gathering of documents. The data analysis then began, transcribing, coding, and delving into deciphering the meaning of the outcomes.

Table 3 outlines the process and procedures for this research study. It includes the date, what actions or activities occurred, followed by the procedures to enact this action

Table 3

Timeline and Procedures of the Study

Time Frame	Actions	Procedures
April 2021	Prepare professional development sessions for the two site administrators.	● Choose articles for the site administrators to read and send to them. ● Contact site administrators to calendar professional development. ● Prepare the slides and change leadership Google doc.
May 2021	Interview site leaders at Enterprise.	● Interview Principal Muscat and Assistant Principal Fence separately. ● This was the preinterview to determine what their current attitudes, beliefs, and practices were.
June, July 2021	Deliver professional development.	● Prepare individual leadership change presentations with materials, slides, and strategies. ● Conduct the training sessions.
August 1, 2021	Administer staff perception presurvey.	● Send Google form survey to Enterprise staff.
August–October 2021 Trimonthly meetings	Begin regularly coaching Enterprise site leadership.	● Utilizing the work completed in the leadership sessions, plan for implementation of change leadership. ● Coach the site leaders on staff meetings and specific site interventions during the trimonthly meetings.
October 2021	Observe a staff meeting.	● Take field notes.

September 2021	Middle cycle interview of site leaders.	● Interview Principal Muscat and Assistant Principal Fence separately. ● This is the midcycle interview to determine any progress made in the innovation.
End of October 2021	Administer the postinnovation staff perception survey to Enterprise teachers.	● Send the survey to Enterprise teachers. ● Send reminders to those who have not completed it.
November 2021	Postinnovation interview with site leaders.	● Interview Principal Muscat and Principal Fence to determine if attitudes, beliefs, and practices have changed.
November–December 2021	Analyze data.	● Transcribe audio recordings. ● Conduct qualitative analysis. ● Conduct quantitative analysis.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose (Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*, 1942).

My passion for and curiosity about leading change became formalized research in this project. My prying into literature and theories and a school and its people warranted further fascination. My purpose gained clarity, and thus, I dove into action research. This process has provided me the opportunity to explore more deeply. With focus, structure, and accountability, I was able to glean new understandings and strengthen many I had already established. Learning is constant, and it is magnified when engaged in focused action research.

In this chapter, I share the investigation results through the lens of my research questions. For each of the following research questions, I devote a portion of this chapter:

RQ1. How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the attitudes of school leaders?

RQ2. How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the practice of school leaders?

RQ3. In the context of change initiatives, to what degree does such a coaching program affect teachers' perception of (a) contribution of teacher voice, (b) alignment of shared vision between teachers and leaders, and (c) leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs?

The research questions are addressed with evidence from the qualitative and quantitative instruments, which are delineated within the evidence provided.

A summary of all research questions and instruments used to address each question is found in Table 2 of Chapter 3. Data was gathered from Monday Memos, a staff meeting observation, staff meeting agendas, coaching field notes, the Staff Perception Survey, and interviews that were all used to analyze then address these questions.

School Leader Attitudes and Beliefs (RQ1)

The first research question explored how a research-based leadership coaching program could impact the attitudes and beliefs of the site leaders. To answer this question, I utilized the transcriptions from semistructured interviews and coaching field notes.

Some of the most frequent codes that arose from the transcriptions included the descriptive codes *directives*, *positive*, *building relationships*, *supportive*, *focus*, *explaining why*, *and teacher responsibility*. This also included the a priori codes *removing roadblocks*, *sense of urgency*, *vision*, and *small wins*. When pieced together and analyzed, these categories addressed the larger question regarding school leaders' attitudes and how those attitudes were affected by the coaching program I designed and implemented.

Frustration to Hope

The codes were categorized during the data analysis process, and themes were discovered. One of those themes was *emerging positivity*. In examining the pieces of this theme, a clear shift was noticed from the initial interviews compared to the final interview. This transformation occurred in the site leaders' attitudes regarding leading change. Through the mid- and postintervention interviews, site leaders expressed

attitudes of *hopefulness* regarding efforts to lead change compared to frustration, which will be reviewed next.

Frustration

During interviews conducted prior to the site leaders' professional development and coaching, site leaders expressed attitudes of frustration during efforts to lead change. For example, Principal Muscat recounted a change effort that ultimately succeeded but had its challenges along the way. The change was to move kindergarten instruction into small groups and guided reading. Principal Muscat stated:

> I think a lot of it was just having those follow-up conversations, and then at a certain point, when they're not seeing the big picture, it's coming in and saying, well, this is the expectation. This is what I expect you to do, this is what I expect to see when I come in and then go from there. And then they get over it eventually.

During the interview, Principal Muscat expressed frustration when recollecting when his staff did not get on board with the change. As seen in this comment, when the change was not manifesting, he resorted to providing a directive.

Hopefulness

In the postintervention interviews, the site leaders expressed a changed attitude regarding implementing change. Principal Muscat showed this hopeful attitude when he said, "I think we can show by doing these things, we are making some headway." Assistant Principal Fence also showed this positive approach to leading change when she talked about leading collaboration. She felt the changes they were making in the collaboration structure were moving the staff toward the vision. Her adjective to describe this progress was "great." Principal Muscat shared about an evaluation he had just performed with a teacher who usually expresses that change does not work in the

classroom. He described how he encouraged her to try something new, and he used encouragement to support her growth mindset in trying. Here, growth mindset is when people believe their abilities can be developed through dedication, persistence, and effort (Dweck, 2008). The site leaders' statements exemplified the promise and hope that change leadership will be different.

He also moved in a different direction than providing a directive, as evidenced when Principal Muscat reflected his new thinking in his final interview.

> As you're progressing, I want you to reflect on what you're doing to see if this is the best … And if they can reflect, I think some of them will realize … maybe this isn't the best. Maybe I can do more.

In his statement, Principal Muscat is showing a belief in the power of his leading a teacher to reflect on coming to a decision rather than him having to deliver the expectation. Assistant Principal Fence also showed this focus on growth mindset when she said, "So we tell them, just start trying, we don't expect it to be perfect. We don't expect it to be a 30-minute lesson, just try." Here, Assistant Principal Fence supported teachers to try rather than focus on a result. She shows her attitude shifting to believe that she must just support them trying. Through the course of the intervention, site leaders demonstrated a shift in attitude from frustration to a more hopeful and encouraging disposition toward leading change.

Teacher Responsibility to Leadership Centrality

Second, site leaders held a stronger belief in the initial interviews that the teachers largely impacted the change effort. A predominant recurring code was *teacher responsibility*. This was not just in the context of teachers enacting classroom change but also their willingness to be on board with the change. In the final interviews, there was a

shift in belief from the onus of responsibility being on teachers to the leaders having a central role in the change effort.

Teacher Responsibility

The initial interviews reflected the site leaders' beliefs that the teachers carried the largest responsibility. This is an example of where Assistant Principal Fence recounted her experience in change at Colton Elementary, where teachers were centrally responsible for the change:

> I think just the pushback from the teachers, some of the teachers in the upper grades have been in their spots for a while. So, I think they like their routine, they like the assessment that they use. But the assessment that they were using for reading wasn't specific and detailed enough, it didn't tell them what the student was missing.

According to Assistant Principal Fence, teachers chose to maintain their routine and remain in a comfort zone rather than gravitate toward a more effective assessment. Her perspective was that the teachers held the control to change or not change. Principal Muscat also placed a more significant level of onus on the teachers. For instance, in the first interview, Principal Muscat stated, "So teachers are a big impact, we just got to get them on board and not necessarily agree with it, but just do what we need them to do to get it moving forward right." He was expressing his belief that teachers are the central players, need to be brought on board, and then get the changing moving forward.

Principal Muscat also noted that some teachers unwilling to change because they do not see the need for change. He went on to explain how significant the teachers are in a change effort, "I think … they have a big role … the teachers have a big part … because they're going to be making that change in the classroom, they're the ones that have to implement it." Here, Principal Muscat vocalized his belief about the degree and

centrality teachers have in the change effort. The onus and responsibility rested in the teachers' corner to make the change occur.

Leadership Centrality

The belief that teachers are important to the change effort did not change through the intervention but the site leaders' approach to the centrality of their role as leaders impacting the change did. An example of this shift in focus is demonstrated by this quote from Assistant Principal Fence's final interview:

> Every staff meeting, we say this will be a continued conversation throughout the year. So it's just being really consistent that this isn't something that we're going to do for a year and then it's going to drop off and go away, so just really honing in on it as often as possible.

In this quote, she focused on the efforts of the site leaders to make the change versus the teachers. The teachers are not even mentioned in this quote. Principal Muscat also shifted his thoughts about his ability to impact teacher thinking.

> So it was getting them to change the way they look at it, where it's not really one more thing. You already do a lot of this … we're just being more specific and intentional in how we do it.

Principal Muscat's focus was on his role in making the change occur and how he could impact the teachers' thinking. Rather than focusing just on the teachers needing to get on board, his role in making that happen had increased. The central focus for each site leader became their ability to impact the change effort and their ability to influence the teachers.

Expanding Beliefs About Change Strategies

Finally, the site leaders noted prevalent beliefs in their initial interviews about specific strategies that promote change. In the following sections, I provide an analysis of

their initial beliefs and follow with a summary that demonstrates how these evolved to a more extensive belief system.

Initial Interviews

The site leaders held beliefs that three strategies were necessary in a change effort. Principal Muscat and Assistant Principal Fence believed the following strategies were key in leading change efforts in addition to getting teachers on board, as previously mentioned: (a) *building relationships,* (b) *extending support,* and (c) *explaining why*. Building relationships refers to the belief that connecting with staff and getting to know them is important for the change effort. Extending support indicates the belief that being supportive to teachers is key to enabling change. Finally, site leaders expressed their belief that explaining why the change was necessary was an important part of enacting change.

Building Relationships. Building relationships was a key strategy for site leaders, which refers to connecting**,** identifying, and initiating working relationships to create mutual benefit. Building relationships was a code noted five times in the initial interviews. An example of this is when Principal Muscat noted, "I think building the relationships has helped me be able to implement the change with the small groups and stuff, across school-wide and just continue to have those conversations." In Principal Muscat's commentary, he saw his ability to connect with staff as an asset to leading change. Assistant Principal Fence also shared her ideas around building relationships, "Now that I've kind of built up my relationships here, it's definitely better." This was connected to her response to the interview question of how she has led change in the past.

Both site leaders saw the importance of building relationships with teachers to enact change.

Extending Support. The site leaders valued extending support, which refers to offering assistance to teachers. During the coding process, extending support was noted 12 times in the initial interviews. Principal Muscat emphasized the importance of support:

> Just give them the support. I think that's the biggest thing is, I can't say, I need you to do this, but then I'm not going to give you any support either. So, I always tell them my door's always open, whatever you need, let me know. We'll figure it out, we'll get it to you.

Here, Principal Muscat pointed out the exchange between expecting teachers to change and offering them support in return. Assistant Principal Fence also noted the importance of support to enable change, "It was definitely a lot of scaffolds put in place for them so that they felt supported enough to try something new and something out of their comfort zone." She saw the direct correlation between the number of scaffolds or support offered to enable teachers to step out and try a change. Site leaders saw extending support as an important tool in leading change.

Explaining Why. Site leaders stressed the importance of rationalizing for teachers why change is needed or explaining why. As a reoccurring code in the initial interviews, explaining why was noted eight times. For example, in the initial interview, Principal Muscat said, "And really make sure they understand why we feel this is a need to change. I mean, if they don't know the why behind it, it's going to be a lot harder to make that change." Here, Principal Muscat emphasized the importance of explaining to teachers why the change was occurring. There was evidence that these beliefs regarding

change strategies still existed in the final interviews; however, several strategies were added as described next.

Attitudes After Intervention

The site leaders expanded their beliefs about effective strategies for leading change from those noted in their initial interviews (i.e., building relationships, extending support, and explaining why) to more extensive leadership strategies, including beliefs in having *consistency*, building capacity through *collaborative structures*, and providing *accountability*.

Consistency. Implementing consistently became a central theme to the site leaders' beliefs. Consistency refers to the belief in repetition and reoccurrence of working with and implementing the change or vision. Consistency was coded 11 times in Principal Muscat's final interview, whereas there were no codes of consistency in the initial interview. In the first interview, he explained how when the teachers did not get on board with the change, he ultimately had to give them a directive. His belief about change leadership shifted to one of clarity and consistency, as evidenced in his belief statement regarding change and his vision:

> So just being persistent, I think, has helped. You kind of reiterate because we know as teachers and when the school year gets started, there [are] so many things coming at us that you start with one thing and you kind of forget about it, and then you're like, oh, wait, and then it's not going to happen. So with us being persistent has helped, I think with making this change.

Principal Muscat explained how managerial tasks and new demands for their focus could take their attention away from the change idea. In his final interview, he pointed to his belief in persistency being an effective tool. Assistant Principal Fence also confirmed this shift:

> We've talked about it at every PD that we've had, every staff meeting we've had, the data collaboration days, which I think sometimes might feel like overkill, but at the same time, I think it's good that we're showing them that this is what we're focusing on this year and we're really going to continue working on it.

Assistant Principal Fence explained how they integrated the vision in every opportunity working with staff. She stressed how she thought it was good to show the teachers what the focus was, and that this consistency was not going to change. In their final interviews, the site leaders had a decidedly determined attitude, which was driven by consistency.

Collaborative Structures. In the initial interviews, the site leaders discussed collaboration, but in the final interviews, they explained how they changed the collaboration to actualize their vision and create meaning or sensemaking for staff around the change. Assistant Principal Fence demonstrated her belief in creating a collaborative capacity when she said, "I think them being able to contribute and them having their ideas, it's helpful because it's coming from people that are also teaching it. It's not coming from us saying, you do this." Her belief expressed here values teachers' contribution of ideas as important because they are the ones enacting the change. Then Assistant Principal Fence pointed to the teachers' contribution of ideas that prevented the site leaders from having to give a directive. Principal Muscat also explained how he valued making sense of the change for teachers, "We're going to talk about these things and take it back and see what changed and what discussions we can have." He believed in hearing their ideas and then implementing change based on their shared ideas. Their belief had expanded to include collaborative structures and sensemaking as part of the method of moving the staff more toward the vision.

Accountability. Site leaders also expanded their belief about their role in accountability or ensuring the change occurs. In initial interviews, site leaders explained how they had conversations to provide accountability for teachers who were not holding small groups. In the final interviews, this expanded to provide more structured accountability for teachers in the change effort. Specifically, site leaders created a schedule where they had to commit to providing designated ELD time. The site leaders would then go into the classrooms during that time and follow up with a communication from their visit that addressed the specific components of the IC Map, ELD standards, ELD strategy, or student progress that they were seeing. Principal Muscat shared this example, "It goes to the walkthroughs. I mean, as much as we get in the classrooms, that's kind of where it starts is making sure that we're out, we're visible so that we can talk about the change and needs." Principal Muscat shared his belief in accountability for himself in ensuring he gets out and does walkthroughs but also for teachers as the walkthroughs provide accountability for their practice. In reference to teachers, Assistant Principal Fence also noted that "They [teachers] need someone that's going to follow through with whatever it is they say they're going to do, which I learned very quickly here." Like Principal Muscat, Assistant Principal Fence stressed the importance for the site administration to be accountable and follow through with whatever the task. She went on to describe how the scheduling created accountability for the teachers:

> We've been focusing on getting them to send us all of their schedules to hold them more accountable for it so that we're able to get in the classrooms, see how it's going, and then see what they're trying, especially with the ELD, because it's new.

Assistant Principal Fence saw the importance of receiving the teacher schedules so the site leaders could observe how the change was going. Accountability was coded 10 times in the final interviews compared to three times in the initial interviews. Clearly, site leaders incorporated the belief of accountability as an important part of leading change.

It is evident between the initial and final interviews that there was a shift in how the site leaders conceptualized their role as a leader of change. It was expanded, it was more hopeful, and the site leaders saw the increased weight of their role in the impact of leading change. Several of these attitudes and beliefs overlap with changed practices, which are discussed in the following section.

School Leader Practices (RQ2)

The second research question explored how a research-based leadership coaching program could impact the practices of the site leaders. To answer this question, I utilized the semistructured interviews, coaching field notes, a staff meeting observation, and documentary evidence from the Monday Memos and staff meeting agendas (see Table 2).

Prevalent codes that arose from analyzing the transcriptions and documents included *accountability*, *provide reasoning*, *supportive*, *share out*, *feedback*, and *consistency*. This also included the a priori codes *sense of urgency*, *removing roadblocks*, *vision*, and *small wins*. These codes were analyzed and merged into themes entitled *consistency* and *change strategies*. These themes combined the varied aspects of the site leaders' practice. When examined and analyzed as parts of a larger picture, these categories addressed the overarching question regarding school leaders' practices and how the coaching program I designed and implemented affected those practices. These themes indicated that through the research-based coaching program, site leaders changed

their practice regarding their consistency, and both expanded and shifted change strategies. Consistency and research-based strategy implementation are discussed in the next sections.

Consistent Implementation

Site leaders increased their belief in the consistency of how to lead change, which led to a change in practice. Site leaders shifted their practice from introducing the change idea at the outset of the school year and letting it come and go as needed to consistently implementing it at each staff meeting or collaboration. As seen in the field notes from the coaching intervention, site leaders reflected on how they implemented change strategies in the previous week and then planned for the following week. I changed the Coaching Template so that the session always started with a reflection from what was planned the week before and then ended with planning how to address the change in the next week. Principal Muscat shared how this impacted his practice, "And so having that dedicated time allowed us just to keep that consistency, which I think we needed with the veteran staff, is that consistency, we're going to do this. So it was good. It really helped." He saw how the consistency of our coaching sessions impacted their consistency with the teachers. Assistant Principal Fence also found the consistency of the coaching sessions created more consistency with implementing the vision and change. She noted, "It's been really good because it kept us on track." Assistant Principal Fence went on to explain how in the past, they would lose sight of what they were implementing or perhaps even skip it for a month. She pointed to the coaching sessions as the structure that provided a consistent focus and a plan for what they would be doing in the next week. Clearly, the

coaching sessions created more consistency in the site leaders' practice to keep them focused.

More specifically, this consistency from the coaching intervention impacted the site leaders' practice by reinforcing the consistent implementation of the change vision into their daily work. This diverged from their prior practice, as Principal Muscat explained:

> We started off from the get-go introducing it and then just staying on that topic in future meetings to make sure they understand this is what we're going to do, so we didn't hop around to different things. It's we are going to focus on our ELD instruction.

This quote demonstrates the site leaders starting with the vision implementation at the beginning of the year and highlighting it in every meeting since then. Similarly, Assistant Principal Fence reiterated the consistency of vision implementation.

> I think the vision is clear … this is something that we are focusing on this year. We've been giving them all their LPAC [Language Proficiency Assessment Committee] levels, their acceleration templates, all of that is focused around our EL students and intervention.

She highlighted that the vision focus occurred at every meeting, collaboration, or one-on-one interaction with teachers. This consistent implementation was a shift in practice. Each coaching session began and ended with a focus on how the ELD intervention was integrated and would be integrated into their practice. The research-based coaching program supported the site leaders' consistency.

Research-Based Strategy Implementation

In addressing RQ2, I sought to determine how a research-based leadership coaching program could impact the practices of the site leaders. The professional development was filled with new information and learning opportunities for the site

leaders and was followed up with reinforcement through the coaching sessions. The question was if they would implement those ideas into practice. The site leaders added the following research-based strategies to their practice: *change leadership*, *distributed leadership*, *learning theory and sensemaking*, *social cognitive theory*, *transformational leadership*, and adapting to the needs of *veteran teachers*. This section examines the evidence of changed or new practices through the lens of these strategies.

Change Leadership

Change leadership was identified through the vision implementation as mentioned previously but also through creating a sense of urgency, removing roadblocks, and sharing small wins.

Sense of Urgency. To establish a sense of urgency, site leaders shared the spring and initial benchmark assessments during their collaboration day. Having the teachers examine the scores in collaborative grade-level teams, they identified the learning loss of all students. This activity provided a common understanding of the need and promoted action. Principal Muscat translated that commitment to action in addressing the needs of the ELD students. He explained how they would address the learning loss of the ELD students through designated ELD time. Providing the data and discussion was an example of site leaders trying to establish a sense of urgency for their staff.

Removing Roadblocks. Attempting to alleviate obstacles on the path to change or removing roadblocks occurred in several respects as site leaders sought ways to help facilitate the change for staff. Assistant Principal Fence explained how she made it easier to access ELD intervention supports. She took a document the district provided for them regarding ELD strategies and made it more accessible by adding digital links, sentence

frames, and color-coding. Two teachers asked if they could have a color copy printed for them, so the site leaders printed them and laminated the documents for all teachers. This instance demonstrates how the site leaders intervened directly to remove roadblocks. In the October 20, 2021 staff meeting, the site leaders had a slide that explicitly asked, "Have you started? If so, how is it going? What support do you need? If not, when do you anticipate starting? What are the roadblocks that are preventing you from starting?" In the preintervention Monday Memos and staff meetings, the site leaders offered support, such as "Let us know if you need anything." This was a general offer of support, but the evidence after the research-based coaching program warranted specific targeted support.

Sharing Small Wins. Small wins were celebrated during the staff meeting when Principal Muscat and Assistant Principal Fence shared a strategy that a grade-level team had tried. He also communicated to individuals when they had a win. After walkthroughs, the site leaders would follow up with positive commentary, either by email or in person, regarding successful practices they observed. They would note when they saw targeted ELD work in a lesson or with a specific student. Principal Muscat explained, "So we're always walking through, so we can see those things and then be able to just continue to give them the praise." The site leaders expanded their practice to celebrate small wins with their staff. The wins the site leaders noted were targeted, thoughtful, and ultimately moments impacting student learning.

Distributed Leadership

There were parts of distributed leadership practice that did not show significant changes; however, teacher collaboration and sharing shifted from past practice. In the past, the grade-level teams would meet on separate days and places for collaboration

days. This year, Principal Muscat decided to have all the teachers meet in the media center at the same time, broken into grade-level groups. In our coaching session on September 20th, the site leaders described their plan for the new collaboration structure, and on September 27th, we debriefed how it went. The plan included agreeing upon foundational skills by defining them by grade level. This means identifying the power standards and how they vertically articulate between the grade levels. Then they incorporated these into specific ELD lessons. In her final interview, Assistant Principal Fence commented on how this was an improved and changed practice. This new structure resulted in greater collaboration because the staff was in one room and could vertically articulate their power standards. Additionally, the site leaders felt the collaboration was stronger because there were fewer distractions, and they could provide more leadership in focusing the work.

Learning Theory and Sensemaking

This new collaborative structure provided time for teachers to work through their inadequacies, ask for help, and explore and experiment together while acquiring skills to implement (Mezirow, 1990). This was debriefed in the September 27th coaching session and was noted by Assistant Principal Fence in her final interview:

> I got to go sit with each grade level and talk and look at their schedules. And that was the first time that we really did look at their schedules and when are we doing ELD? How are we doing this? What are we teaching?

Prior to this intervention, site leaders would not always be able to attend the grade-level collaborations as they usually occurred during the school day when site leaders had other obligations and teachers could not interact across grade levels because they were teaching. This collaborative structure provided the site leaders time to interact

with the teachers and learn what their needs were and how to frame the change more effectively, which is sensemaking in action. Site leaders had more of an opportunity to interact with teachers across grade levels simultaneously, understand their perceptions and questions, and then adjust to provide sensemaking or more acceptable frames.

Principal Muscat's one-on-one meetings with each teacher at the beginning of the year took on an added dimension: a focus on the change vision. This provided an additional sensemaking opportunity. As Principal Muscat relayed:

> I think that was a lot of it, is having the one-on-ones setting the tone, and introducing it in a one-on-one format's a little bit easier, so then they can respond back … And so this way, you get to hear from everybody. It kind of gives you a sense too, of okay, how much of the staff is really opposed or having a difficult time.

In this quote, Principal Muscat referred to the vision being easier to introduce in the one-on-one format and then the sensemaking came from their ability to respond. From these interactions during one-on-ones or through the collaborations, site leaders were able to take what they learned from these interactions and frame it for their next meeting with teachers. During the coaching sessions, this framing and discussion of what teachers needed were addressed with the site leaders.

Social Cognitive Theory

The grade-level collaboration time also lent itself to discussions of practice where teachers could share their experiences and learn. One of the reasons Principal Muscat felt that teachers could be resistant was because he felt they feared they might fail and thus did not want to try. Building a collaborative will to try the change is supported by Mezirow's (1990) learning theory and Bandura's self-efficacy.

The site leaders shared the ELD IC Map with their staff as a tool to help them see what the ideal ELD instruction should look like. Because teachers understood what the ideal change looked like, it gave them understanding and clarity around the expectations. The site leaders also used it as a tool for their walkthroughs to help guide them in calibrating the effectiveness of the ELD strategies they were observing. To alleviate potential fear or inadequacy, teachers were building their capacity in terms of strategies and instructional techniques during the collaborative time. This contributed to building the collaborative will.

Assistant Principal Fence modeled how to find time for designated ELD. This helped them be able to emulate the task. She reported, "We gave them a couple of examples, some teachers are going to do it during library time, only once a week … where they can pull those kids and have like a 10, 15-minute activity with them." This helped frame the expectation and let teachers access how they could do it. These examples helped teachers to complete their schedules. Again, this modeling and support enabled the teachers to be efficacious and have a collaborative will.

Transformational Leadership

Several parts of transformational leadership have been addressed in the previous sections, such as supporting intellectual stimulation and attending to individualized needs. The inspirational motivation was captured by an activity the site leaders created to start the year. Prior to sharing their vision for improving ELD instruction, site leaders asked teachers to write down and pair-share the reason they went into teaching. The common thread in all their answers was about students. Teachers shared a common purpose to help kids learn. To further this, site leaders asked each teacher to come up

with “one word” to motivate them through the year. Then in a Monday memo and at the staff meeting, they shared the “one-words” of the staff in a pic-collage.

During the staff meeting observation on October 20th, the site leaders led the teachers in a game of spook Olympics where they answered trivia on whiteboards in their table teams. The staff laughed and enjoyed themselves. This built a culture and allowed a more relaxed atmosphere. Later, when they engaged in their ELD instructional work, they seemed motivated and purposeful, as identified by focused discussions, questioning, and making progress on their strategies and schedules.

Adapting to Needs of Veteran Teachers

Learning theory, sensemaking, and social cognitive theory (SCT) support the needs of veteran teachers by providing an understanding of their expertise, their need for processing the change, and supporting their need to be efficacious. The site leaders expanded their practice to incorporate these concepts to support veteran teachers. In the following quote, Principal Muscat indicated he learned that veteran teachers’ needs were distinct. He shared:

> With teachers and then veteran teachers, there [are] so many different personalities and so many different things you have to incorporate to figure out where are they, right? Like what is their need, and why are they resistant … But then letting them talk too and feel comfortable with it and hear where they’re coming from.

Here it is clear that Principal Muscat understood the theory about the different personalities of the veteran teacher (Hargreaves, 2005). The site leaders utilized sensemaking and one-legged interviews to determine the veteran teachers’ needs. This information provided the site leaders the means to frame the change more effectively. In doing so, the site leaders considered psychic rewards, which are where veteran educators

protect certain elements of the profession that they value (Snyder, 2017). Knowing this was important enabled the site leaders to navigate better their implementation of the change. For example, in the introduction activity at their first meeting with the teachers before school started, site leaders had the teachers share why they went into teaching. This prompted and valued those psychic rewards.

In the professional development and reinforced by the coaching sessions, Principal Muscat learned that veteran teachers' need for self-efficacy or reassurance was necessary. Therefore, helping them slightly "tweak" the practice they had already developed would help them be able to take on the challenge. He also realized that constant praise was important for them to undertake the change. Both are seen in the following quote:

> We already have the tools necessary. It's just putting them into play. And I think that's the thing is they think, oh, my God, I don't have the tools. Well, you do. You're a teacher, you're a professional. You've been doing this for years. So, let's just tweak how you do it. Right. Because sometimes they get set in their ways. But tweak how you do it, but you'll be able to do it and go, so that constant praise and just recognizing for what they're doing is going to help.

This insight from Principal Muscat shows his change in practice to build upon the skillset veteran teachers already have. Further, he shared how he utilizes praising teachers and recognizing those that made efforts toward the change.

The professional development provided new information and learning opportunities for the site leaders and was followed up with reinforcement through the coaching sessions. The site leaders implemented change leadership, distributed leadership, learning theory, sensemaking, SCT, transformational leadership, and veteran

teacher theory into their practice. Table 4 organizes the evidence examined of changed or new practices through the lens of each theoretical topic.

Table 4

Theoretical Topic and Changed Practice

Theoretical Topic	Source	Evidence
Change Leadership	Coaching Field Notes, Interviews, Monday Memos, Staff Meeting Agenda, Staff Meeting Observation	● Created a sense of urgency through data. ● Removed roadblocks by listening to needs and finding time to process or develop. ● Small wins of staff trying ELD strategies were shared in staff meeting and individually.
Distributed Leadership	Coaching Field Notes, Interviews	● Change in structure of data collaboration and staff meetings.
Learning Theory	Coaching Field Notes, Interviews	● Provided collaborative time to learn and plan for designated ELD time.
Sensemaking	Coaching Field Notes, Interviews	● Site leaders were able to frame the change based on what they learned from collaborations and one-on-ones.
Social Cognitive Theory	Coaching Field Notes, Interviews, Staff Meeting Observation	● Collaborative structures supported self-efficacy. ● IC Maps provided clear expectations.
Transformational Leadership	Coaching Field Notes, Interviews, Monday Memos, Staff Meeting Agenda, Staff Meeting Observation	● Reason I teach exercise. ● One word commitment. ● Fun team building.
Veteran Teachers	Coaching Field Notes, Interviews	● Understanding the veteran teacher's plight. ● Providing reassurance in self-efficacy. ● Providing praise and encouragement.

Staff Perception (RQ3)

The third research question explored how a research-based leadership coaching program could affect teachers' perception of the contribution of their voice, the alignment of shared vision, and the leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs. To answer this question, I utilized a Likert scale and open-ended questions from the Staff Perception Survey, coaching field notes, and a staff meeting observation.

Requests to complete the Staff Perception Survey were sent to 24 teachers. Fourteen teachers completed the pre-Staff Perception Survey, and 12 teachers completed the post-Staff Perception Survey. Only six survey participants had the same four-digit identifier from preintervention survey to postintervention survey. Due to the small sample size and lack of data normality, instead of a conventional *t* test, the more conservative nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was applied to assess pre-to-post differences. Results indicated no statistically significant differences between the pre- and postintervention survey among individual items or among collective construct items (i.e., teacher voice, shared vision, removing obstacles, and building culture). It is difficult to make any strong conclusions from this data because of the different participants from pre- to postsurvey and the lack of statistically significant data.

Each construct showed a slight decline from the preintervention survey to the postintervention survey. The constructs were calculated as averages per item. Given the Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (6), the means were calculated using a six-point scale. These declines in mean per construct item were not greater than four-tenths of a point from pre to post.

In the following subsections, I provide the results from my analysis of the Staff Perception Survey with added evidence from the qualitative data. It is divided into three segments: teacher voice, shared vision, and response to teacher needs. These segments are based on the four constructs in the survey: teacher voice, shared vision, removing obstacles, and building culture. The removing obstacles and building culture constructs are combined to encompass the third portion of RQ3, leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs.

Teacher Voice

The first four items of the Staff Perception Survey represent the construct voice. Specifically, teacher voice indicates that they felt they had the opportunity to contribute ideas and felt those were heard, valued, and integrated into the greater plan. The per-item mean from the four voice construct items from the preintervention survey was 4.5 and on postintervention survey was 4.1. Results of a Mann-Whitney U test indicated no significant change for the voice construct (p = .366). Though the data was not significant, there are interesting aspects to consider from two of the voice construct items.

In examining pre-to-post changes among the four items that compose the voice construct, though the changes were not statistically significant, there were notable shifts in some individual item means. The item, *When I contribute ideas, I feel my school administrators understand what I am saying*, decreased from a mean of 4.8 to 4.3. A similar item, *When I contribute ideas, I feel those are valued by my school administrators*, also declined from 4.8 to 4.1. These two items showed a greater decrease compared to the other two teacher voice items, which only decreased by three-tenths between the pre- and postintervention surveys.

The two open-ended response items at the end of the Staff Perception Survey allowed teachers to explain their perceptions. The question elicited the responses for voice as follows: *Please share any changes this school year in the contribution of teacher voice, the alignment of shared vision between teachers and leaders, and the leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs?* Teacher 5911 shared this commentary regarding voice, "The leaders welcome the ideas of the staff, and it is noticeably a two-way street here. The leaders show dedication and interest in listening to the staff's ideas, and any idea is respected." Teacher 5911 sees reciprocity of communication where the site leaders hear the teachers' ideas and respect those. She uses the word "welcome" to describe how the site leaders take ideas from the staff. Then she said they show dedication and interest in listening to the staff. This was a strong sentiment shared by this teacher regarding how she perceived her voice as valued and listened to. Teacher 3233 also felt teachers have the opportunity to share their voice, "We are able to use our voices at PBIS (positive behavioral interventions and support) and leadership meetings. I also feel like we can share our thoughts at our evaluation meetings." Teacher 3233, though not as strongly as Teacher 5911, felt teachers had opportunities to share their voice at meetings. She did not comment if the site leaders heard and applied those thoughts, but she was able to identify the contribution. Teacher 1723 felt that there was not an interest in hearing their concerns, "Teacher concerns are often met with 'Yeah ... but,' as if we are constantly making excuses for the challenges and difficulties we face." Teacher 1723 does not deny her voice is heard; rather, she feels if the content of her statement is a concern, it is not heard and met with excuses. The evidence from the open-ended responses indicated that the site leaders do create opportunities for staff to express their

voice. The open-ended responses are less definitive regarding if the site leaders implement those ideas.

From the staff meeting observation, it was clear that teachers were given several opportunities to share their thoughts or voice. Interpretations of observations are my perception and not necessarily the teachers' perception. First, Principal Muscat asked staff what time the Halloween parade should begin. Staff members voiced their opinions and shared why one time or another would work well. Ultimately, after listening to their input, he suggested, "The majority is supporting the start of school time." Teachers could perceive this as a perfunctory issue and not an opportunity to share their voice. Principal Muscat did not appear to have a preconceived notion of what he wanted to hear from the teachers; rather, he was seeking input from those the decision impacted the most. He also discussed "rainy day lunch" and asked for any comments on his plan. In this situation, Principal Muscat had a plan that he was submitting and thus was asking for fewer ideas and more commentary or suggestions. Here, the teachers could perceive this as an opportunity to have a say or see it as the principal asking for input but adhering to a plan he already had. Teachers further participated in a discussion about the timing of volunteers starting. The teachers shared ideas of when it would be appropriate to start having volunteers back in the classroom by contributing when they thought volunteers should start and then providing reasoning. There was a give and take between teachers and the site leaders. This allowed teachers to share how a decision could impact them. Again, the site leaders showed responsiveness to their contribution and decided to start in January. From my perspective, the site leaders showed openness and flexibility; however, teachers may not have perceived this as an opportunity to share their voice or that it was

heard. They may perceive this as a decision that should be theirs to make. Prior to beginning their collaborative time working on ELD strategies, Principal Muscat and Assistant Principal Fence had the staff share out ideas or things they have done thus far for designated ELD time. Teachers shared out strategies that had worked or that they were trying in the classroom. This was an opportunity for teachers to have voice. However, RQ3 addresses the teachers' perception, and thus, these observations may not have been perceived as an opportunity for voice.

Shared Vision

The next seven items of the Staff Perception Survey compose the vision construct. Specifically, the items asked if teachers felt the vision was clear and communicated and if they engaged or participated in the vision. The per-item mean from the four vision construct items from the preintervention survey was 4.5, and the postintervention survey was 4.4. Results of a Mann-Whitney U test indicated there was no significant change for the vision construct from pre to post (p = .640). Though the data was not significant, there are interesting aspects to consider from individual items in the vision construct.

When analyzing the individual vision construct items, the items showed very little change between the preintervention and postintervention surveys. The item stating, *I tend to participate and engage in the schoolwide plans regarding working with students* showed an increased mean from 5.0 to 5.1. While one-tenth of a point difference is not notable, the mean is one of the highest on the Likert scale compared to other items for both the pre- and postsurvey items. Therefore, it was learned that teachers perceived that they do participate in schoolwide plans and that this was true both before and after my intervention.

In the open-ended responses of the Staff Perception Survey, teachers, with one exception, did not directly address their perception of a shared vision. The question that elicited responses for vision was as follows: Please share any changes this school year in the contribution of teacher voice, the alignment of shared vision between teachers and leaders, and the leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs? Teacher 1723 shared this commentary regarding vision, "I still don't think we have a shared vision or a clearly articulated one." This response is clear and straightforward; this teacher does not perceive there is a shared vision that is clearly communicated by the site leaders. The remainder of the responses did not address vision at all.

In the staff meeting observation before the teachers began working with their ELD tracking sheets and grade level groups on strategy planning, Assistant Principal Fence reminded the teachers of their focus on improving their ELD teaching and learning this year. She also thanked them for sharing their schedules, indicating their participation in the vision when she said, "I thank you for sending in their designated ELD schedules, great job!" The ELD schedules combined with the compilation of strategies the staff were observed creating shows engagement in the ELD work. Again, this is only an indication that the teachers participated, not that they perceived this as a clear vision or that their participation indicated their buy-in to it.

Response to Teacher Needs

The removing obstacles and culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy constructs are combined to encompass the third portion of RQ3, leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs. Being able to understand what support is needed and alleviate or remove obstacles is an important part of change leadership theory. Building a culture

of belonging, growth, and efficacy is necessary to meet teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic needs to function more effectively in their environment. Both constructs are explored next.

Removing Obstacles. Three items of the Staff Perception Survey represent the construct removing obstacles. Specifically, the removing obstacles construct indicates teachers felt the site leaders understood what the obstacles were and could remove them. The per-item mean from the four removing obstacles construct items from the preintervention survey was 3.7, and the postintervention survey was 3.2. Utilizing the Mann-Whitney U test for all items in this construct, the *p*-value was still not significant for the removing obstacles construct from pre to post ($p = .323$). Though the data was not significant, there are interesting aspects to consider from individual items in the removing obstacles construct.

When analyzing the mean of individual removing obstacles construct items, though not statistically significant, there was a negative shift in the teachers' perception of the site leaders' understanding of the obstacles and a positive shift in the teachers' perception of them removing them. The mean of the removing obstacles item, *My school administrators have a clear understanding of what obstacles are in the way when implementing change* decreased from 3.8 to 3.3. Utilizing the Mann-Whitney U test for this item, the *p*-value was still not significant from pre to post ($p = .334$). A similar item, *My school leaders remove obstacles that keep us from implementing change* showed an increased mean from 3.0 to 3.3. Utilizing the Mann-Whitney U test for this item, the *p*-value was still not significant from pre to post ($p = .710$). Despite the nonsignificant statistical change, given some of the open-ended responses, it is interesting to consider

the implications. It is possible the site leaders did not fully understand the obstacles, but teachers were aware the site leaders were making efforts to remove them.

In the open-ended responses at the end of the Staff Perception Survey, teachers were able to explain further their perceptions of the site leaders removing obstacles. Teacher 4869 offered this:

> It seems as though they are truly trying to take things off our plates. It has been an extremely difficult year so far as we try to catch up with critical time lost in education overall ... one less staff meeting (replaced with a quick email of info), one less yard duty (implemented next Monday), helping with the kiddos who need extra support ... I do appreciate seeing them out on the playground helping us.

Teacher 4869 saw the efforts of the site leaders to remove obstacles for teachers. Teacher 4869 saw the site leaders' actions directly correlate with helping teachers address the "critical time lost" in educating students. Teacher 5911 also expressed that she felt supported by the site leaders and shared that they understood her needs. Teacher 3231 was not as clear about the support, "Let me start by saying that Enterprise's current admins have good intentions. They seem stretched thin and only have time to deliver DO orders … There is support or lack of support ... it can be inconsistent." Teacher 3231 is not as convinced as Teacher 5911 and 4869 of the site leaders' contribution to remove obstacles but admits there is support. It appears their perspective is that an outside force, the district office, is keeping the site leaders from being able to provide support effectively. Teacher 3231's statement indicates she would like more support in that she sees a lack of it.

During the staff meeting, it was observed that the site administrators had prepared tracking sheets with links to the IC Map, ELD standards, and other resource links to support them in their work. The tracking sheets also had links to sample schedules. This

not only would save teachers time, but this linked tracking sheet also provided the guidance and support teachers needed to grasp the task. Again, this appears to be removing roadblocks and smoothing the path; however, it may not be the teachers' perception.

Culture of Belonging, Growth, and Efficacy. The final construct, culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy, provided further insights into RQ3. The culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy indicates if teachers felt they were part of the team, sought growth, and felt efficacious. The per-item mean from the 10 culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy construct items from the preintervention survey was 4.6, and the postintervention survey was 4.6. Utilizing the Mann-Whitney U test for all items in this construct, the *p*-value was still not significant for the culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy construct from pre to post (p =.583). Though the data was not significant, there are interesting aspects to consider from individual items in the culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy construct.

The means of most of the culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy items negligibly changed from pre to post. However, one item noticeably changed negatively and one item distinctly changed positively. Regarding the item stating, *In our school's teaching staff, learning new ideas and concepts is very important*, 28.5% of all responses on the presurvey were in one of the three disagree categories (*strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *slightly disagree*); this increased to 50% on the postintervention survey. The increase in the *disagree* category could indicate that the staff perceived their colleagues as valuing less the opportunity to learn new concepts. This increase occurred

during the intervention, which may indicate the perception of reluctance to learn new ideas during the intervention.

Regarding the item, *As a teacher at this school, I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind*, the positive shift was from 21.4% *strongly agree* on the preintervention to 41.7% *strongly agree* on the postintervention survey. This could indicate that teachers have a perception that they can succeed at anything they choose to apply themselves to. The purpose of this item was to measure self-efficacy. It is difficult to make any strong conclusions from this data because of the different participants from pre- to postsurvey and the lack of statistically significant data; however, these changes do initiate questions regarding a potential increase in self-efficacy.

In the open-ended responses at the end of the Staff Perception Survey, teachers could further explain their perceptions of culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy. Teacher 5911 noted the effort site leaders made to create a culture of belonging, "A great effort to build our school team and motivate the staff. This is fostering a positive environment, especially helpful after returning from the pandemic distance learning experience." In this statement, culture-building is described in terms of a positive environment, building a team, and motivating staff. Teacher 5911 also expressed that they felt valued, which adds to the culture of belonging and efficacy. Another teacher, 3237, noticed, "They stop by the classrooms more often." The idea that the site leaders are part of the school and regularly visit classrooms creates an atmosphere of team and belonging.

In the staff meeting observation, there were several instances where the site leaders made efforts to support the teachers, build culture, and tap into self-efficacy.

During the grade-level work time, the site leaders went around answering questions. Several times, they bent or kneeled on the teacher's level to coach, listen, or provide answers. Teachers may not perceive this as building growth and self-efficacy, but from my perspective, the site leaders were offering support and building the teachers' capacity. To build culture, the site leaders created a Halloween trivia game that they played in their grade-level teams. The teachers giggled and cheered throughout the game and clapped at the end. Though this may not be the teachers' perception, I observed a positive collegial atmosphere. At one point, Principal Muscat said to a teacher, "What are you doing to show your expertise in that area of reading and writing?" This showed an effort to connect with their needs as a veteran teacher and tap into their self-efficacy. The intervention of professional development and coaching addressed self-efficacy and, in those sessions, the site leaders strategized how to implement those with the staff. An example is how we discussed providing time for teachers to share their expertise on ELD strategies. Again, teachers may not perceive these actions as supportive and building their capacity.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old but on building the new (Dan Millman, *Way of the Peaceful Warrior*, 1980)

The purpose of this action research project was to determine if a research-based coaching program could make a difference in site leaders' attitudes, beliefs, and practices. It also sought to measure the their teachers' perception of contribution of their voice, a shared vision, as well as understanding and responding to teacher needs. My passion for this project was driven by my social justice vision to change the learning landscape for children whose academic needs were not fully being met. In the case of Enterprise Elementary and Martin School District, the data indicated those students were ELD students. Recognizing that Enterprise Elementary needed to change its practice to meet the needs of the ELD students, I created a research-based change leadership program to guide the site leaders to lead change effectively.

In this program, I formulated an intervention to teach and coach the site leaders in change implementation. This included (a) professional development on change theories and planning time to map out how those ideas would fit into their practice, and (b) weekly coaching sessions to reinforce, strategize, and plan with the site leaders. The research goal was to determine if this intervention impacted the attitudes, beliefs, and practices of the site leaders. To further determine its potency, I sought to understand if and in what ways the teachers perceived change had occurred.

Focusing on these shifts, I collected quantitative survey data from the teachers and a variety of qualitative data from the site leaders. In this chapter, I explore the study's

findings as they relate to the research questions. Following those conclusions, I examine the limitations of the study, implications for research and practice, and my personal learning.

Discussion of Findings

Within this section, the discussion of results is aligned with the corresponding research questions. Comparisons, connections, and conclusions are drawn incorporating theory with the evidence from my research.

Attitudes and Beliefs (RQ1)

How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the attitudes of school leaders? Utilizing the transcriptions from the qualitative semistructured interviews and the coaching field notes, site leaders appeared to have changed their attitudes and beliefs from preintervention to postintervention in these three areas:

1. Frustration to hopefulness.
2. Centrality of leaders' role.
3. Expanded leadership beliefs.

These changes in attitudes and beliefs resulted from a research-based coaching program.

Frustration to Hopefulness

When asked about their experience leading change prior to the intervention, the site leaders expressed frustration regarding teachers not supporting the small group reading change idea. After the intervention, site leaders expressed hopeful statements that reflected the idea that they were, as Principal Muscat said, "making some headway." This can-do attitude developed through the intervention. The attitude shift to hopefulness is

not a surprise because the site leaders are also adult learners. Similar to Mezirow (1990), they began to explore, experiment, and implement these ideas and created a more inclusive perspective. They were sculpted as they learned and expanded their views (Alexander et al., 2009).

Further, the site leaders developed self-efficacy through the coaching program. Being pushed out of their routine patterns of leadership allowed them to develop expertise, which promoted their ability to grow and adapt to change successfully (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993). This empowerment made them hopeful that change could, would, and did occur. As mentioned in Chapter 2, self-efficacy can occur through verbal persuasion, which refers to increasing an individual's perception of their abilities by coaching them. This coaching intervention provided reinforcement and reassurance that the site leaders could achieve change. Because self-efficacy influences the degree of challenge individuals embrace and how resilient they are through the difficulties, in this intervention, building self-efficacy changed the site leaders' attitude toward their effectiveness in leading change (Bandura, 2012). The site leaders experienced higher self-efficacy through the coaching program, evidenced by their hopeful attitudes.

Centrality of Leaders' Role

In the interviews prior to the intervention, the site leaders expressed that teachers largely impacted the change effort because they are the implementers of the change. Site leaders believed the degree and amount of control of the change effort's success were connected primarily to the teachers. After the intervention, site leaders shifted their perception of that centrality to themselves. Assistant Principal Fence explained how they would focus on the change and never let it drop off. Principal Muscat further explained

how he could impact the teachers' thinking by being more intentional about his approach. The site leaders did not lessen the importance of the teachers in the change effort. Instead, they responded with a focus on how they, themselves, could impact the teachers.

In the intervention, change leadership and leadership theories presented the site leaders with many ways they could impact change effectively. All of those theories provided the reframing of the leader having a significant impact on change. For instance, the crux of transformational leadership is the four areas where leadership is impactful: influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1995). The site leaders were presented these ideas, and through the coaching sessions, formulated new ways to enact them, which shifted their belief that they could impact their followers. This was exemplified when the site leaders explored sensemaking and learned how they could better lead the process of teachers taking in new information. Understanding processes of sensemaking made site leaders more intentional about their approach. Sensemaking helped site leaders adjust their approach to fit the experiences of their teachers, which in turn shifted the site leaders' belief in the centrality of their role in change. The learning and coaching of change leadership strategies like establishing a guiding coalition, creating a sense of urgency, implementing a vision, and pointing out small wins, also reinforced the centralized role of the leader in change (Kotter, 2012). The site leaders learned about leadership theory, reinforced implementation of those theories through coaching, and increased their focus on their central role in change.

Expanded Change Leadership Beliefs

In their initial interviews prior to the intervention, the site leaders expressed their beliefs that effective strategies for leading change included *building relationships*, *extending support*, and *explaining why*. After the intervention, site leaders expanded their perception to include implementing a *consistent vision*, *building capacity through collaborative structures*, and *providing accountability*. Principal Muscat pointed out how easily distracted teachers and leaders can be with "so many things thrown at them." He went on to say that persistently implementing the vision or change made a difference. The site leaders also changed the way their teachers collaborated to establish a more schoolwide cohesive change. By creating schedules for the designated ELD time, site leaders were able to follow up with classroom visits and specific feedback to improve instruction. This belief in structured accountability expanded their original concepts of change leadership.

Consistent Vision. The importance of conveying a consistent vision was a significant part of the professional development and the coaching sessions. During the professional development, site leaders were exposed to Kotter (2012) and Sutton and Rao (2014), who emphasized that a vision should be simple and repeated as often and in as many ways as possible. Then through the coaching program, each week, we would debrief and plan how their vision for ELD students would be implemented. There was consistency in the coaching and its expectations, and thus not surprising that the vision was implemented consistently.

Building Capacity Through Collaborative Structures. Changing the collaboration structure showed how site leaders incorporated two theoretical concepts

into their belief system that were presented in the professional development. First, distributed leadership is likely to build internal accountability for success, which was evident in the new structure for collaboration (Harris, 2004; Printy & Liu, 2020). Within the new structure, the teachers worked in their grade-level teams but could collaborate with the other grade levels and access support from the site leaders. This created internal accountability among the collaborating teachers. Secondly, the new structure created an environment conducive for working together compared to when they worked in grade-level teams on separate days and places. The site leaders explained how those preintervention collaborations were less productive and teachers often trailed off task. In the new structure, teachers had the support of each other and the site leaders. The influence the teachers had on one another reflects the concept of rallying the herd, which refers to the fact that most people reflect the behaviors of those around them (Heath & Heath, 2010). This concept of peer influence can also be found in social cognitive theory (SCT). The teachers modeling for one another in this structure determined the socially acceptable behavior or emotions that ultimately shaped the reality of the working environment in the library (Bandura, 2012). The creation of this new collaborative structure shows a shift in belief from a scenario where teachers were isolated and could not see how productive other grade levels might be to one where interactions across grade levels supported growth. Additionally, the collaborative structure allowed space for the site leaders to set the tone.

Providing Accountability. Finally, site leaders expanded their beliefs to include greater accountability for their teachers. In the coaching sessions, one of the weekly questions asked of the site leaders was, *What progress did you make toward the target*?

Further, the coaching sessions began with a debrief of the last week and the implementation of the planned action. This created accountability for the site leaders, who then established accountability for their teachers. Research-based coaching frameworks recommend assessment and feedback along with action planning, which coincides with the practices of this intervention in that each session started with assessment and feedback and ended with action planning (Goff et al., 2014; Huff et al., 2013). Following this assessment action planning cycle, our coaching sessions increased accountability, as seen in the results of this research.

School Leader Practices (RQ2)

How does a leadership coaching program focused on research-based change theories affect the practice of school leaders? Utilizing the transcriptions from the qualitative semistructured interviews, a staff meeting observation, documentary evidence from the Monday Memos and staff meeting agendas, and the coaching field notes, it was concluded that site leaders changed their practices from preintervention to postintervention in these two areas:

1. Consistent implementation.
2. Research-based strategy implementation.

It is proposed that these changes in practice were a result of the research-based coaching program.

Consistent Implementation

As mentioned, when discussing RQ1, the site leaders shifted their attitudes and beliefs regarding how to lead change. This coincided with their actions. In their initial interviews prior to the intervention, the site leaders expressed how they led change in the

past, specifically the guided reading. Principal Muscat explained how they would either get lost in all the other things "thrown at them" or after their general roll out, the teachers would not get on board, so he provided a directive. After the intervention, site leaders changed their implementation actions to be more consistent and focused. Principal Muscat pointed out how they "started off from the get-go introducing it and then just staying on that topic in future meetings." He went on to say that persistently implementing the vision or change made a difference. Principal Fence described how the coaching sessions were good "because it kept us on track." She further explained how it helped them plan, and it also kept them accountable.

This changed practice of consistent implementation makes sense when the coaching theory is examined. Coaching facilitates active engagement and a commitment to act, which can be identified in how the site leaders connected their vision for ELD instructional change in every meeting (Arvisais 2004; Goff et al., 2014). Further, the coaching sessions stressed the importance of ongoing assessment and support over time, which increased the site leaders' propensity to implement consistently (Huff et al., 2013). Because the coaching sessions at Enterprise Elementary monitored progress, sustained the change, and built upon successes over time, the site leaders improved their practice in the form of consistent implementation (Huff et al., 2013).

Theoretical Strategy Implementation

The site leaders were presented with a theoretically based program through both professional development and coaching sessions. The question was if they would implement those practices. The evidence indicated expansion of the following practices:

change leadership, distributed leadership, learning theory, sensemaking, social cognitive theory, transformational leadership, and specialized support for veteran teachers.

During the final interviews and throughout the coaching sessions, the site leaders described how they were enacting these theoretically based strategies. At times, they were specific in identifying their actions with theoretical verbiage, and other times, they responded with the idea of the theory but not the actual verbiage. For instance, in the September 7th coaching session, regarding Kotter's (2012) change theory, Principal Muscat discussed how his leadership team (guiding coalition) supported leading the change. During another coaching session on October 4th, Principal Muscat explicitly described Kotter's (2012) change leadership theory when he said that he was going to emphasize the ELD instructional vision in the teacher collaboration on Friday as well as implement the IC Map (Hall & Hord, 2011). Transformational leadership was exemplified when Assistant Principal Fence described the "one-word" project as a motivational, culture-building, and focus-centering activity. She did not use the term transformational leadership but instead created this action from the planning during the professional development session on August 3rd. In the final interview, Principal Muscat commented on the plight of veteran teachers and was referencing Hargreaves (2005) but could not remember the exact categories of veteran teachers, just that it was important to provide them with self-efficacy opportunities. The site leaders conceptually understood what the concepts were and implemented them into their practice.

These listed practices provided the basis for the theoretically based coaching program. The professional development gave learning opportunities for each of these and was reinforced weekly once school started through the coaching sessions. The

components were chosen based on leadership theory, change theory, and specifically what Enterprise Elementary needed in terms of their veteran staff. I planned the professional development learning activities, which included a slide presentation where a synopsis of each concept was portrayed (see Appendix E). This provided an organized summary for access during the professional development and then later during the coaching. The site leaders read articles, provided examples, played out scenarios, and discussed the presented theories during the PD. The final step of the PD was the Learning Template. Here, I created a Learning Template for the site leaders to plan actions corresponding to each theoretical concept (see Appendix A). Then in each coaching session, the first two sessions mirrored the Learning Template to discuss and record actions. After the third coaching session, I changed the template to help me be more organized and to track their actions more effectively in the Coaching Template (see Appendix B). Each of the theoretical concepts was still highlighted in a bar at the top of the Coaching Template. All templates and slides were shared and editable by the site leaders.

Coaching theory supports the results of increased implementation of theoretical strategies by the site leaders through this intervention. Goff et al. (2014) found that eight to 10 coaching sessions may be adequate to change behavior. We performed 10 coaching sessions in our intervention. Huff et al. (2013) found that the success of coaching required the participants to verbalize and examine ideas closely while the coach must return to previous discussions and adapt to the changes to maintain adherence to the goal. This coaching program exemplified Huff et al.'s (2013) assertions in that the participants

verbalized and examined ideas, and I ritualistically reviewed past action steps and created new ones.

Teacher Perceptions (RQ3)

In the context of change initiatives, to what degree does such a coaching program affect teachers' perception of (a) contribution of teacher voice, (b) alignment of shared vision between teachers and leaders, and (c) leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs? The Staff Perception Survey was the primary data source to answer RQ3. The Likert-scale survey data showed there was no significant change in teachers' perception from the preintervention to the postintervention survey. There are potential explanations for the lack of shift, including the small sample size, different respondents between the pre- and postintervention survey, or that the teachers indeed perceived no change. However, in evaluating constructs of the Staff Perception Survey (voice, shared vision, removing obstacles, and culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy), the open-ended questions on the Staff Perception Survey, coaching field notes, and the staff meeting observation, the evidence can be discussed. The Staff Perception Survey does not permit conclusions to be made, only discussion and potential directions to examine the other data sources.

Though there is no evidence of perceived changes in the quantitative data, through other data sources, the theoretically based coaching program provided insights into voice, vision, and supportive measures. In the following sections, I first generally address the Staff Perception Survey results and then follow with specific discussions about what was learned regarding teachers' perception of voice, vision, and supportive measures.

Staff Perception Survey

The preintervention survey had 14 participants, and the postintervention had 12 participants. Out of 24 teachers, this roughly makes up half of the pool of teachers. Additionally, only six survey participants had the same four-digit identifier from the preintervention survey to the postintervention survey. This could indicate that half of the postintervention results were from a new group of participants. Another explanation could be that those participants forgot their four-digit identifier. Thus, the sample size was limited, and there was potentially a different participant pool from pre- to postsurvey. Nevertheless, those surveyed are representative of the whole lot of teachers and worthy of analysis.

Mann-Whitney U tests applied to the survey's Likert-scale items indicated no statistically significant differences between the pre- and postsurvey. This indicates no shift in teachers' perception of voice, vision, and response to teacher needs. However, individual Likert-scale items can be examined for discussion while observations, documents, coaching field notes, interviews, and open-ended survey responses can be used for further evidence.

Voice

While the change from the pre- to postsurvey for the four voice construct items may not have significantly changed, the mean negatively shifted five-tenths and four-tenths on two items from the preintervention survey to the postintervention survey. Both items incorporate the concept of the leader hearing and understanding teachers' ideas, then in the second item, implementing the idea. In the case of this intervention, teachers examined the student data that showed the ELD students falling behind. While the

teachers shared their ideas about the data and could craft the strategies used during designated ELD time, the concept of having designated ELD time did not come from the teachers but rather from the site leaders and curriculum department at the district office. Kotter's (2012) guiding coalition was meant to create a representative group of leaders who were able to shape, implement, and sustain the change. In this case, Enterprise's site leadership team did not contribute to or shape the designated ELD time concept. With support from district curriculum leaders, the site leaders established the concept of designated ELD time. This could have been an opportunity to utilize sensemaking to help the leaders understand the frames of the teachers. Teachers may have had different ideas that were not implemented or perhaps another conception of what designated ELD time was or would be. Taking the time to reflect on these frames could have provided learning opportunities for the next steps (Weick, 1985).

Teacher 1723 stated her concern regarding the site leaders not listening when she said, "Teacher concerns are often met with 'Yeah … but,' as if we are constantly making excuses for the challenges and difficulties we face." Principal Muscat relayed in the September 13th coaching session that a teacher had submitted a different idea than the designated ELD time. According to Principal Muscat, the teacher said, "I'm not going to get through six weeks this year ... We need SEL (social emotional learning)." Principal Muscat noted a few other teachers agreed. Principal Muscat responded by explaining that the ELD students cannot afford to get six more weeks behind, and then next year six more weeks when some are already a year behind. According to Principal Muscat, the teacher who made this comment came in after the meeting and said, "It had to be said." Principal Muscat agreed that SEL is important but that "we can't blow off [the]

curriculum. The kids need academics. How can we close this gap?" It should be noted that SEL is already a part of the district's daily curriculum. Likely, this veteran teacher was experiencing social nostalgia where teaching remotely had increased the challenge of preserving personal relationships, and adding academics seemed to take time away from that (Snyder, 2017). This is a quagmire many leaders find themselves in. The teacher was not wrong in her opinion or idea, but Principal Muscat saw differently how that would impact the student learning. His response was not to genuinely listen or implement the idea of the teacher. In this instance, he could have listened and found ways to emphasize the SEL being taught and still maintained his focus. However, this poses a question in change leadership theory, should a leader support participant voice even if it strays from the vision?

Contrary to the previous representation, Teacher 5911 and Teacher 3233 both felt they had the opportunity to share ideas and use their voices. Teacher 5911 stated, "The leaders welcome ideas of the staff, and it is noticeably a two-way street." Clearly, some staff felt the leaders understood their ideas and even invited them. This was also observed in the staff meeting where Principal Muscat invited commentary on three agenda items. When the teachers shared their ideas for designated ELD time, it was an example of shared or distributed leadership where there is a joint responsibility to influence processes and decisions (Day et al., 2004; Jones, 2014; Nguyen & Hunter, 2018; Spillane, 2006; Woods & Gronn, 2009). The teachers had the opportunity to contribute ideas and participate in the decision-making. Even though teachers could share ideas with their site leaders, the survey suggested the leaders might not be hearing or implementing them. More effective efforts could be made to ensure these ideas are heard and perhaps

implemented at different degrees or integrated into the change effort. The coaching intervention could be modified to include a portion of each session devoted to recounting teacher voice and planning the integration of those voices into the vision.

Shared Vision

While the change from the pre- to postsurvey for the seven vision construct items may not have significantly changed, there was one item of interest from the preintervention survey to the postintervention survey. In this item, *I tend to participate and engage in the schoolwide plans regarding working with students* showed an increased mean from 4.9 to 5.1. This is not a notable difference, but this is the highest mean of all vision construct items pre- or postsurvey and is interesting to consider given other evidence.

During this intervention, the site leaders changed how they led collaboration days. Rather than having the grade-level teams meet separately, the teams all met on the same day, in the same room. This, according to the site leaders in their postintervention interviews, created a different atmosphere than is usually evident. In the coaching sessions, the site leaders described how teachers were more engaged in discussion and contributed more effectively to planning. Additionally, the site leaders utilized more time during staff meetings compared to past years to collaborate and accomplish the vision for improved ELD instruction.

If the staff had more opportunities to participate in the schoolwide plans and the atmosphere was more conducive for a focused discussion on the ELD vision for change, then it would follow that staff would perceive they participated more in schoolwide plans regarding working with students. This was also observed during the staff meeting where

teachers actively engaged in their grade-level groups to plan for their designated ELD time, which corresponds to change theory where a vision should empower stakeholders to enact it themselves and through their own sphere in the organization (Kotter, 2012). The teachers participated in the vision through increased opportunities for collaboration that the site leaders set up. However, changes in teachers' perception of their participation in the vision could not be measured through the quantitative Staff Perception Survey.

Response to Teacher Needs

The two constructs regarding teacher needs discussed in this section are *removing obstacles* and *culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy*. While the change from the pre- to postsurvey for the 13 removing obstacles and culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy construct items did not significantly change, there were some shifts from the preintervention survey to the postintervention survey worth closer examination, particularly in light of evidence from other data sources.

Removing Obstacles. The removing obstacles item, *My school administrators have a clear understanding of what obstacles are in the way when implementing change* showed a decreased mean from 3.8 to 3.3. A similar item, *My school leaders remove obstacles that keep us from implementing change* showed an increased mean from 3.0 to 3.3. It is interesting that teachers possibly perceive that the site leaders do not understand the obstacles but can remove them to support the change effort. The teachers may be indicating that the site leaders are out of touch with what the demands of teachers really are. These mean shifts, however, are not definitive enough to embrace conclusions; therefore, I will discuss concepts through the lens of coaching field notes, staff meeting observation, and interviews.

The site leaders repeatedly emphasized the importance of supporting and removing roadblocks for successful change in their initial and final interviews. During the weekly coaching intervention, I asked the site leaders what the challenges were and then we strategized how to alleviate those. In one-on-one sensemaking meetings with teachers, site leaders tried to learn about individual roadblocks. Assistant Principal Fence explained how she looked for ways to alleviate the perpetual "not enough time" issue by testing some of the students herself. Specifically, Assistant Principal Fence's actions to take things off teachers' plates correspond to what Sutton and Rao (2014) suggested: when more is added, something must be subtracted. During the staff meeting observation, the site leaders had prepared tracking sheets with links to the IC Map, ELD standards, and other resource links to support them in their work. These linked tracking sheets were evidence of site leaders paving the path clearly and creating a more feasible situation for people to adjust to (Heath & Heath, 2010).

The site leaders were removing roadblocks and smoothing the path, and this was more evident in the teachers' open-ended responses on the Staff Perception Survey. Teacher 4869 offered this regarding removing obstacles, "It seems as though they are truly trying to take things off our plates." Teacher 4869 strongly felt there was an effort to take things off their plate or remove roadblocks. Teacher 5703 expressed concerns about the demands of teaching from the state and district. This teacher clearly saw those entities creating roadblocks that may not be removed for the teachers. Kotter (2012) warned that these types of structural barriers could undermine the change process, especially if participants are independent practitioners. It may be especially important to increase the level of collaboration and communicate clearly about the roadblocks that can

be removed and those that cannot. Thus, the changed collaboration model could be instrumental in overcoming those structural barriers.

Culture of Belonging, Growth, and Efficacy. Analysis of the 10 items related to the construct of culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy provided further insights into RQ3. The mean of the culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy construct was 4.6 on both the pre- and postintervention surveys. Given this lack of variation, I will focus on interesting shifts among specific items.

The item stating, *In our school's teaching staff, learning new ideas and concepts is very important* shifted negatively from 28.5% in all three *disagree* categories in the preintervention survey to 50% in the postintervention survey. Similarly, this item shifted when combining the three positive categories, *slightly agree*, *agree*, *and strongly agree*, from 71.4% on the preintervention survey to 50% on the postintervention survey. These declining percentages could indicate that the teachers perceived their colleagues as valuing less the opportunity to learn new concepts. When created, this item was intended to measure the perceived growth mindset of the teaching staff. A general decline across this item may indicate the perception of a colleague's reluctance to learn new ideas and concepts during the intervention.

Regarding the item, *As a teacher at this school, I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind*, the positive shift was from 21.4% *strongly agree* on the preintervention to 41.7% *strongly agree* on the postintervention survey. This construct was meant to identify self-efficacy among teachers. The shift to *strongly agree* could indicate experienced staff members increased their self-perception regarding their ability to take on challenges.

Teachers noticed how supportive the site leaders were and their efforts to create a culture of belonging. Regarding the open-ended prompt, *Please share any changes in the practice you have noticed in your site leaders this school year,* Teacher 5911 noted, "A great effort to build our school team and motivate the staff. This is fostering a positive environment, especially helpful after returning from the pandemic distance learning experience." This teacher gave credit to the site leaders for creating a supportive culture and building the capacity of the staff. From the staff meeting observation, there were several instances, such as the Halloween trivia, the linked tracking sheets, or supportive guidance to grade-level groups, wherein the site leaders were making efforts to support the teachers, build culture, and promote self-efficacy. Gregoire (2003) concluded that increasing teachers' subject matter knowledge, allowing time and freedom to implement change, and building self-efficacy were important ways to encourage teachers to view change in a nonthreatening way. Site leaders were increasing teachers' subject matter knowledge through the ELD planning, linked tracking sheet and gave teachers time to plan through the collaboration. The efforts site leaders made to streamline collaboration, the consistent vision they threaded through every meeting, and the encouragement they offered teachers could impact teachers' self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). The site leaders provided many of the ingredients necessary to create a culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy; however, evidence of the teachers' perception of this still needs more support.

Limitations of Study

Research has limitations. Action research can pose specific limitations based on the involvement of the action researcher in the inquiry. This study identified three

primary limitations: researcher influence, the duration of the intervention, and COVID. These limitations potentially posed a risk to the validity of the study. These three limitations are addressed in the following sections.

Researcher Influence

Prior to beginning this intervention, I forecasted that my role as a district office personnel and as an outsider could contribute to suspicion or fear of being taken advantage of. This could have contributed to the low participation in the Staff Perception Survey. A little over half of the staff participated in the preintervention survey, and exactly half the staff participated in the postintervention survey.

Further, in the open-ended responses in the Staff Perception Survey, a few participants took the opportunity to share things they wanted me to hear rather than were relevant to the study. The two open-ended questions were as follows:

1. Please share any changes in the practice you have noticed in your site leaders this school year.
2. Also, please share any changes this school year in the contribution of teacher voice, the alignment of shared vision between teachers and leaders, and the leaders' understanding and response to teacher needs?"

Teacher 6160 said, "Teachers are on the front line! We are overworked and underpaid! … We are one of the most underpaid, and DO [district office] employees are on par with the highest paid in our county." The DO (district office) employees are a collective group in which I am included. This comment references being underpaid, which could also be directed at my position as the lead negotiator for salary increases. Another comment discussed the evaluation system, which is also an area I oversee.

Additionally, two other comments expressed the desire to have a full-time assistant principal. These comments did not pertain to the questions asked but were clearly important to share. My district office position most likely prompted these comments, taking away from the focus of the intervention and survey. I am seen as someone in a position to either deliver complaints to or an individual who has the power to influence or control something. This caused limitations in the study and would likely exist for an individual undertaking a similar study in a similar position.

Conversely, the site leaders may have been more inclined to engage in the work because of my position as their superior. It is possible that the site leaders were motivated by my position and thus engaged in the intervention to a greater degree. While there is no evidence to support this supposition, it is important to consider it as a potential limitation in replicating the outcomes.

Duration of Intervention

The length of time of this intervention was also a limitation. The intervention lasted from the beginning of school in mid-August until the end of October. With 10 coaching sessions but even fewer staff meetings and collaborations, the site leaders were tasked to implement a lot in a short period. Evidence indicates that changes were made to the attitudes, beliefs, and practices of the site leaders, but those changes could have been more significant or taken on more depth given more time. For example, their implementation of change theory could have increased the number of practices and perhaps have been more detailed. Similarly, the teachers' perceptions as measured by the Staff Perception Survey may have been significant if the intervention was able to take effect for a year.

COVID

A worldwide pandemic was underway throughout the intervention. Students and staff wore masks, washed hands, and followed a variety of other safety guidelines. The intervention followed a year of remote teaching and two and a half months of hybrid instruction. There was a mental transition for all involved and changes in behaviors while on campus. This could pose a limitation to the implementation of a change intervention.

Implications for Practice

The purpose of this study was to guide site leaders to lead change more effectively. Action research enabled me to be an active participant in that process. In reflecting through this iterative study, I gleaned four implications for practice: coaching reinforces practice, coaching from the inside creates an advantage, using a coaching template aids implementation, and coaching creates accountability.

Coaching Reinforces Practice

The site leaders participated in two professional development sessions prior to the school year starting that were based on leadership theories and theories directly connected to the needs of Enterprise Elementary. During these professional development sessions, the site leaders mapped out their plans to implement the theoretical concepts into their practice. If the intervention had ended at that point, the outcomes might not have been implemented with fidelity. The coaching sessions reinforced the professional development and provided flexibility in adjusting to site leader needs. Therefore, I recommend that theoretically based professional development be sustained by a coaching program.

Insider Coaching

Working in the same district and being fully aware of how systems function, including policies, curriculum, and social currents, allowed for more advanced coaching. First, I understood the expectations, whether it be masking, visitors, computer software, procedural guidelines, or even the contractual language around meetings. Not having to spend time on those things allowed for focused time on the theoretical concepts and change leadership. Second, I was aware of the curriculum and instruction direction of the district, which allowed me to meld the theoretical concepts with the expectations of the district. For instance, the district was supporting the use of *Daily 5* during guided reading time. I was able to incorporate that into our sessions. Finally, I was aware of the political and social currents of the site and district, which helped to navigate some of the issues. I was familiar with many of the teachers, had been in their classrooms, and knew their grade levels. This enhanced our coaching to be able to grasp the context and provide clearer questions and suggestions. Understanding the currents of the union and the dynamics of the site juxtaposed to the district was beneficial.

Not unlike how I was asking the site leaders to utilize sensemaking to adjust better to the needs and frames of the teachers, I was able to capitalize on my knowledge base and experience to support them better. Additionally, the case study nature of this intervention provided for unique interactions and the ability to work specifically with the dynamics of one site. Even in preparation for this intervention, theoretical frameworks were assessed based on their use in supporting the needs of Enterprise Elementary.

Coaching Template

Utilizing the shared Coaching Template to track reflections and plan for the next steps was an effective tool in the innovation. My initial template categorized the theoretical concepts and simply focused on how they were addressing the different theoretical ideas. We would also discuss the next steps, but it was less formal on the template. After the third session, I changed the template to begin with the next steps from the last meeting. I copied and pasted those into the template prior to our coaching session. At the end of each meeting, we would plan those next steps. The template was on a Google Doc and was shared with the site leaders. They utilized this as a resource for their planning to remind them of what needed to be implemented.

Two lessons were learned from this. First, the original template was valuable because it supported the focus on the theoretical concepts, but it did not create enough continuity. The improved template focused more on the reflection and action of those concepts. Being flexible to adjust and improve the coaching was valuable. Second, the shared document provided sustained changes in practice and accountability, which is discussed next.

Accountability and Focus

The weekly coaching sessions coupled with the Coaching Template provided a structure that created accountability and consistency. The focus of this intervention was to lead change more effectively through the teaching and coaching of theoretically based strategies. An unforeseen result of the coaching program was accountability that created consistency of implementation. By addressing the planned implementation weekly, site leaders felt accountable for implementing the change. They understood that the following

week we would review what they had accomplished. They felt they would be held accountable and thus lived up to the expectations.

In holding the site leaders accountable, they then held their staff accountable and consistently implemented the change effort. A week did not pass where the site leaders were not enacting a part of a theoretically based concept. Their enactments created consistency in message and delivery.

The site leaders stayed focused on the vision and the tasks that the vision entailed because of the coaching sessions. Principal Muscat noted the impact of the coaching sessions in his final interview:

> It had me think about different topics that I don't know if I did before … You just kind of get thrown in, and it's like, oh, we got to try to run a school, so what are we going to do? And you forget some of those other things that help run the school.

Principal Muscat found that the coaching sessions helped him implement the ideas presented in the professional development.

Implications for Research

This action research study provided insights into guiding site leaders to lead change more effectively. There are valuable lessons for me, the site leaders, and other practitioners. Through the cyclical lens of action research, several questions and potential next steps warrant future study. Moving forward, researchers could examine how changes to the intervention could impact the results or perhaps adjusting the methodology could enable different insights. The most significant research direction could be in examining if the changes in the site leaders' attitudes, beliefs, and practices resulted in substantive changes in teachers' mindsets and practices.

First, slight or even significant changes to the intervention could change results. For example, the professional development could be embedded throughout the year prior to implementation, creating more space for the leaders to comprehend and have time to plan. Another change to the intervention could be the coaching structure, where the template could be adjusted to account for all past activities and plan further into the future rather than from week to week. Extending the amount of time could be the most significant change to the intervention. For example, this intervention could be longitudinal over three years. To fully implement a change and change the culture of a school could take one to three years. In this scenario, the professional development and coaching could be more spread out. These changes in the intervention would provide different results, and it would be interesting to compare the outcomes.

Researchers could change the methodology, which could enable different perspectives as well. Redesigning the Staff Perception Survey after the qualitative data were gathered could inform constructs that would better reflect the progress noted by the site leaders. This could more effectively take the changes observed in the site leaders and determine if the teachers specifically noticed those. For example, if data from the site leaders' qualitative interviews indicated an increase in consistency, that could be measured in the survey as a construct. Another shift in methodology could be qualitative interviews of the teaching staff. The Staff Perception Survey and its open-ended responses provided anonymity for the teachers, but perhaps adding qualitative teacher interviews to the methodology would provide deeper insights into their perceptions. The ability to follow up and understand the nuances of their perceptions could be beneficial.

A research quandary to consider that could lead down an interesting path is if continued observance of deepening practice by the site leaders occurred and the teachers did not notice, why that might be? Even if the methodology or intervention were effective and the evidence of site leader growth was clearly deepened, what could be the reasons the teachers' perceptions did not change? This could be an interesting course of study to determine what was not shifting teachers' perceptions.

The crux of this study was focused on the leaders changing their attitudes, beliefs, and practices. Ultimately, the reason for making this effort was to make a difference in teachers' mindsets and practices because teacher improvement equates to student success. An important study to explore next would be investigating the extent to which changes in the site leaders' attitudes, beliefs, and practices resulted in substantive and sustained changes within the teacher mindsets and practices.

These potential research directions could lead this study and future studies down interesting and provocative paths. For this study at Enterprise Elementary, I would like to see if these changes in practice and attitude are sustainable. Personally, I am curious if the duration of time this coaching program is implemented impacts long-term sustainability for both site leaders and teachers.

Lessons Learned

I began this journey exploring my curiosity and contemplating questions regarding that curiosity. Initially, I honed in on veteran teachers and change, and this dissertation is the cumulative work from that point. Along the way and through this process, I have learned valuable lessons about myself, leadership, and the process of research.

Myself

The doctoral program enhanced my ability to be flexible and open to new ways of thinking. I have always considered myself open-minded and flexible, but when faced with the magnitude this program requires, stretching my ways of learning and doing became a way of being. Feedback from my committee and professors, new learning from the courses, and new connections pushed me to think beyond my previous boundaries. I adjusted to the changing landscape and had to be flexible in my thinking and ways of doing. For instance, reshaping the Coaching Template to be a more effective tool was an example of this growth.

Leadership

My leadership skillset grew through this project and my perspective on leadership. While I had been a mentor and a master teacher, I had not yet coached other leaders. This intervention gave me the opportunity to sharpen my coaching skills. I learned about and developed my coaching skillset by researching leadership coaching programs and then taking pieces of those to formulate my own program.

In my experience, leadership coaching occurs for new leaders and then not again until you enter a new position. Through this intervention, I realized most leaders develop their leadership skills on their own. This coaching intervention allowed me to open the door to site practice that is often left untouched. I saw a window into the site leaders' attitudes and practices, how those developed, and then had the opportunity to strengthen those attitudes and practices. How a site leader runs a staff meeting or plans for collaboration is key to the underpinnings of leading change. Leadership should not be an assumption of knowing—but rather an opportunity to grow.

Process of Research

In the practice of education, my experience has been to discover a need and then find professional development to address it. At times, professional development was implemented because it was the latest trend, not even for necessity. The course of the past three years has taught me the intricacies of a true study and implementation of research. The degree of planning and researching prior to implementation was probably the most significant lesson. Moving forward, I will continue to practice having theoretical support for an intervention. Implementing the action research through the intervention was rewarding. Then analyzing the data was a powerful stretch of my skillset. There were several times I exclaimed, "My brain hurts!" Compiling the research in a written dissertation fully embodied my growth. My thinking, writing, and analytical research skills surpassed even what I imagined.

Concluding Thoughts

Leading change is undoubtedly one of the most significant challenges a site school leader will encounter. This study provided ideas and possibilities to guide site leaders to lead change more effectively. While there is so much more to explore, this study uncovered that a research-based coaching program shifted the site leaders' attitudes, beliefs, and practices. These site leaders' attitudes evolved from frustration to hopefulness and extended their belief in the centrality of their role while also expanding their concept of what is necessary to lead change. The site leaders changed their practice to more consistent implementation of change strategies while broadening their breadth of strategies. The self-efficacy and empowerment of the site leaders to impact change at their school were evident. The evidence of teacher perception of these changes was not

conclusive, but there was limited evidence of teachers having the opportunity to share their voice, partake in the vision in staff interactions, and reap the benefit of supportive measures.

This study presented a supportive solution for a significant challenge site leaders face. The possibilities of applying this intervention to practice abound, and the propensity to extend this research is exciting. Supporting school leaders to be more effective should be at the forefront of our educational mindset. School leaders have an immense impact on the trajectory of their school's success. It is imperative that we invest in research and interventions such as this study to support better the site leaders' work. Supporting change leadership and building the capacity of site leaders is necessary in our complex educational arena. It is an endeavor we must be committed to. As Andy Warhol said, "They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself."

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APPENDIX A

LEARNING TEMPLATE

LEARNING TEMPLATE

Theoretical Concept	What you learned	How you can apply it!
Veteran Teachers		
Resistance		
Learning Theory		
Social Cognitive Theory		
Unconscious Bias		

Distributed Leadership Theory		
Transformative Leadership Theory		
Change Leadership Theory		
CBAM		
Sensemaking		

APPENDIX B

COACHING TEMPLATE

LEADING CHANGE COACHING TEMPLATE

Veteran Teachers ☐ Resistance ☐ Learning Theory	Social Cognitive Theory	Unconscious Bias	LEADERSHIP ☐ Distributed Leadership Theory ☐ Transformative Leadership Theory ☐ Change Leadership Theory ☐ CBAM	Sensemaking

REVIEW

Previous Next Steps Clarifications?

REFLECT

Based on your last next steps, how did it go?	What progress did they make towards the target?
	What did the staff struggle with?
	What did you learn about leading from this?

POWER STEPS

What are your highest leverage activities that you will try next?	What do you need to achieve these?

APPENDIX C

STAFF PERCEPTION SURVEY CONSTRUCTS

1. Voice (distributed leadership and sensemaking)
    a. Teachers have opportunities to contribute their voices.
        i. At this school, I feel I have an opportunity to contribute my ideas to greater school improvement.
    b. Teachers feel they are heard.
        i. When I contribute ideas, I feel my school administrators understand what I am saying.
    c. Teachers feel their contributions are valued.
        i. When I contribute ideas, I feel those ideas are valued by my school administrators.
    d. Teachers feel their ideas are integrated into the bigger plans.
        i. When I contribute ideas, I feel the school administrators implement those into the bigger school plans.
2. Shared Vision (transformational leadership and change theories)
    a. Teachers have clarity of what the vision is.
        i. When my school administrators are attempting to implement change regarding how we work with students, I am clear about the plans.
        ii. My school administrators are clear when they share ideas about changing the way we work with students at my school.
    b. Teachers understand the purpose of the vision.
        i. When my school administrators share ideas about how we work with students, I understand their purpose.

ii. My school administrators paint a clear picture of what the objectives and outcomes are for the school.

iii. When my school administrators share ideas about how we work with students, they make the objectives and outcomes very understandable.

c. Engagement and buy-in

i. I tend to participate and engage in the schoolwide plans regarding working with students.

ii. Other teachers at my school participate and engage in schoolwide plans about improving student learning.

3. Removing Obstacles (change theories and sensemaking)

a. Teachers feel leaders understand what the obstacles are.

i. My school administrators have a clear understanding of what obstacles are in the way when implementing change.

b. Leaders remove obstacles that prevent change implementation.

i. My school leaders remove obstacles that keep us from implementing change.

4. When I am implementing changes, my school administrators make efforts to alleviate the challenges. Culture of belonging, growth, and efficacy (transformational leadership and self-efficacy)

a. Teachers feel a part of the change effort.

i. I feel I am part of making a difference for the greater school team.

ii. My school administrators make efforts to make me feel part of the team.

b. Teachers feel there is a culture of growth.
    i. It's important to me that I improve my skills.
    ii. It's important to our staff to improve our skills.
    iii. It's important to me that the site administrators don't think that I know less than others in our school.
    iv. In our school's teaching staff, learning new ideas and concepts is very important.
c. Teachers feel efficacious.
    i. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind.
    ii. When I try new instructional techniques, I feel more confident as a classroom teacher.
    iii. I am interested and committed to the improvement of our school.
    iv. Difficult tasks or situations are beyond my control or capability of addressing.

APPENDIX D

STAFF PERCEPTION SURVEY

If you felt different ways at different times, give a rating for how things were for you on average.

Please be sure to answer each question.

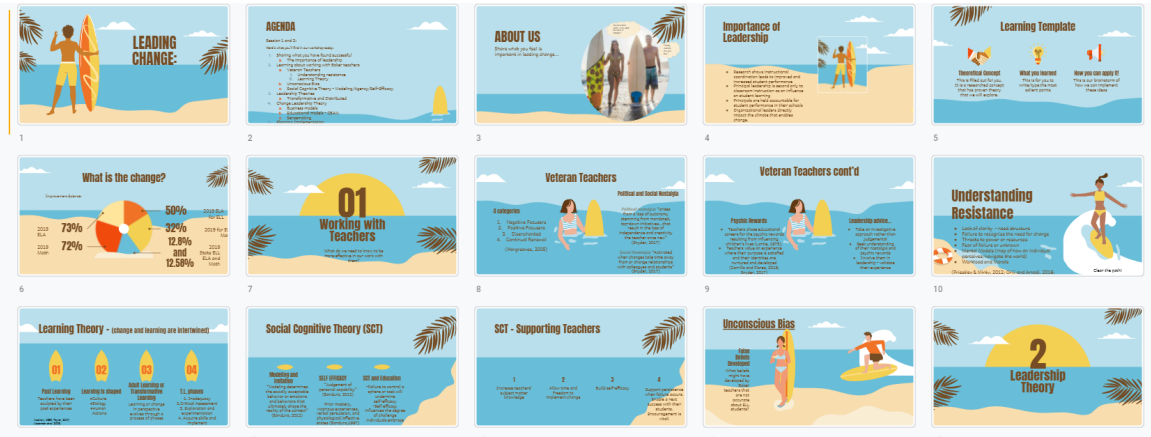
My perception at this moment is...		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	At this school, I feel I have an opportunity to contribute my ideas to the greater school improvement.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2	When I contribute ideas, I feel my school administrators understand what I am saying.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3	When I contribute ideas, I feel those ideas are valued by my school administrators.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4	When I contribute ideas, I feel the school administrators implement those into the bigger school plans.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
5	When my school administrators are attempting to implement change regarding how we work with students, I am clear about the plans.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
6	My school administrators are clear when they share ideas about changing the way we work with students at my school.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

7	When my school administrators share ideas about how we work with students, I understand their purpose.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
8	My school administrators paint a clear picture of what the objectives and outcomes are for the school.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
9	When my school administrators share ideas about how we work with students, they make the objectives and outcomes very understandable.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
10	I tend to participate and engage in the schoolwide plans regarding working with students.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
11	Other teachers at my school participate and engage in schoolwide plans about improving student learning.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
12	My school administrators have a clear understanding of what obstacles are in the way when implementing change.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
13	My school leaders remove obstacles that keep us from implementing change.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
14	When I am implementing changes, my school administrators make efforts to alleviate the challenges.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
15	I feel I am part of making a difference for the greater school team.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
16	My school administrators make efforts to make me feel part of the team.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

17	It's important to me that I improve my job-related skills.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
18	It's important to our staff and faculty to improve our skills.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
19	It's important to me that my school administrators don't think that I know less than others in our school.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
21	In our school's teaching staff, learning new ideas and concepts is very important.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
22	As a teacher at this school, I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
23	When I try new instructional techniques, I feel more confident as a classroom teacher.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
25	I am interested and committed to the improvement of our school.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
26	Difficult tasks or situations at my school are beyond my control or capability of addressing.	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

APPENDIX E

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SLIDE PRESENTATION


LEADING CHANGE:
AGENDA
ABOUT US
Importance of Leadership
Learning Template
What is the change?
50%
32%
12.8%
and
12.58%
73%
72%
01
Working with Teachers
Veteran Teachers
Veteran Teachers cont'd
Understanding Resistance
Learning Theory - (change and learning are intertwined)
Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)
SCT - Supporting Teachers
Unconscious Bias
2
Leadership Theory


Distributed Leadership
Shared, collective, distributed
DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP in EDUCATION
Transformative Leadership
Transformational Leadership Theory
03
Change Theory
Leading Change (Kotter, 2012)
Change Leadership cont'd
Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)
Educational Sense-making
Sensemaking
Creation
Interpretation
Enactment
Next Steps
THANK YOU!

APPENDIX F

SITE LEADER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Site Leader Interview Protocol 6/1/2021

1. What did you do the last time you tried to implement a change? What did that look like?
    1. In the past when you have implemented change what were some of the pitfalls/challenges? (Attitude/Beliefs/Practice)
    2. How did you deal with those pitfalls/challenges?
2. How do you believe teachers can contribute to change efforts? (Attitude)
    1. How do your teachers contribute to change efforts?
3. How effective is your ability to lead change?(Beliefs/Self-efficacy)
4. How do you feel leaders at other schools lead change? (Beliefs/Self-efficacy)
5. How have been able to share, guide, or show what the change is? (Practice)
6. In the past what are the strategies you have used to bring your teachers on board with change initiatives? (what do you think about that?) (Practice)
7. How do your daily activities support the change efforts? (Practice)
8. How do you prioritize your day, week, month? (Practice)
9. What is your vision and how do you implement it? (Practice/transformational leadership)
10. How do you engage your staff to participate? (Practice/distributed leadership)

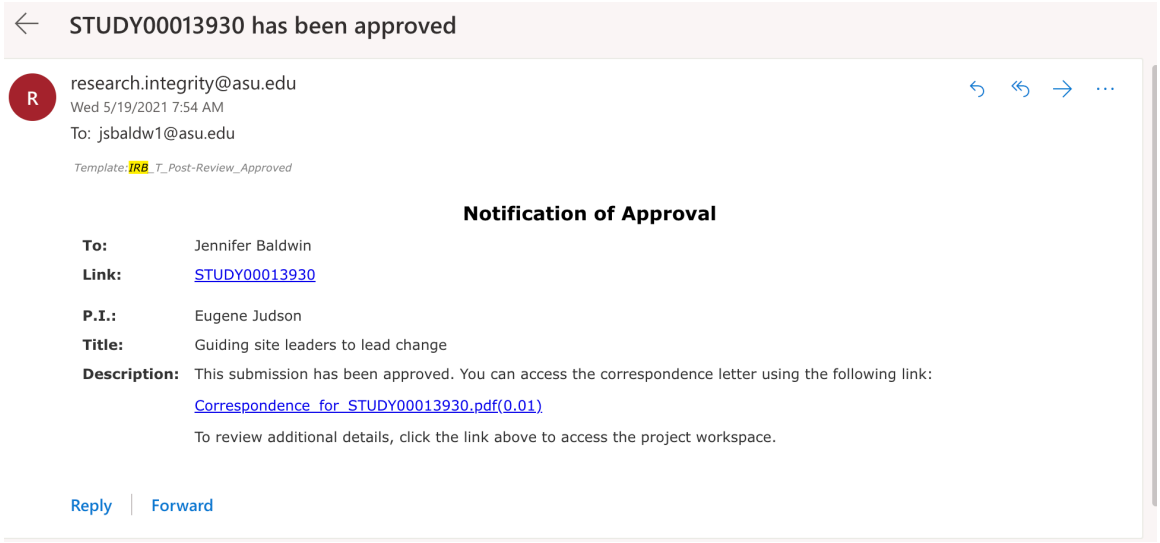
Site Leader Interview Protocol 9/21 and 10/21

1. When you tried to implement a change this year, what was it? What did that look like?
    1. What were some of the pitfalls/challenges? (Attitude/Beliefs/Practice)
    2. How did you deal with those pitfalls/challenges?
2. How do you believe teachers are contributing to change efforts? (Attitude)
    1. How do your teachers contribute to change efforts?
3. How effective is your ability to lead change?(Beliefs/Self-efficacy)
4. How do you feel leaders at other schools lead change? Are they as equipped as you are? (Beliefs/Self-efficacy)
5. How have been able to share, guide, or show what the change is? (Practice)
6. What are the strategies you have used to bring your teachers on board with change initiatives? (what do you think about that?) (Practice)
7. How do your daily activities support the change efforts? (Practice)
8. How do you prioritize your day, week, month? (Practice)
9. What was your vision in this change and how do you implement it? (Practice/transformational leadership)
10. How do you engage your staff to participate? (Practice/distributed leadership)

Laying out why we are doing it. Give them time to practice.
Set up social events. Need to make time.
Go talk to your team leader. They have the information. Complaint group…how do you have them carry the message.

APPENDIX G

ASU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL



STUDY00013930 has been approved

R

research.integrity@asu.edu
Wed 5/19/2021 7:54 AM
To: jsbaldw1@asu.edu

Template.IRB_T_Post-Review_Approved

Notification of Approval

To:	Jennifer Baldwin
Link:	STUDY00013930
P.I.:	Eugene Judson
Title:	Guiding site leaders to lead change
Description:	This submission has been approved. You can access the correspondence letter using the following link: Correspondence_for_STUDY00013930.pdf(0.01) To review additional details, click the link above to access the project workspace.

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