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The Principal's Role in Promoting Success for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students: A Participatory Research Study

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THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN PROMOTING SUCCESS
FOR CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS
A PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH STUDY

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education

International and Multicultural Education Program

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

María Norma Martínez
San Francisco, California
December 4, 2003

This dissertation written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee has been presented and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

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DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Esta disertación está dedicada a mis padres, Jesús y Ernestina Martínez, quienes me han dado apoyo, amor y confianza. It is also dedicated to my beloved husband, Jim Palmer, who encourages me to be the best that I can be and accepts me as I am. My most heartfelt thanks to him for giving me the gift of time, for his endless support, and for sharing the doctoral experience every step of the way.

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The dissertation is finished, but there is more work to be done. ¡Seguimos en la lucha!

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THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Background and Need for the Study

The California Department of Education (2002d) reported the following

student enrollment in K-12 public schools for the 2001-02 school year: 35% White,

44% Latino, 8% African American, 8% Asian, 2% Filipino, and 2% other (Pacific

Islander, Alaskan, American Indian). Of this total student population,

approximately 25% are identified as English Language Learners, students who

are not proficient in English. Spanish is the language spoken by most students

(84%) identified as English Language Learners. Within the next two decades the

U.S. total population is expected to consist of about 65% non-White and mostly

represented by people from Asian and Latino backgrounds. Overall, Whites are

expected to be a minority in the year 2050 (Hodgkinson, 2002).

Unfortunately, while California's public school student population is

becoming more ethnically and linguistically diverse, academic achievement data

reflect that students from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds continue

to score below grade level on the State's standardized test in grades 2-12.

Students scoring at the 50% national percentile rank, considered meeting

standard and being on grade level, were reported by ethnicity as follows: White

65%, Asian 57%, Filipino 55%, American Indian 43%, Pacific Islander 38%,

African American 31%, and Hispanic 26% (California Department of Education,

2002a). Mathematics scores were very similar, except for Asians who outscored

White students. High school dropout rates also showed a disparity between

groups. The same data revealed that during 2000-01 school year, the dropout rates for public school students in a four year span between grades 9-12 were the highest for non-Whites: African Americans 19%, Hispanics 15%, American Indians 14%, Pacific Islanders 6%, Asians 6% and White students 7%. With the exception of Asians and Pacific Islanders, drop out rates for African American, American Indian and Latino students were higher than for Whites (California Department of Education, 2002b). Together, these two facts—(1) that school populations are increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse and (2) that there continue to be significant achievement gaps between White students and ethnically diverse students—pose major educational challenges for school leaders, especially in today's era of high-stakes testing, standards, and accountability.

The achievement gap, which Johnston and Viadero (2000, March 15) define as "the disparity in school performance tied to race and ethnicity," shows up in grades, test scores, course selection and college completion. The degree to which schools have been successful in meeting the challenge of closing the achievement gap for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations varies. As an example, in 1999, California adopted a public schools accountability system that evaluates student achievement based on standardized test results, namely the Stanford-9 (SAT-9) at that time. The Academic Performance Index (API) annually ranks all schools on the basis of whether they meet targets for improvement. Specifically, schools are judged to have met those designated targets based on whether two significant student subgroups show improvement on standardized test scores (California Department of Education, 2002c). These

two subgroups are ethnic students and socioeconomically disadvantaged students. In the last three years since this system was institutionalized, significant numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students continue to have lower test scores (Herman, Brown, & Baker, 2000). Yet there are schools with large numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students who did meet their targets and ranked very well in California (Gold, 2001). Schools utilizing students' first languages as a medium for instruction in specially designed programs continue to demonstrate high academic achievement as compared to schools who do not and are still demonstrating positive academic outcomes (Thomas & Collier, 2001). The 90-90-90 studies (Reeves, 2001) on high poverty, highly populated schools with ethnically diverse students in Milwaukee demonstrate that culturally diverse students can achieve.

School principals play a key role in developing curriculum and establishing a school culture for teaching and learning. Their values, beliefs, and interactions with others influence the manner in which their schools are organized (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982; Sergiovanni, 1995). Research on effective schools (Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, & Wisenbaker, 1979; Edmonds, 1986) identified school leadership as one of the key factors that contribute to the academic success of diverse students who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. However, research on leadership in meeting the specific needs of culturally diverse students has not been adequately addressed (Dillard, 1995; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Riehl, 2000). In fact, in most of the current literature on educational standards-based reform, diversity is seldom mentioned as a resource to improving achievement. By nature of their ascribed

position of power, principals can work to facilitate change or maintain the status quo. Unless school principals assume an advocacy role and embrace the diversity challenge in creating new ways for schooling, the problems of low achievement and high dropout rates of culturally and linguistically diverse students will continue.

Purpose of the Study

We need to understand more fully what facilitates success in schools with diverse populations. Through participatory research, the voices of school principals who are responsive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students were recorded and analyzed to provide insights on the practices that promote the school success of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Using a dialogic retrospective, the participants had the opportunity to engage, individually and collectively, in reflection and dialogue to identify common themes that emerged in their important work as school leaders and as advocates for diverse students.

Theoretical Framework

For decades, culturally and linguistically diverse student populations have been the focus in school improvement programs and initiatives. In the forefront of looking at these issues, Cummins (1989) developed a theoretical framework for intervention that suggests culturally diverse students have experienced school failure due to the differences in power and status between themselves and the majority, mainstream population. These relations of power manifested at the macro-level in broader society are also reflected at the micro-

level in the relationships diverse students have with educators in schools. He states that an intercultural orientation in which students' cultural backgrounds are integrated into the school will support culturally and linguistically diverse students to gain "the ability, confidence and motivation to succeed academically" (p. 60).

This intercultural orientation is portrayed on a continuum with an assimilationist orientation on the other end. The degree to which educators adopt either orientation depends on how they define and negotiate their roles (Cummins, 1996). Therefore, his theory implies that teachers and administrators redefine their roles to be advocates for disenfranchised students by adopting an intercultural orientation presented in the following dimensions:

1. *Linguistic and Cultural Incorporation*: Students' language and culture are incorporated into the school program and environment.

2. *Community Participation*: The participation of culturally and linguistically diverse parents and community members is encouraged in order to establish a meaningful link between school and home.

3. *Pedagogy*: Students who come from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds benefit from a model of instruction that promotes intrinsic motivation. Pedagogy is highly interactive and students are provided with ample opportunities to generate their own knowledge.

4. *Assessment*: Educators play the role of advocates for linguistically diverse students so that assessment practices are not used to legitimize past practices that cause more harm than support the achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse youth. For example, psychological or

standardized tests are usually not accurate measures of performance, intelligence or potential since they are usually not normed with large numbers of culturally diverse students and are, therefore, often culturally biased. Placing a heavy emphasis on such test results may lead to mislabeling, misplacing and misdiagnosing of culturally and linguistically diverse students, who may need a specific intervention or alternative program more aligned with their specific needs.

A learning environment that is based on this theoretical framework promotes the empowerment of culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families. Schools have traditionally implemented practices wherein institutional power embedded in the infrastructure of the school system has perpetuated processes that have continued to disengage culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families in both covert and overt ways (Cummins, 1989). The outcome of the intercultural orientation is a system that empowers students, whereas the outcome of an assimilationist orientation on the other end of the spectrum is a system that disables students from being successful.

Paulo Freire (1985) states that education is not neutral and that usually educators use their power to maintain the status quo of creating unequals in society. Often these unequals are students and their families who are not part of the creation and interpretation of their respective reality. Too often, educators have paternalistically decided what culturally and linguistically students need and how the problems attributed to their lack of school success should be resolved. Redefining the roles that educators have held in the past allows for a

sharing of power at all levels—between educators and community members, between students and teachers, and between administrators and teachers. This is a proactive formula for creating change in our schools.

Statement of the Problem

Schools that have undergone reform efforts have identified school leadership as one of the factors for improving academic performance. Principals hold important leadership positions in schools and have the ability to influence, lead and manage school communities. Few studies have looked specifically at the characteristics of principals who have successfully improved the achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse youth. Thus, it is beneficial to understand in greater detail the complex role of school principals, how their values affect decision-making, and how the position influences the way in which others perceive culturally diverse students and their families.

Limitations of the Study

I, the researcher, identify with culturally diverse persons as a Latina, second language learner, and former bilingual educator. The seven participants are former or current school principals in local school districts in the Bay Area. Scientific methods of research might consider these facts as limitations; however, the subjective nature of participatory research methodology allows the participants' experiences, and those of the researcher, to offer data not available through other forms of scientific inquiry. Therefore, these are not considered limitations of this study.

Delimitations of the Study

The intent of the study was to examine the role of successful principals and their shared values, attitudes and beliefs working with culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. It does not provide a prescriptive formula for improving student achievement. While the term diversity ·encompasses differences such as gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status, the study focused mainly on linguistic and cultural diversity. Within the scope of the study, some of the participants were more familiar with me as a colleague and possibly felt less inhibited in their discussions. A few of the participants who did not know me previously may have felt less comfortable sharing personal information. Most of the participants represented the elementary grades K-5 while only one of the participants was a high school principal.

Research Questions

1. How do principals define success for culturally and linguistically diverse students?

2. What are the roles, shared values and beliefs of principals who promote school success for culturally and linguistically diverse students?

3. To what extent do principals practice aspects of Cummins' (1989) intercultural orientation in promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students?

4. What are some of the obstacles or challenges principals face in addressing the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students with the school system?

5. What recommendations can principals make to other principals that may influence their work in improving schooling for diverse school populations?

Significance of the Study

The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (2001) requires universities and colleges offering administrative certification programs to demonstrate that school administrators, including principals, develop competence in working with diverse populations. The standards for administrative preparation programs should provide opportunities to explore attitudes towards persons from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds and develop "an awareness of the impact of instructional practices and administrative decisions on students of different genders, races, ability levels, language or cultural backgrounds, religious affiliation, ethnic groups and sexual orientation" (p. 39). The revised California Professional Standards for School Leaders (California School Leadership Academy, 2001) includes in its preamble that "inherent in these standards is a strong commitment to cultural diversity and the use of the technology as a powerful tool" (p. 1). These standards, aligned with the standards of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, were designed to guide the professional development of aspiring school administrators. In effect, then, the preparation of principals requires them to

know how to address the needs of culturally diverse students as a qualification for leading schools.

This study provided a research opportunity for school principals to be subjects of their own learning and engage in individual and group reflection on successful practices, challenges, and perceptions in working with culturally and linguistically diverse student groups. The findings have implications for educators in leadership roles in supporting student success. As a result of this participatory study, it is hoped that the information collected can be shared in professional development activities of principals and aspiring school administrators.

Terminology

To promote social justice and a paradigm change in how school systems perceive culturally and linguistically diverse students, it is necessary to attend to the language we as educators use to communicate our ideas because this language shapes public thought and political processes. Terms like *minority* and *Limited English Proficient* are status oriented, referring to students coming from different cultural and language backgrounds as deficient in some way. The word *minority* can no longer refer to demographics since students from these backgrounds are increasing in numbers. Therefore, students traditionally defined by the term *minority* are referred as *culturally diverse*. Students who come from homes with an additional language other than English are referred as *linguistically diverse*. Since most of the culturally and linguistically diverse students in California public schools come from Spanish-speaking origins, they

are referred as *Latino* or *Latina* in order to embrace the variety of Spanish-speaking countries. Terms such as *minority* and *Limited English Proficient* (LEP) are pejorative and are used only when quoting literature or research findings.

CHAPTER II

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

An abundance of literature specifically addresses the principalship and school effectiveness. The intent of this literature review was to explore the principal's role as it relates to culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Unfortunately, very few empirical studies specifically do this. Therefore most of the review of the literature is based on conceptual and theoretical frameworks including a description of the current policies that affect how schools define success.

This chapter begins with an overview of the principal's role as defined by educators, policymakers and professional organizations. Following the overview is an analysis of the current definition of success in California and its impact on school leadership. The next section discusses issues principals face when dealing with diversity and equity. The literature review continues by exploring the principal's role using the work of Jim Cummins' intercultural orientation (1989) as a foundation. Then, since the principal's role is often described using metaphoric language, the section Principal as Advocate presents a new view of today's school leader. Finally, the review of the literature addresses participatory research as a methodology and its application to this study.

The Principal's Role

Effective schools research has shown that principals who demonstrate a commitment to the educational program play a key role in impacting the achievement of students in urban settings (Edmonds, 1986). The effective schools research conducted in the 1970s found that the following correlates contribute to school achievement:

Clear school mission

Emphasis on learning

High expectations for success

A school climate which provides a safe and orderly environment

Principals who are strong instructional leaders

The relationship between school effectiveness and the principal's role has been studied in the last 15 years (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Although there is some evidence that the principal may not directly affect student achievement (Grady, 1989; Hallinger & Heck, 1996), reform movements continue to highlight the importance of effective school leadership as a necessary ingredient to educational improvement. Hallinger and Heck's (1996) review of empirical research indicated that the principal's role does have an indirect bearing on student achievement by facilitating processes in the school that set school goals and by setting up the structures that ultimately support academic performance. One of the conclusions of the analysis was that the principals' effectiveness needed to be reviewed within the school contexts in which principals found themselves.

The role of the principal has evolved over time with each new educational agenda and reform movement. Beck & Murphy (1993) analyzed the principal's role over time by conducting an analysis in *Understanding the Principalship: Metaphorical Themes 1920s-1990s*, which describes how metaphors have shaped the expectations that principals must meet to be successful. In the 1920s, the principal's main role was to guide teachers to carry on American values through schooling. During the 1930s, the role evolved to that of building manager, which added more administrative duties. In response to the war in the 1940s, the principalship took on the role of democratic leader who supported equality and by the time *Brown v. Board of Education* was in effect in the 1950s, the principal's role required a new level of expertise based on empirical studies and theoretical understanding of school leadership. This theory expert evolved into a bureaucrat during the 1960s as principals carried out the goals of school districts and implemented policies. The 1970s called for a community leader who was capable of nurturing the relationship between schools and the community as a response to political movements and legislative mandates.

Philip Hallinger, Director of the Vanderbilt International Institute for Principals (Lockwood, 1995), explains that the principal's role changed during the 1980s with the *Nation at Risk* federal policy, requiring principals to use their power to ensure that changes occurred at the school level in support of the achievement of low performing students—that is, culturally diverse and poor students. The principal's role spanned five functions: to support staff development, develop programs, secure resources and manage the building, oversee student services, and establish positive school-community relations

(Ubben & Hughes, 1987). There was an emphasis on supervising instruction by establishing teacher-principal relationships. Beck & Murphy (1993) conclude that the expectations for the principal have changed over time not in response to students' needs, but rather as reactions to the political and historical climate of each period. Interestingly, the literature reviewed rarely mentions that the role of the principal must be responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity as a contributing factor to school success. There is an overwhelming sentiment that what is good for all students will also help culturally and linguistically diverse.

The principalship for the 21st century targets a school leader who is primarily focused on accountability for student achievement. The cry to close "the achievement gap" as a measure of success places great responsibilities on the principal. The success of a school, as reflected in its improved test scores, in many ways represents the principal's personal degree of success. The principal's responsibilities seem to have been expanded towards unrealistic expectations encompassing multiple roles as enforcer of policies and yet still being ultimately responsible for managing the school building.

Several reports currently call for high expectations for school principals. According to the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2001), the school principal's efforts must be focused on equity and student achievement in order to meet rigorous academic standards. Creating a quality school with a qualified principal was described as follows:

> Having a first-rate school without first-rate leadership is impossible. Leadership is a balance of management and vision. There is simply no way a principal alone can perform all the complex tasks of a school. Responsibility must be distributed, and people must understand the values behind various tasks. A full-time qualified school leader places

student and adult learning at the center of all decisions in a school. In addition, effective leadership requires that principals have the autonomy to make decisions based on the needs of individual schools. Effective leadership also depends on having the authority to hold people accountable to results. (p. 11)

A Task Force Report on *Reinventing the Principalship* published by the Institute of Educational Leadership (2000) confirms that school leaders must prioritize learning rather than holding "a middle management position overloaded with responsibilities for basic building operations" (p. 1). The management position is keeping principals from being effective in improving instruction. Today's principals are identified by their strengths in teaching and learning, use of data, curricular knowledge, accountability, and community leadership through shared decision-making and vision. The Task Force participants consisted of a few principals, a superintendent, a school board member and representatives from university school leadership institutes from across the country who agreed that without these strengths, educational reforms to improve achievement would be undermined.

Recently the Council for Basic Education and the Johnson Foundation (2002) held a conference where educational leaders discussed the standards reform movement and identified barriers to closing the achievement gap. The use of standardized tests as a measure for accountability, the lack of coherent professional development under the guise of the principal, and the lack of resources for meeting the needs of specific groups of students were identified as barriers. The report states that the crisis in schools is due to the lack of qualified leadership who are equipped with a complete understanding of the academic

standards necessary to bring teachers along in the process of changing past practices.

In light of the policy mandates for school leadership that focus on academic achievement, there is room for caring school leadership (Beck, 1994; Houlihan, 1988). In fact these are not exclusive from one another. The work of Benard (1995) was instrumental in identifying factors that contribute to student success especially for "at-risk" youngsters. High expectations, caring and support and meaningful opportunities for participation characterize schools that create resilient environments in which students can "bounce back" despite circumstances that place them at-risk. Krovetz (1999) highlighted schools in Northern California in which resiliency was cultivated. These schools demonstrated that principals interacted with adults and students in personal and positive ways. High expectations instilled a belief that everyone could be successful. Principals provided teachers and students with resources they needed. They also practiced collaborative decision making with teachers and supported them in accepting changes at their schools in a humanistic way. School administrators and teachers are successful when they learn to accept change as a natural aspect of their profession. A resilient environment will support them in this process.

Beck (1994) also challenges school leaders to be caring practitioners who embrace a care ethic as integral to their role. Caring leaders see themselves as teachers and learners. They seek opportunities to know more about the lives of others and model this learning for others. They teach values by telling stories that point out what is important in the school community. Principals respond to

the needs of others, but also find meaning in their personal and professional development. Henze, Katz, Norte, Sather, & Walker (2002) and Houlihan (1988) suggest that leaders think of the interactions in their schools based on Maslow's hierarchal concept of basic needs where relationships are the foundation of the organization. Humans respond well when their basic need for food, wellness, shelter and safety are satisfied. This sense of security with the need for relationships is the foundation for a positive self-concept. Validating cultural and social aspects can reinforce a positive self-concept, which has an effect on attitudes and performance. In the end, the principal is responsible for establishing a school climate where performance from staff and students is the outcome of solid healthy, relationships.

Leithwood and Riehl (2003) recently summarized research findings on school leadership and concluded that leaders working in diverse student communities do the following: (1) They implement research based practices found to be most effective with the students in their schools knowing that not all instructional approaches are not appropriate for everyone. (2) Leaders establish a school community where a sense of caring and trust exists. Teachers are encouraged to be innovative and engage in practical professional development focused on the diverse students' needs. (3) They regard students as "social capital," bringing to school knowledge and values unique to their identities. (4) School leaders create school climates where covert and overt actions of injustice and discrimination are challenged and not tolerated. (5) School leaders provide parents with the necessary resources to create a "family educational culture" (p.7) in the form of parent education, mutual goal setting and active decision-

making. They embrace the educational cultures parents bring and adjust for differences.

Defining Success: The Politics of Education in California

High-stakes accountability policies are the driving force behind all current educational decisions. No school can be considered successful without showing significant and consistent improvement on standardized test scores. Although equity is often noted as a goal in implementing such policies, the reality of the situation is that these policies are forcing school leaders to focus on compliance with State mandates even though this focus may perpetuate even more inequity. Policies such as California's Academic Performance Index (with its heavy emphasis on standardized testing) and the California High School Exit Exam (which requires every student to pass this test in order to graduate from high school) have raised academic expectations for all students and placed pressure on educators to raise test scores. In addition, the implementation of Education Code 300 or Proposition 227 (which drastically affected bilingual instruction) in 1998 has placed more pressure on educators to teach in English to second language learners because the progress of English Learners is presently under great scrutiny by the public. This legislation has forced publishers to eliminate the availability of instructional materials in students' home languages and allowed school districts to do away with bilingual educational programs.

These are a few examples of mandates that will probably produce more dropouts and generate more academic failure among culturally and linguistically diverse populations. Such politically motivated initiatives impose a strict

curriculum and fail to acknowledge cultural or linguistic diversity as an asset for improving student achievement. Instead, they promote a system that defines school success based on high-stakes testing and rigorous standards for all students, without taking into account their backgrounds and experiences. As an example, when students learning English as a second language are required to take standardized tests regardless of their linguistic abilities, the results will typically be low test scores (Thompson, Dicerbo, Mahoney, & MacSwan, 2002). This problem is exacerbated by the fact that many educators don't understand how to create effective accountability systems that can truly reflect positive academic growth for linguistically diverse students (Linquanti, 2001; Thompson et al., 2002).

Effective schools research showing that school leadership is a key factor in improving academic achievement, has been criticized for advocating a one size fits all prescription for schools with large numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students, of which many have been classified as disadvantaged (Grady, 1989; Lucas et al., 1990; Stedman, 1987). In fact, in most of the current literature on school reform within the educational standards-based reform policies, diversity is seldom mentioned as a key factor in contributing to school improvement. California Tomorrow (Olsen et al., 1994) completed a study on schools undergoing restructuring and found that few schools identified diversity as an impetus for restructuring even though many of the schools had a diverse school population. The report states,

> It appeared to us that the majority of schools, all of them with culturally, linguistically and racially diverse students populations were largely blind

to the need to address the individual needs and experiences of these
students in the restructuring process. (p. 28)

The report (Olsen et al., 1994) suggests that issues related to diversity such as

those of race, language and culture must be at the core of any restructuring

initiative.

Cummins (2000) argues that while schools have taken on the rhetoric of

equity, educators for the most part have institutionalized a system that continues

to disempower culturally diverse students through "coercive relations of power

and consequently has supported their academic failure" (p. 43). The educational

system for the most part has institutionalized an assimilationist perspective,

demanding that culturally diverse students conform to the values, ideals and

curriculum of a monolithic view of learning. This is evident in the Standards

movement. Culturally diverse students are expected to abandon their identities

and first languages, and subscribe to a dominant culture of existence if they are

to be viewed as successful (Valenzuela, 1999). This is evidenced by the strong

anti-bilingual sentiment in California and nationwide. The subtractive nature in

pedagogical practices, such as in the state mandated curriculum, does not value

the inherent cultural wealth of resources that students can provide both to the

school and to their communities. Valenzuela (1999) refers to this as "subtractive

schooling" (p. 27).

Educational formulas for improving student achievement have relied on

effective school research and other research-driven projects that have excluded

dealing directly with issues of race, culture, power and language (Cummins,

2000; Dillard, 1995).The immediate reaction from educators and policymakers is

to "fix" underachieving students by improving the technical knowledge of administrators and teachers on how to improve their academic success. A scientific approach employing specialized curricular packaged programs, intervention strategies, and school-wide restructuring have often been implemented. Cummins (2000) posits that,

> ... the failure of the mainstream educational reform movement to acknowledge the sociopolitical roots of student failure is a major factor in the limited impact that this research [school effectiveness] has exerted to date on the process of reversing educational inequality. (p. 249)

Ignoring the issues that relations of power plays in the system perpetuates the problem of underachievement.

Multiculturalists, however, attempt to deal with such issues and propose educational reforms that include the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students. Their paradigm often discounts the heavy emphasis on test scores. While standardized test scores alone as the criterion for student success narrows its definition, being accountable for academic achievement must be an important part of the educational agenda for culturally diverse youth. In effect, Cummins (2000) challenges both multiculturalists who work from a critical, ethnographic educational paradigm and school reformers who work primarily from a scientific paradigm to link both perspectives, thus creating a new definition of success that focuses on accountability and high expectations with linguistic and cultural diversity at the core.

Whereas the focus on student achievement and academics must remain as high priority in schools, the need to teach our students and ourselves how to function in culturally diverse contexts should not be compromised. This is

relevant now more than ever considering our changing demographics. Success based on student achievement can be measured through statistical data as shown by its public display in the media and as a result of the public school accountability movement, but assessing how well schools implement positive crosscultural relationships or assessing caring in school environments is difficult to evaluate without a structure or tool. Henze et al (2002) claim that schools can keep qualitative data to document changes in practices and behaviors in interethnic relations. Some schools use parent or school climate surveys to obtain this type of information. Consequently, maintaining this data and sharing it with others highlights relationships and crosscultural interactions as other indicators of school success.

So, what is school success? Houlihan (1988) discriminates between school effectiveness and school success claiming that "school effectiveness" is often based on standardized testing and is specific while "school success" is relative. He pronounces that educators are prone to use statistical data as ways to assess school effectiveness. Schools that do not produce high test scores may be deemed ineffective and yet still be successful. There may be an improvement of achievement for a group of students over time that is overlooked while high performing testing schools may not improve at all or show significant improvement. He presents,

> As educators we are making a serious mistake if we allow ourselves to be fooled by the notion that simple statistical data is an adequate measure of the effectiveness of a school. Ultimately, this shallow acceptance will lead to the development of modes of operation by principals and superintendents, which will not hold up over time. Students in a school may do well on a test for one, two, or even three years, but if test scores

become the dominant descriptor of success, eventually a number of other serious organizational problems are likely to surface. (p. 7)

Essentially, principals can demonstrate they are being effective in their roles by considering variables in addition to standardized test results as indicators of success. Social variables must be reviewed in order to understand how some schools are successful. These variables include relationships and the degree to which students are accepted and relate to the educators within the school setting.

Issues of Equity and Diversity in School Leadership

A commitment to meeting the needs of diverse students means dealing with the inequities that currently exist in the school system (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 1999; Mirón, 1997; Obiakor, 2001; Riehl, 2000). Freire (1985) states that traditional forms of schooling are controlled by those in power who dominate the school curriculum. Their practices may be well intentioned, but also serve as carriers of subtle and powerful messages to those not at the same level of power about their place in society. Like Cummins and Freire, Mirón (1997) alleges in his book, *Resisting Discrimination*, that discrimination is practiced both in subtle and not-so-subtle ways. He claims that a strong relationship exists between discrimination and the development of students' self image. The following are some examples of students sharing how they felt:

> Some teachers have their favorites, but it ain't racism. She [my teacher] thinks that I'm a hoodlum. She thinks every black male she sees dressed like me is a criminal. It's something in the style of clothing that she considers them a hoodlum or gang member. A lot of [other] teachers say that, though. I hear them say that. (Mirón, 1997 p. 5)
>
> In high school, I was really embarrassed to be Chinese. I wanted to be distanced from other Chinese students. I didn't want my parents to speak

Chinese in front of my friends. I remember at one point in high school I thought, "I'm American, not Chinese." That's the whole concept I grew up in. (Olsen et al., 2002 p. 152)

Various forms of discrimination continue to occur in our schools through academic tracking and teacher behaviors that communicate to culturally diverse students that they will be unsuccessful (Mirón, 1997). Because schools have typically defined diversity from an assimilationist perspective, where culturally and linguistically diverse students are expected to adopt the cultural values and ideals from the mainstream culture, many school reformers do not acknowledge the value that cultural and linguistic differences can bring to an educational setting (Olsen et al., 1994; Valenzuela, 1999).

These subtle forms of discrimination, or institutional racism, are not a result of personal or openly intentional racist behavior as most people might think. It is reflected in subtle, covert ways within systemic practices that keep certain groups of student and adults in positions of power (Keleher & Johnson, 2001). The results of these practices can easily been seen through standardized test data as well as graduation, dropout rates, discipline referrals or school activities where only one group of students either identified by race, ethnic background, socioeconomic background or gender are overwhelmingly represented. Keleher and Johnson (2002) recommended that schools look at "impacts rather than intentions." Most educators have difficulty discussing institutional racism and therefore, become defensive or fearful. (Olsen et al., 1994). School leaders can take a proactive approach by addressing it as a social responsibility.

The hidden curriculum (H. A. Giroux & Purpel, 1983), which is defined as curricula not formally taught in schools, maintains discriminatory practices in our schools even though educators are required to adhere to legal mandates that promote equality and fair treatment of all students. What comes into question is whether principals and teachers can practice the kind of leadership that includes moral politics encompassing a school philosophy that makes combating discrimination a major goal. Acknowledging that discrimination and racism exist and are practiced via the hidden curriculum is the first step in moving towards an equitable society. It is the first step school leaders can take in moving towards effective school reform that will impact the achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Some school leaders have effectively dealt with existing inequalities in their schools. Henze et al. (2002) conducted a qualitative, multiple case study with 21 U.S. schools looking at how leaders address interethnic relationships. They found that despite the racist attitudes that exist in school systems and in broader society, school leaders could make a difference in how schools handle conflicts around diversity. They also propose that staffs examine the contexts of their schools and interpret how policies might affect the interethnic relationships at their sites based on the assumption that positive relationships is the foundation for successful learning. A school might begin this internal study by looking at disaggregated data to identify gaps in achievement. In addition, identifying the school's key players who influence the school culture helps to analyze whose values are being represented. These players can be staff, parents and even students who contribute to the overall dynamics of power existing

within the school environment. Schools might consider developing vision statements that include social justice or improving interethnic relationships as an explicit goal. There are approaches leaders can take to incorporate diversity and equity into their roles.

Principals in restructuring efforts used shared leadership as a way to gain various perspectives to problems and extend possibilities for solutions using a broad base of expertise among the staff (Olsen et al., 1994). The challenges that school principals face in closing the achievement gap for culturally and linguistically diverse students require strategic thinking on their part on how to solve some of the issues that surface when dealing with special populations. Cultural and linguistic differences can either be viewed as assets or as problems that need solutions. Therefore, a principal's perceptions and philosophies around issues of diversity influence how decisions are made at their schools (Dillard, 1995; Henze et al., 2002; Pedro Reyes & Capper, 1991; Riehl, 2000). As an example, Reyes and Capper (1991) conducted a study in 1986-87 that looked specifically at how urban principals defined the problem of high school drop out of culturally diverse students. A multiple case study approach was utilized that included eight urban high schools with large numbers of Latino and African American students and drop out rates that ranged from 40-70%. The findings indicated that principals who defined the source of the dropout problem with the students and their families, proposed solutions that were directed at remedying the students and their families. They did not consider the school context as contributing to the drop out problem.

On the other hand, two principals defined the source of the dropout problem within the school context and sought solutions that corresponded with seeking changes in the school such as with teacher expectations, the instructional program and the school culture. Thus, the practices and solutions implemented under the principal's leadership were aligned with how the problem was perceived. Evidently none of the principals perceived that by making cultural diversity the core of the school's culture, students might be more engaged with the school and less likely to drop out.

Developing an appreciation for cultural diversity is often mentioned as a goal for schools. The school that implements multicultural education goes beyond surface ethnic celebrations and holidays, and practices an anti-racist education which includes teaching students how to address issues of racism and discrimination. It includes bringing White and culturally diverse students in mutual understanding of the problems brought upon them individually and collectively. School curriculum includes engaging in discussions around social justice and thinking about how their environments, the media, their identities and experiences mold their views of the world.

At a different level, educators also move the meaning of cultural diversity to a significant dimension by beginning to explore their own cultural identities and becoming aware of how their position of privilege is used, consciously and subconsciously in their work (Howard, 1999; Johnson, 2001). One's ethnic, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic background and experience affect how we interact with others. So when the educators' experiences are different from the students, parents and community members, there is a need to develop a broader

perspective that includes empathy for what others experience and a closer understanding of how they see the world from *their* perspective (Henze et al., 2002). The exploration of these attitudes and behaviors supports a model of cultural proficiency where the members of the school take an inside-out approach, an approach that requires them to learn about their own value system as it relates to coping with differences (Lindsey et al. (1999) instead of an approach that focuses only on learning about others.

> Cultural proficiency is the policies and practices of an organization or the values and behaviors of an individual that enable that agency or person to interact effectively in culturally diverse environment. Culturally proficiency is reflected in the way an organization treats its employees, its clients, and its community. (Lindsey et al., 1999, p. 26)

Lindsey et al. (1999), authors of *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders*, assert that some individuals who carry a "presumption of entitlement" (p. 71) show resistance in dealing with cultural proficiency because they believe that they do not need to make any modifications for others. Instead the expectation is that culturally diverse communities must adapt to the mainstream. Cultural proficiency is more than political correctness. "The sincere intent underlying cultural proficiency reflects a firm belief that response to diversity is both necessary and good" (Lindsey et al., (1999).

Culturally proficient leaders understand that in order to change attitudes, they must assess the staff's understanding of diversity and support them in the change process by explaining *why* changes are being made. The idea that racism can be unlearned and that bias is a human reaction to what we have learned should be communicated among the staff. Effective leaders model this learning with others by sharing what they have learned. This strategy mirrors the same

characteristics of principals who foster resiliency and promote a care ethic as described earlier (Beck, 1994; Krovetz, 1999). Speaking out when one has erred in their actions or attitudes provides the safety one needs to initiate change (Henze et al., 2002). Thus, school principals who promote success for culturally diverse communities choose culturally proficiency as a goal for their schools.

Intercultural Orientation

I believe that a school principal who embraces Cummins' (1989) intercultural orientation in practice creates conditions that make it possible for culturally and linguistically diverse students to experience success. Using this framework as a foundation, other research is presented supporting or elaborating on each of these dimensions: (1) linguistic and cultural incorporation, (2) community participation, (3) pedagogy, and (4) assessment.

Cultural and linguistic Incorporation

This dimension supports bilingual proficiency for linguistically diverse students by implementing instructional programs that teach in the students' home language (Cummins, 1989). While there is much debate over the effectiveness of bilingual programs in teaching English, there are studies that have demonstrated that linguistically diverse students do well academically (Ramirez, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 2001). Schools that recognized language as vital to academic success (Lucas et al., 1990; Stedman, 1987) provided bilingual education programs. Stedman (1987) maintains the following:

> By divorcing learning from culture, current reform efforts limit their chance for success. School improvement projects in urban areas need to make ethnic and racial pluralism a cornerstone of their efforts. Teachers

and principals should view differences in culture, class and language as a valuable resource that can enrich their programs rather than as obstacles that must be overcome. (p. 219)

Aside from success effective bilingual programs have student academic achievement, the inclusion of students' cultural heritage and backgrounds in the school environment can have a tremendous effect on their emotional connection to the school. Encouraging students to use their home language, or primary language, socially, providing accessibility of books and instructional materials in different languages, displaying bilingual signs around the school and, incorporating ethnic studies in the curriculum are just a few examples of how a school can raise the status of the "minority" language and culture (Cummins, 1989).

One of the most common characteristics cited as central to promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students was school climate (Lucas et al., 1990; Mirón, 1997; Nieto, 1997; Pedro Reyes & Capper, 1991; Reyes, Scribner, & Scribner, 1999; Riehl, 2000; Valverde, 1988). School climate was defined by Brookover et al. (1979) as "the composite of norms, expectations, and beliefs which characterize the school social system as perceived by members of the social system..." (p. 19). Earlier research on effective schools (Brookover et al., 1979; Edmonds, 1986) revealed that attitudes such as the lack of high expectations impacted the achievement of students from low socioeconomic levels. Subconscious teaching behaviors communicate to students their level of acceptance in the system. The subtle messages students receive about themselves convey to them how they are perceived and send strong messages about their status in the school environment.

Through interaction, students, teachers, administrators, and others in the school social system communicate to each other conceptions of the role behaviors and expectations proper for students. The students thus come to perceive their place in the social structure, and the norms ad expectations of teachers, principals, and other in the school community (Brookover et al., 1979).

Hence, relationships that educators have with culturally and linguistically diverse students either facilitate or impede learning. Conclusively, these relationships establish the school 's norms, expectations and beliefs making up the school climate.

Establishing a sense of belonging for culturally diverse students allows them to feel like valued members of the school community. A positive self identity facilitates learning to take place when students feel positive about themselves (Pedro Reyes & Capper, 1991; Valverde, 1988). The most important way principals can do this is to create a school that incorporates the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the students into the curriculum as well as into its environment (Cummins, 1989).

Valverde (1988) suggests:

Developing a multicultural climate is important because of the attitudinal impact it has on students. Principals need to realize the attending to the cultural aspect of human beings is not trivial but central to holding minority students in school and to promoting learning" (p. 326).

The principal serves as "a cultural agent" (Valverde, 1988, p. 322) who strives to create a school climate that addresses the psychological need for humans to feel connected to others. The physical environment of the school should represent the culture of the student population by displaying art, murals, student work that reflects the students' cultural backgrounds and by posting school signs in the languages of the students. This promotes the status of the

Midwest where culturally diverse students were bussed to to a White, upper middle class community. Using the Dean Alienation Scale, the findings revealed that the school administration did not recognize "minority" parents as wanting a good education for their children. These parents felt more alienated than White parents , and they felt that the school failed to consider the needs of the parents when inviting them to the school. This limited research suggests that negative attitudes toward the school by culturally diverse parents can certainly influence how their children perceive the school environment.

Parental involvement of culturally diverse students can sometimes be a great challenge for administrators and teachers, but it is crucial in making connections between the home and school environment. Parents of linguistically and diverse families may not be perceived as having much to contribute to the school under conventional and traditional definitions of parent involvement. In fact at times, educators may assume that education is not valued because it is not demonstrated in the same way that mainstream parents show it. At the same time, parents may feel disconnected to the school system due to their lack of familiarity with the system or due to language barriers. Martinez and Smith (2000) argue that parents who comply with the school's expectations of parent involvement support a system of inequity. Educators must find innovative ways to include families in the educational process rather than define parental involvement by conventional means.

Stedman (1987) found that effective schools involved parents by maintaining good communication with parents on student progress and involving parents in governance of the schools. Helping parents to participate

actively in the decision-making process brings their experience and concern for their children to a powerful position. Schools that are culturally responsive actively seek community support and resources. They enhance parents' sense of connection to the school as they begin to feel they have something to contribute to their children's education.

Schools with a large population of culturally diverse students often need more than support from the community in educating their youngsters (Riehl, 2000). Principals must make city and public community agencies their allies and develop relationships with churches, local advocacy groups, social agencies, and other relevant groups.

Pedagogy

One of the roles that principals take in managing their schools is that of instructional leader. Bossert et al (1982) discussed how principals indirectly influence what teachers do in their classrooms by the processes set up within the school structure that will facilitate teachers working on effective instructional practices. They are viewed as setting the tone for how instruction will be organized and implemented. Riehl (2000) notes that although effective schools research highlights the importance of principals being actively involved in the instructional aspects of their jobs, it is not enough to promote what is deemed as effective instructional strategies and hope that it will make a difference for culturally and linguistically diverse students. The instruction can only be meaningful for culturally diverse students if their reality is incorporated rather than excluded into the subject matter, which is key to connecting students to

school. Principals promote a curriculum that embraces diversity and makes multicultural education an integral part of the academic program. Students must find the curriculum relevant in order to make learning meaningful (Reyes & Capper, 1991; Riehl, 2000).

Principals who support teachers in raising student achievement for culturally diverse students inform them of the instructional goals and provide consistent feedback in assessing their teaching effectiveness (Rosenholtz, 1985). Many reform or restructuring efforts directed at improving the achievement of diverse student populations has involved building "professional communities" that will provide teachers with organized, systematic networks for self-evaluating their effectiveness (Sergiovanni, 1994;, 1995). Teachers who work with low-income and culturally diverse youngsters are often not acknowledged for their efforts in improving student success. Effective principals will assure teachers that the instructional practices they use with these youngsters are valued (Riehl, 2000). Teachers are encouraged to address a variety of strategies that will address the students' cognitive and communication styles. This viewpoint entails an approach that accommodates to the students' needs and backgrounds instead of the traditional approach, which requires students to adapt to the teachers' styles and perspectives.

Research on linguistically diverse student populations (Bernard, 1991; Lucas et al., 1990) looked specifically at schools with significant numbers of such students and found that achievement improved when school principals made the education of English Learners a priority. In particular, Lucas, Henze and Donato (1990) conducted one of the very few studies that looked at linguistically diverse

students at the high school level. Six high schools were examined for effective instructional practices. The findings based on both qualitative and quantitative data revealed eight features as the most salient in promoting success for linguistically diverse students:

1. Value is placed on the students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

2. High expectations were held for all students.

3. School leaders make the education of language minority students a priority.

4. Staff development is designed to assist teachers in serving language minority youth.

5. Courses and programs are offered that meet the needs of language minority students.

6. Counseling services aimed at helping language minority students.

7. Parents of language minority youth are encouraged to become involved.

8. School staffs share a strong g commitment to empower linguistically diverse students through educational programs.

While strong leadership is a key factor in supporting the achievement of linguistically diverse students, Lucas, et al (1990) did not limit the leadership role to that of the principal. Strong leadership can also come from program directors, department chairpersons, and teachers who promote the education of linguistically diverse youth. The education of linguistically diverse students was not given secondary status, but instead was the focus of hiring professionals who

were knowledgeable in teaching and working with linguistically diverse populations.

Cummins (1996) defines a pedagogy that is truly transformative where students are active participants in their own learning. Teachers share the classroom power with their students and create a learning environment based on critical inquiry and interaction rather one that is hierarchal and static in nature. This type of instruction moves away from the traditional practices that have aimed to indoctrinate students into meeting a standard for learning predetermined by individuals who may be radically different from who they are. Students' backgrounds are reflected in the curriculum, and they participate in their learning and assessment. They have a voice in their learning (Freire, 1985; Mirón, 1997; Olsen et al., 2002). Teachers practicing transformative pedagogy recognize that social injustices exist in the world. Courageously, they provide a forum for students to reflect upon their lives critically supporting their ability to become advocates for themselves and others.

Assessment

Historically, culturally diverse students have been misdiagnosed or mislabeled due to an assessment procedures where linguistic differences are viewed as harmful, or worse, identifies students as lacking cognitive abilities. Educators can either continue to legitimize these practices or can take the position of advocate by ensuring that the educational program and its assessment procedures are appropriate and educationally sound (Cummins, 1989).

> We want a truly competent public-school system: one that respects the
> way of being of its students, their class and cultural pattern, their values,
> their knowledge, and their language-a school system tat does not assess
> eth intellectual potential of lower-class children with evaluation tools
> created for those who class conditioning gives them an undeniable
> advantage over the former (Freire, 1993, p. 37).

While accountability and assessment are a driving force in changing

educational and systemic practices in schools today, it is imperative that

principals understand how to best use assessment to truly improve achievement

for linguistically and culturally diverse students. The use of multiple measures

that support the evaluation of learning is not only much more authentic in

looking at individual students, but also yields rich data when evaluated over

time (Council for Basic Education, 2002). The message is not that educators of

culturally and linguistically diverse student populations should have lower

expectations, but rather that the assessment and evaluation processes should be

viewed with a fair perspective.

Using standardized test results alone to make programmatic decisions,

especially for students who are not proficient in English, has been harmful when

other measures are not used. Educators who understand their role as advocates

support their teachers in understanding this phenomenon rather than

legitimizing past practices that have traditionally misdiagnosed students

(Cummins, 1989). Therefore principals must model and support teachers in

making careful decisions and diagnosing students needs in their discussions. As

principals become consumed by the standards and accountability agenda, they

hold teachers and staff members accountable for students' academic success. But

a culturally proficient principal will also advocate for a comprehensive

assessment process that is fair and more honest with what students know and what they can do.

Principal as Advocate: A Different Metaphor

The most important role a principal can undertake to effectively promote student success is as an advocate who implements practices aimed towards the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students as high priority. The school principal must view the diverse student population at the core of the school, which means incorporating the students' parents and community members into the educational process. The curricular trends promoted by the school principal must incorporate the needs and interests of the students and maintain high expectations for their success. Moreover, the vision of improving student achievement among culturally and linguistically diverse students means using an additive approach to curriculum instead of a subtractive or assimilationist one. Last, and probably most important, the principal is willing to challenge traditional and contemporary agendas for schooling that refuse to acknowledge the value of language and culture as a significant key to success. In essence, the principals who strive to change a system in hopes of improving schooling for disenfranchised youth accept the challenges inherent in those efforts as a positive aspect of their work (Bernard, 1991).

Today's school administrators recognize that politics are an integral aspect of their job. By promoting the success of all students, a school leader acknowledges that the role needs to be responsive to social justice. Wilmore (2002) reminds principals that homogeneity is not a realistic goal, and that

standards for the development of quality school administrators include inviting open dialogue around these sensitive issues. She states,

> Without divergent opinions and perspectives, there can be no critical analysis.... How can you be actively involved, make knowledgeable decisions and seek to engage others in advocacy if you do not know what is taking place in the larger society context? (p. 94).

Wilmore challenges school principals to be involved in whatever is going on politically, socially and legally, as these aspects affect teaching and learning in the broader sense. Principals are expected to influence and provide a sense of direction in responding to these external factors. This is supported by Reyes and Capper (1991) and Reyes, Scribner, and Scribner (1999) who found that school administrators who were committed to the success of culturally and linguistically diverse students looked beyond the educational system for solutions and assumed the role of advocate within the larger community. Those that challenged the system and implemented changes on behalf of these students and their families at this level promoted their students' school success. Advocates do not legitimize activities that do not help students. They actively voice injustices and act on behalf of the students they serve. Interestingly, it was (Edmonds, 1979) from the original bank of "effective schools" research in the 1970's, who stated the following:

> We can, whenever and where we choose, successfully teach all students whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to in order to do that. Whether we do it or not will finally come to depend on how we feel about that fact that we haven't done it so far. (p. 23)

School leaders at all levels, whether at the state department. district office or the school site, should embrace these words and genuinely consider whether

we are realistically moving beyond comfortable patterns of educating youth and challenging ourselves to be advocates sensitive to the populations we serve.

Reflective Practice

Dantley (1990) asserts that effective school leadership for urban poor students will not change unless schools begin to recognize that school leadership must engage in a process of critical reflection. Principals must recognize that school systems perpetuate inequities by their institutional practices, practices that silence the needs and voices of those whose reality schools most want to change. He states,

> What is exceptionally evident is that schools presently are not arenas of ideas, thinking, and problem-posing pedagogy. The effective leader in this context is thus charged with producing and maintaining an environment that is safe for students and teachers to work but not to learn, to walk but not to think, to be but not to contribute. (p. 592)

Principals must be visionaries, but not ones who impose a definition of success based on what they and others in power define as success. They must be visionaries who believe that what occurs in schools for culturally and linguistically diverse students can be tools for what Dantley (1990) calls "social and political reconstruction" (p. 594). Principals who engage in critical reflection with teachers and with students can overcome the conditions that maintain a lack of equity and social justice in the system. Riehl (2000) supports this idea in the following statement:

> Administrators are subject to the same kind of hidden curriculum about discipline and control that teachers and students experience. Like teachers, they not only experience but also reproduce, sometimes unwittingly, conditions of hierarchy and oppression, in particular by fostering compliant thinking instead of critical reflection. (p. 58)

Dillard (1995) explored the relationship between personal and professional aspects of effective leadership. This single case study of an African American high school principal revealed that school leaders hold very subjective feelings and understanding of their work with culturally diverse students. Individual experiences impact how diversity is viewed in a school and to what degree the administrators will implement changes to improve schooling for culturally and linguistically diverse students. The function of a school administrator is one of practice in which action will lead to change and change will occur through practice. Dillard suggests that principals probe their own subjectivity and explore their own biases by engaging in critical reflection. Sergiovanni (1995), a proponent of reflective practice, reminds us that teachers and administrators must feel their work is significant and purposeful to their lives and that by creating organizations of adults teaching and learning from each other, student outcomes and school culture can also change.

Participatory Research

Peter Park (1993) defines participatory research as "a way of creating knowledge that involves learning from investigation and applying what is learned to collective problems though social action" (p. 30). Participatory research gives the researcher permission to work with others who have typically been called the subjects of a study in the active role of creating knowledge (Park, 1993). It breaks away from the social scientific paradigm that has usually "privileged the experts with controlling the production and distribution of knowledge"(p. 33).

Participatory research is about people, power and praxis (Finn, 1994). The participatory research approach opens up discussions of social problems in a dynamic process of intellectual activity with the very people who are directly affected by those problems. Founded in critical pedagogy and the work of Paulo Freire, the theoretical construct supporting this approach, this methodology moves from a banking system of knowledge transmission to a more humanistic framework of study. Knowledge is constructed through dialogic retrospection (Kieffer, 1981) in a dynamic cycle of inquiry that propels further questions for reflection and thought. Basically, participatory research is a process that unveils truths about the world through the eyes of the participants. As Ada and Beutel (1993) inform us, "Researchers and participants come together in a mutual and rigorous exploration of their lives, deeply respecting each other's ability to truly know and believing that through the act of knowing we can transform our reality" (p. 7). In essence, the participants of the study become co-researchers. True participatory research and critical pedagogy are not practiced until reflection and the creation of knowledge lead to some form of action. This is what places the word *action* in the term participatory action research. Praxis is when theory is conjoined with reflection and initiates a change in practice. Therefore, participatory action research maintains action as its goal. The act of reflection is considered a vital part of the praxis, but what is done with the information should be determined by all of the researchers—the participants and the researcher.

Through communication and dialogue, the participants and researchers bond and via this relationship, become aware of the language and how it is used

to define and redefine themselves and the world (Herda, 1999). The dialogues are conversations requiring active listening in an equal encounter of ideas. It is not an interview where questions are asked and answers are given. Instead, the dialogue in participatory research is a process suspending one from premeditated position and opinion and placing the researcher in the reciprocal mode of learner. At the same time, it allows for discussions to take place that maybe otherwise not occur. Each dialogue is tape-recorded and then transcribed. This printed transcription becomes a text of which both the researcher and participant reads and reflects upon. The relationship between those texts and the readers is an interpretation of the important issues personal to those involved (Herda, 1999).

The four phases of the Creative Dialogue (Ada, Beutel, & Petersen, 1990) have often been used in participatory research studies as a framework to assist educators in reading and analyzing text as an approach in creating new knowledge and initiating transformation. The four phases are: descriptive, personal interpretive, critical analysis and the creative phase. At the descriptive phase, the text provides basic information in naming the problem. At the personal interpretive phase, one interacts with the text and relates the problem at a deeper level relating it real life experiences and exploring how one feels about the problem. At the critical analysis phase, the process moves to analyzing the problem critically and generating possibilities for change and finally at the creative phase, social action is determined. Social action constitutes actually doing something about a problem long or short term and can be anything from voicing a concern, writing a letter, a book, designing a program, initiating policy

changes or sharing information that will directly respond to the problem and contribute to change.

There is a place for participatory research to provide significant contributions to both educational and research agendas. Participatory research has been most recognized in addressing social movements in international development, education, and social work (Finn, 1994; Hall, 1993). The work of Patricia Maguire (1993) has illuminated the field with the role that gender and race plays in participatory research practice. The subjective nature of research methods such as participatory research causes some educators and researchers to question its validity and value. All types of research, quantitative or qualitative, are not totally free of bias. Let's acknowledge that fact. Herda (1999) claims that investigative methods such as participatory research provide opportunities for individuals within organizations to create meaningful relationships in critiquing social problems and imagine a better life as a result of some form of practical change. As researchers contributing to the field of education, we must recognize that there are ideas, issues and concerns that need to be shared from multiple perspectives and that we have a moral obligation to share them.

As previously mentioned, participatory research has an emancipatory aspect which has most often been used to help disempowered or oppressed communities change their social realities (Freire, 1970; Huizar, 1997). In this study, the approach was used with educators who hold formal positions of power in their culturally diverse school communities. The research provided an opportunity for them to delve into their roles as school principals and allowed them to voice their ideas, any injustices, or oppressive situations that *they* face.

They carry unique responsibilities and capacities that affect the lives of many others—teachers, secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, parents and students—and yet they still must respond to the directives and mandates of superintendents, policymakers, district office supervisors and board of education members.

Freire (1993) emphasized the importance of hearing from those that worked in the schools where he was involved in a reform project in Sao Paulo, Brazil:

> It is necessary that they talk to us and tell us how they see the schools, how they would like them to be, that they tell us something about what is and what is not taught in schools and about how it is taught. (p. 39)

The voices of the principals who work daily on school reform must be acknowledged through what Freire (1993) referred to as" open, courageous dialogue" (p. 39). As school principals who practice democratic leadership, there is a responsibility to lead and act with authority and yet respect others. Through dialogue, educators can explore how relationships are used to exercise power and recognize that schools are highly political. Once we acknowledge that we play a role as political and educational leaders, we can move to the next step of changing how culturally and linguistically diverse students are educated.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Participatory research originates from the work of educators and social scientists who were interested in promoting change in society. This is done through the active participation of the individuals or groups who have an interest in changing the conditions in which they live or work. It is a research method that captures the voices of those most affected by inequities or oppressive conditions (Ada & Beutel, 1993; Freire, 1985). The researcher does not maintain a position of power over the participant. In the process, the researcher does not promote his or her ideas about the world. The researcher does not define knowledge for the participant. In fact, the real power of this research lies in the definition of knowledge by both the researcher and the participant so that the dialogues facilitate both a deeper understanding of the problems surrounding the research and an exploration of some type of change. With this in mind, I selected individuals who worked closely with the community that is the focus of this study. Since I am a school administrator, the participants and I were able to engage collectively in dialogic retrospection exploring conditions that may be oppressive in nature and that promote social injustice in education. This shared concern for improving the educational experiences of diverse students is considered a strength in this study.

Kieffer (1981) and others (Ada & Beutel, 1993; Ada et al., 1990) have defined a process that includes the following steps in participatory research

studies:

1. Identify an area of study with representatives of the community

2. Recruit participants and developing entry into the community

3. Collect data and conduct dialogic interviews

4. Analyze data for generative themes based on transcriptions of the recorded dialogues into text. Generative themes are ideas or concerns that appear frequently throughout the text.

5. Reflect on nature of the dialogues with the participants

6. Constructing meaning through an integrative analysis

Kieffer (1981) emphasizes that participatory research be a true collaborative effort between the researcher and the participants. The participants are involved in the development of the research questions, the design of the study, and the interpretation of the data. Although the researcher selected the area of study, the participants were involved in various phases of the study. Following is a description of each step taken in the process.

Selection of the Research Topic

The problem was formulated through informal conversations with others in the field mainly district office school administrators and school site principals. Two principals participated in a pilot of the research before proposal approval in order to field test the questions and provide practice conducting the dialogues. A review of the literature was conducted to clarify and further the research focus and included information on the roles and practices of school principals working with culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. This review also

included demographics, academic achievement data and information regarding current educational policies affecting school principals. A theoretical framework was identified which aided in organizing the literature review and designing the research questions.

<div align="center">Entry into the Community and Recruitment of Participants</div>

Entry into the community is the phase of participatory research in which the researcher learns as much as possible about the community by participating in activities with them. This allows the researcher an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the participants' social realities and builds a sense of connection to the study (Ada & Beutel, 1993; Kieffer, 1981). Ada & Beutel (1993) recommends that inner and outer preparation take place to set up entry into the community. The inner preparation involved reading professional books and articles on leadership and multicultural education. It was also complemented by my past experience educating culturally and linguistically diverse students as a bilingual teacher and learning English as a student in the public school system. The outer preparation included conversations with other school administrators, reflections from the dialogues from the principals that participated in the pilot, data collection on schools, and the literature review.

My experience as a school administrator provided me with many opportunities to know school leaders in a number of capacities. In my recent position, one of the primary responsibilities was supporting schools in developing programs and services for linguistically and culturally diverse students. I became aware of the challenges and demands of the principalship

through conversations I had with colleagues and by observation. These often occurred during principal meetings, district office staff meetings or at school sites when I shadowed principals performing their day to day duties. I visited some of the participants' school sites before and during the study. Equally important, my personal experience as a second language learner and child of immigrant parents helped me to be sensitive to the communities principals served.

A review of demographic and student achievement data was completed of local and neighboring school districts to identify potential candidates for participation in the study. The superintendents of the principals were contacted and permission letters were written approving participation in the study (Appendix D). At the same time, participants were initially contacted by telephone. An invitational letter (Appendix A) was mailed with the Informed Consent Form (Appendix B) for review. A group introductory meeting was organized to answer questions and provide additional information regarding potential participation. It was my intention to have all the participants identified at once, but this was not possible due to the inability to identify school principals who met the criteria and who were willing to participate. As such, three of the participants attended the introductory session. The remaining four participants were identified in the following months. I met with them individually to review their possible participation in the study. Each participant was also asked to complete a Self-Portrait Questionnaire (Appendix C) in order to prepare for the dialogues.

Participant Selection

The study included six elementary school principals and one high school principal from public schools in the Bay Area. Since no one single definition existed for what defines "success", the criteria for selecting the principals who actively promote success for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations was based on criteria initially developed by the researcher. As a result of my experiences in the school system and from the information obtained from the literature review, the criteria for selection included evidence of progress in student achievement and to the degree possible, evidence of active parental involvement. The definition for success was explored further with the participants. Principals were invited based on the following preliminary criteria:

1. Principals with 5 or more years of experience in public school settings.

2. Schools that represent a culturally and linguistically diverse school populations of at least 30% students identified as English Learners in order to address linguistic diversity or at least 50% representation of non-White, culturally diverse student populations based on ethnic composition as reported by the California State Department of Education.

3. Schools meeting academic growth targets on the Academic Performance Index (API) in the last 3 years between the years of 1999-2002 as reported by the California Department of Education. A school is determined to have met its annual growth target if its two subgroups, defined by ethnicity or low socioeconomic level meet their respective growth targets.

4. Active parent involvement and community satisfaction as reported by district data. An established governance parent committee such as the School Site Council consisting of at least half of the members representative of culturally diverse backgrounds. In schools with significant English Learner populations, there has been an established School English Learner Advisory Council (SELAC) for the past five years as evidenced by school documentation.

5. Recommendations from district office administration.

The original proposal for this study had been limited to elementary school principals, but I felt strongly that the experience and viewpoint of the high school participant would enrich the study. He had been the only secondary level principal to provide a bilingual education strand when instruction in students' home languages was not desired both at the district and state level. This afforded an opportunity to gain his insights as to the research problem. Some of the participants selected for the study did not meet all of the aforementioned criteria. A few potential candidates were contacted, but were not interested in participating in the study. Therefore it was necessary to select participants who closely met most of the criteria and demonstrated interest in the research topic.

Portraits of the Participants

The participants provided information about themselves through the Self-Portrait questionnaire and the dialogues. Following is a portrait of each of the participants followed by a brief description of his or her respective school.

Although the participants were informed that a pseudonym would be used to identify them in the study, some of the participants chose not to use one.

Carolina Bejarano

Carolina Bejarano is a 59 year old, Mexican American woman and the oldest of five children. She grew up in a copper mining town in Arizona where she informed me that "the Mexicanos were the laborers and the Anglos were the bosses." She spoke fondly of her childhood schooling experiences having had teachers "who were dedicated, had high expectations [and] made me feel special and intelligent." What she most remembers moving from Arizona as a teacher, was finding that teachers had low expectations for Latino children in California. She stated, "That's where I get who I am and the kind of leader I am. I am focused on kids...giving them a safety net, loving them, being firm, having guidelines for them." Bejarano described herself as "the soul of the school."

Bejarano's inspiration to be a leader came from a principal she admired who was focused on children. She holds a Masters degree in counseling and worked as a counselor for two years before becoming an elementary school principal. She was a principal for a total of 12 years and served as principal at her last school for 8 years before retiring in 2002.

The school where Bejarano served was described as "an active, caring school," committed to helping all students succeed. It had an enrollment of 639 with an ethnic composition as follows: 79% Latino, 11% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 5% White and 4% African American. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the population was identified as English Learner of which 92% had a home language of Spanish, 2% Vietnamese and 3% other languages. Located in a residential area

near businesses, most of the children attending the school were bussed from neighboring areas. Seventy percent (70%) of the students qualified for free or reduced priced meals compared to the 55% state average. The average attendance percentage improved over three years from 92% to 95%. Unfortunately, suspensions for the three year span increased from zero in 1999 to 34 in 2001-2002 (School Accountability Report Card, 2001-2002). The increase in suspensions was due to changes in the enforcement of district policies.

Bejarano's school implemented a Spanish transitional bilingual program and received federal funding for low-income students providing resource staff to support literacy development. It also received funding from a SB65 School–Based Pupil Motivation and Maintenance grant supporting drop out prevention, parent outreach services and discipline programs. It also implemented an extended school day through city funding.

The school met the state's Academic Performance Index for three years between 1999 and 2002 exceeding its growth target each year making it eligible for the Governor' Performance Award. The Governor's Performance Award was a state legislated monetary awards program granted to schools that met or exceeded their designated growth target by 5% or had an API increase of 5 points, whichever was greater (California Department of Education, 2001-02).

Sylvia Bennington

Sylvia Bennington, 59, identified her self as White of Scandinavian background. She grew up in the state of Washington and described her upbringing as one from "humble beginnings." She grew up in a family with strong religious beliefs. Her father always wanted to be a missionary and so she

grew up with the orientation of helping others. She took this approach as a school principal calling herself "an optimist." Her inspiration to become a school administrator came from others who encouraged her to take on leadership roles. She enjoyed being part of a team and creating programs for school improvement. Bennington attributes her experiences as a teacher trainer and working in schools with high culturally diverse student populations for teaching her all she has learned. She described herself as "a doer," not a leader. She spent 12 years as a school administrator of which nine were as the school principal of the school focused for this study. She retired in 2002 and is currently supervising student teachers for a local university.

The elementary school where Bennington served as principal reported an enrollment of 517 for the 2001-02 school year. One third of the population was identified as English Learners with the following breakdown by home language: 68% Spanish, 18% Vietnamese and 14% other languages including Cantonese, Khmer, and Cambodian. The ethnic composition consisted of 48% Latino, 27% White, 15% Asian American/Pacific Islander and 9% African American. Of the population, 44% of the students received free or reduced priced meals as compared to the state 55%. Attendance rates for students were 95% and there was a decrease of reported suspensions from 30 to 17 between 2000 and 2002, however only 12 suspensions were reported for the 1999-2000 school year (School Accountability Report Card, 2001-2002). The school met the state's Academic Performance Index for three years between 1999 and 2002 and received the Governor's Performance Award for exceeding growth targets.

The vision statement for her school was "to build a school community and create powerful learning in a nurturing environment where all members are appreciated and accepted by who they are and where we can celebrate each other's diversity." The school implemented a Spanish bilingual program during the years of the study. It also implemented the Stanford Accelerated Schools model in which school leadership was broad based. It was recognized as a California Distinguished School and had an active partnership with the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative receiving special funding to support restructuring efforts.

Lisa Chambers

Chambers, 41, is a third generation Mexican–American woman who grew up in a working class environment and learned Spanish as her second language in college. She remembers growing up and hearing her parents tell her how they were punished for speaking Spanish in school. Her parents were resilient and raised five successful children, teaching them to speak English and do well in school. Chambers is sensitive to the experiences of the migrant families of her community remembering how hard her parents worked instilling a sense of optimism and hope in their children:

> I think of our school parents working long hours in literally backbreaking jobs because they want more for their own children. And that is why I feel it's my obligation to make sure that we provide their children with the tools they need to keep their hope alive.

Chambers has been the principal at her elementary school for three years. She has been an administrator for a total of 10 years in two different school districts in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties. She began her career as a

bilingual elementary teacher and held leadership positions coordinating Title I and bilingual programs. Chambers also taught a course to prospective school administrators at a local university and has provided professional development to principals in her school district on assessment practices in raising student achievement. She described herself as a problem-solver. She tries to address problems as a person trying to unscramble a Rubrix Cube by looking at it from different angles and seeing how one piece affects another in the larger picture.

The school where Chambers works "is committed to cultivating peace and (instilling) the value of bilingualism." The goal of the school is to provide academic excellence through a multicultural education. The K-6 elementary school enrolled 800 students with the following ethnic composition: 96% Latino, 2% White and 2% other. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the students were identified as English Learners with 99% of those students having a home language of Spanish (California Department of Education, 2001-2002). Most of the student population was "socio-economically disadvantaged" (99%) and over 50% of the students were identified as children of migrant farm workers. The school met the state's Academic Performance Index for three years between 1999 and 2002 exceeding its growth target each year making it eligible for the Governors Award.

Patrick Day

Patrick Day, 49, is a White male who grew up in Ohio and upon high school graduation became a musician with the United States Navy. He remembers growing up in an environment in which racist terms were used often.

Upon returning from the Navy, he realized that those derogatory words

"bothered" him. He explained,

> ... because now I knew those people. I knew when their family would
> come visit. I knew their brothers and sisters and... they are trying to do
> the same things my family is trying to do and that is, to do the best you
> can to try to support your family.

After teaching music for some time in Ohio and deciding not to raise his

children in that environment, he moved to California where he also taught music

and later became a resource teacher for performing arts schools in kindergarten

though twelfth grades. His inspiration to become a principal came "from a desire

to be a champion for fine arts education through a larger sphere of influence."

Subsequently, he became an assistant principal at the secondary level for five

years, a middle school principal for three years and a high school principal for

five years.

Day was the first secondary level (middle and high school) principal to

implement a bilingual education strand at each one of the schools where he

served as principal in his school district. Under his leadership, he reconfigured

the school schedule to offer more courses for linguistically diverse students that

included social studies, science and math classes taught in Spanish for the large

number of immigrant students at his school. The high school received a

commendation from the State Department of Education in 2000 for providing

equal access to the core curriculum by providing these courses.

The high school is located in a middle class neighborhood bordering a

community of immigrant families with a reported student population of 1,277.

The ethnic composition was reported as follows: 57% Latino, 29% White and 11%

Asian American/Pacific Islander. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the population were identified as English Learners with these home languages: 86% Spanish, 7% Vietnamese and 7% spoke other languages. Of the total student population, 37% received free or reduced priced meals as compared to 32% reported for the state. Attendance rates were 93%. There were 214 suspensions in 2001-02, which increased from previous years. The number of Advanced placement (AP) exams increased by 40% in the previous two years (School Accountability Report Card, 2001-2002) . In 1998-99, only 35% of all Latino seniors had taken at least one semester of AP placement courses with a grade of C or better. Two years later in the 2001-02 year, it increased to 50% of all Latino seniors. The school had the highest percentage of Latino seniors taking AP courses since Day opened up more sections in the school schedule. The school met the State's Academic Performance Index for two years between 1999 and 2001 and also received the Governor's Performance Award for exceeding growth targets for those years.

Adam Escoto

Adam Escoto, 54, is Latino and grew up in East Palo Alto and San Jose, California. Like many of his students, he "was very mobile" attending various schools throughout his childhood. He holds a degree in social work and was involved with non-profit community based organizations for a number of years before being recruited to assist in developing the school district's desegregation plan. He held various leadership positions supporting parent outreach, serving as a community liaison and worked as a middle school assistant principal for two years before his current assignment. His inspiration to become a school

principal stemmed from recognizing his ability to relate well to students and envisioning a school that focused on relationships.

Escoto is currently in his eighth year as principal of his K-5 elementary school. He became the sixth principal to be assigned to his school in five years. Located in a downtown neighborhood plagued by crime and traffic, he has maintained an ambitious drive to make this school a safe learning environment working closely with city and district office officials. The goal of the school where he serves is "to equip students from a diverse community with attitudes, knowledge, and skills they need to learn and to become productive and responsible citizens."

The school reported an enrollment of 261 students with the following ethnic composition: 82% Latino, 9% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 4% White and 3% African American. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of the population was identified as English Learner with these home languages: 93% Spanish, 6% Vietnamese, 1% Filipino/Tagalog and 1% representing other languages. Compared to the state's 55 percentage, 77% of the students received free or reduced priced meals due to low income. Attendance rates were 96% for the students and unfortunately in 2001-02 there were 69 suspensions, a significant increase from the two previous years which averaged about 28 (School Accountability Report Card, 2001-2002). Increases in suspensions were due to changes in the enforcement of district policies. The school has one of the highest mobility rates in the school district.

This school implements a transitional bilingual program in grades K-5 and a state funded after school program. The school was awarded the Seal of

Excellence from the California Association for Bilingual Education in 2001 and received the Mayor's Award for improved student academic achievement in 2001. During the 2001-2002, the school ranked 21st among all California elementary schools in growth on the Stanford-9. The school met the state's Academic Performance Index for two years between 1999 and 2001 and received the Governor's Performance Award for exceeding growth targets for those years. For the 2001-2002 year, it met the growth targets for low-income students only, but not for Latino students.

Marcella Fehely

Marcella Fehely, 58, has been the principal at her school for five years. She was an assistant principal for 15 years before her princpalship and has also served as a dean of guidance and counselor. She began her career 33 years ago as an English teacher at the secondary level. Fehely identified herself as Black, daughter of the first Black nurse in her hometown in Northern California, having attended and graduated from the same school district where she is now employed. She is the oldest of six children of which five hold Masters' degrees. Fehely's inspiration to become a principal came from growing up in a home where education was highly valued and taught to "never accept mediocrity."

The vision at the school where Fehely serves as principal is, "Today's Learners, Tomorrow's Leaders," with a reported enrollment of 720 in grades K-5. The ethnic composition is 66% Latino, 21% White, 6% Asian, 3 % Filipino, 3% African American and 2% other in 2002. Of the total population, 31% of the student population was identified as English Learner with the following home languages: 85% Spanish, 5% Vietnamese, 5% Punjabi, 2% Filipino/Pilipino and

2% representing other languages. (School Accountability Report Card, 2000-2001). Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the students qualified for free or reduced meals. There are intervention programs provided for students before and after school and on Saturdays paid out of school funds and school initiated grants. The school met the state's Academic Performance Index for three years between 1999 and 2002 and received the Governor's Performance Award for exceeding growth targets. It was recognized by the city with a Progress of Excellence award in 2002 for having the second highest growth on the API in the county.

Carlos López

Carlos López, 65, was principal at the K-5 elementary school for nine years before retiring after a 40-year career in education in 2002. His experience includes 28 years as a school principal at five different schools, six years as a bilingual education director and various other administrative positions. He grew up in a rural, farm-working town in Porterville, California as a migrant child in a family of 13 children. He stated he was a good student and had "pleasant experiences" as a student. His inspiration to become a school administrator came from a superintendent who saw his potential as a successful leader. His experience as an itinerant Spanish teacher early in his career forced him to see the various needs Spanish-speaking students had and became one of the first school leaders to develop and implement bilingual programs in the Bay Area.

Mr. López is the epitome of a change agent. Under his leadership, he transformed a school located in an urban, low-income area with a large immigrant Mexican community into a true "community school" providing extended school programs for students, parent education, and by providing

families with health resources on campus. In 1994, his school received a Five Star

Performance School Award and in 2000, the school was honored with the Seal of

Excellence award from the California Association of Bilingual Education. The

city development corporation recently recognized López for his commitment and

contribution to the Latino community. His calling to education stems from his

tireless commitment to his community. He remains active coordinating programs

for Migrant Education and as a mentor to new principals.

The school where López served as principal enrolled 678 students in

grades K-5 in 2001-02. The mission of the school was "All students can learn. All

students can succeed." The school offered a transitional bilingual education

program and a 3-hour after school academic support program. The school

location offered the district's Migrant Education program every Saturday and

has done so for several years. The school coordinated health services with a full-

time health clinic and a preschool center co-funded with the city. The ethnic

composition was reported as follows: 95% Latino, 2% White, 2% Asian

American/Pacific Islander and 1% African American. Of the total school

population, 75% of the students are identified English Learners with 99% coming

from Spanish-speaking homes. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the students

qualified for free or reduced priced meals due to low income. The attendance

rate for students was reported as 96% for 2001-02. The number of suspensions for

the three-year span 1999-2002 was less than the district average. (School

Accountability Report Card, 2001-2002). The school met the state's Academic

Performance Index for three years between 1999 and 2002 and received the

Governor's Performance Award for exceeding growth targets.

Table I. summarizes the criteria used to select the participants identified for the study. All but two participants had served at their schools for at least five years. All participants, except Day, were elementary school principals. Day was a high school principal. The participants' schools either had to have 30% or more of the student population identified as English Learners (EL) or 50% or more of the population represent non-White students. All met the demographic criteria. In order to meet the API annually a school must meet its growth target for all identified subgroups calculated by the California Department of Education. Five out of the seven schools met API targets for three years. One school met the API for 2001-2002 for low-income students identified as SES, but did not meet its growth target for the Latino population. All schools except one had parent governance committees in place. One school has had the School English Learner Advisory Committee (SELAC) in place for three and a half years.

Table I

Summary of Participants Meeting Criteria for Study

Participant	No. of years at school	30%+ EL	50%+ non-White	Met API[a] 1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	SELAC[b] 5 years	SSC[c] 50%+ Ethnic
Bejarano	8	x(48%)	x(95%)	x	x	x	x	x
Bennington	9	x(33%)	x(73%)	x	x	x	x	x
Chambers	3	x(87%)	x(96%)	x	x	x	x	x
Day	5		x(71%)	x	x		x	x
Escoto	8	x(39%)	x(96%)	x	x	SES Only	x	x
Fehely	4	x(31%)	x(79%)	x	x	x	3.5 years	x
López	9	x(75%)	x(98%)	x	x	x	x	x

Note. [a]Academic Performance Index [b]School English Learner Advisory Committee

[c]School Site Council

Research Questions and Questions to Guide the Dialogues

The questions that were used to guide the dialogues are noted under each research question.

1. How do principals define success for culturally and linguistically diverse students?

    a. How do you define school success?

    b. What do you perceive to be your role as principal in promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students? Is this different from promoting success for all students?

    c. What evidence can you share on ways in which you have promoted the success of culturally and linguistically diverse students?

    d. Do you think school systems do a good job of promoting equity and school success for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations? Why or why not?

2. What are the roles, shared values and beliefs of principals who promote the school success of culturally and linguistically diverse students?

    a. How does your belief system or educational philosophy influence how you make decisions with regard to culturally and linguistically diverse youth and their families?

    b. What does equity mean to you?

    c. What specific examples can you share that demonstrate how you influence others around you to practice the value of diversity and equity?

    d. What skills do you seek in the staff you hire in promoting equity and success?

3. To what extent do principals practice aspects of Cummins' (1989) intercultural orientation in promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students?

    a. What power do you have to influence the schooling of culturally and linguistically diverse students?

    b. How do you communicate the importance of sustaining cultural identity and cultural incorporation in the classrooms?

    c. How do you deal with problems around subtle and not so subtle racist practices at your school?

    d. As a school leader in the height of accountability, how do you communicate to your staff the importance of fair assessment?

    e. How do you involve the community and the parents in meaningful ways to connect them to your school?

4. What are some of the obstacles or challenges principals face in addressing the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students with the school system?

    a. What are some of the problems that principals have in addressing the needs of culturally diverse students?

    b. What type of support do you need to be more culturally

        responsive to your students and the community?

    c. What type of support does your staff need?

5. What recommendations can principals make to other principals that

    may influence their work in improving schooling for diverse school

    populations?

    a. What experiences have you had that supports your ability to be

        sensitive around issues of cultural diversity or equity?

    b. What training or professional development have you had that

        supports your ability to be sensitive around issues of cultural

        diversity or equity?

    c. What ideas or strategies can you share with other school

        administrators?

Data Collection

The sources for data included the participants' Self-Portrait Questionnaires (Appendix C), the transcriptions from the individual dialogues and information kept in a researcher's journal and notebook. The Self-Portrait Questionnaire provided basic information (name, contact information, telephone numbers, etc.) for each participant as well as answers to questions regarding backgrounds and educational philosophies.

The seven participants participated in dialogues over an eight-month period between March and October, 2003. Each participant chose the location of his or her choice for each dialogue. Three participants opted to hold the

dialogues in their homes and the other four requested to have them in their school offices.

Each dialogue began with a brief overview of the participatory research process confirming that this was not an interview, but rather a conversation between two people reflecting on the research questions. The dialogue questions were used to frame the conversations for the dialogues, but not all of the dialogue questions were addressed with each participant. At times the topics that arose in the dialogues took the conversation in a different direction and time was allowed for participants to express what most concerned them. Ada & Beutel (1993) reminds us that the dialogue questions are the driving force in participatory research, but the creation of knowledge cannot be limited by the imposition of a process. Each dialogue was tape-recorded lasting 60-90 minutes. After each dialogue, the recordings were transcribed and mailed to each participant for review and feedback. A copy of the questions for the second dialogue was sent beforehand. Participants were asked to consider questions that perhaps needed to be part of the following dialogue.

The content of each dialogue provided me with more ideas for the next dialogue. Ideas from previous dialogues with other participants were shared with a participant for reflection. The first dialogues basically covered the definition of success for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations and discussions around their roles and belief systems as principals. The second dialogues always began with reflections on the transcription of the first dialogue. The second dialogues essentially covered reflections on equity, racism, diversity and challenges and recommendations. A final group dialogue was organized

once all of the individual dialogues were held, transcribed and analyzed. Participants who were unable to attend the group dialogue were contacted and individual feedback was given.

Analysis and Interpretation

The transcriptions provided a text from which to identify generative themes that emerged individually and collectively. The process included multiples readings of each participant's text drawing meaning from the words, choice of words and the manner in which each person chose to express her or himself. The Creative Dialogue phases (descriptive, personal interpretive, critical analysis and the creative phases) aided the data analysis of the text. Generative themes were identified for each participant. Some themes were not as pronounced as others and were categorized as subthemes. Once all of the generative themes and subthemes were identified for all of the participants, a broader look of all the themes were reviewed and organized in such a way that the themes could be grouped and collapsed together in order to synthesize and clarify the most resounding ideas. Quotations were selected from the various transcriptions to support or illustrate the themes. The summation of these ideas or generative themes was developed into a draft of the findings. This draft was analyzed; re-read several times to synthesize even further interpreting and clarifying the themes for each research question. The researcher's journal and notes were also utilized to analyze and think more critically about the themes.

A final group dialogue was arranged to discuss the findings from the research. A copy of the findings was mailed to each participant for review prior

to the group reflection. Participants who were unable to attend the final group dialogue were contacted individually. The group dialogue included pending questions related to attitudes that principals were trying to change, challenges and recommendations for other principals. The participants were also asked what action to take with the study or to identify other means of social action. Additional thoughts, reflections and clarification from the participants were integrated into the findings and recommendations in concluding the study.

Portrait of the Researcher

I am a 46-year-old Mexican-American educator, daughter to immigrant parents who was born in México and raised in San José, California. I attended public schools during the elementary years. It was a time of isolation for me. I was a child learning to cope in two worlds that were different from one another—my Spanish-speaking, Mexican home and my English speaking White school. Inspired to be a teacher at a young age, I watched teachers daily at their craft imagining the kind of teacher I wanted to be.

Consequently, I began a career in education 23 years ago as a bilingual classroom teacher. I remember vividly saying to myself when I first began teaching, "I am doing exactly what I want to be doing!" After serving both as a classroom and school resource teacher for several years, I was recruited to work at the district level to provide professional development to a variety of audiences on educating culturally and linguistically diverse students. I earned a Masters degree in International and Multicultural Education focusing my study on parent involvement. Inspired to accept the challenge of leadership, I became a district

office school administrator monitoring compliance with federal and state programs and providing technical assistance to schools. In a short time I began to see how the lives of children were affected in a larger picture. My perspective of the educational system broadened as I realized I was part of a system that claimed advocacy and equity, yet acted differently and often unfairly. I learned much about the inner workings of the school structure and became extremely frustrated at the practices that continued to alienate and oppress the rights of culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families. My impetus for furthering my education was to understand the complexities associated with leadership and advocacy for oppressed communities, enabling me to do my life's work more effectively. The process of attaining a doctoral degree has provided me with an extraordinary opportunity to reflect on my own practice as a school leader and on my personal philosophy of education. I hope to take what I have learned and contribute to the educational field by doing what I love best—teach.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

The ideas and concepts that surfaced from the dialogues with the seven participants are presented in this chapter. The participants' reflections and themes are represented for each research question. The dialogue questions provided the structure for theme identification. Due to the nature of the dialogic process, however, the participants also touched upon other themes that arose from the discussion.

Research Question #1: Defining Success

How do principals define success for culturally and linguistically diverse students?

The responses to the question of success resulted in the participants defining success in slightly varied ways. While all of the participants defined academic achievement as an important indicator of success for culturally and linguistically diverse students, none of the participants defined it only in terms of academics. Their definitions included developing a positive self-concept in students, one that embraces their histories, backgrounds and identities. Their definitions stressed the need to include cultural, linguistic or socioeconomic factors in the formula for designing successful interventions to support students' academic attainment. Moreover, some of the participants defined success as outcomes for students, while others described school processes or conditions

needing to be in place in order for students to be successful. Based on this difference, the themes that surfaced in the discussions of success are summarized in the following sections, (1) Success as Student Outcomes and (2) Systemic Action to Meet Goals for Student Success.

Success as Student Outcomes

Success is More than Academic Achievement

All of the participants clearly equated academic achievement with success. But while literacy development was especially important, progress in the core curriculum was only part of the definition. Bejarano claimed:

> ...that they [students] are able to read on at grade level, are able to have confidence in what they are doing, have high expectations for themselves and very good self esteem in dealing with their education because many times there are children who come to us and for some reason and it comes from home [or] it comes from school, they don't feel that they can succeed and they can compete with the norm.

Chambers' definition also captured a broader concept of success:

> That's one aspect [referring to academic achievement] and the other aspect is that they [the students] feel a sense of pride in themselves in terms of what they can accomplish. They value their own background because that's where they are going to get their strength from as they face every new challenge.

There is a dual responsibility then, to ensure that students are successful academically and to help students use their backgrounds as a source of knowledge. This only occurs when school leaders communicate this belief in their staff and model it in what they expect from their teachers.

Success is Achieving Equity

Two of the participants included the concept of equity in their definitions. According to the participants, equity also embraced other areas besides academic

achievement. López stated, "Success would be that all the kids, no matter what, especially Latino, the group were concentrating on, would be able to be successful as their counterparts, the non-Latino kids, in *every endeavor.*" He explained that success would include students being valedictorians, participating in student government, going to college--prestigious colleges--and excelling in non-academic areas such as in dance and sports. Fehely had a similar definition to success related to equity:

> When I look at success, *true success,* and I look at our students, it would mean to me that whether children have a learning disability and that it has been identified, whether they come from families of poverty, whether they come from other ethnicities other than the dominant one which would be White, that there is no achievement gap, that they come into school and that they would be equally prepared to be successful in whatever they would choose in life later on.

The participants who used the concept of equity in defining success recognize that inequality exists. Their vision of success is defining a system where culturally and linguistically diverse students are provided with access and resources. This is more than an outcome for students; it is a positive outcome for society.

Success is Community Engagement

Building a sense of community and belonging was an important part of achieving success for all of the participants, but for Bennington, creating a sense of community was the most important goal. She asserted:

> I define success as it relates to environment--if people are happy working there, if people are feeling productive, if people have a sense of purpose that is being fulfilled, if kids feel a sense of pride, worth and purpose. It's more personal than academic.

The evidence of Bennington's focus showed in how many parents actually participated in school events and whether they returned year after year. Those memories created a connection. She elaborated:

> And that sense if those people come back to their school, that means education is important and they're going to make education important for their children. So to me, that coming back, that reliving, that rethinking is just making another advocate for what we do ....if people are more disenfranchised from that, then they are not going to be supporting it [education] with their children.

The relationship with parents was reciprocal in that the principals needed parents to help their own children succeed, and the parent community needed support from the school in learning how to provide effective support. As Fehely claimed,

> So success is, you know, you look at test scores and we look at that, but we look at the complete child and then we look at what happens with our families that we're working with and our outreach to them, that's very important to us.

López told the parents at his school, "Success for your child begins when he gets up and he gets to school. If he doesn't get to school, he's not going to learn. He has to be there everyday because there is something to learn everyday." The outreach to parents required principals like López to continuously reinforce ways to support their children. As Escoto explained, " We are the professional teachers. The parents are the natural teachers." Success for students depends on parents, but parents cannot do it alone. (Note: More information on how the participants worked with their parent communities will be covered in the summary for Research Question number three, page 123.)

Success is Fostering Student Resiliency

Three of the participants felt that being able to provide a sense of

resiliency and concern for students was significant in their schools. Escoto

defined success exclusively as follows:

> Well I would have to redefine success and it would have to be redefined
> on different levels.... I think we'll be successful if all of our students feel
> safe and cared for. And every year is a new year. We have children who
> come with their experiences and some of their experiences of schools and
> in general and certain adults in particular are not positive. So they'll come
> with that apprehension. They'll come with that fear. We'll be successful if
> by the end of the school year, at least by the end of their experience at [this
> school], which could end in two months, six months because of the
> mobility, we'll be successful if when they leave us, they feel more secure.
> That they'll feel like that they have had a relationship with someone that
> they haven't had before or hadn't experienced before.

Escoto's statement supports what resiliency research (Benard, 1995) has

indicated: providing "at-risk" students connections with caring adults supports

their ability to overcome extenuating circumstances that can impede their success

in school.

Other participants highlighted the importance of relationships as a goal

for success. Bejarano wrote in her Self-Portrait Questionnaire, "They [the

students] have to feel supported, encouraged, loved, cared for." And Fehely

stressed that, "We have to get kids that are prepared for society so that they

don't get treated differently...our job is not only to teach them to read and write,

but they have to be able to survive in this culture." Human worth is fundamental

to the healthy development of children. Schools as social organizations facilitate

opportunities for both children and adults to become aware of the relationships

with one another and what those relationships tell you directly and indirectly

about your self-worth (Houlihan, 1988).

Despite the current focus on improving student achievement as evidenced by the current public spotlight on test scores, definitions of success for school leaders are personal and include a human element that is not easily measured by public evaluations. When I informed the participants that they had been identified for the study based on the state API, there was hardly any reaction. Yet, the participants spoke proudly of their schools and their accomplishments.

Systemic Action to Meet Goals for Student Success

Success was also defined in terms of the conditions or mechanisms that contribute to student success. Many of these conditions were related to school climate. School climate encompasses various dimensions that describe the values and attitudes of the staff and community as reflected in the organization (Bossert et al., 1982). This includes the relationships of the individuals who interact within the organization, the development and implementation of school goals, and the manner in which the organization is structured. The responses from the participants were organized into these themes: (1) Restructuring Instruction, (2) Developing A Common Vision as a Key to Success (3) Hiring Teachers Committed to the Community, and (4) Changing Attitudes and Perceptions.

Restructuring Instruction

The dialogues revealed a bold commitment to improve the instructional program. Each one of the participants employed some type of strategic plan for improving academic achievement in response to the standards-based accountability mandates that have been implemented in the last few years. Some principals explained how they led their staff members through an inquiry

process in which they dissected their instructional program and evaluated its effectiveness. Some used district and external funding sources such as the SB65 grant monies for dropout prevention, the Immediate Intervention Underperforming School's Program (IIUSP), and the Bay Areas Schools Reform Coalition (BASRC). Some schools used the Governors' Award monies to supplement programs, which were given to them for meeting the API. Most of the principals (López, Bejarano, Bennington, Escoto) restructured the language arts program in their schools using an assessment-based approach to improve teacher practice based on students' academic needs. Bennington and López sought the partnership of the local university, and their schools became professional development schools using BASRC funding. In professional development schools, teachers were provided with training in research-based methods and were given opportunities to pursue graduate degrees in specialized areas. Bennington used the Stanford Accelerated School process to drive the change in her school and felt strongly that this was *instrumental* in helping her staff deal with the changing population at her school. During the restructuring of their programs, several of the participants reactivated their belief in the potential of children. With a sense of urgency in her voice, Bejarano outlined:

> For me as a principal, for all of us administrators, [the goal] was to raise test scores. I mean that was statewide, nationwide and so I took that to be very serious. Coming into the school and seeing children that were reading at the primer level at first grade was okay with the staff, but not okay with me. Because *they are* capable intelligent children and if given the right tools they will succeed. And so *for me*, as an administrator, my goal was to make sure these children had every opportunity to learn to read and to achieve. And so everything else started falling into place. We just started taking those steps until we got to this point surpassing grade level reading and raising API scores every year.

Accountability was a welcome change in education for many of the participants. The vision for improving academic achievement for culturally and linguistically diverse students would hold all teachers accountable for ensuring their success. López claimed:

> I'm really for accountability and I think that's what we need. We didn't have enough of that previous to the last eight years or so. The more we focus on the standards and the goals for academic achievement and then put into practice the instructional curriculum to achieve those, the better off we are. And we measure and see how we're doing so you have regular assessment so we implemented that. As long as you're showing results that's all we need to do.

The participants took the emphasis on test results and guided teachers through this change process by teaching them and modeling how to use assessment data.

As a result, assessment became an important component of instruction and a number of the participants implemented the use of performance-based assessments in order to assess whether students were meeting standards. The focus on data driven instruction, however, did not keep principals from using a multifaceted approach to analyzing their students' results. Test results in the primary language, were used and valued in schools implementing bilingual programs. In particular, Chambers included assessment results in English Language Development (ELD) in evaluating teacher performance. ELD became an important core curricular area and was given more emphasis in many of the participants' schools. The responsibility was not limited to ELD teachers. Fehely attributed the rise in test scores on the standardized test to the training the teachers received on ELD.

Bennington referred to assessment results as a necessary tool for addressing gaps in achievement:

> Gosh, that was another tool that I just used to hammer away at the difference in assessment and what we can do to accommodate it and its just another way of saying equity, equity, equity and the resources and support to give them that equity.

Although testing did not become the priority for the participants, the presence of accountability measures and availability of data became a useful tool for measuring success. Bejarano explained that she helped her staff to "integrate [test taking skills] into what we are doing without being the priority which it's part of the daily routine and it worked." But restructuring the instructional program was only part of the change process. To effect a positive academic achievement, the participants had to ensure there was a vision that provided structure and a mutual sense of purpose.

Developing a Common Vision as a Key to Success

A critical aspect of establishing a positive school climate was creating a common vision, or what has often been referred to as "a shared vision" for success. This common vision was the basis for goal setting and establishing a sense of collegiality among the staff. For all of the participants, mobilizing their staff and community towards a common goal was discussed as a key to success. Whether it was specific to instructional practice or part of establishing a general belief system for the school, getting staff to "buy in" was what they mostly did as school leaders. As López stated:

> The key was to get everybody on the same page and everybody doing the same thing so that we could build on our successes so that the kids didn't have to relearn how to learn every time they went to a new teacher the next year.

Creating a common goal became a much more efficient way of managing the organization and keeping everyone focused. Bejarano stated:

> It was important to me to have everybody in the whole school focusing together on a goal, then it will most likely happen. But if you have a goal, and everybody is trying to reach it in their own way, you're never going to get it there as a whole. It's gonna take a heck of a lot longer and there are always going to be those people that are going to go off in different tangents.

Bennington noted that this task required a change in attitudes:

> But what I thought was what were the elements present in order to make your school successful year after year. And to me one was attitude and a shared vision. If I didn't have that I couldn't have even begun. And so if they [teachers] don't have the right attitude or a shared vision, I didn't have a chance of raising those test scores.

The participants felt that their schools needed to refocus their efforts during a time of increased accountability. Two of the participants added that having a common language among staff members bound them together as one committed organization. The common vision that most of the participants aspired to was focused on instructional goals and practices, but for at least two of the participants, the buy-in process required them to challenge some teachers' subjective views on students as school priorities. As Mirón (1997) stated, "Failure to take a stand on discrimination in public schools is a failure to set a shared vision that nurtures minority students"(p. 15).

Hiring Teachers Committed to the Community

Another generative theme that emerged in discussions of success was the participants' emphasis on hiring "the best teachers." Principals see hiring qualified staff as essential in implementing effective programs for students learning English as their second language (Bernard, 1991). Three participants, Chambers, Fehely and López, specified that teachers had to be credentialed to

work with linguistically diverse students. But all of the participants felt that having credentials for working with linguistically diverse students was only one qualification of good teachers. Hiring teachers who demonstrated a commitment to work with the population was just as important as possessing the technical skills to teach. The following comment by Bejarano summarizes what the participants expressed on hiring staff:

> You want to have the best teachers. And what does that mean, the best teachers? You want to have those teachers who can understand the children, the culture and that have the strategies; the tools to work with them and that have empathy, not sympathy. That have high expectations.

Being empathetic to the lives of the children did not mean students were expected to do less.

The participants sought teachers prepared to work beyond what was required in their duties. In other words, they held high expectations for their teachers as well. Bejarano went on to state:

> ...and they [the teachers] are going to give it everything, 200%, to make sure they reach the children. They also have to be able to deal with the many different challenges that the families bring because they are not just dealing with the child, but you're dealing with everything else that happens around them. How do you provide a quality education when the child is suffering abuse or suffering from sadness or whatever is going on in their lives? And yet you're teaching and you know they are not picking up on [it]. What kinds of things can you do as an individual to bring that child in? Again you're building resiliency. You're building a bonding and if the child does not bond, you might as well forget it because you're going against the wall... it's more than just schooling. It's more than just teaching, it's caring.

Teachers also needed to be problem solvers, insightful and willing to work with parents as part of their responsibility. Chambers claimed:

> Well I think it's very important that teachers be very aware of the challenges that the students face within their environment. They have to be aware of language issues and issues related to poverty. For example, do

the parents have a car to get to school? Can they attend meetings after having worked a full day? Teachers need to responsive to challenges not just be aware of them. Are they willing to make a home visit or call a few times during the evening? Rather than say, 'Oh well I tried,' and give up. They should be aware of things that might get in the way of children doing their homework and plan how they can provide more structure and relate better to parents to gain support. The relationship we develop with parents is so key because I see differences between teachers who are strictly professional versus those teachers who try to develop a relationship with parents as an ally and as a friend who share the common interest of the child's welfare.

A commitment to work with the community can be challenging for some teachers. For example, López shared a story about a teacher he interviewed who was concerned about the presence of gangs at the school. He told her:

> There are a lot of gangs in this area and people are afraid. I'm going to tell you right now, if you are afraid of the gangs, then you shouldn't work here. There is a perception that it's not safe here and people are going to tell you that. You are going to feel uneasy and you are going to see gang members here...I embrace the gang members. I think that if we want this school not to have any graffiti and not to have any break-ins, then we have to have a positive relationship with the gangs because the gangs are there. I can't get rid of the gangs.

He had in fact established a relationship with many of the community members, and he wanted teachers at his school who had the courage to work within the context of the community. That requirement did not deter him from seeking good teachers for his school.

With these definitions of success, it makes sense that participants regarded qualified teachers for their schools both as strong academic instructors and as individuals capable of fostering resiliency and good community relationships. There were, however, still instances where staff or community members' attitudes in working with students needed to be addressed.

Changing Attitudes and Perceptions

This section will begin with an overview of this theme followed by two subthemes: (a) Avoiding Isolation and (b) Sending Messages of Success, Hope and Acceptance.

Participants discussed supporting staff and the community members in changing their attitudes towards culturally and linguistically students and understanding the implications in terms of their own professional practice. They felt that neither their students nor their schools would be able to be successful unless teachers believed that their students could succeed. A couple of the participants began this process by getting their staffs to accept their new challenges as opportunities for change. Bennington and Fehely specifically described the challenges of working in schools where the demographics were quickly changing from a homogenous, predominately White and middle class population to a more culturally and linguistically diverse population. Many of the students were from homes with lower socioeconomic backgrounds. At one of the schools, the community and some of the teachers were angry about the bilingual program being "imposed" on the school as they expressed feelings of nostalgia for the way the school was once before. Bennington reflected:

> ...they [the teachers] liked being in that community and they liked what it used to be and they thought they could keep that and so I think there was a lot of that stuff. There was a lot of anger about bilingual ed. and there is still maybe. But there isn't anger about the children and that's the real important part.

López shared the same sentiment as he described his past administrative experience at another school in a similar situation:

This is a generalization, but teachers become very possessive that this is their school and their classroom. They forget that, 'No [it's] not your school. You are here to serve the needs of the kids. And the needs of the kids change over here. You may be here, have been here for years (laugh). You can't keep teaching the same way be [cause] these kids have changed completely.

The imposition of the changes brought upon teachers and community members who lack preparation or are unfamiliar with diverse families aroused a sense of discomfort or fear. Throughout the dialogues, a couple of the participants and I discovered that the fear of their own failure could have a tremendous effect on teachers, making it difficult for them to accept new challenges like working with children who did not speak English well when they as educators did not speak the students' language, or interacting with parents who had a cultural orientation that they found foreign to their personal experience.

Some of the participants discussed the difficulty staff members had in dealing with the conditions such as poverty presented by some culturally and linguistically diverse families. Escoto observed:

> ...it was essential that the staff understand that certainly children who come to our school are coming with circumstances that would overwhelm a healthy adult, let alone a child, circumstances that for the most part, we can't do anything about. We can't do anything about their housing, the adult relationships in the household. We can't do anything about their economic situation and their family's economic vulnerability. But what is essential is the staff needs to really understand, I mean truly internalize that despite these circumstances that we can't do anything about, that we can and should change the circumstances by which we teach them. So to the degree people understand that, to the degree that people have internalized that belief, then we begin to see the changes in the attitudes and perceptions of themselves as educators. We begin to see the changes in attitudes and perceptions of students, or children as students as well as parents, attitudes and perceptions of themselves as parents of school age children. It begins to see somewhat of a domino effect where (pause) there is this belief despite these circumstances; children are going to be

educated, teachers are going to be able to teach and feel that their efforts are making a difference.

Success would be the outcome of an environment where the individuals focused on providing a sense of resiliency and empathy. While still requiring academic high expectations for children, the systems approach that Escoto proposed requires teachers to open their hearts and minds to children's lives and adjust their attitudes and their instruction. Focusing on instruction without considering students' unique histories and the dynamics affecting their lives inherently limits the possibilities for academic achievement.

Avoiding Isolation.

A subtheme in addressing attitudes and perceptions was avoiding isolation of culturally diverse students and the staff who works with them. The process of creating a common school vision prompted Bejarano and Bennington to look at how programs were organized in their schools. For example, programs designed for English Learners and the "regular" mainstream program were sometimes perceived differently from one another. Teachers who worked in those respective classrooms did not interact much with each other. One participant noted this isolation perpetuated some of the stereotypes that individuals had about certain students, and perhaps hindered members of the same school from talking, sharing and problem solving with one another. Bejarano, a supporter of bilingual education, felt it was important to have the bilingual program and English Only classrooms perceived as being part of a unified school. Asked why this was important, she answered:

For that reason because of the attitude that the staff had. I wanted the staff to see themselves as one and not be divided by programs to build an awareness among the English Only teachers that Hispanic and bilingual children were capable and did not fit into their perception of them not being capable and different. Also to make them realize that the educational program was the same and the expectations were the same for all children [between the two programs].

During this dialogue I responded, .

...if we want people to understand Bilingual Education, our best advocates and our best spokespeople could be the English Only teachers. Any teacher working in a school with a bilingual program should be able to speak intelligently about Bilingual Education whether you agree with it or not.

Bejarano enthusiastically agreed. Creating a cohesive school did not mean that specialized programs should be eliminated in order to maintain order, but neither did it imply that teachers should work only within their area of expertise.

Working with different schools where bilingual education programs functioned in isolation, I observed that school leaders and non-bilingual classroom staff members who had little experience with bilingual programs formulated their ideas about the program and the children based on their limited experience and need for information. At the same time, advocates for bilingual programs believed their English Only peers were unsupportive of them. This isolation led to misconceptions on both sides due to the lack of dialogue and education between staff members. Breaking through these unspoken barriers at the professional level is crucial in serving culturally and linguistically diverse students. As the person who most influences the school culture, a principal can facilitate much needed communication across a school's various programs in order to avoid isolation between individuals and the perpetuation of stereotypes.

Especially for Bennington, the integration of programs became the priority for the school and the basis for an improvement plan. She related, "Our vision was that all *those* children are *our* children. So once they had that vision, then it was ready to go." The implementation of a Bilingual Partner Model in which a bilingual teacher teamed with an English Only teacher helped to eradicate false notions that they had of one another. This came about after a painful staff meeting in which teachers stated their sadness and frustration in seeing how students were segregated in the school's academic programs. The Bilingual Partner Model began with only a few teachers. Each year thereafter, more teachers began to team together, and the school evolved a culture avoiding isolationist tendencies and the concomitant perpetuation of negative attitudes. Avoiding isolation began with changes in the adults.

The way in which a school was organized was a consideration for principals who wanted to facilitate cooperation and communication among different members and groups of the school community. The organizational structures had to provide opportunities for individuals--classroom teachers, specialty teachers, paraprofessionals, tutors and administrators--to get to know one another and to identify one another as resources. This interdependence built cohesion and broke down stereotypes and misconceptions. Bennington's staff forced children from the bilingual and English Only classrooms to interact with one another for purposeful interaction, and the effects were rewarding for both the staff and the students. Integration was their common vision.

Sending Messages of Success, Hope and Acceptance.

One attitude discussed by participants as they described the process for

being successful was reinforcing high expectations for students. Many of the

participants mentioned talking to students and parents about "going to the

university or to college." Several of the participants discussed inculcating in

students an "I can do it" attitude by repeatedly encouraging them. A portion of

this work, though, involved helping teachers to reframe their expectation levels

for the students. Bejarano shared her experience of some of her staff's attitudes

found at her school as follows:

> Because even though there were really wonderful programs in place, the
> children were not reading on grade level. And it was based on the fact
> that some people had been there forever. The attitude was that children
> weren't capable; that they would probably end up working at
> McDonalds... and it was said to me. The programs that were there were in
> place mostly for, in my estimation, mostly, the welfare for the teacher and
> not for the betterment of the education for children. So, working with
> staff, we decided to investigate some programs to focus on the reading
> level and bring that up to grade level.

Bennington led an exercise with her staff as they were going through a

process of defining equity in their work. She asked the teachers how many of

them had students who they believed who would go to college. She said the

answer was 10-15%. She then asked them,

> How many of you think your [own] children are going to college? All of
> them. And then I said, 'how many of you talk to your children at home
> about college?' All of them! How many of you talk to your class about
> college? No hands went up [said quietly].

The idea that the teachers now had a responsibility to provide a sense of hope

and vision for their own students was a startling moment for the staff. During

the dialogue, Bennington exclaimed that at the end of the year, the school survey

showed that 94% of the students indicated that they were going to college.

Instilling a belief system for success with the students must begin with the staff.

Another dimension of school climate is the physical environment of the

school campus. Three of the participants, Escoto, Fehely and López, indicated

how important it was to maintain a school environment that visibly

communicates to the outer community that the school is a good place to be. For

example, López' assignment to his school began with changing the image of the

school. He reflected on how he was told that the school was "a bad school."

Teachers resisted working there or working late because they were afraid of the

gangs in the neighborhood. Not even the custodians would work late. The

campus basically closed down at 3:30 every afternoon. When he spoke to his

superintendent, he told her,

> We're gonna change this. We need to have them [the custodians] here. Tell
> them that they have to be here. And that *I* will be here. I'll stay with the
> custodians. I mean I got plenty to do. I'll be here. So, anyway she agreed.
> So they changed their hours. I'm gonna bring classes here. If you're going
> to make a safe school, you got to have people here at night. They have to
> feel safe and I'm willing to be here.

So he began working late and staying with the custodians. Walking

around the campus, he would reflect:

> Oh what a dirty place. I wouldn't want my kids to come here so I am
> going to make this school a place that I'd want my kids to come to. And so
> I started picking up trash (laugh). And pretty soon people started joining
> me. The parents started coming and they'd say, 'You're here every night,'
> and I would say, 'This is a good school. It's safe. And I want to make it
> the best'. So, more and more people started joining and the teachers
> started feeling more comfortable and staying.

By reconceptualizing the image of the school as a safe and orderly place,

he conveyed to the community that he cared about the school and that they were

invited to be there. This was their school. Fehely shared similar feelings. During her home visits, she found that the situations at some of the students' homes were not conducive to their learning. Therefore, she wanted to provide "a clean, healthy environment" so students could feel a sense of pride while at school. Additionally, Escoto shared that principals should never allow graffiti at their schools as it scares children. Thus, the physical environment should not contribute further to the negative messages students receive about their self worth or their group identity.

In summary, the degree to which participants were able to improve student academic performance and create a positive learning environment was a significant indicator of success for the participants as school leaders. Each participant undertook a specific path to establish a culture for success by taking into consideration the issues presented by and resources available within his or her school context. More importantly, none of the participants expressed a pure focus on academic achievement without considering the necessary mechanisms that needed to be in place to produce success for students. Success can best be described as a process as well as an end result. The next section examines the participants' certain shared values and beliefs underlying their definitions of success.

<center>Research Question #2: Roles, Shared Values and Beliefs</center>

What are the roles, shared values and beliefs of principals who promote the school success of culturally and linguistically diverse students?

The dialogue questions posed for this research question asked the participants to identify their most important roles in promoting success for diverse students and probed their beliefs on equity, diversity and racism. This section begins with an overview of the resulting generative themes on the topic of the principal's role in relation to power, followed by a summary of the remaining themes organized into a section on *Roles* and another on *Values, Attitudes and Beliefs*.

Power Redefined—Responsibility and Shared Leadership

Since the principal's role has traditionally been interpreted as a position of power at the school site, it was important to see how principals used that power in promoting success for culturally diverse students. The responses were mixed. Some principals were more comfortable than others discussing their role as one of power. However, what did surface recurrently was an interpretation of power as a strong sense of responsibility.

Most of the participants did not identify their principals' roles as positions of power. For instance, Bennington stated not liking the word "leader" and saw herself functioning more as a member of a larger family in her school. And López remarked:

> Maybe I have different responsibilities. I want to work with that person. I don't want to get into a power struggle and that's what that is. If you're powerful and you think of yourself as powerful and you have the final say and all this, then you have to use that as a weapon to control somebody else and you've lost....One of the things you have to avoid is a power struggle because people always want to get into power struggles. And so if you're really powerful, you don't need to resort to that.

In fact, López thought a strict use of power would work against a goal of

building an institutional legacy to leave with the school. He continued:

> I've never used, 'I'm the principal and that's why it's gonna get done or its
> not negotiable' or those kind of things because you can use that, but
> you've lost everything else in terms of building a team or moving forward
> to implementing any plans. Because as soon as you're gone, it's gone. You
> want to institutionalize things. You have to have built a foundation. And
> the foundation are the teachers, the parents and the kids....But so what I
> need to do here is build something that can continue to grow. The work is
> never finished.

Bejarano had similar sentiments. She was unique in her response, though.

She responded that she shared power with teachers by telling them about her

past and how, as a child, teachers believed in her. By pointing herself out as a

role model, she hoped to influence teachers' beliefs in their students. For her,

power was influence. She added:

> Power is (laughs), can be very negative. It can very self-serving, but I
> never saw my position in the terms of power. I saw it in terms of being
> able to make a difference in the lives of children and in the lives of my
> staff. And again [in] teaching. Teaching is what I knew as a person and as
> my education, my experiences and as an educator.

In contrast, a couple of the participants acknowledged possessing power.

Day thought that since current legislation holds school principals accountable for

academic achievement, it is incumbent on them to take leadership seriously to

ensure the instructional program yields results. He used a leadership team for

staff input and shared decision-making, but he felt that ultimately he was

responsible, and if there was resistance to making changes, he employed his

power. For example, he mandated additional sections of ESL (English as a

Second Language) classes in his school to accommodate the increasing number of

immigrant students.

Similar to Day, a very experienced principal, Silva (personal communication, July 16, 2003), shared with me that when she has worked in schools where ESL or Special Education programs were weak, she used her power as the site leader to mandate changes. She felt strongly that a good principal who advocates for under-represented students will use power where necessary, and she found that most teachers want principals to make some decisions. Nevertheless, most of the participants spoke about power as being shared with others, namely teachers.

Escoto recognized power, but translated it as teacher leadership. He admitted:

> *I am the leader.* And that in being the leader, my primary responsibility is to cultivate as much leadership opportunities [sic] so when I say I am the leader, I don't mean that somehow I'm above everyone or ahead of everyone in terms of leading the charge. But really I see myself of creating as many opportunities for other people to step forward and provide as many as I said opportunities to cultivate that leadership.

Hence, while the participants had various interpretations of their position as one of power, they see their role as having different responsibilities from other staff members and being ultimately responsible for what happens in their schools. Responsibility was shared through teacher leadership. According to Sergiovanni (1995), sharing leadership roles distributes the responsibility and pushes a school forward in meeting its goals while building a sense of purpose among the staff.

Shared leadership allowed for multiple perspectives to be expressed, as Bejarano observed:

> It's [shared leadership] important because (pause) a school business is not made up of one leader. Different people provide different kinds of

leadership. And in order to have a well-rounded vision, mission, goal, you have to have input from different people and there are staff members who are leaders in the eyes of other staff members and they can bring forth different ideas from them. They can share their ideas. They can bring them along to go with the goal of the school, to meet the goal. It's just very important to be able to say, I am the principal but I have this group of teachers that are leaders of the school, that I can depend on to get a message across. Because not all teachers will listen to the principal at all times. They are likely to listen to a colleague.

Shared leadership was exercised in a variety of ways. The participants indicated that besides having formal leadership roles in their schools such as literacy coaches and resource teachers, they encouraged classroom teachers to publicly share ideas, techniques and lessons with others in grade level meetings or during inservice days. Bennington credited her teachers for being the drivers of the change process at their school through their teacher led cadres.

Communication is a form of shared leadership. Many of the participants informed me they had leadership teams that served as the voices of the teachers, thus providing technical and emotional support to one another. López articulated, "If the staff is going to be part of the change, then they have to have a voice in your schools." Dealing with problems or concerns from the teachers in a weekly faculty senate meeting was one way he saw that teachers had power. Chambers added:

> I am very open to hearing other opinions and other points of view and then using that ... 'Yeah, that sounds like a better way to do it. Lets do it that way.' I am not tied into saying, ' it's got be my way.' You want to find allies who are at least open to being learners. If people are really stuck in their position, you're not going to get anywhere.

In general, power ascribed to the principal as the school leader was not used in rigidly authoritarian ways, but rather was viewed by the participants as a responsibility to guide and direct the school's activities. Shared leadership was

a feature of sharing power. I speculate that the reason many of the participants did not identify their positions as ones of power is because the word *power* can connote a hierarchical system of top-down management. On the other hand, a few principals were much more comfortable thinking of themselves as having power, especially when used to advocate on behalf of the students. But all of the participants equated their position with responsibility and distributing power with others.

<center>*Roles*</center>

There are a multitude of roles that school principals play in leading their schools. The commonalities among the participants in terms of their roles were identified as: (1) Instructional Leader, (2) Change Negotiator, and (3) Broker of Resources.

Instructional Leader

Most of the participants saw themselves as the instructional leaders of their schools. One participant referred to herself as "a teaching principal." Another said she was "a teacher of teachers," and yet another participant referred to her school as "one big professional classroom." The participants initiated a focus on student academic progress and were actively involved in professional development activities at their schools. They spoke of "monitoring results" and becoming more "data driven." Chambers believed that this is a requirement for today's principal. Chambers modeled for her teachers how to use assessment processes to improve instruction by grade level. She created a system for monitoring progress, and she was excited that teachers were now

creating their own. Likewise, Bejarano designed her own templates for reporting

data to teachers on their students, and she taught her staff how to analyze and

interpret data. Bennington and Chambers met with teachers by grade level or

individually three times a year to review performance-based data.

As instructional leaders, they had specific knowledge about how to meet

the instructional needs of their diverse students.

Fehely reflected:

But I think my primary role has to be instruction and it has to be how it's
delivered to the students and it has to be so that it is differentiated. And it
also has to be that it meets all of the different children we have whether its
GATE [Gifted and Talented Education] children, whether it's the second
language learner or whether it's the under performing child, so it has to be
Instruction.

López agreed:

My role is to provide leadership, resources and opportunity for the staff to
become knowledgeable and skilled at meeting the needs of the culturally
and linguistically needs of the students so that they may be successful in
the core curriculum.

The participants expressed possessing the necessary knowledge to guide their

staff in program development and implementation. Bennington observed:

For me it [the principal's role as it relates to culturally diverse students]
was very different from promoting success for all students. I'm not sure
that most educators really truly understand the language, learning and
concept of schema of second language learners. I remember what most
surprised me was even those who held CLAD [Cross-cultural Language
Academic Development] credentials were extremely limited in terms of
their perceptions, ability to work with students, or in their understanding
of the unique complex web of integrated knowledge and language that
each child brought to the learning setting.

The participants required staff to become knowledgeable in English

Language Development and felt it was an important part of the core curriculum

in their schools. Bejarano, Bennington, and López provided professional

development informally to staff members to help them understand how to teach linguistically diverse students.

Whether or not they implemented a bilingual education program, all of the participants were cognizant of the relationship between instruction in the primary language and English language acquisition. They understood how to implement bilingual programs that would allow them to lead their schools more effectively:

> Chambers noted:
>
> It's not just the dual immersion program, but a well-run bilingual program. If the teachers are doing a good job and they have a rigorous curriculum and high standards and they assess regularly, the students will make very good progress and their parents will even say, they're very satisfied with the program. My child is all in English now. And some of our highest students are students who started in the bilingual program six years ago; they are the highest students in the English program. And so that's why I support it. Because I know, based on my experience and the results we're seeing-- that students who are English Language Learners tend to do better within a bilingual program if it's a well-structured program with high standards.

In terms of curriculum, López added that the core curriculum "must address the special needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse students." López knew that making curriculum available in the primary language was providing access to his Spanish-speaking students and that as the instructional leader, he made sure these materials were available to his school. Another participant shared that she had to keep reminding the district office to modify materials, or even order materials, for her second language learners. When most mainstream educators talk of the core curriculum, they are usually referring to an English language curriculum designed for native English speakers. These educators do not think of how curricular practices need to be modified to deliver

that core curriculum specifically for linguistically diverse students. Without this type of advocacy, the core curriculum remains unchanged, and instructional practices perpetuate "a sink or swim" approach for those students who need additional support and who in many cases, make up a large part of the student population in classrooms today.

As instructional leaders, the participants recognized that the curricular practice needed to meet the needs of the *entire* student population. They either advocated for or directly ensured that the necessary modifications were made to the curriculum and that equity in materials or delivery occurred. In particular, principals in schools with linguistically diverse students benefit from understanding how bilingual and effective English language programs work in order to provide that guidance to their staff.

Change Negotiator

Another common role for the participants was the principal as change negotiator. It is not surprising to open a book on school leadership and find the term "change agent" used to describe a principal's role. But while the participants were in fact change agents who led the process of change in their schools, the term "change negotiator" more accurately describes the process described by the participants in the dialogues. Whether the process was changing attitudes, restructuring programs, or developing a school vision, the participants first brought the staff to a common understanding of why change was needed. They did not initiate change in their schools by directive, but instead implemented courses of action in which others contributed to how change would be implemented. Many of the participants used inquiry as a

strategy to guide their teachers and staff members in analyzing the problem and discovering why change was needed. Lopez shared:

> What are the things that are successful? What are the things that need to be changed? Change is hard. You can see this needs to be done but, doing it and getting it done and getting people to buy into it and accept the changes is the hard part. So, you need to work with them [the teachers] and make sure that they feel very comfortable and empowered to make the change and they *too see the change*. You know people will make changes and they'll do what you want, but it isn't going to be successful or it's not going to be enduring because change takes a while and you have to be able to stick with it because you aren't going to see results.

He emphasized what he called "stick-to-it-ness" that kept everyone centered on his or her agreed-upon goals since the results usually do not appear immediately. "It [change] takes a long time because you have to do it little by little and sometimes people don't even see the change until it's happened." Escoto also mentioned, that when staff members wanted to move in a different direction, he requested information from them to understand what was driving their concern or desire to divert from the school plans. He stated that by not keeping the staff focused, "It's like a little ship that has no rudder. It's just going all over the place." Although the participants walked their staff through a process of building the rationale for change, as the leaders they maintained the focus.

Negotiating change was done "in small steps." Bennington stated she "planted seeds" of new ideas for improvement either individually or at grade level meetings. Then, teachers would take those ideas, think about how to make them work, and bring them up in their school committees. Similarly, Bejarano shared the responsibility for change with others and gave teachers information

that was disseminated through various channels of communication. Like

Bennington, she involved teachers in the change process:

> And in many instances whenever change was to be brought about, [sharing leadership] was exactly what was done. I gave the teachers, certain teachers that leadership role so that they could go and make the change or develop the change because change is difficult for the majority of people. I don't care what walk of life you're in. Change is just difficult. *I love change.* I thrive on change [said laughingly].

Bejarano underscored the building of trust with her staff to implement

change. Certainly the relationship school leaders had with staff members

determined to what degree they were successful in getting their staff to respond

to the need for change. In the literature, Krovetz (1999) claimed that fostering

resiliency in the school environment among the staff will support the

management of change, especially when teachers feel that principals care about

them and support them.

The participants were sensitive to their staff's emotions as they dealt with

the changes. Moreno counseled individual teachers who were having difficulty

accepting changes that affected them as a result of modifying the language arts

program. Fehely mentioned attending the literacy training in order to show that

she was learning too. Bennington not only admitted to being "scared" in dealing

with the issues of diversity with the staff as they discussed the demographic

changes in her school, but also provided empathy to her staff as they expressed

their own anger and frustrations.

By negotiating change for their schools, the participants were able to help

their school communities to see the need for change, design strategies for

solutions, and then implement the changes through shared decision-making.

Recognizing that change is often difficult, the principals supported their staff by offering moral support and resources.

Broker of Resources

Finally, many of the participants described their role in terms of providing resources to teachers, whether in the area of training, instructional materials, assistance in the classroom, or support from parents. The participants spoke about being the individual "who makes it happen." López shared that when teachers were experiencing difficulties in their classroom, he would ask," What's the issue you have? What's the problem? What's the concern? How can we make it work for you? You tell me what you need. I'll do everything I can to get it for you." The participants saw it as their role to help teachers and do whatever was necessary to support them. Bejarano helped teachers unpack boxes of instructional materials, inventory them, and order more. She advocated with the district for bilingual materials. Other participants provided help by recruiting parent volunteers for their classrooms or allocating time from instructional assistants. In short, the participants remained responsive to the needs of their teachers.

The participants also provided examples of seeking resources outside the school community--with the city government, private industry and the district office--to garner additional support for students and families. López and Escoto had worked extensively with outside agencies to bring health services to their schools. The participants wrote grants to extend the school day, and they offered summer school programs to focus on identified student needs. Fehely explained how she made it her personal goal to head a fundraising campaign to raise

money for chess and music programs after school. She also worked with staff and the surrounding community to send all the fifth graders to science camp. She explained this resource brokering in terms of advocacy:

> When I came here...everybody covered only one select group of children. But now we are all advocates for our kids. We are out there trying to find all kinds of resources and we'll write grants and do different kinds of things like that.

The "partnership" she had established with the business community continued to flourish over time, so she no longer had to take the lead, transferring the responsibility to parent committees.

Another way the participants supported their teachers was by providing relevant information. Escoto stated that his role was as "a filter of information," as he helped the staff interpret communications that came from the district office and the state. People expected him to set the tone and to provide clarity around the priorities for the school:

> You've got to develop yourself as that of a broker, a broker of resources.... They [the teachers] are going to be concerned about what kind of resources can you broker on their behalf. They are going to be concerned about what kinds of critical information they need about the communities that you serve. What kinds of information can you translate for them? Not in the linguistic sense, but in the sense of dynamics, economic, socioeconomic dynamics and how those factors shape and mold the communities that we're serving and how those things get played out as far as parent involvement, kids coming to schools and how they perceive themselves as students.

Escoto saw it as his responsibility to educate the staff on what is happening in the community. As many of the other participants reinforced in other parts of the dialogues, understanding the community in their context will certainly help the school staff comprehend how to support them in helping their children.

By brokering resources, the participants were not only able to help school members do their jobs, but also were able to respond to existing inequalities of resources in their schools. Even though only one participant used the word "advocate" in the dialogues, promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations relies heavily on educators being advocates, not just for students, but also for the teachers who serve them.

In summary, while principals assume a number of roles, the most pronounced roles the data revealed for working with diverse student populations were the principal as instructional leader, change negotiator, and broker of resources. The next section discusses how in these roles, participants manifested key values and beliefs.

Values, Attitudes and Beliefs

The themes are organized as follows: (1) Students are the Focus with the subthemes of Caring and Empathy and Sincerity, (2) Committed to Equity, (3) Diversity as an Asset, and (4) Dealing with Racism.

Students are the Focus

A focus on students was a resounding theme with all of the participants, with subthemes emerging on caring and, empathy and sincerity. Bejarano claimed that her staff knew any concern or request raised at her school would be responded with "Is it good for children? How is it going to help them? Is it going to help them succeed? They knew that of me." She had instilled the idea that all decisions must reflect the needs of the children--"their education, their well being, their safety." Participants stated that they consistently visited

classrooms. Two participants, Escoto and Fehely, described spending time with students in and outside the classroom. Escoto went to classrooms to ask students what they were learning. He demonstrated that instruction should be focused on students needs,

> And this is one of the rituals that I want teachers to internalize. I want students to internalize. That's one of the things that we value, that's an expectation and it's not an assumption that whatever we're teaching and communicating with students that they really understand what is it that we're learning.

Fehely asserted, "I also like to get to know the kids because they tell me an awful lot and I think that if I have a personal relationship as the principal with children, it's more powerful." She used her yard supervision time to talk to them as well as to teach them new vocabulary or to discuss what was going on in the world.

Caring.

Prevalent in the study was a strong ethic of care for the children and the school community. Caring for children in schools fosters resiliency. The bond between students and teachers or principals cultivates motivation to do well in school (Benard, 1995; Krovetz, 1999).

There was evidence that tending to the students' most basic needs would prepare them for learning and communicate that they could trust their teachers and principals. Caring was demonstrated in a number of ways. Fehely told me passionately that she believed in her students and cared about each one of the children. She worked with families to meet individual needs. Caring for students

was shown when she and López discussed changing the image of their schools.
Bejarano described:

> We help and work with those children that need the extra attention. More
> than half of the children are in some kind of a situation where they're
> living with relatives or they're, we have a lot of homeless, I mean different
> situations that upset a child emotionally. And if you cannot have a healthy
> child emotionally, they're not, I don't care what you do, they're not going
> to learn.

Bejarano added that teachers brought in clothes for homeless children. She

and some of the other participants counseled distressed children in their offices

and provided community resources for families.

The dialogues with Escoto were especially revealing on this topic. He

declared that his most important role was to help change the staff's "attitudes

and perceptions" towards the students they were serving. Escoto had his

teachers take an ethical view of discipline and its relationship to academic

performance. Upon assignment to his school, he saw students' behavior

problems were being interpreted "as character issues rather than academic

issues." In one story, he observed that a number of students were being referred

to the office every morning for disciplinary reasons. He saw a correlation

between students' misbehavior and the academic tasks that were being

demanded in the classroom. Escoto continued,

> ...that began the process of getting staff members to understand or at least
> attempting to understand how children cope with situations that can be
> very stressful. They were in situations where they had a choice. I [the
> student] could either be humiliated you know or rescue myself by doing
> something really off the wall. And the choices were being made by these
> students that they would rather be perceived as someone defiant or even
> disrespectful than be perceived as a non-reader or a student that for
> whatever reasons was unable complete the homework because they didn't
> understand, or the dynamics at home were such that they weren't able to
> complete those tasks.

It was evident that the participants showed a great deal of concern for students as individuals, often acting as comforters, listeners, disciplinarians or, as described above, as resource brokers. They also worked with teachers to develop mutual concern not only for students' learning, but also for their emotional readiness to learn. As one participant exclaimed, "We find out if they've eaten and if they haven't, we feed them breakfast and then we teach them math!"

Empathy and Sincerity.

Another aspect to exercising a care ethic in schools was the ability for staff to be empathetic. The participants commented frequently on the need for educators to have empathy, not sympathy, for students. Helping staff members to understand how the dynamics from students' home lives can impact learning was emphasized, especially as related to poverty. Rather than reacting to situations from a perspective of hopelessness, educators must strive to understand what students may be experiencing. The participants clearly distinguished empathy from sympathy, and stressed that sympathy was not productive.

Five participants also articulated the need for educators to be sincere with both children and their parents. This goal was reinforced when the principals discussed the qualifications they sought when hiring teachers and also in their recommendations to other principals. Bejarano said:

> I see it as dealing with humanity. It's just being human. It's just treating someone else like you want to be treated.... You can be saying this with your mouth and your body is saying something totally different so you need to make sure that your body language is in step with what you are saying. Because the children will pick it up (snaps fingers) like that. They

[the students] know if you are lying or not. You need to be sincere with them. You need to be sincere.

Having a sincere adult in your life was portrayed as a significant factor in building resiliency. Escoto noted:

Traditionally that used to be a family member, not any more. Now it is somebody in the community. More than likely it's in a school setting. It could be a school counselor, it could be a principal, it could be a custodian, it could be a yard duty person, but usually it's a teacher. And if you stop and think of who the significant adults were in your life aside from family members, the significant adult who communicated respect and empathy and sincerity for you, I've got to believe that you had a personal connection with that individual for those reasons.

The participants strongly believed that all students, regardless of circumstance or cultural background, have the right to be educated, and they felt it was their responsibility to ensure that students were treated with respect and dignity. In general, teachers and administrators will find it difficult to make connections with students and their parents until trust is established, and sincerity was seen as the means for establishing that trust.

Committed to Equity

The participants' care and advocacy for their students were impelled by a vision for equity. As leaders of schools with large culturally and linguistically diverse populations, it was essential for them to reflect upon their concept of equity. The participants were asked how they defined and practiced equity and whether they felt school systems did a good job of promoting equity for students. All of the participants valued equity as a goal and a core value of their work, and all but one of them defined equity as "leveling the playing field." López even defined success as achieving equity. Chambers remarked:

Equity is when students truly do have equal opportunity and equal access to higher education and the job market. So when they leave school, you've

prepared them to be on an equal footing with their peers. Just by saying it's all equal and not providing the necessary interventions and enrichment, you're actually neglecting them [the students]. You're ignoring the reality that middle class kids tend to be exposed to a lot of different experiences where our kids often don't get out of the neighborhood they live in.

Many of the participants acknowledged that some educators interpret equity as meaning equality. By not recognizing this distinction, these educators do not provide the additional services and support that some students require. They dismiss those needs by declaring that equal treatment is equity. But professing equality in education without understanding how to deliver truly equitable solutions is to ignore students' realities.

Day defined equity as providing students with the necessary materials they will need to succeed with the core curriculum, noting that some educators, in reality do not provide true access to the core curriculum *until* they learn English, "that's not equity." He reflected:

> Well to me when you talk about equal opportunity, it isn't about equal opportunity *today*. It's about equal opportunity at graduation. It's about equal opportunity when you are 25 years old. It's equal opportunity at 30 years old. What do I need to do with them today, tomorrow, when they're 13, 14, 15, 16 years old so they have that same opportunity at graduation day as the kid who's a native English speaker. They do not have to work to support their family, those things. It's not about what is equal today. Those kids need more than that kid so they can have equal opportunity at the outcome.

Here, he defines equity as a process for achieving equality.

Interestingly, Bennington stated in her first dialogue that she did not use the words *equity* and *diversity*, and that she had not used these terms with the staff at her school. Despite her resistance to these words, a lot of the work at her

school focused on improving achievement for underperforming students. When she reflected on her final review of the transcription, she wrote:

> Thirteen years ago, I hated the words because the connotations they called up for me were unhappiness and unfairness (pause)... I didn't like those words and I also thought that people, certain people on my staff, had an aversion to them. My staff was filled with mixed emotions and attitudes from a broad range of experiences...outgrowths of changing demographics, court-ordered desegregation, guilt over biases, lack of exposure to different cultures, and limited teaching/academic successes with English-language learners. You can't be successful at authentic school transformation with this baggage.

She explained that addressing issues circumspectly rather than head on allowed her teachers to feel more successful accommodating "their new learners," thus becoming learners themselves as they reshaped their attitudes.

Thus, while much of the rhetoric in education focuses on closing the achievement gap, some educators shy away from including issues of equity and discrimination in the discourse on how to improve the education of underperforming students. They may hesitate to use words like *diversity* and *equity* because they (or the people that they want to influence) associate the words with feelings of guilt or defensiveness, as described in Johnson (2001) and Olsen et al (1994). For some educators, focusing on improving academics is separate from diversity issues.

Four of the participants were asked if school systems did a good job of promoting equity. In general, they felt that the school systems did not. López noted,

> I think they promote it. But I don't think that people really buy into it, what it is. And there are uh, people, principals and so administrators, school board members what have you, community people, teachers they don't see that *there are* some kids who may need more resources.

For Bejarano, the lack of equity was reflected in the attitudes that others had towards diverse students. She explained that equity was not promoted even in the administrative ranks. And Chambers tied equity to the availability of resources:

> If you are talking about equity in terms of achievement and making sure that students have equal access to advanced courses in high school as well as programs like GATE [Gifted and Talented Education] and quality instruction, across the board I would say no. Creating equity has a lot to do with demographics. First of all, it depends on where a lot of minority students live. They tend to live in lower income areas and those schools and school districts tend to get teachers who are less well qualified. There are a lot of low-income school districts that have many teachers who are on emergency [credentials] or other waivers. And when you have bilingual programs, it makes it even more difficult to staff. Sometimes you start to get teachers with less experience or those who lack second language skills. So it's not through design, at least at the school level, but students often don't receive equitable treatment.

Chambers elaborated that often the source of the problem is due to the lack of resources provided by the government. She claimed that it is "definitely neglect" at the state and national level since an insufficient amount of resources are provided and there is no incentive to encourage people to apply for teaching positions in those areas. The expectation is "to improve on your own."

One participant did not know whether school systems did a good job of promoting equity, and stated that with state and federal mandates "the intention is to do a good job and I think you have to have compliance in order to make people at least know you're there." She praised the work of her district since it provided professional development to her on working with culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. She had recently learned that other districts were still lacking in this support.

Most of the participants held a belief system based on equity and saw their role as a provider of opportunity for their students. This was evident in their pursuit of resources and implementation of programs to provide students with equal access, and yet there existed a feeling of frustration with the institutional bureaucracies that did not help them. There was a lack of trust in school systems, but this did not discourage the participants from trying to work with the system.

Diversity as an Asset

All of the participants valued diversity as an asset. In their explanations of success, they viewed students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds as strengths that could become sources for instilling positive self-concept and, more generally, resources for learning. At the last group dialogue, the participants suggested that educators continue to perceive culturally and linguistically diverse students as disadvantaged--as if "something is missing." The deficit model in education has been noted in the literature as a major problem in schooling culturally and linguistically diverse youth. These perceptions, stereotypes and attitudes persist in schools, and they are rarely addressed in teacher preparation programs or in professional development activities with staff members.

The participants felt they modeled the value of diversity in a number of ways. Mostly, it was shown in how they included language and culture in their schools as a means for instruction and enrichment. Fehely shared that her Vietnamese students were learning to speak Spanish on the playground and that she constantly expressed the value of learning another language. The principals

felt that recognition of diversity was an important value to transmit to students. They also showed their commitment to diversity in their interactions with staff and parents by combating detrimental attitudes. Bejarano was representative of what several of the participants shared:

> ... what I tell teachers and even parents, if you take the child with all the strengths that they bring to the school and you build on those strengths, you're going to have successful children because you are accepting them. You're accepting who they are, you are accepting where they come from and you're helping them to build on that.

Cultural awareness was a quality that some of the participants identified stemming from their own experiences and backgrounds, but all of the participants explained that it could also be learned. Chambers shared that principals who demonstrate an interest in learning the language of the students should also learn about the culture. Bejarano felt that educators should learn more about the cultural norms and values present in the community they serve since it models for others that adopting what is perceived as "minority" culture is acceptable and expected.

López commented, "You can learn and be taught cultural differences.... you may feel uncomfortable about it, but you are coming in, you have to accept that. I have made many mistakes myself in terms of culture." He described his experiences as principal of a school with a large Vietnamese community. He shared that he usually hugged people when he greeted them and realized later that this was not always appropriate in the Vietnamese culture. He adapted his cultural orientation to learn about the Vietnamese language and their cultural patterns. More examples of how the participants illustrated the value of diversity will be discussed in Research Question number three, page 123.

Dealing with Racism

Conversations around concepts of diversity and equity included facing the harsh realities of racist attitudes in schools. The participants were asked how they dealt with subtle and not-so-subtle acts of racism. Not-so-subtle acts were defined as overt behaviors that were immediately recognized as discriminatory and come from strong negative biases towards people of color, language, gender or socioeconomic class. The "subtle" acts were covert and not as easily recognized because they were institutionalized practices that perpetuated inequity in the school. They showed up in the achievement gap (as described in the first chapter of this study) or in the "hidden curriculum" as portrayed by the some of the attitudes held by teachers. The not-so-subtle acts were easier for the participants to discuss than the subtle ones. The participants dealt with racism and discriminatory actions by teaching about them and by addressing them individually with students and adults when specific incidents occurred.

The participants dealt with overt acts of racism, such as name calling between children, directly with the students by talking to them and teaching them. Many of those conversations were about respect and recognizing that words can be hurtful. Fehely stressed, "…that's not something we tolerate [referring to teachers who may have negative attitudes towards diverse students] and something we don't tolerate on the playground and so the children are every respectful." She shared a story about a parent who "accused [her] of being a peacemaker." A biracial Black student was upset because another student had told him, "You're Black." Apparently, the student was experiencing conflict around his biracial White and Black identity. The upset parents came to see her.

Fehely took it upon herself to talk with the parents and let them know that there was nothing wrong with what the student had said. She told the parents, "You know what I would have said? I would have said, 'I am Black and I am beautiful and I love myself (as she kisses her own hand).' The parents responded that when they were young children themselves, that calling children Black was negative. Fehely explained to them that children commenting on the differences between children is not wrong Affirming one's identity is important especially for young children who may be having difficulty trying to figure out whether their "difference" is good or bad. She stated that she was trying to teach a different value. For Fehely and others in the study, students should be proud of who they are, and differences should be seen as positive, not negative, attributes.

Chambers also took these matters seriously:

> But really you have to listen carefully to the kind of things that are said and the comments that are made and you have to be ready to say something right away and talk about how it is not acceptable for that kind of behavior. And I will give kids a warning if they do it again, I will suspend them. And we talk about why. It's not acceptable to call names and how would you feel if you were called these names and do you actually know what that name means and how it actually makes that person feel?

She explained that because the majority of her students were Latino, "they need to know how to face racism" when they begin to go out of their community. All of the participants took a zero tolerance approach to overt discriminatory behaviors from students.

Participants also indicated that they had to deal with racist comments by staff members. López responded,

> The not so subtle racists, you address with the person by bringing those things up. I know you could let those things go and you, I like to talk to

them in private. I don't want to embarrass them or put them on the spot [be] cause that isn't going to be productive.

As an example, López recounted the story of a teacher who refused to complete her certification requirements for teaching in a Vietnamese bilingual classroom. She told him that she took the assignment because she didn't want to work with Mexican kids. She told him," they weren't dedicated."

> So I said, 'I don't think you belong at this school. And you went into this thing for the wrong reasons,' and she left. You address them. You don't let them slide. I addressed it in a nice way and privately. And so you address those.

Day, the only secondary level administrator in the study, shared how some of his teachers reacted to data he was sharing at a staff meeting by claiming that Latino parents didn't care about education and that "failure was accepted in that culture." He went on,

> And that night and I don't know if I've ever been as angry with myself as I was that night. Because I *let them* get away with that. And the next morning, [my assistant principal] and I had a long talk because she didn't say anything either. And we said never again. We're going to call them on that shit. You say that stuff; you're getting called on it. At a minimum, I'm going to say, I don't agree with that. And as a principal I need to say, 'and that won't be tolerated in these meetings' As a person, I have to say, 'I don't agree.' As a leader, that's unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. But it's racism, blatant racism.

Day was not prepared to deal with such an outburst of hostility from some of his staff members. There were teachers that did not agree with some of these statements, but they remained silent. These conversations are difficult for school administrators, and principals need support in how to facilitate difficult discussions so they are productive, not destructive. But neither is silence acceptable. Ignoring that these attitudes permeate the schools is

counterproductive, and left unchecked, they will eventually affect the school environment in insidious ways.

Interestingly, most of the participants did not describe how they dealt with subtle acts of racism. López thought it was important to keep data so that educators could continue to look at the problems related to equity, such as the achievement gap or even the hiring practices of culturally and linguistically diverse school administrators. Two participants, Bejarano and Fehely, talked to teachers if they noticed any biased patterns that targeted certain students either for discipline or for leadership roles.

Fehely, however, did describe a couple of situations that occurred at her school as subtle acts of discrimination. When Fehely started working at her school, she observed that many of the practices there served the White middle class population exclusively. Some teachers were assigned the most successful students. Consequently, she reorganized the grouping of the students, and many teachers who were resistant to this change ended up leaving the school that first year. She claimed that all the teachers who currently work at her school now understand that they are responsible for reaching all children.

Another situation Fehely changed dramatically was parent involvement. Five years ago, White parents mostly controlled the parent leadership and there had been very little effort to recruit culturally diverse parents. When she spoke with the PTA leadership regarding her concern that the PTA needed to represent the entire student population, she was told that many parents "didn't speak English." Fehely spoke individually to each of the parent leaders about changing the dynamics of the school and informed them that she would help. She found a

bilingual parent who involved more Spanish-speaking parents and eventually became a PTA leader. Parents representing African American and Vietnamese backgrounds were also sought. As a result, the school's parent leadership became more integrated, with a diverse group of parents supporting the school's activities and leading fundraising activities. These two examples reveal how one leader identified covert acts of discrimination and successfully effected changes in her school.

Conversely, most of the participants did not address subtle acts of racism or discrimination. After careful analysis of the transcriptions, however, I found that most of the participants faced real challenges in dealing with negative attitudes from teachers or parent communities toward culturally diverse populations. The participants may not describe these attitudes as subtle acts of racism per se, but nonetheless, they did work on those "attitudes" they found to be barriers to helping students succeed. These barriers were usually substantiated in teachers' perceptions of the students' capabilities. Blaming students or their parents for their lack of school success was often a smoke screen for the real issues around their own lack of security and self-confidence in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. López said his teachers felt uncomfortable. Bennington asserted that her staff cared about the children, but felt insecure about their ability to be successful teachers. Both she and Bejarano worked on the attitudes *before* focusing on raising student achievement. Escoto constantly reminded his staff that while they had no control over the circumstances affecting their students' lives at home, they could change the circumstances by which they educate. Whether the participants consciously

recognized that these prevalent attitudes had a foundation in racism, they knew these feelings presented obstacles for their commitment to equity.

Instead, the participants dealt with these attitudes by focusing their conversations with staff on student success. Bennington admitted she was not able to address those attitudes head on. She commented that if she had started the change process with an agenda of diversity, the door would have been closed and she wouldn't have been able to move forward:

> Another thing was, there was a lot of guilt over bias. If you were a really good human being and my staff was filled with good human beings, that guilt about the biases that we all kind of have, have to be dealt with. And then there was stratification based on ethnicity too. And that brings up guilt and uncomfortableness. And the lack of experience with groups of other ethnicities or unpleasant experiences, one or the other, lack or unpleasant were all things that were not unifiers.

She admitted lacking the tools to deal with some of the crosscultural conflicts and questions raised by her staff in regarding the changing community at her school. She supplied professional development once teachers saw a need for it.

A few of the participants provided training and professional literature to help move educators toward accepting cultural differences, but both López and Escoto specifically stated that the passion for working to overcome the challenges presented by a diverse population was not something the principal could transmit to others. The majority of the participants tried to hire qualified teachers that they thought already accepted the community. If people were unwilling to move in the new direction of the school then, as Escoto put it, "they should have the opportunity to move on."

At the last group dialogue, I explained that the findings revealed that all of them had worked to change attitudes and perceptions with their school

communities, and I wanted to know what to call those attitudes. One of the participants responded, "It's racism." While the others agreed non-verbally, it was not a word that most of them used to name the problem during the individual dialogues. It was not until the final group dialogue that the participants seemed more comfortable discussing racism openly. Two of them stated that they were risk-takers by addressing racism head on, either with their staffs or with individuals at their schools. Others never used the words racism or discrimination in their dealings with staff members, but they thought that it was racism.

In summary, most participants saw the principal's role not as a leader exercising authoritative power, but rather as a leader imbued with responsibility. Through shared leadership, principals share this responsibility in order to execute the academic program and to involve the staff as partners in change. Teachers *must* feel that they are active members of the change process. The participants also agreed that they were primarily instructional leaders and felt strongly that they must hire committed teachers willing to work with the school's community. Their care for children led them to establish environments that dealt with children empathetically and sincerely, environments where diversity was viewed as an asset. They also addressed overt and subtle racist or discriminatory attitudes with students, parents and staff. Although most of the participants did not initially discuss racism as the root of the negative attitudes in their schools, they eventually recognized it as such.

Research Question #3: Practicing an Intercultural Orientation

To what extent do principals practice aspects of Cummins' (1989) intercultural orientation in promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students?

As described in Chapter 1, Cummins (1989) suggested that the failure of culturally and linguistically diverse students at school can be attributed to the ways in which power is manifested in the interactions between educators and students. The four dimensions defined in Cummins' framework are (1) linguistic and cultural incorporation, (2) community participation, (3) pedagogy, and (4) assessment. In the following sections, the findings are organized by each dimension, renaming them to reflect more accurately the generative themes that emerged: (1) Language and Culture: An Additive Approach, (2) Supporting Parent Involvement (3) Transformative Leadership, and (4) Fair and Relevant Accountability.

Language and Culture: An Additive Approach

By incorporating language and culture into their school, educators give the students' backgrounds a higher status, which exemplifies power and equal importance. The participants valued diversity and accepted their communities with respect and sincerity. Whether the participants themselves came from the same cultural or linguistic backgrounds as their communities, they recognized that the language of the students' homes was a valuable and necessary tool for teaching students and engaging their families in a collaborative relationship.

Five of the seven participants implemented bilingual education programs at their schools, but all participants supported bilingualism. Educating culturally diverse students in their home or primary language is a key to their school success. At the same time, participants also recognized that students must learn English to do well academically in the long run. Many underscored that students' academic foundation in their home languages provided access to the curriculum while developing English skills. Despite legislated changes and policies regarding the use of the home language in schools with initiatives like Proposition 227, the participants implemented bilingual programs following state requirements. López responded to the demands of the state's policies on improving test scores by "not compromising the bilingual program."

> We strongly believe that the kids need a strong foundation in their primary language in order to be successful in the long run. I mean you could teach them English and they can pass that test but we're looking for sustained learning and so, but yet we held our feet to the fire to meet our API [Academic Performance Index] points.

Chambers affirmed:

> Instead of looking at the language as a deficit, say, 'Look at what they come with. Look at the all the vocabulary they have and the experience they've had in that language and to use that.' That's why I feel so strongly about Bilingual Education. You're cutting off one of your resources if you decide to do English Only. It can be done. I don't feel it is as successful as the bilingual program and it can be successful for some students, but you're really cutting yourself short and there is no reason for that.

Another way that the participants incorporated the language and culture of the students' backgrounds into their schools was by providing bilingual staff in the office. This was important so that parents felt welcome and had access to school information. For Bennington, who is not bilingual, having the bilingual resource teacher's office next to her own office made her more accessible to

parents. It also made a statement about the status of this resource to the school. At assemblies, she always prepared a bilingual script to welcome parents, and she asked her Student Council members to do announcements in the two languages on the public announcement system. She reminded them that their constituency was more than monolingual English speaking students and informed me, "And that was what I was trying to teach them was to have that respect."

All the participants sent home communications in two languages, Spanish and English. The participants who were not bilingual indicated that they provided translators at school parent functions. When parents come into the school environment and are addressed in their home language or are provided written communications in both languages, they are apt to feel more welcome. By incorporating the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the students into the school environment, principals can access the community as partners.

Supporting Parent Involvement

School systems want parent participation, and the extent to which educators reach out to culturally diverse parents varies depending on the quality of the interactions between the school staff and the community. Educators can either take a firm conventional approach, excluding and further alienating diverse parents, or they can be innovative and imaginative in their outreach.

All the participants discussed the value of including the parents of diverse students in the educational process. As noted above, principals expected their teachers to work with the students' families. Bennington, López and Fehely

highlighted community participation in their definitions of school success. The principals agreed that parents care about their children's education, that they want to be involved, but that sometimes the ways in which traditional school settings pose limitations for them, especially when linguistic differences are perceived as a major obstacle. Consequently, educators may interpret an absence of involvement as parents being uncaring or not interested in school matters. Escoto and I discussed the possibility that the lack of parent involvement may be due to cultural differences. He responded,

> I think it's more of how people cope with a system that is either closed to them...not welcoming... That is not reaching out and is not asking for any kind of partnership So I think it has more to do, not what parents bring to this country, this neighborhood, this community with power, experiences and perceptions of what it was like somewhere else. I think it's more of what we as a system perceive newcomers, perceive people whose language is not English. Part of it has to do with some political dynamics that the system's perceptions of these families are that they're not empowered. So there is so much energy and resources that we have and there is very little to justify spending resources on these families, these communities. So I think that it is a dynamic that exists.

Fehely reminded me that limited parent participation is not always due to linguistic or cultural differences. Some parents have other circumstances that might prevent them from feeling they are welcome. She explained:

> We have a lot of gang people here that are coming out of the prisons. We have a 'Welcome Wagon', it's what we call it, and on the first two days of school they welcome parents. The PTA does that for me because we want those parents to know that, ' we don't care about your past. We just want you to work with us and that we invite you in," and so it makes a difference. Because their experiences in school may have not been positive and their attitude therefore is tainted, they're less likely to want to work with you or the classroom teacher. And if you were to say, 'your child is not meeting standards,' they might back off. But you let them know that you want them there and they can learn with us.

Participants mentioned that some parents have had negative experiences with education, either as a parent or as students themselves. "You have to work with them because they have not seen the success of education," López stated. Some parents felt powerless and did not know how to support their child or connect with the school. Hence, school leaders found a variety of ways to engage parents by establishing a trusting relationship that was inclusive in nature. Some participants (Bejarano, Chambers, López, Fehely) offered evening classes in English as a Second Language. All of them provided parent education workshops so parents could learn how to support their children with literacy development or math. Fehely proudly shared that Spanish-speaking parents had moved from "hanging out by the door" to volunteering in classrooms and getting jobs. She declared, "Those parents have become our leaders." She had very active parents, both English and Spanish-speaking, who volunteered in classrooms, tutored students, organized fundraisers and coordinated events such as welcoming new parents to the school. Bennington made sure that she allocated money in her school budget for translation and transportation so that parents could attend school events.

The issue of status also needs to be considered among parent groups. Under Fehely's direction, the PTA reconstituted their membership to reflect a more diverse representation. Bennington also noted that the English proficient parents who were the most vocal and active in her school decided they wanted to recruit more Spanish-speaking parents as leaders. But while the objective was a worthy and a proactive one, the English-speaking parents didn't use interpreters nor adjust the way they conducted meetings to make the meetings more

meaningful. Bennington mentored the parents so the Spanish-speaking parents' involvement could be more than a symbolic gesture.

Some of the participants communicated high expectations and high hopes for the future to students by telling them they could go to college. Furthermore, Bennington, Chambers and López supported parents in envisioning this as a promising option in their children's lives. By constantly clarifying the value of education with them, they felt they could indeed suggest to parents that higher education was a viable goal for their children. López outlines:

> Well, one of the things that as a principal that I try to do is to have parent buy in to that their kids can be successful. That's number one...those parents who really believed in their kids and really want their kids to be successful and provide the support and the resources for them to be successful *will be successful*. You know, there is not doubt about it. I see it all the time.... They don't necessarily have to be socioeconomic, better off. That always helps. But even those who don't. So you have to have parents that really understand what it's going to take on their part to have their kids be successful in school, retain the level of going to college or whatever they may want to do and so, that's number one.

López told the following true story to parents to show them how they could play a key role in their children's success.

> There was this kid who got this award who was a migrant student and he got this scholarship. And he had been accepted into Stanford and his dream was to be a doctor. So he's going to Stanford and his mother came up [to the microphone] when he was honored and they asked her, 'do you wanna say a few words' so, she said yes. So, she took the mike. She says, 'I never went to school. I never went to any school. So I don't know how to read and write in Spanish, but the only thing I knew, I knew how to love *my son*. And when he was at the table working, I was there. I didn't help him, but I was there. I wouldn't go to bed until he was done.'

López then stressed to parents that they could provide support "in simple ways, but powerful ways," by "being there." He also stated that although the mother said she did not know how to read or write, "she had a lot of knowledge and

wisdom." This story illustrates several points. First, parent participation was valued in all forms. For this parent, the lack of literacy did not keep her from demonstrating love and concern for her child's education. Second, López did not say to his parents that they had to learn English in order to assist their children. Because he respected the community and did not view language and cultural differences as barriers to success, he affirmed that they have much to contribute. Finally, the fact that López told this story to parents is an excellent example of building school culture. As discussed above, the principal symbolically reinforces what is valued in a school by his actions and behaviors. López believed his students *could be* successful and had high regard for parent participation. By telling this story, he communicated those values.

Some of the participants highlighted that parents noticed how educators behaved towards them, so they were especially conscious of their own behavior towards parents. Bejarano told me that she always acknowledged her parents when she saw them.

> When parents come into your office and they want to talk to you and they know you're in there and you can hear them. You can either sit there and ignore them and they get that feeling that they're being ignored or you can come out and say hello and may I help you? 'Or I'm busy', or 'lets make an appointment.' At least acknowledge them. That's very key. They're going to respect you more for that because sometimes the parent will come once and if you don't acknowledge them, that's the impression they go away with. You have to be very sensitized to that and our Hispanic families, you have to acknowledge them. They will sit and they will watch and if you say, 'Hello Mrs. Smith' and you don't say, 'Hello Sra. Rodríguez' that's going to come back and bite you. You know people are very in tune with that.

Language differences do not have to limit relationships between parents and the school leader. Bennington, who is monolingual, tried to speak to parents

in Spanish whenever she could. She greeted parents in Spanish during public school functions. She suggested, "Even if you know they don't speak the language, look at them...." López offered this advice:

> You go over there and say hello and greet them. You know, tell them welcome. Speak to them in English but they can see it in your face. They can see it in your body language. You approach them. And you say 'I'm the new principal and I don't speak Spanish and I'm here to help you in any way I can.'. And they know. They can see it in you face, in your gestures, your approach that you're genuine. Be genuine.

In summary, the participants accommodated cultural and linguistic differences by creatively involving parents in non-threatening ways. They promoted active parent involvement as a two-way process. It was difficult to determine, due to limitations in time, to what degree parents truly engaged as equal partners in decision-making other than through the usual governance parent committees such as the School English Learner Advisory Committee (SELAC) and School Site Council (SSC). Still, the participants sought parents as partners and valued their involvement.

Transformative Leadership

In Cummins' (1996) pedagogy dimension, students are active participants *in* their education and not simply recipients *of* their education. Unlike traditional methods where teachers provide a skills-oriented model of instruction, this pedagogy suggests that students must be engaged in critical thinking and experiential learning. There was not enough time to fully explore this topic in the dialogues to determine to what extent principals promoted a transformative pedagogy.

In transformative pedagogical practices, students contribute to their learning by having a voice as important stakeholders. Two participants described students having opportunities to discuss issues of social justice during social studies in the upper grades. Three of the participants reported that they promoted classroom instruction that educates students to be problem solvers and critical thinkers.

> And giving them a structured, direct-instruction delivery of facts and content each day in their classroom and then turning them loose at the end of the day, uh-uh [no] we have to build thinkers and you have to have thinkers who have dreams for the future. So you have to do a lot of work. Not just give them instruction in the classroom [be] cause their choices are even harder.

Bejarano, Bennington and Fehely felt that children need to develop the necessary skills to articulate their ideas and advocate for themselves as a means for "survival." Fehely's fifth grade students had written her letters over the summer asking her to provide a computer lab. She exclaimed, "They convinced me that it was important enough that I consider it." She established a lab using donated computers, and teachers were able to bring in classes to do writing and research. Her philosophy around student voice and empowerment was as follows:

> And I want children, and it's all right to think out of the box, but I want them to learn the process so that they are not left out and they're not just people that you look out and ignore. You want them to be able to express their ideas and to work on ways to get it around.

More broadly, however, the participants did practice transformative pedagogy in the form of leadership. Escoto's understanding of meaningful pedagogy for the student population at his school meant redefining the tasks students were being asked to do and how they related to their lives. A powerful

example of this was a change his school made with respect to homework. Many

of the teachers had complained about students not completing homework and

parents not assisting their children with homework. Escoto asked his staff during

a meeting whether homework had been significant in their learning as students

or whether it had been something else. His staff had a lengthy discussion and

then realized that learning "was really based on the interaction between the

student and the teacher during the classroom day." So the staff brainstormed

ways to enhance the dynamics at home by making the homework assignments

ones in which parents could actually become involved, like writing about

grandparents. The objective was to maintain family engagement in the

educational process as much as possible, thus fostering resilient children as well.

As Escoto stressed:

> There is no opportunity that cannot be seized by a parent. There just isn't.
> We really need to change that paradigm.... And it goes back to what I said
> earlier that despite the circumstances that children come to school with,
> despite their parents' economic circumstances, despite their parents'
> educational circumstances, we can and should change the circumstances
> by which we teach. In terms of *homework*, it needs to be, we don't want to
> do away with homework. [We] just want to change the kinds of activities
> and the kinds of dynamics that we believe, that *I* believe, would be
> generated as a result of those opportunities. I can't think of a parent, I
> can't think of one parent who would not feel (pause) some degree of
> (pause) joy when their child expresses to them that they want to know
> something about their family. They want to know something about them.
> They want to know something about their mom and dad, their other
> family members; that they want to know something about their culture;
> that they want to know something about their life experience. And to tie
> that into with our charge of creating students that are literate, that have
> computational skills, that are critical thinkers, life-long learners, it all fits.
> But I think we need to look at different kinds of paradigms.

This was a powerful example of how a school, under the principal's leadership,

began to change educational traditions that are believed to be good for children's

learning, but in fact need to be re-evaluated in terms of fairness, relevancy and impact.

The dialogues did not go into depth regarding specific pedagogical practices used in classroom that provided students with opportunities for transformative reflection. But the statements from the participants on other topics alluded to an underlying belief that transforming how students and parent communities view themselves and their sense of power was important. They demonstrated being strong instructional leaders providing direction to curricular issues. Nevertheless, the dialogues had insufficient information to determine to what extent the participants initiated or aggressively promoted pedagogy that addressed issues of social justice and self-empowerment in the curriculum with the teaching staff.

Fair and Relevant Accountability

Finally, Cummins (1989) argues that educators must advocate for relevant and appropriate assessment policies, ones that accurately reflect students' potential for learning rather than ones that continue to view students as failures or worse, misdiagnose their academic needs due to linguistic or cultural issues. Cummins (1989) calls this dimension "assessment," but I have added the word "accountability" to encompass the current trend in accountability.

School administrators and teachers who understand how to use assessment appropriately for culturally and linguistically diverse students know that cultural biases in standardized tests normed for English proficient populations affect test results. Additionally, students learning English must have

academic and language assessments done in their primary languages in order to

have a comprehensive evaluation of their academic needs. López stated that

assessments for bilingual students should be administered in two languages. The

goals and objectives are the same.

> How we get there might be a different path for reaching the kids. Some
> tests are going to be used for identifying kids for Special Ed and then
> that's wrong because that assessment is in English type of thing and these
> kids read totally in Spanish.

Many students have been misdiagnosed as having learning disabilities

due to the fact that they were not proficient enough in English to do well on

standardized tests administered in English. This continues to be a systemic

problem as many educators neglect to do assessments given in students' primary

languages. Many of the participants required classroom teachers to bring

primary language information, such as the School Study Team (SST) process, to

meetings where individual students were being discussed.

The advocacy for fair assessment extended to raising the status of primary

language tests. All of the participants who provided bilingual programs said

their staff used primary language assessment data, such as the Spanish

Assessment of Basic Education (SABE), to assess students' academic performance

and evaluate the effectiveness of their bilingual programs. SABE is a state-

mandated standardized test administered to Spanish-speaking students who are

identified as English Learners. Bennington, Bejarano and Chambers related that

the teachers at their schools knew that test results in the home language were

useful in making predications about how well the students would do in English.

For example, Bejarano used SABE test scores to confirm students' academic

potential. She told the English Only teachers, "'Look at how smart they are. Look at where they scored on the SABE in their primary language. This is where they are reading." At Bennington's school, teachers celebrated high SABE test scores of the students in the bilingual classroom.

In a broader context, the participants looked at assessment and accountability measures from a non-mainstream perspective because test scores for students identified as English Learners were more than likely going to fall below state or district criteria used to classify them as proficient in English. When I posed the question to Bejarano about how her school looked at data, she responded:

> The only difference was that we looked at the SABE scores. We brought those in and we had the kids who were way up here on SABE and in their primary language doing really well and then in English, they would be like down here. So what we did with that is that we always kept in mind that there's a reason for them to be low in English.

Day provided this perspective.

> Well, why did we meet out API two out of three years? When you look at all the data, maybe they [scores for students learning English] brought it down. Do I think those test scores should be included in? Do I think they should be the same, lumped with everyone else when you're giving the test in English to see if they learned math? No, *it's not fair*. But I am not saying it's not fair to my school. It's not fair to that kid. You're *destroying that kid and that family who doesn't understand this whole big mess*.

Understanding that assessment results for linguistically diverse students can be challenging to interpret did not prevent the participants from using assessment in their schools. Many of the participants used performance assessments in their schools. Chambers added:

> And then there are also people who will say that testing in general, whether it's in English or Spanish, has inherent biases. But then what I would say to that is, then you have to show other measures that are

reliable to demonstrate that your students are improving. Also, there is always some correlation between standardized tests and success in other areas. You cannot ignore them and say they're not fair; students are going to be affected by testing for the rest of their careers, especially if they have a career that involves higher education.

It is important to recognize that linguistically diverse students as a group needed to be evaluated longitudinally, with accountability measured over time. Because schools with large numbers of identified English Learners will generally produce lower test scores, it is much more reasonable to assess performance and hold schools accountable for language development by designating annual benchmarks for growth and evaluating this growth over time. Chambers was especially attuned to this fact. She looked at growth targets for students based on their years in the school's program. She asserted:

> Especially for English Language Learners you want to look at the exit outcomes. You want to look at fifth and sixth grade scores for students who entered school as non-English speakers in kindergarten. Did we make progress each year to help them to become fluent? It's really unfair to look at one test in English for all grades because you are mixing in so many variables: second language, time in school, migrancy [sic] that doesn't exist in other schools.

In general, the participants used data to monitor results, but also demonstrated a nuanced understanding of how to interpret assessment results for their population. They gave SABE test results equal weight in their schools as a proactive way of obtaining a more fair and accurate representation of their students' abilities. They understood the relevance of assessment done in the primary language in relationship to English language development and academic learning, and they advocated for comprehensive assessment processes within their schools. Additionally, the participants understood that when data are presented as a whole, the scores of identified English Learners must be

disaggregated and analyzed separately. One participant discussed the importance of measuring progress by evaluating student yearly progress based on outcomes over time.

In conclusion, the findings for this research question revealed that cultural and linguistic incorporation and parent participation were two dimensions that were practiced extensively. To a lesser degree, the participants practiced aspects of the assessment dimension. The participants implemented procedures for looking at assessment in a proactive way on behalf of their students. They also recognized that accountability systems were unjust for evaluating student academic attainment, but they did not voice that concern nor advocate publicly within their school districts for a more realistic accountability system. I believe that they would welcome it if one were designed for them. Only one participant collected annual performance indicators for linguistically diverse students over time. Lastly, while curriculum and instruction was important to all of the participants, it was difficult to establish whether transformative pedagogy was an integral part of the curriculum. My sense is that if it were, the participants and their teachers would have been more vocal in their advocacy with the power structures at the district or state level.

<div align="center">Research Question #4: Challenges</div>

What are some of the obstacles or challenges principals face in addressing the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students within the school system?

Challenges were identified throughout the dialogues and addressed again at the group dialogue. The overall challenge was to overcome a lack of

support—from institutions, parents, or individual staff members—for addressing

the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Bejarano shared:

> Once I was assigned principal I found that I had to convince staff that all students are capable and intelligent regardless of their cultural or linguistically background. The only difference in their academic capacity was that they spoke another language, had different experiences, and/or shared a different culture. Underneath they are children waiting anxiously to absorb all the knowledge they are taught.

Blaming school failure on students' families or perceiving the problem to

lie with the students were examples of how some teachers escaped their

responsibility for ensuring student success. Chambers indicated,

> Some teachers don't put extra effort and tend to say, 'Well it's those kids' or they want to put the blame on their families and you hear it in their comments. Not let me look at my teaching and the strategies I am not using. Those are the people that struggle the most.

López spoke of teachers who refused to take courses to complete

certification requirements even though they were assigned to classes designated

for second language learners. He had the sense that some teachers felt, "…that

we were here first. Why do we have to change?" When I asked the participants

why teachers found it so difficult to change, they expressed that teachers felt

uncomfortable or threatened.

Members of the community who did not support or understand the value

of bilingual education in the schools were also a problem for principals,

especially where the demographics were changing. This lack of support was not

expressed exclusively by White, English Only populations, but also by other

ethnic groups. López discussed "cultural clashes" among Latinos, and he was

questioned by second or third generation Latinos for implementing programs for

"those kids," meaning new immigrant students. Escoto observed, "Sometimes

families affected by poverty and limited education have maladaptive coping skills and sometimes it is very difficult to access them and to get follow through on the things they are responsible for."

Other challenges were institutional. Four of the participants (Chambers, Fehely, López and Day) noted that identifying resources to support the school's activities was a challenge. Recent cuts in school budgets have eliminated this assistance. López mentioned that "getting buy in" from community members or the district was sometimes difficult when funding was being sought to extend the school day or school year. Bejarano was the only participant who thought that "the laws" were one of the biggest challenges. She specifically stated, "Proposition 227 put a clinch in our bilingual education." Another challenge referenced was not being able to make decisions on staffing because of seniority or union issues even though the teachers were not a good fit for the school.

The most illuminating theme on their challenges emerged from the group dialogue. As the dialogue was about to end, one participant commented that the biggest challenge did not lie with the students, but with the adults. He said,

> As leaders there is a great deal of emphasis on the adults—on trying to mold, develop, create, get rid of, encourage the adults. That's where most of the impact is. If we don't do that as a leader, who is? The influence is on more than 30 kids.

The principals spent much of their time creating relationships with teachers, encouraging and motivating them to assume responsibility for all students. Another participant responded, "There just isn't enough understanding that they [all teachers] have a vested interest in making sure that all children succeed. We are responsible for everybody."

The same effort must be extended to the parents. One participant added:

The problem is the White English Only parent. How do we get them to care beyond their own kid? How do you get the individual groups, committees, and boosters to see the bigger picture? [Such as in saying] We are going to move this program and share resources so others can succeed.

A closely related theme to this topic was the language used in the educational system to communicate ideas about students. Escoto emphasized, "A critical challenge was trying to get people to understand that language [difference] is not a deficit, like the 'limited' in limited English proficient." He viewed this as perpetuating the problem. Bennington agreed, "The word 'Limited English' seemed to mean limited and that one word may have unconsciously blocked educators from seeing these children as gifted."

The comments from this group dialogue supported challenging how power is manifested in our schools by the way roles are defined. Teachers and administrators hold positions of power in schools, whether they admit it or not. They may not have the same degree of power as their boards of education or supervisors since they are school site designees in the organizational structure of the school system. But, they are educated individuals and often perceived by the community and their school site staff to be the primary decision makers in the school. They decide who will be educated or not. The degree to which principals are able to convince their staff to invest in students' success will have a direct, positive impact on the school community eventually on all of society. The participants believed that if teachers and parents were truly committed to every student's success, culturally and linguistically diverse students would achieve. But they sadly admitted that only the success of the mainstream, affluent

population is interpreted as success for them as principals. So, the challenges

faced by principals exist at a deeper level. They must become political

messengers on behalf of all students. The participants ended the conversation

stating that they needed multiple carriers of the message. They needed others to

help them lead, and that being able to identify the resources and allies who

would work with them in this endeavor would make it less challenging.

<div align="center">Research Question #5: Recommendations</div>

What recommendations can principals make to other principals that may

influence their work in improving schooling for diverse school populations?

Most of the participants recommended that principals working with

diverse populations "be sincere" in their work. Bejarano captured many of the

participant's sentiments in the following statement.

> Come with an open mind and set aside any stereotypes or thoughts, perceptions that they might have and find out as much as they can about the school community, parents, the children, the history, the academic history... really look at the school. Look at what was or what is and then decided what is going to be. But also look at yourself. It comes from you. If what you're thinking and what you're saying, if they don't go together, it shows. It's a feeling. And people can sense that. So you really need to know yourself. Look at how you react to situations, to people. How do you interact with them? Put yourself in their place? What are they seeing? You really have to do a lot of self-analysis because if you want to be successful, you have to be able to make changes where you need to make them in order to have a better relationship with the children, with the staff and with the parents.

Many of the participants stated, "it comes from the heart" over and over

again. The motivation to work with diverse student populations must come from

one's personal commitment to serve. It is driven by a moral obligation.

Chambers added other questions for reflection.

When looking at a new school, I look at the goals and what needs to be accomplished. Then I look at the fit. Where would I be best, at which of these schools? What interests me? For which of these problems do I want to work towards a solution? Or where could my skills be used best? So, I don't think people kind of fall into a school. They should have some connection already. Now in a school where the population's changing and they don't have any type of cultural understanding related to the group that's coming in, that's where you're going to find more conflict. [Be] cause they want the kids to fit what's already in place, rather than their coming in as the leader and making the school fit the needs of the students.

López added,

You don't have to be *Latino* to serve the Latino population in positive ways. But you *need* to know their needs. You need to have empathy. You need to have compassion, not as excuses, but to understand that you can then provide for them in a dignified way and not feel sorry for them. I hate people who say "O son los pobrecitos." [Oh the poor ones].

He again stressed the need to be empathetic, not sympathetic.

Good principals are learners. They renegotiate their roles as leaders, experts and resource brokers, and they open their hearts and minds to learning about and *from* the community. This is especially relevant if principals work in settings where initially they do not identify with the students culturally or do not speak the language of the community. Bennington, who is White and monolingual, saw inflexibility and unwillingness to learn as a "potential for danger." López and others advised not to be afraid of admitting you need help identifying resources. Silva, one of the principals who participated in the pilot research, shared the following perspective. She is an experienced principal having worked with diverse cultures in the International Schools system. She advised:

Look around the school. Look at who the teachers are. Look at who parents are. Just get a sense of who here can help me to understand the

school needs. Connect with the community…. And see who the staff is that can really work with you in a positive way.

Escoto challenged principals:

Does the mainstream look at their inability to communicate in Spanish, do they refer to themselves as Limited Spanish speaking and all of that and all of what that connotes? No. That would never work. You never look at our own lack of awareness of skills as deficits. We never look at that. And part of that again is taking responsibility and looking at what expectations you have as a principal and in order to meet those expectations, what are the skills? What is the knowledge that you need to have in order to work with the populations that you're working with?

Escoto reiterated that principals are "brokers of resources" where resources are not only identified, but consulted for help. He recommended that principals take a systems approach to parent participation. "See what are the obstacles that are getting in the way of parents being involved? Look at what is impacting the family and seek the resources, the healthcare, the training or what ever it will take to get them involved. Be an advocate. The advocacy has to go beyond the site."

The non-bilingual participants shared stories about making connections with bilingual communities. They had learned to speak some phrases in the languages of their students and talked to them. Day shared being encouraged by his assistant principals to prepare a welcome speech in Spanish for the School Site Council meeting. He reminisced about that experience, saying that he had read from a script and remembered looking up and seeing the smiles on parents' faces. It was worth more than anything else he could have done. What powerful messages a principal can send to teachers and parents when they see him or her do that!

Four participants felt that the more principals can break down barriers that perpetuate misconceptions and isolationist tendencies between programs, students and teachers, the more they can begin to inculcate the belief that the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students is everyone's responsibility. For example, when discussing students' needs, principals should address them in terms of school-wide issues instead of a specific program's problem or concern. One participant suggested that instead of identifying teachers as the "ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers or the bilingual teachers," refer to them as teachers, eliminating the idea that only bilingual or ESL teachers are responsible for "those students." This does not devalue the tremendous resource, knowledge and expertise that ESL or bilingual teachers provide, but rather emphasizes that the expertise and the responsibility should extend to the entire staff.

Finally, one participant offered one of the most provocative recommendations for principals: "Checking your own attitudes is a life long pursuit." One must constantly be accountable and think about how one's core values, biases and perceptions are manifested in action. This statement supports the literature highlighting the benefits of exploring how one relates to others in terms of their views on diversity (Henze et al., 2002; Johnson, 2001; Lindsey et al., 1999). Constant introspection and personal reflection is the most powerful action a principal can take to imagine change.

Summary

The dialogues with seven school principals provided relevant insights into their practices, their values and beliefs, and how these values and beliefs were integrated into their work as school leaders. Through dialogic retrospection, the participants reflected upon equity and diversity and defined success for culturally and linguistically diverse students. They exhibited a sense of responsibility in meeting state and federal mandates to raise test scores, but none of the participants indicated that this was an exclusive assignment without considering other goals for their schools.

Success for culturally and linguistically diverse students and for the educators who work with them was defined by high expectations for academic achievement and a healthy school climate that fosters self-worth. Although the participants were selected for the study based on a preliminary criterion that included student achievement test data in English, the (re) definition of success for students includes the development of resilient, healthy students and community participation. These are not easy to measure, but are invaluable elements for the participants. Escoto concluded:

> At some point in my career, I came to the realization it's ultimately the kind of programs that you have, the kinds of initiatives that you launch, the kinds of statistical results that are a by product...At some point in my career I kind of figured out that it really, it's ultimately about relationships. About the kind of relationships that adults have with children and vice versa. The kind of relationships that children have with their peers and equally important if not more important, the kinds of relationships that the adults have with one another.

The participants encouraged others in leadership roles to promote school initiatives for achievement, and they dealt with the challenges of changing

attitudes and perceptions of students and parents in positive, teaching ways. They led culturally diverse schools by modeling what they believed in—equity and the value of diversity. They gave status to the language and cultural backgrounds of the students by implementing programs that used the home language for instruction as well as emphasizing the need to learn English. Their accountability systems included a holistic view of children's needs and used standardized test results in the primary language to evaluate program effectiveness as well as to monitor student progress. They knew that a mainstream perspective on assessment and curriculum did not provide an accurate or a fair picture of the students' potential in their schools.

As principals, they recognized that many of the challenges involved a lack of understanding that existed in the school context in which they worked. Some of the challenges were institutional—policies and decisions that did not provide them with the necessary resources. The more significant challenges were changing people's attitudes towards diverse students and their families and, ultimately, dealing with racism in a positive, nonthreatening manner.

These leaders' personal core values reflected a strong commitment to serve the community—an obligation to serve with a sense of duty and passion for change. A significant aspect of their work was working with others, whether staff members, parents or students, to redefine their roles as contributing members to this change. For teachers and staff members, this meant providing a safe, positive working environment that promoted their own personal and professional growth as educators and advocates for children. For parents, this meant eliciting their assistance and helping them to understand how essential

their presence was for their children's success. For the students, this meant

connecting with them in caring ways, reinforcing their potential and

communicating that what they bring to school is respected and a key for success.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this participatory study was to explore the role successful principals play in promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Educational research claims that strong school leadership is a critical factor in raising student achievement, yet non-White and poor students in California continue to experience academic failure. By understanding how principals serving diverse populations define their roles and how they interpret their values and beliefs on the concepts of diversity and equity, we can comprehend in greater detail how school leadership affects student success.

The seven participants are school principals who are currently working or have worked in Bay Area public schools with at least a 50% culturally diverse student population, defined as non-White for the study, or with at least 30% English Learners. In addition, the principals' schools needed to have met the state Academic Performance Index for three years from 1999-2001. This criterion was formulated to identify school leaders who were successful in meeting the academic needs of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Six elementary participants and one high school principal were selected based on all or most of the outlined criteria. Participants were either recommended by school district personnel or selected based on the criteria. All the participants had the approval of their school district superintendents to participate in the study.

Participatory research methodology was used whereby the subjects of the study become co-researchers or participants in the study. Whereas traditional or scientific researchers strive to lessen objectivization, participatory research acknowledges bias as human condition and strives to delve further into those biases tapping into areas that might not otherwise be represented in educational research. Through dialogic retrospection, data was collected, interpreted and summarized keeping in mind that the goal of participatory research is to achieve praxis. It is through praxis that the conjoining of theory, reflection and action can lead to change.

The literature review provided a background on the principal's role and how issues related to diversity and equity are addressed. The work of Jim Cummins (1989) was the basis for the study's theoretical framework, which challenges educators to negotiate their identities through an intercultural rather than an assimilationist orientation. The intercultural orientation was the foundation for developing the questions that guided the dialogues and provided categories from which to organize themes initially. Clarification of the research topic and the dialogue questions were piloted with two principals before the study formally began.

Two individual dialogues were held with six of the seven participants. Due to scheduling constraints, one dialogue was held with the seventh participant. Each session was tape recorded and transcribed into text. Each participant was provided a copy of the transcription for further reflection and clarification. An analysis of each transcription was conducted identifying generative themes. The generative themes for each participant were then

reviewed more carefully and compiled into a summation of the most prevalent themes and subthemes creating yet another text for the participants and researcher to review. The participants were provided with a copy of the findings and imparted further reflection and guidance collectively and individually.

The final analysis of each research question presented certain concepts that seemed to recur and intersect throughout the study. Often the participants' ideas overlapped in answering the research questions. The participatory research process is an intellectual activity that does not place limits on voice. The participants are free to delve into their inner most feelings and put into their own words what they wish to express. Some themes were very important to the individual and less to the other participants. And still some themes were important to all of them, but expressed in varying ways of relevance. Following is a summary for the most prevalent generative themes.

Generative Themes

The generative themes are (1) Equity as a Guiding Value, Practice and Challenge, (2) Caring and Resiliency, and (3) Changing Attitudes and Perceptions.

Equity as a Guiding Value, a Practice and a Challenge

The participants defined equity as a definition of success and as a guiding value in their work. Maintaining this value presented itself with challenges as well. In the participants' definitions of success, there was some discussion regarding the terms equality and equity. Four participants did not define equity to mean equal. Equity is the process by which students can be successful. While

the other participants did not use the word equity in their dialogues, their views were reflective of a strong belief in working on equity issues as it relates to all students. I heard over and over again from the participants' words like, "giving kids what they need" and "leveling the playing field." As Fehely claimed, "the status quo won't work anymore," meaning that teachers can no longer afford to teach to one type of student. Teachers must be able to work with every child. The days of sending non-achievers or students who don't speak English to another teacher for help are over. While the focus of this study is on culturally and linguistically diverse students, some participants informed me that we need to consider issues of poverty and the inclusion of disabled students in this definition. All the participants share the same value that each student, regardless of background, is entitled to an education and that they, as leaders, feel the responsibility to ensure that schools strive to do so.

The participants described their roles as ones associated with responsibility. By seeking teachers who were willing to accept the challenges of this work, they demonstrated a promise to provide whatever means they could to support the families. Chambers specifically stated she wanted teachers who were "community focused" rather than "individual focused." A qualification of the teachers was the willingness to "give 200 percent." Escoto described seeking teachers who possessed a certain degree of passion. The participants know that educating culturally and linguistically diverse students can present an additional responsibility other than just teaching, and by requesting more of themselves and the teachers, they are activating the vision for equity.

In the assessment area, equity was shown by the way the participants used test results in the primary language as vital information in evaluating student success. Whether it was reviewing individual student academic needs or modifying the instructional program, all of the participants expressed using any available assessment performed in Spanish, in these cases. If being data driven is a requirement of today's principal, then why not include assessment that can provide a truer picture of students' performance? By incorporating this data in presentations to the staff and requesting that teachers include assessments that assist them in evaluating student progress in both languages, they model a responsible approach to educating linguistically diverse students.

Equity was also highlighted as a challenge. For instance, López said upfront that we would be successful when Latino students would have the same opportunities as their counterparts. Yet when asked what was a challenge for principals, he specified one was convincing others that extra services or additional funding was needed to assist his community. Most of the participants stated that school systems do not do a good job of promoting equity because as López said they "don't buy into it." While equity is the charge for many principals of schools with diverse student needs, it is up to them to create avenues for equity to be realized. Therefore, the role the school leader takes is one of advocacy.

On a different level, equity was discussed in terms of institutionalizing practices with the teachers themselves. Bennington spoke about providing opportunities for her teaching staff as one way equity was practiced at her school site. When the teachers developed the Bilingual Teacher Model, the status of the

bilingual teacher changed in her school. Since the bilingual program had not been a part of the school historically, many of the veteran teachers who were monolingual did not understand or accept it. By setting up an organization structure and having teachers work in teams, they were able to learn from one another as professionals in educating culturally and linguistically diverse students. In addition, this slowly broke down their personal stereotypes or misconceptions about one another and equalized the playing field at the professional level. A few other participants spoke about the lack of support for hiring culturally diverse school administrators. If equity is to be a goal for the educational system, it needs to be modeled and represented at all levels of the power structure.

Caring and Resiliency

The most dominant theme that surfaced throughout the study was caring for students. The participants possessed an indisputable level of commitment to their students. The focus on students as a characteristic of their school cultures as demonstrated by decision-making showed the principals genuinely cared about their students. All of the participants at one time or another during our conversations presented situations in which the fundamental question of what's best for students guided their work. Escoto shares:

> There's this expectation that they [the students] are gonna grow up to be survivors. *I don't want them to be survivors.* I want them to live their life, not survive it. I want them to be able to reap the benefits of being productive and contributing. So I think one of the characteristics is that you've got to be determined to act out ethically. I think you do need to focus on results and certainly the results from my perspective, again it's not just about reading comprehension. It's about other things as well that contribute to a child's success, a child's resiliency, a child's sense of confidence and competence.

Two of the participants informed me that their frustration at times is working in a system that sometimes prioritizes the adults' needs over the students, such as in dealing with union contracts or school district policies in relation to hiring practices. In contrast, two other participants noted that if teachers felt purposeful and valued, they would be more motivated to do a good job. Nonetheless, the focus on children, whether viewed as more important or just as important as the adults of the school, is the foundation for the principals' work. The participants never indicated that position, titles or programs were the primary concern in their schools. And although the concept of power as principals was difficult for some of the participants to accept, they all recognized that power is best utilized through others.

During one dialogue, I shared my own reflections on school leadership and caring.

> I think that is something as myself as a person in school administration have had to deal with because being at the District Office you're even *further* removed from the faces of the kids and so you have to remind yourself, is this procedure, is this policy, is this plan, is this thing really gonna help kids. Are we creating bureaucracies to (pause) make a name for ourselves? To make a department for ourselves? To mark our place in the system and then if so, for what reason? The *power* is so strong and I think sometimes principals get caught up in the power thing, my school, my teachers but, we forget about the kids. I think we all started off as teachers caring about kids.

Many of the participants told me their work stems from the heart. Day shared, "It's about heart and the attitude and that doesn't show up in mission statements. We all know the rhetoric." He spoke about school systems that pronounce working on behalf of diversity and equity issues, but then do not exemplify these goals in the process of the work. Bejarano also reflected

emotionally about sitting with colleague principals who focused on programs rather than on children. As a school culture builder at her school, she repeatedly reminded teachers,

> All we can do is to do the best that we can when we have that child from the time they come in the morning to the time they leave us. What we do in between is critical, okay. And what is that? Not academically, but emotionally, socially making them bond, not just with the teacher, but with other children and with the school.

The work of the participants as school leaders had a strong foundation in humanism and caring. The ability to improve student achievement is incumbent on nurturing, trusting and encouraging staff to work well together. Houlihan (1988) reminds us that there are certain variables that work interchangeably to provide for our most fundamental basic human need for relationships. Because schools are social organizations, successful leaders rely on sustaining good working relationships with the individuals involved in their schools. Some of the participants' desires to establish a common school vision were to set direction and purpose to their work as well as to produce a sense of belonging for the staff. The development of López' "community school" is an excellent example of practicing leadership with an ethic of caring. Bennington's pursuit of using the Cooperative Learning model in which the adults planned and strategized in cadres was based on "building on each other's strengths." Creating a common language for instruction between teachers, as Fehely and López indicated, was another example that teaching and learning is a communal effort. The participants' outreach to parents was successful because they did not treat language differences as an obstacle. Finally, the ability to trust teachers and community members to take on shared leadership roles is a worthy piece of

evidence in underscoring how caring exists in schools where individuals are free to take risks, encouraged to be leaders and celebrated for their successes.

Caring and resiliency were also demonstrated in the recurring statements around empathy and sincerity. The ability to have empathy is a characteristic participants sought in teachers they hired. Empathy was included in recommendations to other principals. They felt that educators working with diverse students need to posses the ability to understand the circumstances that some students live in and bring with them to school even though the educators themselves did not share those same circumstances. To quote a phrase shared with me by one of my professors, "Pity implies difference. Empathy is grounded in equity" (Herda, 2003). Sympathetic attitudes as in feeling sorry for children or having pity upon the students were not part of the participants' belief system. Serving a population that is already powerless in terms of political and socioeconomic levels can inadvertently motivate educators to adopt a kind of missionary role that perceives these communities as ones needing to be saved. They are not "the pobrecitos" [the poor ones] who need to be saved. López emphasized supporting the community with dignity and respect and relationships need to be cultivated so they can find their place in the educational system as people who will exercise their voice. Chambers related,

> I have had parents who choose certain teachers and they generally choose teachers who have really high standards. And they will tell me that other teachers didn't push them and so the empathy is there's cultural understanding in terms of certain conditions the child is living with and the constraints upon the parent. But it's not sympathy because they're not going 'poor kid, oh the poor family'. You're just aware of it and then you're responding to it, but your goal is to get results to a high level.

Hence, high expectations is a form of caring.

Some of the participants (Bejarano, Escoto, and Fehely) reiterated that students know when people are being sincere with them. Escoto claimed,

> ...because of that personal connection...because you do need to have those other skills [academic], but those relationships seem to lay the foundation for the kinds of interactions, the kind of engagement that's needed in my opinion for learning to take place.

The participants recommend to other leaders that they be sincere and genuine in their approach to parents.

In relation to the theoretical framework, (Cummins, 1989, 1996, 2000: Freire, 1970) power is to be shared and those in societal positions of power and privilege sustain the oppression of others. As Valenzuela (1999) points out, there is a politics of caring in our schools when educators profess to care for students without fully understanding how students want to be cared for. I believe that real caring implies recognizing where power lives in the system, redefining it, and facilitating ways for culturally and linguistically diverse persons to empower themselves.

Changing Attitudes and Perceptions

> Attitude is everything and I think for me as a leader I certainly had better days, than others in doing that. When things go bad or things are just, aren't focused because of crises and [I] forget about checking myself on that, what's my attitude? And the way I was brought up in a racist world in the Midwest with African Americans and Whites, where it was said to me all the time we don't have a problem in this town because they stay on their side of the tracks and we stay on ours. So for me it's always going to be a life long pursuit of checking myself and understanding with my background. Because you recognize things are wrong or [it] doesn't make that those things are right and you weren't checking it out.

The dialogues revealed that promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students and families required school leaders to take on challenges as opportunities for change. The quotation by Day symbolizes that as

leaders of diverse schools, the calling to change the attitudes of the school community members begins with oneself. Many of the participants shared their processes for restructuring instruction. The prescription for focusing on achievement included their assessing the values, belief systems and attitudes of the teachers.

During the last group dialogue, the participants who were present decided that these negative attitudes came from racism. Two participants who were unable to attend the group dialogue met with me individually. Upon sharing how the others had named the problem, they confirmed that the problem was in fact due to racism. The fact that the participants never used vocabulary such as racism, discrimination, prejudice or even bias to describe the attitudes they were talking about is an interesting observation to note. However, there was only one participant who was especially uncomfortable with this notion and truly believed that teachers' resistance to change was due to their own insecurities as teachers.

Does everyone understand they have a vested interest in making sure every student succeeds? This was a question that was posed in the final group dialogue by the participants. Success for students, be it academic attainment or the establishment of a resilient school environment, is incumbent on the leader's ability to assess the culture of the school to identify the walls that need to be addressed. The participants believed that changing attitudes and perceptions problematic to their vision for success was fundamental to their work and a precursor for academic progress. The participants recommended to other principals that they ask some essential questions about their personal experience,

biases and perceptions. Introspection can be difficult especially when there is denial that racism still exists.

One attitude that was identified as a problem was having low expectations. Many of the participants addressed keeping teachers from falling into sympathetic roles where they unconsciously or consciously promoted a sense of hopelessness like the teacher who told one of the principals, "If only these children had wings, I would teach them how to fly." This was also portrayed when Bennington discovered that her staff had never talked to their students about going to college. Fortunately this changed, but it was the leadership's role to bring those issues to the awareness level and then have the staff decide what they were going to do about it. Parent communities may not perceive themselves of helping their children or contributing to the school for a number of reasons. Perhaps they feel inadequate because they are learning English themselves or have had negative experiences with school either as parents or students as some of the participants discovered. Supporting both the educational staff and parent community to believe in the students and dream about the possibilities is more than an inspiration shared by the principal. It was communicated often to the students and with the parents. Bejarano, for one, shared her disappointment in the low reading levels of her students when she arrived at her school as the principal years ago. She raised the academic bar with the teachers and kept reminding the students, "When you go to the university, when you go to the university...."

The participants who had the most difficulty changing attitudes and perceptions of culturally and linguistically diverse students were those in schools

where the demographic composition of the schools was changing. These principals found it easier to create change in small steps and individually. The participants know that because mainstream U.S. society continues to regard these students as being disadvantaged, many teachers function from their perspective in not knowing or understanding their role in relationship to these children. The assimilationist ideology thrives on tradition and for educators inexperienced in addressing diverse students; it can be an uncomfortable feeling. The participants articulated this to be the biggest challenge they have as principals. Whether they dealt with these issues directly like participants Day, López and Bejarano or "through the side door," like participant Bennington, all of the participants recognized it was their responsibility to advocate for all students.

Conclusions

This study needed to identify principals who were being successful with diverse student populations. While one criterion for selecting the participants included standardized test data, the findings indicated that the participants did not define their success solely on test results. In a time of high-stakes accountability, the participants took seriously the challenge of raising academic achievement by assessing school needs, restructuring their instructional strategies and negotiating change with their staff members. Of course they thought academic achievement was important. But they also asserted that engaging the community and creating a caring environment were equally important and, in fact, prerequisites for achieving the desired academic results.

The focus on test scores must not exclude these other factors necessary for student success. As a result, public discourse on academic achievement must be expanded to encompass what school principals in diverse settings actually do to promote success in their schools.

The participants had a care ethic in their schools by insisting on a high regard for children and developing students' self-concept. The concepts presented in the literature on fostering resiliency reflect many of the same ideas for promoting a culturally sensitive environment. The participants affirmed that respecting students' histories and cultural identities was critical for student resiliency. Additionally, a few participants recognized that students must be prepared to deal with racist attitudes in their lifetime as part of their development. Implementing a transformative curriculum in schools would help students gain a better understanding of how to address these attitudes, as a symptom of a greater societal problem, and become even more resilient.

A significant responsibility shouldered by all participants was the promotion of a culture of equity, fairness and respect for culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families. Their need to change attitudes and perceptions that conflicted with establishing a common vision of high expectations was one of the most prevalent tasks the participants. Because culturally and linguistically diverse student populations continue to be viewed as deficient, the participants focused much of their energy on unraveling perceptions that teachers and community members brought to the school environment and, as one participant stated, "hurt children." They recognized overt racist or discriminatory actions by students much more easily than they

identified subtle ones. Institutionalized racist acts are difficult to see when one is entrenched in traditional bureaucratic systems. The participants knew that institutionalized racism existed as a pervasive problem throughout the educational system, but as school site leaders, they focused their work on advocating for their respective schools. It becomes difficult for educators to discuss such issues, which takes me to my next point.

The most profound conclusion drawn is the lack of a common language to discuss the issues that educators face in meeting the challenges of achieving equity. The difficulty that one participant had initially with the words *diversity* and *equity* reminded me that the diversity agenda is not always perceived as a proactive agenda for some educators. Even though many reform efforts currently use equity and diversity language, there are differences in how individuals interpret these concepts and how they are reflected in our schools.

Moreover, that the participants did not use the word *racism* (to define some of the attitudes they described) until the end of the study indicates that even educators who promote equity and diversity can be apprehensive in naming the problem. This may be the primary reason why school initiatives on improving schooling do not directly address racism or discrimination. But it is important to note that whether the participants defined some of these attitudes as racist, they nevertheless dealt with the problem. Not all principals may have the courage or ability to do so. This must become a consideration in leadership development. If school leaders recognize that racist attitudes exist in schools, but focus their energies on raising academic achievement without some form of

dialogue addressing those attitudes, the chances for improvement are minimized.

The participants recognized the value of language and culture in their schools while maintaining their focus on improving academic performance. Promoting culturally responsive education need not take away from an agenda of academic achievement, but can in fact help achieve that goal. Therefore educators must find a way to bring these forces together in a unified effort.

In relation to the theoretical framework, the participants led schools that practiced aspects of an intercultural orientation (Cummins, 1989). The participants practiced linguistic and cultural incorporation and collaborative parent participation in their schools. Very little data, however, indicated to what extent the participants' schools followed a transformative experiential pedagogy with their students. Principals who truly adhered to a framework designed to empower diverse students would be willing to take a strong stance on changing curricular practices that continue to negate cultural identity. Teachers would be encouraged to teach content standards, but also modify their practices so that students would have opportunities to be critical in what they are learning. School leaders who believe in sharing power with their staff would encourage their teachers to share power with their students. This means practicing a critical pedagogy where students have voice and are taught to "empower themselves." My feeling is that teachers and administrators need more training in this area. To start, principals could model critical reflection with their staff and begin looking at these issues collectively.

The participatory study provided an opportunity to learn from successful school principals who have a strong sense of duty to serve their communities. They are successful because they have not divorced sociocultural knowledge from their roles as instructional leaders required to possess technical knowledge. In an essence, they symbolize an additive approach in leadership. Because principals represent the power structure as members of the public school system, it is sometimes difficult for them to be the voice of their communities. Renouncing unfair practices can have negative consequences for them professionally. So they too must negotiate their own identities as community leaders and public servants.

Policy makers and educators who have mandated increasing test scores and publicly rewarding schools must be cognizant that school leaders in culturally diverse schools have tremendous pressures and challenges. There is a place for philosophies and value systems that acknowledge diversity as a powerful force in our society and as a resource for student success. Principals who are being successful in improving student achievement for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations must be recognized for their efforts in not only being strong instructional leaders, but also in being culturally responsive leaders and advocates for their students.

Recommendations

The recommendations of this study reflect those provided by the participants in the dialogues. First, culturally responsive school principals must get to know their communities. Aside from assessing school needs in terms of

instructional needs, they must explore questions such as: What languages are spoken? Where are my students from? Are they immigrant or second or third generation immigrants? What are the intragroup differences? It is extremely misleading to assume that all persons from one ethnic or language background are the same. Principals do this by interacting as much as possible with the parents and community members.

School leaders support their school staff by understanding how discrimination and racism play out in the lives of culturally and linguistically diverse communities. This would include understanding how the dynamics in the communities affect students in the classroom. This will support school leaders and teachers to understand how school decisions impact the community and how the school can be more successful in connecting with the parents.

An additive approach to education where students' languages and cultures are valued and used as a resource facilitate connections with students and their families in respectful and empowering ways. It also provides for a redefinition of roles where students are teachers and teachers are learners. One participant stated in the study that, " We all know what subtractive [education] looks like," and wondered if someone could develop a school rubric that would help school leaders and teachers assess the extent to which they implement an intercultural orientation in their schools.

Good teachers matter. The participants recommended hiring staff who are both qualified to teach and committed to the population. By including cultural proficiency as a qualification in hiring principals and teachers, school systems reflect equity and anti-racist educational practices as core values.

School leaders must continue to advocate for fair accountability systems that accurately provide the necessary information to the public, to the school district and to teachers. Disaggregating data by ethnic group, socioeconomic status, gender, program and English language proficiency continues efforts to reduce the achievement gap and remain focused on equity. In addition, disaggregated data for English Learners cannot be lumped into one group for analysis. The accountability measures for linguistically diverse students must be analyzed by cohorts of students based on time in program and years of English Learner identification. If this data is not provided for school administrators, it should be requested. This is advocacy.

Finally, I recognize that the work of advocates requires one to challenge any statement or action that purposefully harms disenfranchised or powerless communities, but it does not have be practiced in isolation. Courageous leadership needs a supportive network of allies. School leaders need opportunities for expression where they can think critically about how their practices align themselves with their core values. In addition, professional development and administrator training programs should include competencies that not only address how to work with diverse populations, but on how to adopt an *anti-racist* approach in leadership that supports success for all students. Policy makers and educators will maintain the status quo if administrator training programs and school districts keep producing school leaders that continue past practices of not confronting the issues of diversity.

Recommendations for Social Action from the Participants

At the conclusion of the dialogues, the participants were asked what we should do with this research. They felt strongly that the study needed to be shared. This could be done in a variety of ways: (1) Sharing the findings in a forum for reflection with other principals, (2) Developing a handbook for reflection to be used in school administrator credentialing programs or/and (3) providing sessions at professional development fairs or workshops.

The participants described feeling valued for their work and how the experience in this research process has given them time to reflect upon their own practices. Listening to one another during the last group dialogue was especially insightful as they listened to one another share "their stories." In particular, one participant stressed that there is a need to make all school leaders aware of their own biases and of the issues they will be confronted with in schools. This is a life long pursuit. As he put it, "We have to deal with our histories. It doesn't go away. It's okay to talk about it." It was recommended that the forum for discussion would be much more successful with individuals who would be receptive to such dialogues. Mandated training for school principals would not be a good idea.

Another participant revealed that for new or future school administrators, a handbook would serve as reference or framework from which individuals could participate in values clarification or self-reflection on their perceived roles and belief systems in relationship to schooling diverse youth. What does a principal do when a teacher makes a racist comment? How does one encourage the value of culture and language in your school? How can we avoid isolation in this work? These are a few of the questions that could be reflected upon in

forums for discussion. Basically, professional development with self and group reflection was the essence of what the participants recommended. In fact one participant remarked that this is not diversity training for school leaders, it's more about successful leadership.

Recommendations for Further Research

The first recommendation for further research is an extension of this study. So many unanswered questions call for deeper exploration. If possible, continuing in the same vein of the participatory action process, it would be especially insightful to continue dialogues with all or some of the participants delving further into their interpretations of institutionalized racism in schools. In doing so the findings might reveal a common language that would facilitate discussion between members of educational institutions in a proactive, open manner. As I have learned, without dialogue there cannot be change.

Secondly, It would be helpful to understand how school leaders' backgrounds, experiences and ethnic identities influence their work. Certainly the participants in this study shared many commonalities in values and beliefs, but it would be worthwhile to explore how cultural identities influence their interpretations of equity, social justice and diversity. A more focused study would be to include White school administrators and their personal challenges in promoting equity.

Additionally, while this study focused mostly on school principals, it would be valuable to replicate the study focusing on district office administrators and engaging them in dialogic examination of how they construe their roles in

relationship to culturally and linguistically diverse students and how they support equal access and educational equity in their policies and decision-making structures.

In consideration of the intercultural orientation that was presented in this study, exploring the extent to which roles are negotiated in terms of power from the perspectives of culturally and linguistically diverse students or their parents would be a most relevant study. Parents might reflect on the manner in which schools involve them and to what degree they feel "empowered" to participate in the educational process. Students might reflect on the manner in which they are taught, how their linguistic and cultural backgrounds are reflected in their schools and how they relate to their teachers.

Finally, it would be extremely insightful to review school administrator programs or leadership professional development activities in school districts to understand more fully how leaders are taught to deal with issues of racism, equity and diversity as social and school realities.

Reflections from the Researcher on Participatory Research

> The task of critical education is to help the individual in cultivating capacity to exercise the creative potential to develop oneself and to become part of the transformative force for social change. (Park, 1995 p. 28)

Before I actually began the research, I wondered if it was appropriate to use participatory research with school principals. I knew that theoretically this approach reaped many benefits with disenfranchised communities examining oppressive conditions in their lives. After all, I was not inviting parents or students to talk about what principals do in their schools to promote success. I

chose to speak to the very individuals that parents, students and teachers deem to be in a position of power. Finally, I reconciled that the voices of school principals needed to be heard. I considered that by engaging in a reflective process, like participatory research, principals would bring ideas, unspoken worries, or concerns to the surface. Furthermore, I thought principals needed to be acknowledged for their efforts in promoting success with a sector of the student population that is frequently associated with academic underachievement.

As I formally conclude this study, I have an even better appreciation for participatory research as a methodology and as a process for, what Peter Park calls, "critical knowledge"(1993). The entire study took me through a progression of unlayering of ideas while crystallizing a concept, thinking of more questions for further reflection and evolving into what seemed like a never-ending quest for more knowledge. The most important skill I had to learn was really understanding that I was a participant and that the participants were researchers. I have learned to think more critically and be a better listener as a result of the dialogic experience.

I was truly amazed witnessing the art of dialogue and reflection in action with my participants. The skills of listening and counter reflection and questioning improved with time. What happened at the final group dialogue when the participants finally were able to say the word, "racism" and confront their anxieties and concerns was a result of sharing what we had discovered individually and collectively. I observed the power of reflection through language when the participants modified parts of their transcriptions choosing

different words to convey what they really meant or rewriting their quotations to communicate a new understanding.

Likewise, the reading and the continual re-reading of the transcriptions and the various drafts of the dissertation provided me with more clarity each time I read the words and organized my ideas into themes or categories for mental filing. One day I would see themes one way. Another day I would think about them in a different way always searching for the right words to express the idea or theme. At times, the words would come easily, and at other times there were no words to articulate what I was thinking. The process was truly liberating for me in terms of having an open mind and placing myself in the role of learner.

The tape recordings provided me with another opportunity to relive the dialogues with the participants. I felt so present in their words as the sound of their words; laughter, hesitations, and tears were transmitted through the earphones. Sometimes their messages were so powerful that I too would cry as I transcribed at the computer. Each time I heard the tapes or reread the transcriptions, I indeed felt closer to the participants. Because I have learned so much from the process, I have provided recommendations to others using participatory research (see Appendix E).

The most gratifying part for me was engaging with others regarding a shared concern. It affirmed for us our commitment to children and at times I felt real solidarity, a feeling a couple of the participants expressed to me was lacking in their roles as risk takers and advocates in the school system. Unfortunately, this study comes to an end here and our lives continue in our separate paths. But I know that the knowledge and experiences that the participants shared with me

are mine to keep forever and use in my own personal transformation as an educator, leader and human being.

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APPENDIX A

Invitation to Be a Participant

Date

Participant's Name
Address
Cit, State, Zip Code

Dear (Name),

It is with great pleasure that I am invite you to participate in the study, which I
am conducting as a graduate student at the University of San Francisco. The
purpose of the study is to identify effective practices of school principals in
promoting the success of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Enclosed is the Consent Document for your review with information on the
study. If you agree to participate in this important study, I would like to invite
you to our first meeting on:

Date:

Time:

Location

At this time I will review the document in detail and answer any questions you
may have. Should you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign
the consent form at that time before any activities related to the research begins.
Please review the Consent Document before the first meeting and feel free to
contact me if you have any concerns or questions at (408) 535-6043 or (408) 287-
7927.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

M. Norma Martinez

APPENDIX B

Consent to be a Participant

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH SUBJECT

Purpose and Background
Ms. Maria Norma Martinez, a graduate student in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco is doing a study on the role school principals in promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students. The public school population is rapidly becoming culturally and linguistically diverse and at the same time there continues to be a significant achievement gap between White students and low performing ethnic minorities. This poses a major educational challenge for school leaders. Research on effective schools (Edmonds, 1979) identifies school leadership as one of the factors that contributes to the academic success of minority students who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. However, the research on leadership in meeting the specific needs of culturally diverse students has not been adequately addressed (Dillard, 1995; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Riehl, 2000). The researcher is interested in understanding the role, practices and characteristics of effective school principals in meeting this challenge.

I am being asked to participate because I am or have been a public school principal working in a school with a culturally and linguistically diverse school population for at least five years. I meet the criteria for the study which includes positive academic progress as demonstrated by school achievement data, information on parent involvement, school climate surveys, suspensions, drop out and graduation rates. This information was used only in establishing the criteria for your potential participation. Permission to conduct this study has been granted by your school superintendent.

Procedures
If I agree to be a participant in this study, the following will happen:

1. I will attend an initial meeting with the researcher and the other participants of the study at which time the study will be explained and my rights will be presented. (1.5-2 hours)

2. At the initial meeting, I will complete a self-portrait questionnaire giving basic information about myself, including age, gender, race, educational background and philosophy. I will be asked about my experiences and educational goals.

3. I will participate in 1-2 interviews or dialogues with the researcher at a time and location that is agreeable to me. I will be asked about my practices and ideas on school leadership. These dialogues will be tape recorded and later transcribed. Copies of the transcription will be made available to me for reflection and feedback within a week of the dialogue. (1 hour)

4. I will participate in a group dialogue with the researcher and the participants of the study in a final meeting. The purpose of this session is to summarize the initial findings from the individual dialogues in answering the research questions. I will be asked to participate in a discussion and this session will be videotaped and tape-recorded. Copies of the videotape and the transcription will be made available to me for reflection and feedback within 2 weeks of the meeting (1-2 hours).

5. I may participate in telephone or face-to-face conversations with the researcher from time to time to discuss any of the topics from any of the dialogues. (10 minutes-1 hour) These sessions may be tape recorded with my permission.

Risks and/or Discomforts
1. It is possible that some of the questions on the self-portrait questionnaire or during the dialogues may make me feel uncomfortable, but I am free to decline to answer any questions I do not wish to answer or to stop participation at any time.
2. Participation in research may mean a loss of confidentiality. Study records will be kept as confidential as is possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study. Study information will be coded and kept in locked files at all times. Only study personnel will have access to the files.
3. Because the time required for my participation may be 1-2 hours for each meeting, I may become tired, anxious or bored especially if these sessions are scheduled after work hours.

Benefits
There will be no direct benefit to me from participating in this study. The anticipated benefit of this study is better understandings of the role school principals take in promoting success for minority youth.

Costs/Financial Considerations
There will be no financial costs to me as a result of taking part in this study.

Payment/Reimbursement
I will receive no payment or reimbursement for participation in this study.

Questions
I have talked to Ms. Martinez about this study and have had my questions answered. If I have further questions about the study, I may call her at (408) 287-7927 or Dr. Alma Flor Ada at (415) 285-7309.

If I have any questions or comments about participation in this study, I should first talk with the researchers. If for some reason I do not wish to do this, I may contact the IRBPHS, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. I may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the

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IRBPHS, Department of Counseling Psychology, Education Building, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

Consent
I have been given a copy of the "Research Subject 's Bill of Rights " and I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep.

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY. I am free to decline to be in this study, or to withdraw from it at any point. My decision as to whether or not to participate in this study will have no influence on my present or future status as a student or employee at USF.

My signature below indicates that I agree to participate in this study.

_____   _____
Subject 's Signature   Date of Signature

_____   _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   Date of Signature

APPENDIX C

Self-Portrait Questionnaire

SELF PORTRAIT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the following information. It is possible that some of the questions may make you feel uncomfortable, but you are free to decline to answer any questions you do not wish to answer, or to stop the participation at any time. Although you will put your name on this questionnaire, your identity will not be used in any of the research.

PART A.   BASIC INFORMATION
1. Name:

_____

2. Home Address:
_____City/State/Zip_____
3. Home Telephone: _____
4. Email (optional)_____
5. Work Address:

_____

City/State/Zip

_____

6. Work Telephone: _____ 7. Email:_____
8. Sex _____ 9. Age: _____
10:How do you define your ethnic/racial background? _____
11. The best time to reach me is_____ at
the following telephone number _____.

PART B.   EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, EXPERIENCE AND
PHILOSPHY
1. Current Job Title: _____
2. School: _____
   District: _____
3. How long were/have you been a school principal? _____ How long
were/have you been a school principal at your current school? _____

4. Brief Job History:

Job Title	Location	Length of time

Job Title	Location	Length of time

Job Title	Location	Length of time

Job Title	Location	Length of time

5. Briefly tell me about yourself-your background, where you grew up.

6. What do you most remember about your own schooling experiences growing up?

7. What or who inspired you to become a school administrator?

8. What do/did you perceive to be your role as principal in promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students? Is this different from promoting success for all students?

9. What were/are the biggest challenges you face(d) in this role?

10. What values and beliefs do you possess that guide(d) your practices as a school leader?

11. What does equity mean to you

12. What specific examples can you share that demonstrate how you influence(d) others around you to practice the value of diversity and equity at your school?

APPENDIX D

Permission Letter from Institutional Management

January X, 2002

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
University of San Francisco
2130 Fulton Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

Dear Members of the Committee:

On behalf of (name of school district), I am writing to formally indicate my awareness of the research proposed by Ms. Maria Norma Martinez, a student at USF. I am aware that Ms. Martinez intends to conduct her research by seeking the participation of principals in the district who will share their experiences as school leaders in promoting success for culturally and linguistically diverse students. I understand that she will obtain written consent from each of the participants.

As superintendent (name of school district), I give Ms. Martinez permission to conduct her research in our district.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my office at (telephone number).

Sincerely,

Name
Superintendent

cc: María Norma Martinez

APPENDIX E

Recommendations to Others Using Participatory Research

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1. Narrow the research topic. I was told this when I begin the doctoral program and I emphasize it. I felt that my topic was narrow only to find that I could have written my whole dissertation on just one of my research questions! The more focused you are in your research question, the more focused you can be in completing the literature review and actually conducting the dialogues.

2. Make sure the dialogue questions you prepare will support answering each research question. Limit the number of dialogue questions. Think about how much you can cover in a one-hour dialogue especially if you are going to review material form a previous dialogue. So prepare the dialogues carefully, understanding that the nature of the dialogic process can lead to topics outside what you have prepared. This is to be expected. Remember the dialogue questions are there only to guide the conversation.

3. Participatory research requires commitment. Participatory research allows for the participants to be co-researchers in the study investigating a particular problem. It is important that information provided to potential participants emphasize what exactly is required as a participant. I found that some participants read the transcription and others had not. As a researcher you have no control over this, but stress that the approach for exploring the research problem is truly a collaborative process.

4. Prepare for the dialogue. Send a copy of the dialogue questions to prepare the participants. I found that some of my best conversations were ones in which the participant was ready to share because he or she had already thought about some of the questions.

5. In preparing for the dialogues, feel free to use a quote from another participant or from the literature related to the topic. The study is an evolving process; so take new knowledge to create more knowledge.

6. Identify the themes from each dialogue and share those with the participants when you send the transcriptions back to each participant or review the emerging themes at the beginning of the subsequent dialogue. If possible, ask the participants to identify the themes with you. Taking this step will help when you are ready to analyze all of the various themes and identify the generative themes of the study.

7. You may find it helpful to create an outline or a summary of the themes for each transcription. Once the dialogues are completed for a participant, create another outline or summary synthesizing the generative themes for each participant. As you collect more data, it can be overwhelming if there isn't a process for organizing all "the gems."

8. Some researchers had professional transcribers transcribe the dialogues. I transcribed 16 dialogues using a professional transcription machine. Listening to the participants' voices once the dialogues were completed was powerful! Hearing the pauses, the laughter and the moments of sadness brought the dialogues back to life. It reminded me of ideas I had been thinking about during portions of the dialogues or it revealed new ideas I had not considered during the dialogues. If possible, transcribe the dialogues yourself and use a transcription machine by all means.

9. When you begin the process of analyzing and writing and find yourself at a loss for words or do not know where to begin, listen to the tapes or start

reading the transcriptions again. I found that engaging with the participants' words always got me back to what the study was about.

10. Above all, remember that you are a participant and your ideas are just as important as those of your participants. Share your critical reflections with others and write down what you are thinking and feeling throughout the process in a research journal. Regard it as another data source in your analysis. Carry your tape recorder with you at all times and capture those revelations and emerging questions as you think of them. I found myself recording some of my reflections when I couldn't get to my journal.

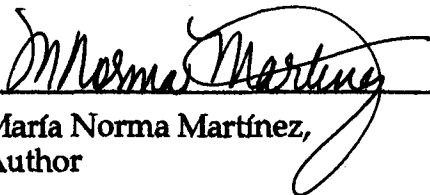THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Dissertation Abstract

The Principal's Role in Promoting Success for Culturally and Linguistically

Diverse Students: A Participatory Research Study

Educational research claims that school leadership is a key factor in

improving academic performance, yet non-White and poor students continue to

experience academic failure. Principals hold important leadership positions in

schools and have the ability to influence, lead and manage school communities.

Few studies, however, have looked specifically at the characteristics of principals

who have successfully improved the achievement of culturally and linguistically

diverse youth. This study examined the complex role of school principals, how

their values affected decision-making, and how their position influenced the way

in which others perceived culturally diverse students and their families
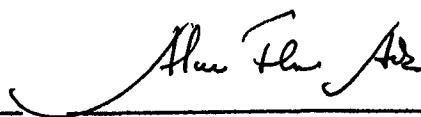
Using Participatory Research methodology, the study included six

elementary school principals and one high school principal from public schools

in the California Bay Area. The selection criteria for participation included

schools with at least a 50% non-White student population, or with at least 30%

identified English Learners. In addition, the schools demonstrated academic

improvement on the state Academic Performance Index from 1999-2002. The

principals participated in a series of dialogues which were recorded, transcribed

and analyzed to identify generative themes. Through dialogic retrospection, the

participants reflected upon equity and diversity and defined success for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

The findings indicated that the participants shared a commitment to improve academic achievement, but none of them felt that this was an exclusive assignment without considering other goals for their schools. Creating a caring environment and community engagement were equally important and were considered prerequisites for achieving desired academic results. The participants' roles as instructional leaders and resource brokers included an intercultural orientation that regarded students' backgrounds as assets. As negotiators for change, one of their major challenges was changing attitudes and perceptions that perpetuated a deficit paradigm for educating diverse students. In conclusion, promoting a culturally responsive education can improve academic performance and there is a need to provide school leaders with constructive opportunities to address racism in administrative practice and in educational initiatives.

María Norma Martínez,
Author

Alma Flor Ada,
Chairperson, Dissertation Committee

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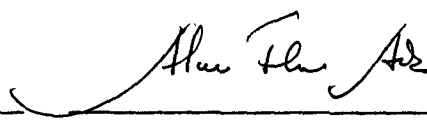in which others perceived culturally diverse students and their families

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