CHALLENGES IN LEADERSHIP THAT BESET BLACK PRINCIPALS IN
PREDOMINANTLY WHITE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Michelle Renee Wiley
A DISSERTATION
in
Educational and Organizational Leadership
Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania
in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education

2016

Supervisor of Dissertation:

Vivian Lynette Gadsden, William T. Carter Professor of Child Development and Education;
Dean, Graduate School of Education:

Pamela L. Grossman, Dean and Professor

Dissertation Committee:

Vivian Lynette Gadsden, William T. Carter Professor of Child Development and Education
James Earl Davis, Professor of Higher Education, Bernard C. Watson Endowed Chair in Urban Education
Diane R. Waff, Practice Professor, Education
CHALLENGES IN LEADERSHIP THAT BESET BLACK PRINCIPALS IN
PREDOMINANTLY WHITE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

COPYRIGHT

2016

Michelle Renee Wiley

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-
NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the countless black principals who serve in predominantly white school communities, who meet the challenges of the day with commitment and with fortitude to defy labels for leadership. You represent sources of inspiration for all children everywhere.

I also dedicate this accomplishment to the educators who have made all the difference in my personal learning experiences. To my greatest teachers, my mother, Mariah Catherine, my mother-in-law, Annie Mae, and my sister, Brenda. You have taught me life lessons that surpass any advanced degrees that I have earned. To Delores Williams, my third grade teacher; to Richard Snell, my ninth grade civics teacher; and to Sandra Holod, my assistant principal and mentor, you’ve taught me to be boundless in my explorations and expectations for myself. Thank you for opening the doors to my imagination.

I dedicate this work to my wonderful family members and to a host of friends who encouraged me during this monumental task. There are no words to express my gratitude for your love, support, and patience. I have never felt so appreciated and uplifted. No more pencils, no more books for a while, I promise!

And finally, to my husband, James, thank you for teaching me the greatest lesson that I could ever learn, how to love, wholeheartedly. O.W.G.T.T.B.N.S.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my appreciation for my dissertation committee, Dr. Vivian Gadsden, Dr. James Davis, and Dr. Diane Waff. Thank you for your assistance during this study. I am humbled and inspired by your expertise and support of this work. My gratitude goes to the Mid-Career Program faculty and staff of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania. Thank you for providing an enriching and rewarding learning experience. I am grateful for the renewal that has been a by-product of the skills gained from the connections I’ve made through this program. To Jessica Lundeen, Martha Williams, Kathy Rho, Adrianne Flamer, and Mary Ye, your support over the past three years has been monumental. Thank you for the smiles and hugs that you have provided during my struggles and growing pains.

A special acknowledgment to all of the members of Cohort 12: You have been a source of strength and affirmation. No words can express the heart-felt appreciation that I have for your care and encouragement. We are, forever. I look forward to our future journeys.

To James and Juliane, no accomplishment surpasses the joy of our moments together.

And finally, To God Be the Glory, this great thing, He has done! He has been my source of strength and endurance.
ABSTRACT

CHALLENGES IN LEADERSHIP THAT BESET BLACK PRINCIPALS IN PREDOMINANTLY WHITE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Michelle Renee Wiley
Vivian Lynette Gadsden

Much of the research on African American educational leaders has focused on the insurmountable odds they face in large, segregated, urban, and underfunded schools where there are high volumes of student underachievement. Increasingly, however, black administrators are found in rural and suburban areas that represent a range of ethnically diverse communities with which they may share little in racial and political history and background experiences.

This qualitative study gathered information about the experiences of black principals who work in predominantly white school communities. It examined the nature of black principals’ experiences in a society in which race continues to occupy a significant place, and it highlighted the challenges they face in establishing trusting relationships with members of their school communities. Their reasons for choosing these sites vary, as do their experiences in them. Participants for this study included 12 African American principals who work or have worked in local school communities where the parents, faculty, and students are predominantly white. The research methodology for the study included in-depth, critical and reflective interviews that were conducted with male or female principals, as well as the examination of their archival data. Findings suggest that racism creates barriers that hinder the development of trusting
relationships between African American principals and their local white communities.
The data suggest that they are vulnerable to feelings of alienation and rejection. This study contributes to theories of educational leadership as well as implications for continued advocacy and acceptance of African American leadership in ethnically diverse school communities.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ........................................................................................................... iii  
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ........................................................................................ iv  
ABSTRACT ................................................................................................................ v  
LIST OF TABLES ..................................................................................................... ix  
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ..................................................................................... x  

CHAPTER 1: RACE MATTERS ................................................................................. 1  
  INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................ 1  
  AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STORY .................................................................................... 2  
  STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM .............................................................................. 15  
  RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE ........................................................................ 17  
  RESEARCH QUESTIONS .......................................................................................... 19  

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .......................................................... 20  
  LEARNING FROM LEADERSHIP ............................................................................ 21  
  ESTABLISHING A CONTEXT AND CULTURE FOR LEARNING ......................... 23  
  LEADERSHIP THAT FOSTERS RELATIONAL TRUST ........................................ 29  
  HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON AFRICAN AMERICAN PRINCIPALS .............. 34  
  CRITICAL RACE THEORY .................................................................................... 47  

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN ...................................... 56  
  CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .................................................................................. 58  
  RESEARCH DESIGN ................................................................................................ 59  
  PARTICIPANT SELECTION AND SELECTION CRITERIA .................................... 61  
  DATA COLLECTION ................................................................................................ 62  
  DATA ANALYSIS .................................................................................................... 63  
  RESEARCHER ROLE AND BIASES ....................................................................... 70  
  VALIDITY ............................................................................................................... 70  

CHAPTER 4: STUDY FINDINGS ............................................................................. 71  
  PATHWAYS TO THE PRINCIPALSHP .................................................................... 71  
  TRANSITIONS TO LEADERSHIP ............................................................................ 88  
  THEIR LIVED EXPERIENCES ............................................................................... 105  

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS ................................................... 112  
  DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS ......................................................................... 113  
  IMPLICATIONS ....................................................................................................... 128  
  SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION ............................................................................ 131  

APPENDIX A: TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS .................... 133  
APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT .................................................. 134  
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL .................................................................. 136  
APPENDIX D: DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS: 2003-2004 .............................. 141
APPENDIX E: NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: 2011-2012.. 145
APPENDIX F: DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY RACE AND LOCATION IN THE UNITED STATES, 2007-2008.......................................................................................................................... 149
APPENDIX G: DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY RACE AND LOCATION IN THE UNITED STATES, 2011-2012.................................................................................................................. 152
BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................................................................................................................................................ 155
# LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Composition of Black/White Principals in U.S. Schools ........................ 56  
Table 2. Demographic Information of Study Participants .......................... 75  
Table 3. Number of Study Participants by Gender ........................................ 75  
Table 4. Number of Study Participants by Regions in the U.S. ..................... 76  
Table 5. Number of Study Participants by States in the U.S. ......................... 76  
Table 6. Number of Study Participants by Regions Outside the U.S. ............ 76  
Table 7. Initial Key Words and Phrases for Cycle One Coding ..................... 78  
Table 8. Final Coding Structure ............................................................. 79  
Table 9. Study Participants’ Individual Pathways to the Principalship .......... 93  
Table 10. Advice to Other Black Principals .............................................. 119
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Frequency of Positive Experiences</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Frequency of Challenges to Relational Trust</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Positive Experiences</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Challenges to Relational Trust</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Positive Encounters Based Upon Years Of Experience</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Challenges Based Upon Years Of Experience</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1:
RACE MATTERS

Introduction

The references to America as being a post-racial society would lead us to think that race is an insignificant factor in regard to limiting opportunities for African Americans. Racial progress is undeniable, as Blacks now hold some of the highest offices in the nation. Never before have we had such diversity in business, politics, sports, labor, and in education. Barack Hussein Obama, an African American\(^1\), Harvard law school graduate is serving his second term as the 44\(^{th}\) President of the United States. Many people viewed President Obama’s election as a huge indicator that racism had finally been eradicated from American culture. Although the twenty first century has indeed seen African Americans at the highest levels of leadership, Blacks still regularly confront obstacles of legitimacy and resistance (Leffler, 2014). Gone are the days when “Whites Only” signs were prominently displayed and espoused in public view; however, racial divide still exists, and we can see the effects in our national employment practices, housing, prison system and other sectors of American society. National statistics indicate that African Americans continue to dwell on the bottom of society in education, income, and all standards of living (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). In 2013, Blacks and Hispanics were more than twice as likely as Whites and Asians to have incomes that fall below the

\(^1\) African American and Black: This study uses the descriptors African American and Black interchangeably. African American and Black refer to individuals of African descent born in the United States as well as those who have migrated from other countries and regions, such as the Caribbean.
official poverty level. The working-poor\textsuperscript{2} rate was 13.3\% for Blacks, 12.8\% for Hispanics, 6.1\% for Whites, and 4.5\% for Asians (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). In January 2016, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the unemployment rate for African Americans lingered at 8.8\% compared to 4.3\% for Whites in the same age brackets.

Certainly, glass ceilings have been pierced, but not shattered (West, 2011). Overt forms of discrimination have been attacked and forced to become more covert, and the legacy of racial divide lingers in the face of the obstinate denials of its realities (West, 2011). The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 led to changes in laws in America; however, underlying attitudes that foster stereotypes and discrimination still prevail. The most visible examples are the recent racial profiling cases that have prompted notable protests and demonstrations in places like Ferguson, Missouri, similar to those of the Freedom Riders in the 1960s. Race and racism are woven in American history and cannot be eradicated without understanding that race matters in everything that we consider American. We have not lived in a colorblind society in the past, nor do we live in a race-less culture today. Race has a deep social meaning for us (DiAngelo, 2012). We can, most definitely, see its prominent effects in our school systems.

**Autobiographical Story**

*Early Influences.* As an African American female, growing up during the 1970’s in a rural, predominantly white community in southeastern Pennsylvania, race was a dominant factor in my daily life’s experiences. It was the focal point of my identity in
the communities where I lived as a young child, at the colleges and universities where I studied, and at the schools where I worked as a school administrator.

During my fifth grade school year, my family moved from our urban neighborhood to a small, white rural community, north of the city. Although the physical distance was less than fifty miles, the two worlds could not have been further apart. I was totally unprepared for the transformations that I experienced as a result of the move from our black neighborhood and faltered under the prominence that race played in my new community. I became more aware of my racial identity as it became a salient aspect of my uniqueness in my new community. I experienced feelings of alienation and isolation as I noticed how the cars of the local residents slowed down as they passed by my house. Their racial jeers created tense moments that erupted without warning. Their silent stares became familiar indicators of the racial divide that separated my family and me from other members of the community. During daily interactions with peers at school and when playing with cousins who came to visit, race was a boundary that separated us; I was either too black or too white to be accepted into their inner circles. Classroom discussions about race related topics were painful moments, as I tried not to notice that I was the only black person in the room. When my cousins came to visit, they made fun of the ‘proper’ way that I talked. They thought that my self-conscious speech patterns were intentional attempts to “act white.” Unknowingly to us all, our thoughts, conversations, and engagements were being orchestrated by racial stereotypes that embedded awkwardness, fear, and separation into our young lives. I felt insecure and angry.

Tatum (1997), a clinical psychologist with experience in racial identity development, affirms the psychological impact of racism on both white and black
children. For young African American children, certain styles of speech, dress, and music may be embraced as “authentically black” and become highly valued, while attitudes and behaviors associated with whites may be viewed with disdain (Tatum, 1997, p.61). Her research about the experiences of black adolescents in predominantly white settings has informed my thinking about the significance of these events and invited new ways of viewing old problems and provided new language for productive dialogue about racial issues. Having a theoretical framework that helps to make sense of what we observe in our daily lives is a very valuable resource (Tatum, 1997).

As I became more familiar with my new surroundings, I totally rejected any notions of inferiority. In spite of the subtle rejections that were ever present, I ran faster than all the white boys who challenged me races at recess and got straight A’s on all of my progress reports. I was smarter than most of the white students in my class and found it ironic, if not ridiculous that I could never meet their standard of approval. And yet, the desire to be accepted by the very same people who rejected me was ever present. I held steadfast to the memories of my old school and to thoughts of my former teacher, Mrs. Williams. My third grade year was a pivotal period in time that formulated my determination to set goals for my future. Those experiences transformed me and all the other black children in the classroom into learners who were empowered to create dreams that were in stark contrast to the restricted lives we were destined to live and provided visions of the power that knowledge could bring.

During my adolescence, I read Richard Wright’s autobiography, *Black Boy*, and it provided great affirmation for my experiences as a black child growing up in a small white community. In his novel, Wright expressed a desire to live his life on his own
terms rather than be forced to adhere to the expectations that society and his family histories had dictated for him. Like me, he struggled with the pressure to conform to the expectations that white and black cultures had designed for him. He wanted to shape his own future, regardless of the consequences. Often times his tenacity to live his own life according to his own principles resulted in isolation from both cultures. I had a high regard for his resiliency, and sought to feel more comfortable in my own skin, regardless of the environment. Tatum (1997) provides explanation for this upsurge of racial independence. “In adolescence, as race becomes personally salient for black youth, they seek to reflect and embrace their racial identity in their self-presentation,”(p. 63).

As a college undergraduate majoring in education, I was one of a few black students at the university I attended. I was the first member of my immediate family to attend college, and I was excited to be at a post secondary level of learning. I enjoyed friendships with both black and white peers; however, the racial gulf between black and white students did not tolerate inter-mingling between the two groups. My blackness was defined, monitored, and measured by both groups, based upon where I sat in the cafeteria. All of the black students showed their solidarity by sitting at the same two tables for every meal. Socializing and sitting with white students in the cafeteria was considered an act of betrayal, resulting in rejection from the other black students at large. Based upon their fieldwork in U.S. high schools, Fordham and Ogbu (1986) noted a similar psychological pattern found among African American young adults they encountered. The anger and resentment that was noted among the teens was in response to the growing awareness of their exclusion from full participation in American society. They turned to each other for the much needed support they were not likely to find anywhere else
(Tatum, 1997). I still enjoyed my relationships with friends on both sides of the racial
gulf, but did not want to appear to be disloyal to my black friends. I chose to eat at the
very end of the meal times, usually alone and in isolation from both groups. These self-
segregating experiences shaped my life for future challenges. Resisting stereotypes and
affirming other definitions of themselves is part of the task facing African Americans in
both white and black communities (Tatum, 1997).

Pathway to the Principalship. My first teaching position was in an urban setting.
I sought to work in a district where I could teach underserved children who would benefit
from my passion for mathematics. I was an algebra teacher in a culturally diverse high
school in Southeastern Pennsylvania, where there was a substantial number of students
from many different cultures. I was one of three African American teachers at the high
school. I flourished as a math teacher and developed a strong rapport with my students
and colleagues. After my third year of teaching, the principal approached me to ask if I
would consider accepting a Dean of Students position at the school. I accepted the quasi-
administrative role, but it proved to be a difficult transition into administration. As the
dean, I was responsible for assisting the assistant principal with student concerns and
behaviors, while maintaining my status as a member of the bargaining unit. The tense
relationship between the faculty and administration made it difficult for me to continue as
a member of an administrative team that did not support teachers. When I decided to
pursue my administrative goals in a nearby suburban district, my school principal did not
speak to me again, and my black colleagues expressed their disappointment in my
decision to leave. They thought I should remain where I could ‘uplift the race’ and be a
positive role model for the black children in the school. I felt like I was abandoning my
students, but my guilt subsided when I saw the positive impact that my presence in the suburban school had on the black, brown, and white children who had never encountered persons of color in an authoritarian role. The assistant superintendent welcomed the cultural diversity that I brought to the white school community and extended his continuous support through my transition in the district. He acknowledged the presence of racial conflict amongst the students at the high school and raised concern of its impact on my success in the school community. He actively sought to recruit other African American teachers to meet the needs of the black students who were experiencing turmoil at the high school; however, I remained the only black employee in the district throughout my tenure. I flourished professionally as a math teacher and completed my graduate coursework to become a building administrator in the district. I served as an assistant principal at the middle school level for three years.

My experiences as the assistant principal prepared me for taking on a building principal position. I had established a great rapport with many students, teachers, and parents in the community; therefore, I was confident in my application for the principalship position at the other middle school in the district. The assistant superintendent had retired, and the school district was in a turbulent transition. The interim superintendent was a bureaucratic leader who espoused dominant culture traditions of school leadership. After an administrative meeting, he approached me and inquired about my hair. I had just begun to wear it chemically straightened, temporarily breaking away from my regular, natural styling. He complimented my new hairdo and suggested that I continue to wear it that way, all the time. His preference for straight hair
was clearly stated. I was offended by the attention he gave to my straightened hair and dismissed his comments, refusing to change my plans to return to my natural styling.

For African American women, the personal choice to wear your hair in its natural state can be a precarious one, viewed by some as a political statement rather than a styling preference. Since African women first came to America, the bends and twists of natural black hair have served as a visible marker of our political and social marginalization. In her essay, *Why ‘Nappy’ Is Offensive*, Zine Magubane (2007) noted Thomas Jefferson’s reflections after emancipation on why it would be impossible to fully incorporate Blacks into American society. In *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson (1785) concluded that full inclusion was out of the question because of the differences “both physical and moral,” chief among them the absence of long, flowing hair (p. 76).

During my interviews for the principalship, I wore my hair twisted in neat ringlets that preserved the natural state of my hair. The teachers and building level administrators on the hiring committee announced that I was their first choice during the first and second rounds of interviews. A few days later the only other semi-final candidate for the position withdrew his name, leaving me as the sole candidate for the principalship. My appointment as the next principal of the middle school seemed eminent. Several days later, the Human Relations Director announced that the district cabinet had hired an external candidate as the new principal of the middle school. The appointment came out of left field, since the newly hired candidate had not participated in the interview process at the teacher and building administrative level and had not submitted paperwork prior to the posted deadline for the position. There were cries of ‘foul play’ from teachers and building administrators in the school community. I was stunned by the turn of events and
wondered if my ‘nappy’ hair had played a role in what had transpired. Should I have straightened my hair to conform to the superintendent’s expectations? I felt betrayed and powerless. How could they get away with such distortions of procedure? What could I do about it? I wrote a letter of complaint to the interim superintendent, requesting an audience with the Board of Directors. He denied my request and informed me that I had no other recourse but to accept the decision that had been made. Shortly thereafter, I decided to leave the district and accepted a middle school principal position in an impoverished urban school district where 68% of the students were non-proficient in reading and 73% of the students were non-proficient in math. Although 97% of the students in the school were Hispanic, there were only three Hispanic teachers on the faculty and one Hispanic administrator. Once again, I was the only black member of the professional staff. My first tenure as principal was challenging and filled with frustration and anguish. I worked tirelessly to impact the epic failure of the bright, young children who were systematically underserved throughout the district. The predominantly white faculty provided marginal lessons and blamed their Hispanic and African American students and the local environment for the lack of student achievement. I challenged their beliefs about their students and fought against the blatant structures of low expectations that permeated the school culture. During my first year as the principal of the building, the instructional support administrator for the school was dismissed after state investigations revealed her inappropriate relationship with a student. During that same year, five teachers received unsatisfactory ratings for their deliberate failure to provide instruction for their students. State and federal funding that had been allotted for improvement in student achievement was squandered and wasted due to the
incompetency of administrators with racial lenses that blinded them to the potential of these bright children. The school community’s disregard for the welfare of their students was rampant. The changes that were implemented during my tenure became unsustainable, and I left the district after serving as a principal for two years.

_School Leadership in a Predominantly White Community._ I applied for an administrative position in a small, white community in southeastern Pennsylvania. The school district consisted of seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and one high school. They had an annual revenue sum that totaled 110 million dollars, and the district spending per student was $14,343. The ethnic makeup of students in the school district community included 2% African American, 2% Asian, 2% Hispanic, 2% Other, and 92% White. The district employed 490 teachers, 74% of them with advanced degrees. The student to teacher ratio was 16:1. After completing a two-hour interview with the superintendent and the assistant superintendent, I was hired as the principal of one of the elementary schools. There were no other interviews or formal discussions with any other personnel in the district. I was grateful for the opportunity to work in a district where student proficiency rates were 83% or higher and my salary would immediately increase by 30%.

Shortly after taking the position, I realized that I had several political and social hurdles to overcome.

I joined the school district as one of two African American principals on the administrative team. My first year in the district was a transitional year in many ways. It was the last year of the teachers’ contract, and negotiations had reached a stalemate. Teachers and administrators were nervous and fearful that a strike was eminent. To add to our level of anxiety, my school building was slated for a summer renovation that
required major changes throughout the facility. My teachers had to pack up their classrooms at the end of the school year and place all their belongings in storage boxes. Some of them had been in their classrooms for more than ten years and resented all the changes that were necessary before the renovation could begin. I received very little support from the district Director of Facilities. He excluded me from important implementation meetings, and I had to continually assert myself into discussions that impacted my students and faculty. It was very obvious that my input was welcomed or valued by the renovation committee.

My faculty and staff members included a small group of veteran teachers that had a reputation in the school district for being a challenging group. They were accustomed to the laid-back leadership style of the former principal, and his lack of involvement framed their practices and procedures in the school building. They dominated the other less assertive faculty members, and used intimidation to keep the younger, inexperienced teachers in line with their ideals. They were very unhappy about the change in school leadership and resented the disruptions caused by the facility renovations. I sought the support of the superintendent, and he encouraged me to ignore their rumblings and to stay the course with the district initiatives. Their frustrations grew and festered. I focused my attention on cultivating relationships with the faculty members who demonstrated a desire to be collaborative. Bus duty and cafeteria duty became opportunities to chat with faculty members on a personal level. These informal talks provided time for us to get acquainted and presented opportunities to foster trust and flexibility. They gave me a chance to share my vision for the school and to dispel any fears about our future work. The negative faction discouraged any efforts that other
teachers made to respond to my attempts to establish a collaborative, working relationship with them. Retrospectively, I realize that I underestimated the power of the informal leadership of the building and miscalculated their ability to influence the other faculty members. They whispered negative comments about me to parents and other staff members in their efforts to gain more support and credibility for their protests. They developed a stronghold of ‘passive defiance’ to cripple my influence on the other faculty and staff members. Our turbulent experiences were a source of anguish and frustration like none other that I have encountered in my professional life. Joining this school organization during this pivotal time when monumental shifts were occurring in the local and school community was definitely a challenge.

I recognized the importance of establishing a genuine, working relationship with key stakeholders and sought out ways to develop a rapport with parents and local community leaders. I knew it would be crucial to my success as the school administrator. The previous principal was a popular, white male who had established intimate ties with several parents and school community members. He socialized with PTO leaders and with members of the faculty regularly. Shortly after his departure, I learned that he continued to socialize with faculty and PTO board members, soliciting news about the school and providing commentary about my leadership. The other elementary principals in the district were cordial when I approached them with questions, but otherwise, they remained aloof. Whether I was attending administrative meetings or greeting parents at my school building, I felt isolated from my school community and alienated from my peers. My efforts to establish relationships with my colleagues and school community were met with distain.
The local community was comprised of blue-collar residents who had lived in this insular area for most of their lives. At the onset of my tenure, African American and Hispanic families began to move into the community from a nearby metropolitan area. Local residents were wary of the demographic changes that were occurring in their neighborhoods and in their schools and devised ways to thwart any substantial impact on their community traditions and ideals. The local parent-teacher organizations was actively involved in funding field trips and assemblies for elementary students. My PTO leaders were an aggressive group who also wanted to make administrative decisions for the school. They decided that we needed more technology in our classrooms and scheduled meetings with the district technology director to determine the type of devices they would purchase for the school. I tried to curtail their ability to eliminate my voice from the decision-making process by soliciting the support of the superintendent and his cabinet members. During our discussions they agreed to assist me in establishing a protocol for the PTO to follow that would prevent them from circumventing the input of the building principal. Nevertheless, the PTO officers continued to successfully push their agendas, and the district cabinet members continued to support their efforts instead of mine. Their boldness and disrespect grew in its intensity and frequency. I felt powerless and invisible in my role as the principal of the school.

I recognized that I did not have the skill set needed to navigate thorough these growing concerns. As my relationship with the faculty and PTO members became increasingly strained, I approached the superintendent several times to solicit support for addressing these problems. He did not have the same sense of urgency that I had in trying to resolve these matters. He categorized this resistance as ‘typical’ issues of
teacher and parent entitlement. He told me not to worry about it. I felt ostracized and marginal in my role as the leader of the school and sought his assistance for support and affirmation. We addressed the issues at hand on a surface level, without addressing the deep-rooted systems that continued to build beneath the layers of frustration. The dissentions of the PTO leaders and teacher group were deep-rooted perceptions that were difficult to transcend. Their patterns of behavior include many instances of passive aggression, such as giving eye contact to others during group discussions that I have facilitated, refusing to address me by my name, sending emails to other faculty members to incite discontent. The unyielding micro-aggressions and challenges from teachers, PTO officers, and colleagues were relentless. They conspired to discredit my leadership at the school and through out the district. They solicited the support of the Human Resource Director. He met with the teachers and presented their arguments to the superintendent, without allowing me to provide a rebuttal to their complaints. My core group of teachers informed me of the coercion they had received from the teachers who were trying to get me removed from my position as the leader of the building. The core group of teachers went to the superintendent to register a complaint against their colleagues, but he seemed to waiver in his support of my leadership as opposition mounted. The union faculty representatives heard about the meetings with the superintendent and threatened to discontinue their union representation for any teachers who refused to follow their lead. I countered their negative influence by working countless hours and devoting more time to support the efforts of the core teachers. I was determined to get the job done, with or without the support of my superintendent and his cabinet members. The great rapport that I had established with the students in the school
and our positive trend in student achievement had no impact on the negative feed that this group continued to release to the local school community. From the head custodian to school board members, group members expressed their discontent and mistrust of my ability to lead the school community. The stress and strain of their rejection resulted in anxiety and exhaustion that had a devastating impact on my health.

Many leaders have personal visions that never get translated into shared visions that motivate an organization because they lack the ability to foster genuine commitment rather than compliance. It is imperative for school principals to develop relational trust with faculty members that allow for effective collaborations to occur. Such trust relationships provide the scaffolding to transform members of the learning organization to support and trust the leader’s vision, instead of formulating a collective effort against it.

**Statement of the Problem**

Despite the wealth of research that has been conducted on educational leadership, there is little knowledge related to black administrators in non-urban settings. Much of the work on black administrators dates back to the 1980s when their numbers were increasing overwhelmingly in black urban districts and to a lesser degree in white, middle class districts. African American leaders’ stories are narratives of hardship, determination, and success situated in local communities and national culture (Leffler, 2014). The research of James Davis and Jean Madsen (2009) emphasized the strengths of African American leaders in establishing relational orientation organizations at their urban schools. As “cultural translators for the school and the school community”, black
administrators were successful in placing their urban schools in the heart of the community, interacting with parents and reducing individual motivations in their efforts to move towards a collective efficacy (Davis and Madsen, 2009, p. 134). Davis and Madsen (2009) demonstrated how black leadership has emerged from historical struggle. Despite the growing presence of black administrators in white school communities, there is little knowledge related to their work: e.g., their experiences, barriers, and opportunities in racially incongruent settings\(^2\). Therefore, information on their unique perspectives and pathways to becoming successful leaders would provide substance that warrants the exploration of their lived experiences. This project is an exploration of African American leadership through the words and experiences of the people themselves (Leffler, 2014).

In examining the experiences of African American principals who work in predominantly White school communities, this research study tried to capture an important period of social change in the United States, educational leadership. In *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, Carter Woodson (1933) provided a definitive critique of the American educational system, with reference to its damaging effects on Blacks. “When you control a man’s thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will find his proper place and will stay in it”(Woodson, 1933, p.5). Woodson’s concept of *mis-education* hinged on the educational system’s failure to provide authenticity to the presence and significance of Blacks in American society. He considered this absence deplorable, an American

\(^2\) *Racially Incongruent Settings*: Environment in which there is an absence or minor representation of one’s racial group amongst the members of the community.
tragedy, dooming Blacks to a hopeless acceptance of the inferior role assigned to them by the dominant race and absorbed by them through their schooling, causing them feel like they will never measure up to the standards of other peoples (Woodson, 1933). No matter the degree of success or accomplishment, there is always a persistent need for African Americans to prove themselves and battle the negative assumptions of the larger society (Leffler, 2014).

**Rationale and Significance**

_The presence of truth in new forms provokes resistance, confounding those committed to accepted measures for determining the quality and validity of statements made and conclusions reached, and making it difficult for them to respond and adjudge what is acceptable._

–Derrick Bell, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*

African American school leadership is an under-researched, underdeveloped, and undervalued topic in the scholarship on school administration and leadership (Foster & Tillman, 2009, p.1). In particular, the experiences of African American leaders in predominantly white school settings are absent from educational discussions, placing the perspectives of black principals in the margins of educational administration (Gooden, 2012, Tillman, 2004). Tillman (2004) attributes what we do know of the experiences and accomplishments of African American principals to a core of historical work that is focused on schools more broadly and in which the experiences of African American principals are a subset of larger discussion of racial discrimination and segregation (see Anderson, 1988; Franklin, 1990; Savage, 2001; and Siddle Walker, 2003). This study examined black principals’ experiences within predominantly white school settings, their motivations to serve, their success in establishing trust relationships with members of the
school community, and their goals in a society in which race continues to occupy a significant place and where schools and schooling are often placed at risk. Through their voices, this research gained insights regarding the impact of race and ethnicity on educational leadership among African Americans, deepening our understanding of the past, illuminating present conditions that hinder their progress, and allowing for others to navigate through challenges in the future (Karpinski, 2006).

This research study offers a critical analysis of the experiences and challenges of African American principals who work in predominantly white school settings. It is presented in five chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and includes an autobiographical narrative that establishes my positionality as an African American principal who works in a predominantly white school community. Chapter One also includes the statement of the problem, the rationale and significance, and research questions.

Chapter Two presents a review of the literature, including connections between school leadership and student learning, describing school leadership that fosters relational trust, reviewing historical perspectives on African American principals, and examining the socio-cultural contestations and convergences of Critical Race Theory.

Chapter Three presents the methodology of this research study. It includes the conceptual framework and design of the study, the selection of participants, and data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter Four presents the study’s findings, including participant profiles and data analysis in regard to the research questions. Chapter Five provides a summary of the entire study, discussions of the findings, implications of the
findings, and recommendations for future research related to African American leadership in education.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. How do African American principals who work in predominantly white school settings describe their experiences?

2. What are the challenges they face in developing trusting relationships with the members of their school communities?
CHAPTER 2:

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much has been written about school leadership. Among school-related influences on student learning, leadership is second in importance only to classroom instruction (Fullan, 1997; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Research and practical knowledge point to the critical importance of strong principal leadership in particular that can effectively manage complex systems and lead to instructional improvement (Fullan, 1997; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Principals are key to initiating, implementing, and sustaining high-quality schools. What schools are and what people in the community want them to be shape the daily, overwhelming work realities of principals. Their day is filled with a flood of problems, issues, ideas, and people, such that the unexpected becomes the norm. Routine notions of time management do not apply as irate parents, challenging students, safety issues, and facility breakdowns require immediate attention, often with little time for careful consideration of alternative solutions (Peterson, 1982). Over the past decade, research on school principals has reiterated their importance in promoting school effectiveness, restructuring, school improvement, and the implementation of reform (Fullan, 1997; Tucker & Codding, 2002). Successful principals engage their schools in the core processes of establishing, maintaining, evaluating, and improving their structures and cultures (Tucker & Codding, 2002). Principals develop their staff and local school community as effective members of the organizations who will sustain the performance of their students and support the goals that the principal wishes to accomplish. They must be keenly aware of the broad social, economic, and cultural trends in order to interpret where and how the school should exert its energies in keeping learning at the
helm. There is a growing body of literature concentrating on the ability of school leaders to be able to work well with others in the school community in order to establish the conditions in which creative and effective student learning can take place. The research suggests that without supportive local conditions, optimizing student learning is unlikely to occur. In the following section the literature will explore the connections between leadership and student learning and discuss how the principal’s leadership is mediated by the culture, the work processes, and the people of the school community.

Learning from Leadership

Over the last decade, educators and policymakers have increasingly recognized sound education leadership as crucial to improving what goes on in the classrooms of the nation’s public schools. However, little is accomplished in schools unless individual leaders have the collective support of others in the school environment. A Wallace Foundation commissioned study, *How Leadership Influences Student Learning* (Leithwood et al., 2004) examines the available evidence that ties leadership to student achievement and makes clear that although principals are the central leaders in schools, they are not the only leaders. The researchers found a strong connection between student achievement and what they call the “collective leadership” of principals, teachers, parents, school administrators, and others in making school decisions (p. 6). The combined influence of these varied leaders had a greater impact on learning than the influence of any one leader.

Different forms of leadership are described by Leithwood, using adjectives such as “instructional,” “participative,” “democratic,” “transformational,” “moral,” and
“strategic” (Leithwood et al., 2004). These labels primarily capture different stylistic or methodological approaches to accomplishing the same two essential objectives critical to any organization’s effectiveness: 1) helping the organization set a defensible set of directions and 2) influencing members to move in those directions (Leithwood et al., 2004). “Instructional leadership,” for example, encourages a focus on improving the classroom practices of teachers as the direction for the school. “Transformational leadership,” on the other hand, draws attention to a broader array of school and classroom conditions that may need to be changed if learning is to improve. Both “democratic” and “participative leadership” are especially concerned with how decisions are made about both school priorities and how to pursue them. As it is frequently used in the field and in educational leadership research dating back nearly 70 years, the ideas underlying the term “distributed leadership” have mainly common sense meanings and connotations that are not disputed (Leithwood et al., 2004).

According to the evidence compiled and analyzed by Leithwood, there is compelling evidence of a common core of practices that are the basis of successful leadership that is linked to success student outcomes: a) setting directions, b) developing people, and c) redesigning the organization (Leithwood et al., 2004).

Leithwood goes on to say that setting directions account for the largest proportion of a leader’s impact (Leithwood et al., 2004). People are motivated by goals that can undergird a sense of purpose or vision, and people are motivated by goals that they find personally compelling, as well as challenging. Leithwood theorizes that these goals help people make sense of their work and help them to find a sense of identity for themselves within the context of work (Leithwood et al., 2004). Specific leadership practices, such
as identifying and articulating a vision foster the acceptance of group goals and create high performance expectations for students (Leithwood et al., 2004).

The evidence collected by Leithwood et al. (2004) regarding the contributions of developing people is substantial. More-specific sets of leadership practices significantly and positively influencing these direct experiences include offering intellectual stimulation, providing individualized support and providing appropriate models of best practice that are fundamental to student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004). Leithwood found that the contribution of schools to student learning most certainly depends on the motivations and capacities of teachers and administrators, acting both individually and collectively (Leithwood et al., 2004). Successful educational leaders develop their districts and schools as effective organizations that support and sustain the performance of administrators and teachers as well as students (Leithwood et al., 2004). Specific practices associated with this set of basics include strengthening district and school cultures, modifying organizational structures and building collaborative processes. Like experts in most fields, successful leaders master not only the basics, but they also respond to the unique demands of the contexts in which they find themselves. Impressive evidence suggests that individual leaders actually behave quite differently depending on the circumstances they are facing and the people with whom they are working (Leithwood et al., 2004).

**Establishing A Context and Culture For Learning**

Leithwood et al. (2004) explore other features that have important implications for what it means to offer successful leadership: the relevance of organizational context
to leaders, including features such as geographic location, level of schooling, and both school and district size. For example, successful principals in inner-city schools often find it necessary to engage in more direct and top-down forms of leadership than do successful principals in suburban settings. The curricular knowledge of successful elementary principals frequently rivals the curricular knowledge of their teachers; in contrast, secondary principals will typically rely on their department heads for such knowledge. Similarly, small schools allow for quite direct engagement of leaders in modeling desirable forms of instruction and monitoring the practices of teachers whereas equally successful leaders of large schools typically influence their teachers in more indirect ways, for example, through planned professional development experiences.

There is still much to learn about the essentials of quality leadership, how to harness its benefits, and how to ensure that we don’t continue to throw good leaders into bad systems that will grind down even the best of them (Leithwood et al., 2004). Neither superintendents nor principals can do the whole leadership task by themselves. Successful leaders develop and count on contributions from many others in their organizations. Principals typically count on key teachers for such leadership, along with their local administrative colleagues. They rely on leadership from many central-office and school-based people, along with elected board members.

The impact of a principal’s leadership is also mediated by the culture, the work processes, and the people of the school community (Leithwood et al., 2004). Leadership for learning is not the dramatic announcement of a new innovation. It is the persistent focus on improving the conditions for learning and creating consistency in values and actions across classrooms each day. Leithwood’s “mutual influence” model emphasizes
the impact that the school’s context has on both leadership and on learning (Leithwood et al., 2004). The principal is important, but he or she can only achieve success through the cooperation of others; therefore, leadership should be aimed at building the school’s capacity for improvement. This perspective is both encouraging and humbling. Both education and school improvement are about the development of human capacity; therefore, leadership and learning should be as well (Hallinger, 2011). Leaders who possess a single set of tools will find themselves bouncing around from success to failure without understanding why. The capacity to read their context correctly and their ability to adapt their leadership to the needs accordingly will determine their success. There is no one best leadership style for fostering learning in schools. Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. Leadership is not a phenomenon that has any real meaning until it is attached to a particular context, and until it is directed to a particular purpose with particular people (MacBeath, 2008). McBeath’s work (2008) shows that there has been a change over a period of time from a concentration on leadership as individual action to leadership as a collective activity.

Hallinger (2003) presents a research-based model of leadership for learning that argues that the field has made substantial progress over the past forty years in identifying ways in which leadership contributes to school improvement. Four specific dimensions of leading for learning are presented: values and beliefs, leadership focus, contexts for leadership, and sharing leadership (Hallinger, 2003). Hallinger (2003) begins by presenting a broad model of leadership for learning, followed by an examination of several of its key concepts.
Hallinger (2003) employs the phrase, *leadership for learning* to describe approaches that school leaders should use to achieve important school outcomes, with a particular focus on student learning (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2006, 2010; MacBeath and Cheng, 2008). While the term, *instructional leadership* originally focused on the role of the principal, *leadership for learning* implies a broader concept that incorporates others as well as additional areas for action. Hallinger’s model (2003) indicates that leadership is enacted within an organizational and environmental context. School leaders operate in an “open system” that consists not only of the community, but also the institutional system and social culture (Leithwood et al., 2010). Effective leadership is shaped and responds to the constraints and opportunities in the school organization and its environment. The exercise of leadership is also articulated by personal characteristics of the leaders themselves. Hallinger and Heck (1996) suggest that leadership does not directly impact student learning; instead, the impact of leadership is mediated by school level processes and conditions (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2010). Hallinger and Heck (1996) present the following three dimensions within this model of leadership for learning: a) values for leadership, b) leadership focus, and c) context for leadership.

*Values for leadership.* This model of leadership for learning highlights the role of values in shaping leadership. Values define both the ends towards which leaders aspire as well as the desirable means by which they will work to achieve them. This perspective is not meant to imply that principals dictate the values that guide the school. Instead, principals must begin by taking the time to understand the values that already predominate in the school culture and the extent to which they are creating a healthy,
productive learning culture. Hallinger and Heck (1996) suggest that principals may choose to introduce changes into the value mix of the school; however, dramatic changes in core values should be reserved for crisis or turnaround situations. Principals act as gatekeepers, monitoring and managing the introduction of new values into the school. The principal acts in this role through decisions made on a day-to-day basis concerning resource allocation, staffing, and problem resolution. It can involve taking a stand on a program that the school will or will not adopt, or on what is defined as acceptable behavior or a student or teacher, or how instructional time will or will not be used.

Values also play a role in the principal’s decision-making in another way. Research conducted by Leithwood and Stager (1989) found that effective principals tend to have a high degree of clarity about their own personal values. The researchers theorize that principals use their values as a substitute for information when solving problems in ambiguous and information poor situations. Leithwood and Stager (1989) found that values both shape the thinking and actions of leaders and represent a useful tool for working with and strengthening the school’s learning culture.

Leadership Focus. Hallinger and Heck (1996) used the term, leadership focus to refer to the indirect means through which leadership impacts learning. They emphasized three main paths through which leadership is linked to learning: vision and goals, academic structures and processes, and people. Their model frames leadership as a process of mutual influence (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). They propose that effective leadership for learning is adaptive and responsive to the changing conditions of the school over time. The nature of their model implies that the means through which leadership is linked to learning cannot be reduced to a list of dispositions, strategies, or
behaviors (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). No list could fully account for the contextually contingent nature of successful leadership practice.

*The Context for Leadership.* Hallinger and Heck (1996) indicated that school context represents an important factor in understanding both leadership and student learning results. In more recent years, the research of Opdenakker and Van Damme (2007) has further illuminated the relationship between school context and leadership. Their theories have emerged from a study of school improvement in the UK. Day et al. (2010) examined patterns of leadership across a set of “high improvement schools” where they were able to identify four stages of school improvement and approaches to leadership for learning: (1) coming out of special measures (turnaround phase), (2) taking ownership, (3) developing creativity, and (4) everyone a leader. Their study offers strong support for linking patterns of leadership behavior to successful school improvement across different contexts (Day et al., 2010). Their work counters the perception that one style of leadership is suitable across all school contexts, and it also provides an empirical basis for action that is based on the needs of the school rather than prescriptions about “good leadership” (Day et al., 2010). This research demonstrates that leaders must adapt their styles to changing circumstances and highlights the need for leadership development that enhances flexibility in leadership styles and strategies; therefore, a principal working in a challenging situation can site empirical support for adopting a directive leadership style for a short term. In like manner, a principal who has used a highly directive style and has succeeded in turning the school around may see that the use of this style may have run its course.
Leadership That Fosters Relational Trust

For a school community to work well, it must achieve agreement in each role relationship in terms of the understandings held about the personal obligations and expectations of others (Bryk, 2002). Regardless of how much formal power any given role has in a school community, all participants remain dependent on others to achieve desired outcomes and feel empowered by their efforts. The principal needs faculty support to maintain a cohesive professional community that productively engages parents and students. Teachers’ work depends on decisions that the principal makes about the allocation of resources to their classrooms. The principal needs faculty support to maintain a cohesive professional community that productively engages parents and students. Parents depend on both teachers and the principal to create an environment that keeps their children safe and helps them learn. Such dependencies create a sense of mutual vulnerability for all individuals involved. Consequently, deliberate action taken by any party to reduce their sense of vulnerability in others to make them feel safe and secure builds trust across the community (Bryk, 2003).

The growing recognition of the salience of trust has led to emerging scholarship on this topic. Although social trust in school communities has emerged in a few studies as a key element in improving schools, little attention has focused on the nature of trust as a substantial aspect of the social organization of schools and how it relates to their effectiveness. Researchers define the distinctive qualities of interpersonal social exchanges in school communities and how they cumulate in an organizational property as relational trust. Much of the current interest in trust as an organizational concept has been inspired by recent developments around the theory of social capital. The research of
Robert Putnam (1995) has drawn on these ideas to analyze the functioning of democratic institutions. Putnam reminds us that the effective functioning of democratic institutions rests heavily on the willingness of citizens to associate voluntarily with one another to redress collective concerns. He argues that such civic engagement depends on the nature of social ties among community members, in particular their levels of interpersonal trust. Putnam’s studies have provoked concern about recent declines in civic participation and increased anxiety about the quality of American collective life. His research is salient for our purposes because it posits that the effectiveness of democratic institutions depends on the quality of interpersonal ties across a community.

Putnam’s research drew inspiration from James Coleman’s theory of social capital (Coleman, 1988). Coleman conceptualized social capital as a property of the relational ties among individuals within a social system. He argued that the nature of these relationships play a key role in a wide range of social and behavioral phenomena. Social capital is intangible and abstract, developed around sustained social interactions (Coleman, 1988). According to Coleman (1988), two general factors combine to create high levels of social capital. The first is social network closure. Coleman argues that a high degree of interconnectedness among individuals makes it easier for members to communicate. The social network closure also facilitates correction of any miscommunications that could lead to interpersonal rifts. Second, Coleman points out that the presence of dense relational ties makes it easier not only to communicate basic information, but also to articulate mutual expectations among various parties and to ascertain whether individuals are actually meeting their respective obligations. Coleman refers to this property of a social network as trustworthiness. Networks with high levels
of trustworthiness maintain socially desirable norms and sanction unacceptable actions.
Coleman couples his ideas about the structure and impact of social networks with a
theory about the social exchanges among individuals who comprise the network.

According to Bryk and Schneider (2003), relational trust is grounded in the social respect that comes from the kinds of social discourse that take place across the school community. Respectful exchanges are marked by listening to others and taking their viewpoint into consideration in subsequent actions. Even when people disagree, individuals can still feel valued if others respect their opinions. Without interpersonal respect, social exchanges will eventually cease.

As individuals interact with one another around the work of schooling, they are constantly discerning the intentions embedded in the actions of others. The reciprocal character of trust relationships allow for misgivings to occur and to be quickly resolved without suspicion. They consider how others’ efforts advance their own interests or whether others’ behavior reflects appropriately on their moral obligations to educate children well. These discernments take into account the history of previous interactions. In the absence of prior contact, participants may rely on the general reputation of the other and also on commonalities of race, gender, age, religion or upbringing. These discernments tend to organize around four specific considerations: respect, personal regard, competence in core role responsibilities and personal integrity (Bryk, 2003). Such regard springs from the willingness of participants to extend themselves beyond the formal requirements of a job definition or a union contract. The openness of the principal to others and the principal’s willingness to reach out to parents, teachers, and students
helps to cultivate a climate in which such regard becomes the norm across the school community.

Anthony Bryk and Barbara Schneider conducted case study research and longitudinal statistical analysis over a period of ten years from 400 elementary schools in Chicago to show the central role of relational trust in building effective education communities. They spent four years in twelve different school communities observing school meetings and events; conducting interviews and focus groups with principals, teachers, parents, and community leaders; observing classroom instruction; and talking to teachers about their progress and problems. Their research shows that important consequences play out in the day-to-day social exchanges within a school community. It demonstrated that relational trust among teachers, parents, and school leaders improves much of the routine work of schools. Each party in a relationship maintains an understanding of his or her role’s obligations and holds some expectations about the obligations of the other parties.

Combined with their field study, they analyzed periodic surveys of teachers, principals, and students collected by the Consortium of Chicago School Research to examine the changing quality of relational dynamics in all Chicago Elementary Schools over a six-year period. They also analyzed trends in student achievement during the same time period to determine the value that each school was adding to student learning. By linking evidence on the schools’ academic improvements with survey results on school trust over a long period of time, they were able to document the powerful influence that relational trust plays as a resource for school improvement.
Bryk’s concept of relational trust entails much more than just making school staff feel good about their work environment and colleagues. A school cannot achieve relational trust through workshops or forms of sensibility training. Schools build relational trust in day-to-day social exchanges. Through their words and actions, school participants show their sense of their obligations toward others, and others discern these intentions. Trust grows through exchanges that validate these expectations. Principals’ actions play a key role in developing and sustaining relational trust. Principals establish both respect and personal regard when they acknowledge the vulnerabilities of others and actively listen to their concerns. Effective principals couple these behaviors with a compelling school vision and behavior that clearly seeks to advance the vision. This consistency between words and actions affirms the personal integrity. Good schools depend heavily on cooperative endeavors. Bryk posits that relational trust is the connective tissue that binds individuals together to advance the education and welfare of students. Therefore, improving schools requires us to think harder about how best to organize the work of adults and students so that their connective tissue remains healthy and strong.

Educational research by Gordon (2000) supports the idea that transformational leadership is needed to address the problems of today’s schools. However, these arguments fail to account for cultural models of leadership and do not take into account structural impediments facing African American school leaders in the form of racism and sexism. The historical perspective of African American principals chronicles examples of social injustice survivors who tried to accomplish their work as educational leaders
the face of challenges and racial conflict. The experiences of such principals in the past can teach contemporary educators about leadership strategies for improving schools.

**Historical Perspective on African American Principals**

Historically, black educational leaders had to overcome serious problems with inaccurate, ill-planned, depoliticized curriculum, lack of resources, as well as poor, preparation of teachers. They had to overcome these barriers as well as others to be of service to the African American community. They created schools where there were none, struggled against the perpetuation of unequal educational environments, or built alternative schools. Motivated by the belief that education would “uplift the race,” black women and men and developed institutions to mitigate the harsh realities of black life through socially critical writings, orations, and activism many leaders succeeded in making a difference in the educational settings that served black people (Murtadha & Watts, 2005). Their stories and contributions have not been incorporated as a central theme in the literature of school administration and leadership. Unfortunately, the omission of black leadership narratives limits our ability to develop ways to improve schools and communities, not only for African American children, but also for all of our nation’s children (Murtadha & Watts, 2005).

It is difficult to predict what 21st century schooling will look like 50 years from now, yet there are a few things we can reasonably assume about the future of schooling in the United States. Schools in this century will educate more students of color and non-Anglo culture than in any other time in the nation’s history. Population projections predict that in 2020, there will be more minority school-aged children than white school-
aged children. While students of color tend to be associated with large urban districts, more of these children will likely attend schools in suburban and rural areas throughout this country. School systems that never had diversity issues will each see increasing numbers of students of color and be compelled to develop strategies or interventions to address the needs of students of color and poor students of all races.

Organizational and leadership theorists have not been attentive to the specific ways by which African Americans have contributed to the discourse regarding school leadership. The lack of research on people of color was not viewed as a deficit by earlier scholars of leadership, and current theorists remain inadequate in their treatment of African Americans, minimizing their impact with brief mentions of their presence in the field (Murtadha & Watts, 2005). The history and consequences of racialized school leadership discourses can provide a vision for dismantling the old architecture of education, as we currently know it (Murtadha & Watts, 2005). As more African American men and women break through the traditional domains of educational administration, researchers are becoming increasingly interested in studying the work and experiences of marginalized groups, describing and acknowledging the different aspects and practices of their leadership. By studying African American educational leadership, researchers find that mainstream theories are lacking in their understanding leadership from the perspectives of diverse cultural groups who fight for equity in this society (Murtadha & Watts, 2005). If we truly want to develop schools to meet the needs of diverse student populations today, the use of cultural knowledge from the historical biographies of successful African American educational leaders can serve as valuable resources.
The work of black educators is historically and culturally significant (Tillman, 2004). African American principals have always faced difficult obstacles in their attempts to foster and lead schools (Rousmaniere, 2013). And yet, a tradition of excellence in school leadership dates back to the 1860’s (Anderson, 1988; Franklin, 1990; M. Foster, 1997; Pollard, 1997; Savage, 2001; Siddle Walker, 2001; Watkins, 2001). In the antebellum South, enslaved African Americans secretly led schools, and after emancipation, they set up private academies to educate freed slaves. Across the south, ex-slaves purchased and built community schools and established independent boards of directors. African American educational leaders fought to maintain the independence of these schools when missionary societies from the North tried to replace them with white men and women educators from the North. They served dual but complementary roles as educators and activists for the education of black children (Tillman, 2004). The educational philosophies of black principals reflected the rationale of black communities that believed education was the key to ensuring a better lifestyle for their children, particularly in small southern towns (Tillman, 2004). Throughout the antebellum era, black ministers/educators were instrumental in opening schools in the North and South. As principals, they held a strong belief in the freedom that is acquired through knowledge and education.

Rousmaniere (2013) tells of slaves like Solomon Coles, a freed slave who attended night school while working for the Freeman’s Bureau in Norfolk. Coles migrated North and enrolled at the Guilford Institute, a preparatory academy that provided the coursework he needed to later attend Lincoln University, a private institution founded by Protestant clergy specifically for the education of Blacks in
Pennsylvania. In 1872, Cole enrolled at Yale University’s Divinity School, and eventually moved to Texas and in 1893; he was appointed principal of the city’s first African American school.

As in the South, African American school leaders faced similar challenges in the North. Black laws limited Blacks from enrolling in publicly funded schools; therefore, Northern black ministers, with the support of local black communities, created their own educational institutes and provided spiritual and political leadership. In 1863, African Americans in Southeastern Ohio founded Albany Enterprise Academy and hired Thomas Jefferson as principal. He helped to organize the Ohio Colored Teachers Association, and in 1866 he published a pamphlet, *Negro Education: The Hope of the Race*, in which he argued how African American education would benefit the white man and the nation at large (Rousmaniere, 2013, p. 15).

African American principals had to take on multiple positions within their school systems, with many of them serving simultaneously as principals, presidents of the school’s board of trustees, and teachers. For these independent schools, the absence of a bureaucratic framework exposed them to powerful, vicious pressures from the white community. In their racially segregated school systems in the South, African American principals played crucial roles as respected leaders and role models in their community. The unintended consequences of racial neglect was that black communities built their own schools of academic excellence and resisted racist policies and expectations by inciting their school communities into social activism and academic achievement (Rousmaniere, 2013). Black principals mediated between the school and the family, and they advocated for their black communities to the all-white school boards. They held
sole authority to shape personnel, implement programs, and raise money for needed resources (Rousmaniere, 2013). They adopted sharp, creative ways to maneuver and deceived white educational leaders into providing more resources to support black education. Julian Savage (2001) completed a case study of the agency of black teachers and principals in Franklin, Tennessee between 1890 and 1967. The research relied on the oral and life histories of thirty-three former students, teachers and community leaders as well as the analyses of public records that pertained to four black schools that were located in Franklin and in the rural areas of Williamson County. Savage (2001) detailed how the Board of Directors from both school districts provided few resources to their black teachers; however, principals who used their creativity to do “more with less” in educating their students. Principals provided extraordinary services for their students by maneuvering district policies to equip their schools and to introduce new curriculum (p. 172). The research showed how black teachers and principals transformed the schools into the central features of the black community. For African Americans, the principal was a respected leader in the community (Anderson, 1988; Tillman, 2004). By the mid twentieth century, black teachers and principals comprised significant portion of the black community’s middle-class. Education was one of the few vocations open to middle class Blacks in the pre-Brown era (James, 1970; Tillman, 2004).

Maudelle Brown Bousfield accomplished a successful career as a Chicago teacher and principal in the midst of great discrimination against black Americans. In 1926, she became the first black woman dean of a Chicago public school and a year later, she was appointed the first black principal in Chicago. Stephanie J. Shaw (1996) noted that elite Blacks growing up in the Jim Crow era were socialized by their families and their
communities to become professional workers not only for themselves, but also to instill pride and uplift to their communities. The idea of professionalism was instilled in them through formal and informal education, giving them a set of behavioral characteristics to ensure that they would represent themselves and their communities in a respectful manner. They were the black elite who not only imparted the characteristics their children needed for success in a racist society, but who were also a living witness of that success. As black children they were trained at certain schools, attended specific churches, and participated in certain organizations. These children were taught to expect the obstacles placed before them and would not allow them to stop them in their quest for success. Bousfield went beyond being a teacher and was able to become an administrator in a school system that didn’t want to hire black teachers to permanent teaching positions. Those who had the opportunity for professional careers knew that it came with the responsibility to “serve the race” (Pollard, 1997; Scott, 1990; Siddle Walker, 2001). This obligation to “uplift” the less fortunate and educate the poor was readily fulfilled by many Blacks like Bousfield. According to Gaines (1996), many black elite demonstrated a service-oriented aspect of racial uplift through occupational and organizational work. As servants of their race and representing bourgeois ideas of the elite, they also analyzed many of the problems of the race associated within the area of education and provided solutions that went beyond personal responsibility. They were a testament to their elite upbringing and were also a fulfillment of the social expectations of the black elite and middle class of the era (Rousmaniere, 2013). As these black leaders moved out into the surrounding counties, they faced considerable dangers, physical and psychological, to themselves and to their families (Siddle Walker, 1996). Rural, white residents were
opposed to educating Blacks, regardless of federal or state mandates and would use any
means necessary to restrict the growth of black schools. Black principals had to develop
self-reliant strategies to overcome oppressive black codes and Jim Crow ordinances
(Siddle-Walker, 1996).

One of the most prominent aspects in the history of black leadership is the
persistence Blacks levied to gain access to an educational system that would ensure their
continued freedom (Tillman, 2004). One of the earliest known black principals was
Booker T. Washington, who led the Hampton Institute in Virginia and eventually
Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Washington was principal during a time when the
education of ex-slaves was controlled by white philanthropists who believed that Blacks
should be trained, rather than educated, in skills that would benefit the economic
development of the south (Anderson, 1988). He established a manual labor program at
Hampton Institute in 1879 that provided instruction to prepare Blacks for a subordinate
lifestyle. Washington’s vision for educating Blacks was consistent with the intellectual
inferiority status placed upon Blacks by the white power structure (Tillman, 2004). He
often disagreed with black educators like W.E. B. DuBois who fought to provide Blacks
with the same type of liberal arts and classical education that Whites received (Anderson,
1988). They weren’t superheroes, nor did they accomplish extraordinary feats. Black
principals and leaders empowered themselves to become agents for creating a better
community for their children (Anderson, 1988).

*The Promise of Brown v. Board of Education.* The history of black access to
education and the pathway to educational leadership has been a difficult one. The *Brown
versus the Board of Education* decision was intended to provide a solution to the
inequities of segregated schooling, but instead, the traditions of excellence in black school leadership were drastically terminated by the desegregation plans that were implemented across the nation, particularly in southern states where resistance to compliance was monumental (Tillman, 2004). “While some black principals retained their positions after the historic Brown decision, desegregation had a devastating impact on the closed structure of black education and thus the professional lives of thousands of black principals” (Pollard, 1997; Tillman, 2004, p. 110). “The deliberate destruction of this valuable resource is one of the tragedies of our time” (James, 1970, p. 20).

At the time of *Brown versus the Board of Education*, black educators had far exceeded their white counterparts in establishing themselves as a professional cohort. Sixty percent of black college graduates chose teaching as their occupation compared to 20% of white college graduates (Siddle Walker, 2003). Many of them, excluded from white state universities, received their professional training at prestigious schools in the North (Karpinski, 2006). Given the multiple roles that they played with the school community, black administrators cultivated their professionalism and established pride in their membership (Siddle Walker, 2003). The tragic result of *Brown* became more evident when highly qualified black principals were passed over and uncertified, inexperienced white candidates were given the leadership positions in the newly desegregated school systems (Karpinski, 2006, p.246). According to Karpinski, highly qualified black principals were “our nation’s most qualified instructional leaders and studies of their displacement and demotions from 1954 to 1968 indicate that race, not competency was the primary factor in job loss.” In the decade after *Brown*, the number of black principals in the South was reduced by 90% and faced literal extinction.
(Rousmaniere, 2013, p. 113). Rousmaniere’s (2013) startling account describes the eliminations in the South that occurred at the peak of desegregation enforcement.

Numbers show the stark reality: Between 1964 and 1971 in Alabama, the number of black secondary school principals fell from 134 to 14 and in Virginia from 107 to 16. Six hundred black principals lost their jobs in Texas. In Mississippi in the two years between 1969 and 1971, the number of black principals plummeted from 168 to 19. In Tennessee, the two-year period between 1968 and 1970 saw the decline in the number of black principals from 73 to 17(p.114).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the problems of these administrators mirrored the experiences of Blacks more broadly whose knowledge and expertise were challenged in the movement toward integration. In North Carolina, from 1963 to 1973 the number of African American principals in the state’s elementary schools plunged from 620 to 170. There were 209 black high school principals in North Carolina in 1963, but less than ten remained in their positions in 1970. By 1973 only three black principals had survived the process. Rousmaniere (2013) estimated that 38,000 black teachers and administrators lost their jobs between 1984 and 1989. The demotion and firing of black principals did more than undermine the careers of aspiring black educators, it interrupted the recruitment and promotion paths for young black teachers and excluded their voices from advocating for black children at the administrative level (Rousmaniere, 2013).

The year 2014 marked the sixtieth anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education decision. A major aspect of the Brown legacy that has been underdeveloped in the literature is the significance of the leadership of African American principals both before and after Brown (Tillman, 2004, p. 101). Historically, the role of African American educators as collaborative leaders has not been captured in the accounts of black segregated schools (Siddle Walker, 2005). Tillman (2004) gave substantial
evidence that Pre-\textit{Brown} black principals were committed to the education of black children, many of them worked with other black leaders to establish high performing schools in the sub-standard conditions of their communities. Focusing on the strength of African American community schools in the midst of \textit{Plessy v. Ferguson’s} separate but equal distortions (Bell, 1992), Siddle Walker (2005) theorized that interpersonal and institutional caring characterized the partnerships that existed between black parents, community leaders and educators of segregated schools. She theorized that research has omitted the roles they played in advocating for equality of educational opportunities for black children in their communities. Her scholarship challenged the dominant portrayal of African American educators as one-dimensional leaders, focusing upon the formal collaborations that existed between the NAACP and the “active stance of black educators during \textit{de jure} segregation in the South (p. 357).

Although it was greatly unanticipated, the Supreme Court decision regarding Brown versus the Board of Education crushed the professional lives of black educators across the United States and resulted in the displacement and dismissal of thousands of black administrators, specifically in the South (Karpinski, 2006). Throughout the region, the manner in which Southern states implemented public school desegregation plans devastated black leadership in the African American community and ended the careers of thousands of black teachers and principals (Anderson, 2014). Karpinski (2006) gives reference to school desegregation policies that eliminated an entire generation of black principals and led to the closing and consolidation of schools, creating a job crisis that undermined the job status of black educators, particularly black principals who were community leaders. Although historical accounts of that time are limited and are
represented by the voices of the dominant culture, we know with certainty that black educators were crippled by social and political conventions that limited their ability to further develop themselves as instructional leaders (Anderson, 1988). Desegregation was not the panacea that many black educators had envisioned, and the impact on their professional community was devastating (Anderson, 1988; Siddle Walker, 2003; Tillman, 2004). Such treatment reflects the long-standing disenfranchisement of the black community and their absence of political power in our local societies (Anderson, 2014).

The concern regarding the diminishing numbers of African American principals is not just relegated to the years immediately following Brown. Carlos McCray, James Wright, and Floyd Beachum (2007) conducted research on what they described as, the perplexing plight of African American principals. They proposed that there is still a great injustice and an insidious line of thinking in the current practice of educational leadership with regard to how African American principals are selected and placed, not only in southern states, but throughout the nation (McCray et al., 2007, p. 248). Today, aspiring black educational leaders find themselves facing insurmountable odds in trying to attain principalships, especially in predominantly white schools (Brown, 2005). McCray et al. (2007) found that African American principals were placed primarily in urban, underserved schools where they had insufficient resources, significant numbers of unqualified teachers, and a high level of student failure. The authors chose to examine the number of black principals working in predominantly white secondary schools where white males are more likely to hold higher hierarchical positions. Notably, only 22% of the secondary principals who participated in their research were black, a slightly higher percentage than the national average of 17.8%. Of the 126 principals who participated in
their study, 81% served in predominantly white schools. McCray et al. (2007) found that only 6% of those principals were black. In contrast, white principals were assigned to 46% of the predominantly black schools. The researchers questioned whether there was an underlying selection process related to institutional racism and white privilege that was being manifested in the disparities observed. Embedded in a Critical Race Theory framework that supports the permanence of racism combined with whiteness as a property, their study called for university leadership preparation programs to acknowledge the historical and current role that race has had in our society and in the field of educational leadership. Until then, McCray et al. (2007) theorized that there will continue to be an underlying supposition within the field of educational leadership that African American principals should only be placed and can only work in school systems where there are large numbers of African American students.

**Under-representation of African Americans in School Leadership.** The National Center for Educational Statistics (2012) documents the historical under-representation of black principals in American school systems. See Appendices D, E, F, and G to review the distribution of principals in American school systems, according to race and locations in the United States from 2003 to 2012.

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2012), the number of white principals serving in American schools continues to exceed the number of black principals working in similar areas. In urban schools, with predominantly African American and other minority student populations, 63.4% of public school principals are white and only 20.8% are black. White principals comprise 82.6% of the public secondary principals while 8.8% represent black principals. In rural America where 75%
of the student population is white, 90.6% of principals are white and 5.1% are black. In private schools the numbers are equally extreme, 87.3% of principals serving in private schools are white and 6.5% of them are black. Table 1 illustrates the disparity in the percentage of black and white principals who comprised American school systems.

Table 1. Composition of Black/White Principals In U.S. School Systems: 2003-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of U.S. Public School Principals</strong></td>
<td>115,478</td>
<td>118,610</td>
<td>115,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of Black Principals in U.S. School Systems</strong></td>
<td>Public: 10.6% Private: 5.2% Urban: 24.5% Suburb: 6.7% Rural: 4.5% Secondary: 9.4%</td>
<td>Public: 9.6% Private: 6.5% Urban: 21.1% Suburb: 10% Rural: 5.1% Secondary: 9.8%</td>
<td>*Public: 10.1% *Private: 5.2% *Urban: 20.8% *Suburb: 9.2% *Rural: 4.4% *Secondary: 8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of White Principals in U.S. School Systems</strong></td>
<td>Public: 82.4% Private: 89.8% Urban: 62.4% Suburb: 88% Rural: 90.9% Secondary: 84.8%</td>
<td>Public: 82.3% Private: 87.3% Urban: 62.9% Suburb: 81.7% Rural: 90.6% Secondary: 84.1%</td>
<td>Public: 80.3% Private: 85.3% Urban: 63.4% Suburb: 81.5% Rural: 90.1% Secondary: 82.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a post-racial environment, achievement and failure are linked to individual effort, whereby systematic oppression and institutional, racial discrimination are extinct. Critical Race Theory, (CRT) espouses vast contradictions to these statements, underscoring existing disparities between racial groups in terms of educational
opportunities, income, and wealth that continue to marginalize black people in American society.

**Critical Race Theory**

Critical Race Theory is an outgrowth of and a separate entity from an earlier legal movement called Critical Legal Studies (CLS) (Tate, 1998). Critical legal scholars attempted to analyze legal ideology and discourse as a social artifact which operates to recreate and legitimate American society” (Crenshaw, 2011, p.1350). The contribution of CLS to legal discourse is in its analysis of legitimating structures in the society (Tate, 1998, p.10). Much of the CLS ideology emanates from the work of Gramsci (1971) and depends on the notion of “hegemony” to describe the continued legitimacy of oppressive structures in American society in which race and racial power are constructed and represented (Tate, 1998, p.10).

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1998) posited that race has become metaphorical, a way of disguising forces, events, and expressions of social decay, completely embedded in the daily discourses of American life. Today, CRT claims a presence in education, education reform, and educational leadership. Ladson-Billings (1998) argued that our conceptions of race, even in a postmodern and postcolonial world, are more embedded and fixed than in a previous age. “It is because of the meaning and value imputed on whiteness that Critical Race Theory (CRT) has become an important intellectual and social tool for deconstruction of oppressive structures and discourse, reconstruction of human agency, and construction of equitable and socially just relations of power” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 9). She tackled new ways for framing discussions about social justice and the
role that education plays in reproducing or interrupting historical practices (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Despite the monumental election of our nation’s first black president, racism and racial discrimination continue to be permanent fixtures in American culture (Bell, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). In 2008, Barrack Obama’s presidential campaign was met with enthusiasm and controversy. Some believed that America’s turbulent history with race and racial discrimination had finally ended with his election to the highest office in the land. No longer would racial distinctions be relevant to the socioeconomic status or achievement of black people in American society because Barrack Obama had fulfilled the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr. His election was evidence that all Americans are on equal footing in their pursuit of success in accordance with the American dream. Critical Race theorist, Kimberle Crenshaw (2011), compared Barack Obama’s “shattering of the political glass ceiling” to the unwarranted triumph that Blacks experienced when “Whites Only” signs came down in the 1960’s and 1970’s. With the collapse of segregation came the confidence that formal equality would ultimately bring racial justice. However, formal equality did little to dismantle established patterns of institutional power and the reproduction of differential privilege and burdens across race lines in the mid-twentieth century (Crenshaw, 2011).

According to Kimberle Crenshaw (2011), Critical Race Theory (CRT) has occupied a presence in the chronicles of recognized intellectual movements that few other race-related conceptions have achieved. She explored the temporal, institutional, and political factors that set the stage from which CRT emerged. In her articulations, she sought to highlight the factors that facilitated the growth of CRT from a collection of
institutional and discursive interventions into a sustained intellectual project (Crenshaw, 2011). “The view of CRT as a stable project sometimes denies the extent to which CRT was and continues to be constituted through a series of dynamic engagements situated within specific institutions over the terms by which their racial logics would be engaged” (p. 1260), formulating a socio-cultural narrative of CRT. However, CRT is not so much composed of intellectual theories and practices, but one that is constituted by a series of contestations and convergences pertaining to the ways that racial power is understood and articulated in the post-civil rights era (p.1261). Crenshaw (2011) invited scholars to examine how disciplinary conventions themselves constitute racial power and challenged them to develop a regiment to weaken and dismantle them (p. 1262). In her work, she revisited the history of CRT through a lens that highlights the relevance of its institutional articulation in light of contemporary discourses on race and racism (p. 1255).

Crenshaw suggested that President Obama’s victory did not signal the defeat of racism. “Although the celebration, prompted by Obama’s victory, was indeed monumental, his breakthrough did not open up a race-free space beyond the glass ceiling so much as it created a new space for race in unchartered terrain”(Crenshaw, 2011, p.1312). Crenshaw posited that our critical challenge is to resist the fusion of this undeniable accomplishment with the achievement of racial justice itself. Numerous controversies suggest that race has shaped the language and imagery through which our president has been critiqued, as well as how he has occupied his role (Crenshaw, 2011). His hesitation to set an agenda that focuses on correcting racial disparities was captured in his speech about the history of racism in America. Paraphrasing a line from William Faulkner’s novel, *Requiem For A Nun*, Obama began his speech entitled, “A More
Perfect Union,” by saying, “The past isn’t dead and buried. In fact, it isn’t even past” (Obama, 2008). His powerful address was presented in response to the attempts made by black and white opponents to force him to address the complexities of race that continue to fortify our nation’s racial divide. He invited Americans to move past racial lines by outlining the following principles for a public policy that provided a collaborative solution:

The path to a more perfect union means acknowledging that what ails the African American community does not just exist in the minds of black folks; that the legacy of discrimination...while less overt than in the past-are real and must be addressed. Not just with words but with deeds, by investing in our schools and communities (Obama, 2008, p. 3).

The social construct of race is so deeply woven into our society that those on opposite sides of support for and against our president contributed a significant portion of their stance to his race (Bacon, 2015). The salience of the Obama address with non-racial action gave post-racial proponents further cause to claim that we were entering a new period in our nation’s history where our society has shifted away from white privilege (Crenshaw, 2011).

Critical Race Theory has become a central conceptual framework for understanding American education and its reform (Khalifa, 2013). However, educational leadership literature is unique in that Critical Race Theory has not often been considered in discussions that constitute an integral part of their scholarship. It was not until the 2000’s that Critical Race Theory advanced into educational leadership studies (Khalifa, 2013). Khalifa’s work speculated that these omissions suggest that there is essentially one way to lead schools that all leaders should exhibit for all students. He theorized that CRT could be useful in the field of educational leadership because it directly challenges
the ubiquitous claims of neutrality and forces dialogue centered on issues associated with all racialized students and forges a shared space between school and community.

CRT begins with the notion that racism continues to be a significant, “normal” factor regarding inequalities in American society. Critical Race Theory sets out to establish how society organizes itself along racial lines and hierarchies, and transforms it (Delgado, 2001). Critical Race Theory provides a framework to analyze race in connection with many aspects of our lives, including school leadership (Gooden (2012).

In Faces at the Bottom of the Well, Bell, (1992) urged African Americans to confront and conquer the otherwise deadening reality of their permanent, subordinate status. He saw it as the only way that Blacks can prevent themselves from being dragged down by society’s racial hostilities (p. 12). In their scholarly inquiry regarding the salience of race in the United States, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) defined racism as “culturally sanctioned beliefs, which, regardless of the intentions involved, defend the advantages Whites have because of the subordinated positions of racial minorities” (p.55). Using Critical Race Theory as an analytical framework, this section of the study will focus on its major tenets: (a) the permanence of racism, (b) interest convergence, (c) color blindness, (d) counter-storytelling.

The Permanence of Racism. Racism is an integral, permanent, and indestructible component of this society that consists of matters of thinking, mental categorization, attitudes and discourse (Bell, 1992; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). It is a social construct, a system of images, words, attitudes, unconscious feelings, scripts, and social teachings by which we convey to one another that certain people are less intelligent, reliable, hardworking, virtuous, and American than others (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).
racism that made slavery possible is far from dead, and the civil rights gains that have been won are being eroded (Bell, 1992). If acts of racism were isolated incidents in culture, we would expect to see countless counterexamples of racial equity in the thoroughfares of our society (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Instead, we can readily provide years of statistical and demographic documentation that confirms otherwise. Despite undeniable progress, African Americans continue to experience discrimination that threatens their careers and jeopardizes their democratic rights as citizens of the United States (Bell, 1992). What has been designated as “racial progress” is in essence a regeneration of social injustice in a perverse form (Bell, 1992). CRT scholars believe that scholarship about race in America could never be written with an attitude of objectivity (Khalifa, 2013, p.491).

*Interest Convergence.* In his elaboration of CRT, Derrick Bell noted that white people tend to support racial justice only to the extent that there is a convergence between the interest of white people and racial justice (Khalifa, 2013). In his work, Bell (1992) challenged the dominant narrative of the decision that *Brown v. Board of Education* was a monumental occasion in our nation’s history that demonstrates a collective, moral, political shift in attitudes towards race and inequality. He suggested that the Supreme Court supported the *Brown* decision because it best served the United States foreign affairs agenda to show America in support of human rights at a time when the U.S. would be viewed and judged internationally. Bell suggested that the Brown decision was motivated by self-interest and not grounded in the desire to dispose our nation of social inequalities. In other words, ending segregation in our schools was done as a result of preserving the international image and reputation as human right advocates and not as a
deliberate act of ending segregation in our nation’s public schools (Bell, 1992). In his book Ethical Ambition (2002), Bell described the underlying tendencies that inhibit real progress in the advancement of race relationships as our attachment to the status quo. For Whites not to acknowledge the fact that they benefit more from legislation that is designed to help black people is a prime example of the dishonest discourse that Bell addressed. He concluded that decisions about race are only made when the interest of the white majority benefits from it or when the decision does not adversely affect them. The will of the majority often tend to the maintenance of the status quo (Bell, 2002). Khalifa (2013) proposed that the most alarming example of interest convergence is standardized high stakes testing policies and requirements that provide lucrative business contracts associated with textbooks, curriculum, and supplemental educational services. Although black children have made low to moderate gains, it appears that white students and white businessmen have benefited excessively.

*Colorblindness.* Khalifa (2013) suggested that colorblindness is the most essential component of CRT because it contends that society should never take race into account. Colorblindness declares racism as a closed chapter in American history, providing reassurance to those who are convinced that this history has ceased to exist (Crenshaw, 2011). The presence of colorblindness within a society is supposed to deem it post-racial; however, it encourages assimilation instead of destroying racial barriers (Bacon, 2015). Due to the visibility within the public of elite black individuals with political and economic clout, white Americans now view race as less of a barrier. They believe that there is equal opportunity among the races to attain middle class status. This belief
ignores institutional racism and biases and feeds into the concept of colorblindness.

DiAngelo (2012) captured common white narratives and provided a way to conceptualize them through recognizable categories that demonstrate their integration in American culture.

While rationalizing and denying racism may not be the conscious intention of those making these claims, such claims so function to rationalize and deny racism. If we are sincere about challenging the racism circulating in the culture at large and its inevitable socializing power, we must be willing to challenge our worldviews. This requires us to explore the ideology that informs our worldview, and the impact of that ideology (p 242).

Counter-Storytelling. Critical Race Theory (CRT) “distinguishes the consciousness of racial minorities and acknowledges the feelings and intangible modes of perception unique to those who have historically been socially, structurally and intellectually marginalized in the United States” (Barnes, 1990, p. 1864). Delgado and Stefancic (2001) defined counter-storytelling as a manner of expression that allows for ‘other’ voices “to cast doubt on the validity of accepted premises or myths, especially ones held by the majority” (p. 43). They argued that a critical element of CRT is valuing the voices of people from marginalized racial groups. African American voices have been forgotten and often ignored in discussions pertaining to their world. Seeking out the voices of marginalized groups creates opportunities for them to critique perpetuated racial stereotypes to challenge the discourse of the majority, to develop an understanding of what life is like for the other, and to develop an agenda for social change (Bennett, 2009, p. 36). “Naming one’s own” is a theme of critical race scholarship because people of color experience a world in which racism permeates all of their experiences (Delgado, 1995). Hence, counter-storytelling brings affirmation to the experiences of black
principals who work in predominantly white school settings as it provides an autobiographical account of the phenomenology of each personal experience (Bennett, 2009, p. 35). Benham (1997) stated “stories are inescapably pervasive in our lives, as they frame the foundations of our souls and have the power to shape the present and future of our lives” (p. 282). Victims of racial discrimination suffer in silence and they internalize the stereotype images that society has constructed (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Storytelling heals the wounds caused by racial oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Critical Race Theory has undergone flagrant, analytical debate. Mainstream critics have charged that storytelling is a distortion of public discourse, suspecting that the stories are not representative of the experiences of the entire group. Another argument questioned its analytical rigor (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Responding to his critics, Delgado posited, “Whites rarely see blatant or subtle acts of racism, while minority people experience such acts all the time” (1995, p. 407). The absence of neutrality therefore, renders the narrative debatable (Delgado, 1995).
CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was designed to give readers an understanding of the experiences and challenges that beset black principals who work in predominantly white school communities. Qualitative research is a method of obtaining and making meaning of in-depth, contextualized information about the behaviors, experiences, and beliefs of people in naturally occurring settings (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Rubin and Rubin (2012) noted that qualitative researchers study people in their natural settings, attempting to understand and interpret their experiences as insiders from a particular culture, group, or organization. This method was used to elicit the lived experience of African American principals who work in predominantly white school communities. Educational research that explores issues of race and culture, especially the experiences of African-Americans, must be culturally, sensitive and position culture as central to the research process, thereby validating and acknowledging historical and contemporary experiences (Beckford-Bennett, 2009; Tillman, 2002). Culturally sensitive research “acknowledges that research involves issues of power, that research is not a neutral phenomenon but one that is authored by a raced, gendered, classed, and politically oriented individual” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p.5). It involves social identities and the impact of these identities on both the researcher and the researched (Beckford-Bennett, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Through a qualitative approach, this study was intended to uncover commonalities in experiences and challenges in response to the following research questions:
(1) How do African American principals who work in predominantly white school communities describe their experiences?

(2) What are the challenges they face in developing trusting relationships with members of their school communities?

Rooted in these questions are several assumptions about black administrators who work in predominantly white environments, including the impression that a qualitative research study will allow the researcher to yield insightful knowledge that is valid and of interest to practitioners and researchers in the field (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). These assumptions are grounded in literature that intersects multiple domains of knowledge. In this section, I will describe the qualitative research paradigm. Although some research has been completed pertaining to black administrators in predominantly black school environments (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003; Brown, 2005; Murtadha & Larson, 1999), very few studies address the experiences of black principals who work or worked in predominantly white school communities. According to Creswell (2006), the qualitative research paradigm should be undertaken based on the following rationales: (a) research questions with how and what, (b) the topic requires exploration because of multiple variables and/or a lack of theory. Thus, a qualitative research design was chosen because such descriptions are more indicative of the experiences of black administrators in reference to the scholarly goals of this study than the numerical data of quantitative research. “It [qualitative research] does not begin from a predetermined starting point or proceed through a fixed sequence of steps, but involves interconnection and interaction among the different design components” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 209). Maxwell addresses the regenerative nature of the design, emphasizing the probable need for adaptations or
modifications and notes the importance of the “participants’ perspective” in gaining an understanding of phenomena that occur in the real world.

**Conceptual Framework**

This study of the experiences and challenges of black principals who work in predominantly white school communities was framed through Critical Race Theory. This theoretical construct provided the scaffolding necessary to situate the understanding of the unique experiences of black principals from a sociocultural, socio-historical, and personal viewpoint. Critical Race Theory positions the lived experiences of black people within the context of racism. Developed by scholars of color who sought to interject issues of racial oppression into discussions of law and society, Critical Race Theory is an innovative and oppositional framework for exploring educational policy, research, and practice (Beckford-Bennett, 2009). The interjection of racial perspectives by critical race theorists challenges institutional structures that facilitate racism and provides a counter telling of dominant ideologies regarding the marginalization of the experiences of people of color (Beckford-Bennett, 2009). Delgado (2001) theorized that Critical Race Theory challenges the experiences of Whites as the normative standard and grounds its conceptual framework in the distinctive experiences of people of color (p. 122). People of color speak from experience framed by racism, and this framework gives their stories a common structure warranting the term *voice* (Delgado, 2001). Therefore, in adjusting the dominant standard of measurement, that being the standard of the white middle-class American male, to include a broader experiential base of diversity in culture, race, gender, and class becomes the basis for understanding the racial experiences in the
context of white settings (Beckford-Bennett, 2009). Analytical discourse that involves racial experiences must be examined from a social perspective wherein the racial experience is crucial to the discussion of race and not considered as a peripheral topic (Beckford-Bennett, 2009). Critical Race Theory “distinguishes the consciousness of racial minorities and acknowledges the feelings and intangible modes of perception unique to those who have historically been socially, structurally, and intellectually marginalized in the United States” (Barnes, 1990, p. 1864).

**Research Design**

Marshall and Rossman (2006) posited that qualitative research is “pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in the lived experiences of people” (p. 2). However, when the lived experiences bear cultural and racial implications, the process through which we share newfound understandings must be deliberate and sensitive to the individual and to contributing sociocultural factors that include the voices of marginalized groups (Beckford-Bennett, 2009). African American administrators are ascending to the role of school leader, altering the historical trend of primarily white school leaders (Beckford-Bennett, 2009). The examination of the leadership experiences of black school administrators in predominantly white environments is needed to provide a full perspective of black public school leaders. For the purpose of this study, I chose to recruit only participants who identified as African American or black. For the purpose of this study, the two terms will be used interchangeably. Selecting individuals who could provide the information needed to answer the guiding research questions was a critical consideration in participant selection decisions (Maxwell, 2012). For this study, an
applicable purposeful selection process was used because it allowed for the deliberate selection of times, settings, and individuals who were relevant to goals of this research (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

Data collection for this study began with 12 individuals’ in-depth interviews, which served as the primary source of data. According to researchers, qualitative research interviews have the potential to generate large amounts of data (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) described interpretative phenomenological analysis and interviewing methods that served as the basis for this qualitative study. They explained that phenomenological analysis yields “rich data” when participants are “granted an opportunity to tell their stories, to speak freely, and reflectively, and to develop their ideas and express their concerns at some length” (Smith et al., p.1195). This format allowed me to pay close attention to consistencies between the interviews and to similarities and themes at various stages of the data collection process (Maxwell, 2013).

Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) added, “An analytic memo is a brief or extended narrative that documents the researcher’s reflections and thinking process about the data” (p.95). In addition to interviews, this study used memos and a research journal to reflect and validate findings throughout the data collection process. Maxwell (2013) described memos as a way of “getting ideas down on paper” and facilitating “reflection and analytic insight” (p.20).

Data analysis for this study was a continuous process (See Appendix A). Several phases of data analysis followed completion of the interviews. In the first phase, the transcription of the interview audio recordings was outsourced to Rev.com, an online
transcription service. In the second phase, Rev.com again provided transcription services for the interview audio recordings. I devoted time to rereading each interview transcript for accuracy and understanding of each participant’s experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

**Participant Selection and Selection Criteria**

Creswell (2005) defines a target population as a “group of individuals with some common defining characteristic that the researcher can identify and study” (p. 145). The participants of this study consisted of twelve building principals who self-identify as African American and who work or previously worked in predominantly white school communities. I asked colleagues and friends for recommendations of black administrators who worked or had previously worked in predominantly white school communities, and I contacted the National Alliance of Black School Educators to solicit their membership. Once potential participants initiated contact and expressed interest, I provided an introduction, an overview, and detailed information about the expectations for participating in this qualitative research study. Through this process, twelve black principals who work in predominantly white school communities signed a letter of consent (See Appendix B) to actually participate in semi-structured, face-to-face, telephone, or Skype interviews. Some of the participants (3) were drawn from the group for extended interviews via site visits to their schools to document their personal, educational, and professional experiences and to examine the factors that influence their leadership.
Data Collection

Interviews. I used audio-recorded, individual interviews with the twelve black principals to comprise the majority of my data. The interviews were conducted between July 2015 and December 2015. I comprised an interview protocol to ensure that all inquires are consistent amongst the participants (See Appendix C). The interviews lasted approximately 90-120 minutes. Nine of the interviews were conducted in person, and the remaining three via telephone conversations. During the interviews, the participants were questioned pertaining to their experiences as African American school leaders in predominantly white school communities. They were asked to (1) discuss the experiences that lead them to their positions as school leaders, (2) describe their relationships with their superintendent, colleagues, teachers, parents and students, (3) identify the challenges they faced in their attempts to develop trust relationships with their parents, teachers, colleagues, superintendents, and students. The open-ended format of the protocol allowed the participants the freedom to respond to each question, while providing the researcher flexibility to probe further, if clarification was needed. As Rubin and Rubin (2012) noted, the semi-structured interview format allowed for in-depth discussion and reflection on personal and sensitive issues.

The interview questions and prompts for this study were designed to accomplish the study’s research goals by focusing on three themes:

- Pathways to the principalship
- Transitions to leadership
- Coping mechanisms used to navigate the environment
Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) described the qualitative research interview as a conversation with a purpose. This approach gave the participants an opportunity to (1) express their thoughts, (2) tell their story, and (3) explore their feelings on the sensitive issues of race and racism. The participants had time to present additional information that was not discussed during the interview session. These data were augmented with informal conversations and follow-up interviews for clarification, if necessary. All interviews were recorded via audio files and transcribed for the purposes of coding and analysis.

Memos and Research Journal. As the participants described their experiences and challenges as black principals who work in predominantly white school settings, memos were used to highlight topics that supported the research questions, giving careful attention to reactions and observations. I wrote memos for each interview and stored them in a research journal to record and substantiate findings in real time throughout the data-collection process. Some memos were comprised of my reflective thoughts about my research procedures and the progress of the study.

Data Analysis

Smith, Flower, and Larkin (2009) described the initial phase of interview analysis as the process of entering the participant’s world. I listened to the interviews while reading the transcripts to ensure accuracy of the transcription and to become immersed in the participants’ individual stories. In this phase of the analysis, each participant received a copy of the transcription and was given the opportunity to verify the transcript, check for errors, clarify anything that I might have misinterpreted. They were also given the
chance to ask questions, or expand upon any of the data. This detailed analysis led to the construction of themes that emerged from participants’ perceptions of their experiences and challenges as black principals, working in predominantly white school communities. Each transcribed interview was stored in a secure, password-protected file on the researcher’s computer.

The next step in the sequence of preparing the data, each participant was assigned a pseudonym as outlined in the IRB-approved study consent form for the purpose of confidentiality and anonymity. Names were obtained from the official Social Security website (http://ssa.gov/oact/babynames/decades/century) listing of the Top Names Over the Last 100 Years and were assigned randomly to each participant. New school names were randomly assigned. I developed an analytical profile for each participant as a step in the initial data collection process. This profile included basic background information such as name, gender, age, and demographic data related to school setting. Table 2 highlights the participants’ background information, and Table 3 shows the breakdown of the study participants, according to gender. Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6 display the region and number of states represented by the study participants.
### Table 2. Demographic Information of Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Admin Experience (Yrs.)</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Doctoral Candidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Pre-K to 12</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Doctoral Candidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Doctoral Candidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Doctoral Candidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Multiple Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3. Number of Study Participants According to Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. Number of Study Participants Represented by Regions in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Number of Study Participants Representing States in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Study Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Illinois</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Iowa</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Maryland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 New Jersey</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 New York</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Pennsylvania</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Virginia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Number of Study Participants Represented by Region (Outside United States)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis computer software program, was used to set up codes and categories to segment the interview data into ideas, concepts, and themes (Miles et al., 2014). Coding is not just labeling; it includes linking, leading the researcher from the data to the idea, and from the idea to all the data pertaining to that idea (Saldana, 2013). A coding framework was created using broad codes based on key words and phrases in response to the interview protocol. The initial analysis of the data produced key words and phrases generated from the participants and ideas and concepts highlighted in the literature and interview protocol. Bernard (2011) stated that analysis is “the search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain why those patterns are there in the first place” (p.338).

In the next cycle, I reread the interview transcripts carefully and developed a comprehensive sense of the range of themes across data sources as initial codes were identified. The data were organized in terms of emergent themes and coded descriptions of thoughts, actions, feelings, and statements. Based on this review, I produced an initial list of coding themes (see Table 6), paying close attention to how data merged into broader themes (Ravitch & Riggan, 2011).
Table 7. Initial Key Words and Phrases For Cycle One Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Blackness</th>
<th>Isolation</th>
<th>Rejection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Coping</td>
<td>Instructional Leader</td>
<td>Relational Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>Credibility of position</td>
<td>Lack of support</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancement</td>
<td>Denied Access</td>
<td>Leadership style</td>
<td>Resiliency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice to others</td>
<td>Disregard for position</td>
<td>Micro-aggressions</td>
<td>Self-Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>Early influence</td>
<td>Not Belonging</td>
<td>Sense of Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Exhaustion</td>
<td>Political hurdles</td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation of work</td>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>Powerlessness</td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Gateway to leadership</td>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Under the microscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being the only one</td>
<td>Insecurities</td>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>Tokenism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, I utilized a second cycle method of coding, as suggested by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), and grouped the coded summaries of data. This cycle included the analysis, coding and thematic organization of themes and key concepts as they related to findings in the literature. This phase also consisted of looking for triangulation across multiple data sources for each participant. For example, memos, the
research journal, and autobiographical information of the participants provided points for triangulating codes prominent in the participants’ interviews and emerging themes.

Table 8. Final Coding Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Appreciation of leadership</th>
<th>Fatigue/Exhaustion</th>
<th>Powerlessness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility to advancement</td>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Feeling under the microscope</td>
<td>Self-reflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement of success</td>
<td>Blatant racism</td>
<td>Insecurities</td>
<td>Sense of Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice to others</td>
<td>Coping mechanisms</td>
<td>Lack of support</td>
<td>Source of encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>Double consciousness</td>
<td>Micro-aggressions</td>
<td>Supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety/Stress</td>
<td>Early influences</td>
<td>Political Hurdles</td>
<td>Tokenism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the final stage, as emerging themes began to evolve through analysis, I continued to map the data to reduce their volume. The reorganization of the data became important at this stage of the analysis. As data were reduced, notes were reduced to themes to allow for interpretation of the data (Smith et al., 2009). The overall objective during the analysis phase was to create a comprehensive final coding structure (see Table 7) that (1) serves the needs of the study, (2) was accurate and useful in reporting what was said and observed, and (3) was useful in describing and understanding the experiences and challenges of black principals who work in predominantly white school settings.
Researcher Role and Biases

As a black principal in a predominantly white community, I am very familiar with the setting of this study; therefore, I was mindful of the need to guard against bias when interviewing the participants. My background and experience in the field helped me to understand their experiences and added to the discourse of this study. I sought to bring privilege to their voices and experiences as I connected their stories to critical theory. I entered a relationship with the participants of the study with transparency about my research agenda and a desire to have open discourse regarding my research questions. This personal connection may have contributed inadvertently to some bias in my work.

Validity

Ensuring validity is one of the most important factors of research study. Maxwell (2013) states that the issue of validity is one of identifying alternative conclusions to the ones we have posited. The following provisions were made to promote confidence and accuracy in this research data:

(a) Uniform research procedures were employed in the interview sessions to insure an opportunity for participants to share their experiences in a consistent manner.

(b) I provided detailed accounts of my research process so that others could determine whether my findings were suitable for generalization purposes.

(c) I was careful to record and report any changes that took place during the course of this study.
CHAPTER 4:
STUDY FINDINGS

The path to becoming a school principal is challenging and demanding. Some people believe that certain individuals are natural-born leaders, and this innate ability carries them through their careers. But the reality is that leadership is often learned over time, and developed through experience, perseverance, and dedication. For school principals, there are a number of leadership skills that mature over time through their interactions with parents, teachers, students, and the school community.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the experiences and challenges of Black principals who work in predominantly white school communities. The themes of this study emerged in relation to my research questions, which are: (1) How do African American principals who work in predominantly white school settings describe their experiences? (2) What are the challenges they face in developing trusting relationships with the members of their school communities? The participants offered insights into their lives inside and outside of their professional settings. Their narratives offered key understandings of their experiences as black principals working in predominantly white school environments. The themes that emerged from the interviews focused on (a) their pathways to the principalship, (b) their transitions to leadership, and (c) the coping mechanisms that were used to navigate effectively in their environment.

Pathways to the Principalship

This study consisted of twelve self-identified African American men and women whose stories represent the emerging narratives that speak to the experiences of black
leaders who are principals in predominantly white school communities, as they strive to find the balance between who they are as individuals, how they build social capital in their environments, and the impact of leading in their settings. Who are these educators who are willing to situate themselves in non-congruent communities in the hope of establishing trust relationships with the local school community? Regardless of their high levels of education, the data suggest that they are vulnerable to insecurities that propagate questions related to their racial identities and their qualifications as school leaders. Their descriptions suggest that the continuous assaults on their self-esteem are relentless. Some of their experiences are unique and enlightening, while others demonstrate how their collective experiences have shaped the path for future generations. Their successes and challenges highlight specific pathways to higher ranks of administrative leadership that will benefit others. As we examine the data we see common themes that emerge regarding their pathways to becoming an educational leader. The analysis of the participants stories indicated the following influences on their pathways to the principalship: (a) childhood and early influences, and (b) gateways from teacher to administrator.

**Childhood and Early Influences.** We all have a story. Each of us has experiences and insights that can inform, that can inspire, that can lead others to higher levels of understanding about themselves and how they can find contentment and productivity in their setting. The themes that emerged from this data were (1) influential individuals and (2) environmental context. An overwhelming majority of the participants indicated that their pathway to educational leadership was impacted by childhood or early influences that involved family members, friends, teachers, or supervisors. For the purpose of this
discussion, we shall define their ‘early influences’ as notable situations that occurred in the lives of participants during their childhood. Our definition will also incorporate significant experiences that took place beyond childhood, up to and including their first year of teaching.

Although many have ambitions and dreams of success, Black educators grapple with daily implications that marginalize and prevent them from establishing a vision for leadership. The study participants did not initially foresee themselves as school leaders, and yet eventually, they recalled significant encounters that contributed to their development of leadership characteristics and fostered a mindset that supported future ambitions for the principalship.

Mary grew up in a small town in Maryland in a two-parent household. Her father drove a delivery truck for local businesses, and her mother worked as a piece-rate operator in a sewing factory. Mary was one of six children, and the first to go to college. She described herself as hard working, responsible, and dependable. She attributed her determination for success to her grandmother.

I was a pretty high achieving student. There was never any question that I would go to college. It was going to be how do I get there? How do I pay for it and where will I go? My paternal grandmother was very actively involved in my life, and she was an inspiration for me. She cleaned houses for other people and I was on her heels whenever I could tag along. I just remember many times she would be mopping the floor or something and she would look up at me and say, "You will not be doing this. You will get your education, you will not be doing this." I guess there was a sense that I couldn't let her down. I've always just been driven. I just see in hindsight that I was often in a teaching role but never really perceived myself to be a teacher.
Linda is a 47-year-old Head of Lower School at an independent school in the Southeastern metropolitan region of the United States. Linda was raised in a two-parent household where there were high expectations for success for Linda and for her two sisters. Her father was in the military and always encouraged his daughters to advocate for themselves. Linda attributed her strong leadership skills to both parents. When asked about early influences on her pathway to educational administration, Linda responded accordingly.

I think my parents probably were, my dad and my mom, although in their own ways I think they contributed equally. I don't know if you've read any of John Ogden's work about black immigrants and their experience in schools compared to African American students, but my mother is Jamaican. In retrospect, as I have thought about my growing up one of the things that has struck me is that growing up in Jamaica, as is true for many black immigrants, they always saw people of color in positions of leadership. That was never unusual. When they saw people excelling those people were people of color so it wasn't unique, it was expected. In terms of how she raised us and the priorities that she put on education: there were really no excuses in terms of there ever being a question that we could succeed, and that we could thrive. I think a lot of that comes from the experience that she had growing up in a place that wasn't the United States.

My dad wanted boys. He wanted three boys, he got three girls, and he raised us all like boys in many ways. He was always really pushing us and encouraging us to speak our minds and debate freely with him. He pushed us not to settle.

Patricia attributed her drive and determination to her mother, who had very little tolerance for self-pity and slothfulness. Patricia received a Bachelor degree from a large research university on the West Coast in political science when she was 21 years old. She was a young, ambitious graduate who decided to take advantage of administrative options that were opening up in public education for people of color. She elected to pursue her Master's Degree in bi-lingual education. She received her teaching and
administrative credentials and credited her fast track to educational leadership to an influential professor.

I met a professor who I really liked and admired. I was living in Mexico for six months as part of my Master’s program, and she talked to me about getting involved in this administrative program that she was going to start in Compton. She was trying to bring in young administrators, and she said that I would be a good candidate, and I really just became more interested. She allowed me to start the class two months early. I only had two months of experience, and she allowed me to take the first class. It was just what I knew I wanted to be, and I was right on that path ever since.

James grew up in a well-educated family. His mother was a curriculum specialist/administrator who worked at the state level to support low-performing schools. Although he quickly transitioned from teacher to administrator, educational leadership was not his first professional choice. Many of his relatives were educators, but James was not interested in pursuing the same field of employment. Through his undergraduate work and research studies in psychology, James explored adolescent behaviors and focused on the interactions of pre-k and kindergarten students, triggering his interest in education. James explained how he landed his first teaching position.

The superintendent of a neighboring county was a close family friend. He had hired my mother as a teacher, where she worked with him for several years in the county where we lived. So that is where I took my first job in education. When I was in my second year [of teaching], the superintendent asked if I would like to work at the middle school level. Just from that conversation, he knew that I would.

John was a political science, pre-law major at South Carolina State University, and while studying for the LSAT, he decided to apply for a substitute position at the same school where his sister was teaching. He enjoyed the experience so much that he
changed his plans for law school and decided to seek a master’s degree in educational administration. His brother, who was also an education major, attended a local job fair and serendipitously prompted John to meet him there. As a result, John was offered a provisional contract by a large, diverse school district located 150 miles south of Washington, DC. He explained why he accepted the offer and moved to Maryland.

This was in the early 90’s, before the era of No Child Left Behind. I was a broke college student in grad school, working as a substitute, with no benefits. They offered me $26,000 and said that I could get certified while I was teaching. I ended up serving in that district from 1991 until 2005. I left the county for nine years, between 2005 and 2014, and returned to the district in 2015.

Jennifer and Richard were two exceptions. Their early influences supported their direct intentions towards a career in education. Jennifer was raised on the south side of Chicago in a two-parent household with her two older brothers. She indicated that she rose to leadership in response to her poor educational experiences. She chose to become a teacher because she wanted to make a difference in the lives of young people, particularly minority children by being in a position to supervise and coach “sub-par” teachers. She described her elementary and secondary school teachers as “burned out” and spoke about the desire to “coach them out” in efforts to pave the way for African American students to experience appropriate learning opportunities with competent teachers.

Richard’s parents did not attend college, and they had no concerted expectations for him and his brother to pursue post-secondary education. They trusted the public schools to do their job, and expected their sons to work hard and to be respectful. Richard was placed in higher-level courses where students of color were not well
represented. He was also on the basketball team, which gave him what he described as “cultural clout” to navigate between both worlds. Through his alignment with his basketball friends and encouragement from his older brother, Richard decided to pursue a college education. He described the support system that he developed.

I had a good peer group to move through school with. We ended up going to the same college, and we were roommates and things like that. I became a Big Brother and volunteered in a place called the Latin American Community Center. That was the bug for me to want to do teaching.

Four of the participants indicated that early influences to the principalship were born within the context of their underprivileged socioeconomic status. They expressed a desire to rise above their circumstances, and found fortitude in their visions of a better life. For many years, teaching was one of the few fields that readily allowed Blacks an entryway into a professional career. The field of education provided opportunities for black people during times when employment in other areas of the labor market was limited.

David grew up in Marion, South Carolina, a predominantly black, impoverished area in the South. From the North Carolina border in the Pee Dee region of the state, down to the Georgia border in the southern corner, this rural, economically distressed region has the moniker, The Corridor of Shame, because the counties located along this stretch of Interstate-95 have the poorest public schools in the United States. David described how he was able to progress to leadership despite the challenges he faced.

My district was one of the poorest districts in the state. But the difference was that I had great teachers and mentors who really cared. They were educators who were dedicated to their roles as teachers and mentors, who never let kids like me, who had come from these farm towns, believe that we couldn’t achieve like everyone else. We had a lot of successful people come out of that school because
of the teachers we had. I have cousins who are dentists and MD’s. Everything that I have, I attribute back to those folks making connections for someone who looks like us, who believed in us and said, “You can achieve, and here are things you can do. I grew up having college conversations. So I think it is important that you have those connections.

As a child growing up in North Carolina, Elizabeth never thought about college because she never thought it was possible for her. Reflecting on her circumstances while living in poverty she expressed her gratitude for everything that she has accomplished in her professional life.

When I think about where I started and where I was, as a child, not having any hope. I never thought about college. I never thought it was possible for me. I didn’t really give it any thought until 9th grade of high school. Even then, it was like, “Ugh, don’t how if I could do that kind of thing.” Knowing that if I could do it, knowing where I used to live and what I didn’t have, if I could make it out, anything’s possible.

While attending college full time, Jennifer also worked to help her parents financially. She described the vivid contrast between her family’s financial situation and her roommates’ access to financial support from their parents.

I was helping my parents keep the lights on with my refund check, in addition to working two jobs while trying to maintain a decent GPA. My roommates’ parents loaded their ATM cards weekly with unlimited money. Those are some of the things that drove me to push through. If I can do it, so can other young people like me.

Six of the participants reported that they lived in or attended school during their formative years (K-12) within the context of a predominantly white community. They reported that their experiences and challenges as young children prepared them for their leadership roles. They developed strength and self-confidence instilled in them by their
parents and early role models. Only one of the six participants spoke candidly about the frustrations that she experienced as a child growing up in that setting.

**Linda** attended Catholic school her whole life, and was in the minority, in kindergarten to grade eight.

I lived in England, so we moved here when I was just turning seven. So, there was not a critical mass of African Americans in my second to eighth grade experience. Through high school I was the only or one of two or three Blacks in the entire school. The year that I graduated in a class of 68 [students], I was the only black kid in my grade and in the school. That was just who I was. The summer between my junior and senior year I was part of the LEAP program, a summer institute for gifted and talented minority students. I spent the summer with 29 other kids of color on the University of Maryland campus. It was like a whole other world for me. Then I came back my senior year, and I was so angry. I was angry at my parents for putting me in that school with all those people who didn't understand me. When you talk about racial identity you go through a whole gambit of experiences, but I think about the experience of being the only one, and all the stories that we hear, even today. We start talking about Martin Luther King, and everybody's looking at you but trying not to look like they're looking at you. When you're looking at the ceiling or all of a sudden you've got to go get a 10-minute drink of water because you just can't avoid the looking, but not looking anymore. I think that all of those experiences created fortitude and resilience and, for me, a commitment. I guess, yeah, a commitment to making sure that as much as I could, other kids did not have to have that experience. In my school I cannot necessarily change the numbers, but I can certainly change how we teach. And I can certainly change how teachers understand the world given their whiteness.

**Charles** always knew that he wanted to be in education because he thought it would be an opportunity to continue to play football in college. A radical family move from an urban neighborhood to a predominantly white community in the suburbs during his freshman year in high school further solidified his trajectory toward his goal.

Had I not been here and made these types of choices and adjustments--and built the type of relationships that I did, I don’t know if I would have made the same choice for my post-secondary studies. So, there are a lot of different factors that effected where I am working today.
Patricia was born and raised in Los Angeles, California, and she and her younger sister attended private schools in an all-white community in Pasadena. Her father was in the Air Force; therefore, her parents transferred to the area from Birmingham, Alabama during the 1960’s. She described her formative years of being educated in a predominantly white school setting.

While I went to school with all white people, and hung out with all white people, we went home to a black community. I think in some ways that grounded my sister and I over the years. She [her mother] always said, "You are just as good as everyone else." She [her mother] worked really hard. She was not a stay-at-home mom like the rest of those people, but she still somehow drove carpool, still came to all of our after-school activities, still made my plays in the middle of the day.

Mary grew up in a diverse community, but it was not unusual for her to be the only one or to be one of a few black students in her advanced, high-achieving courses in high school.

Being the only one gets old, but for me, it’s not a culture shock. I wish I could say that it was, but it’s not. Times have not changed as much as everyone wants to think that they have.

Gateways From Teacher to Administrator. Before becoming leaders, principals must prove they have the ability to lead in times of struggle, and provide the support and mentoring necessary to improve the instructional practices of their faculty members. Administrator certification is the typical way for potential principals to show they have applied themselves and have gained the knowledge necessary to lead their schools to proficiency. For school administrators, the certification process tests potential school principals on their organizational skills and instructional knowledge. Through certification, potential principals prove they are effective agents of growth and...
achievement. The process is different for each state, but most states require an in-depth analysis of a potential principal’s background, as well as exams that assess the individual’s knowledge of running a school. To effectively inspire the school community, principals must have a complete knowledge of leadership skills involved in planning the direction and goals of a school. During the certification process, potential principals must prove their understanding of leadership and how their clear vision of a school inspires and engages the community to realize the school goals. In establishing goals, potential principals must demonstrate an ability to use various types of information to develop a school vision. Certified principals know how to facilitate the development of these plans in a way that clearly states the school’s objections, and then aligns resources to support them.

To become a strong leader, principals must first establish themselves be effective teachers. Forty-one states require prospective principals to have teaching experience in primary or secondary education (Gates, Ringel, & Santibanez, 2003). Although most principals are former teachers, they do not all follow the same path to leadership. Prior experiences as an assistant principal or department head are the most common gateways to the principalship (NCES, 2012).

During certification, potential principals are tested on their knowledge of motivation, teaching and curriculum theory. By understanding learning and teaching theories, principals are prepared to analyze and interpret classroom issues. By evaluating these issues and applying their knowledge of teaching strategies, principals are prepared to support improvement in the classroom. The participants in this study are highly qualified administrators. All of the administrators hold bachelor degrees and masters of
education degrees. Four of the participants have completed doctoral degrees, and four of them are pursuing their doctorate. The themes that emerged in relation to their preparedness for the leadership included (1) career statistics and (2) pathways from the classroom to a leadership position.

Career Statistics. The twelve participants taught students at various stages of development: four participants taught elementary students, three taught at the middle level of learning, four taught high school students, and one participant taught middle schoolers and high school students. Eight of the twelve participants have more than five years of teaching experience. Of the eight participants, five of them provided ten or more years of service in the classroom. The average (mean) number of years teaching experience for the male participants was four, while the average tenure for the female participants was ten years. Two of the participants described “fast track” portals to administration that included three or less years of teaching experience. Two thirds of the twelve participants taught multiple grade levels during their teaching tenure. Eight of the twelve taught multiple subjects while teaching in the classroom.
### TABLE 9. Study Participants’ Individual Pathways to the Principalship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of Years Teaching</th>
<th>Level/Subject of Teaching</th>
<th>Administrative Roles</th>
<th>Certifications</th>
<th>Number of Years As Assist. Principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Spanish-High School</td>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>Principal Cert.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kindergarten Grade 2 Grade 3</td>
<td>Grant-Writing - Facilitator of Proceeds</td>
<td>Principal Credential</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Character Education - Grades 3 to 5</td>
<td>School Counselor</td>
<td>School Counselor</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>English &amp; Language Arts - High School</td>
<td>Colleague Support</td>
<td>Principal Credential</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Studies - High School</td>
<td>Peer Mediator Coordinator Exec. Director of College &amp; Career Readiness</td>
<td>Principal Credential</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Grade 3 Grade 4</td>
<td>Math Specialist - Pre-K to Grade 2</td>
<td>Principal Cert.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Grades 6-8 Math and Science</td>
<td>Gifted Education</td>
<td>Principal Cert.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Reading Specialist</td>
<td>Reading Specialist</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Social Studies-Middle Sch. History - High School</td>
<td>Shared Leadership Mediator</td>
<td>Principal Cert.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Certifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>English - Middle School Director of Guidance</td>
<td>Principal Cert. 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Social Studies - High School Track Coach Football Coach Advisor</td>
<td>Principal Cert. &amp; Superintendent Cert. 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Special Education Walk -Through / State Representatives</td>
<td>Administration &amp; Supervision-Type 75 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the participants provided examples of lessons they learned as teachers in the classroom that provided insights for their development as leaders. David’s teaching experiences fostered his appreciation for his faculty and staff members.

I was a terrible teacher and teaching was hard, you have to be “on” all the time, you’ve got command performance five times a day. I’m not good at that. And that’s why every day when I was a principal I would let everybody know that I love my teachers because they do more; they have the hardest job of all.

Richard’s limited authority to impact discipline issues was the impetus to his entry to leadership. He described an incident that provoked his direction toward the principalship.

I remember one day, one of my students got into a fight. Normally, with discipline issues in my classroom, I would tend to it. I never referred kids to the administrators. In this case, it was a fight, so it was at a level where I couldn’t deal with it. I remember thinking that I wanted to be the one sitting around the table with Bobby and the other stakeholders to help figure that out, rather than just walking back to my classroom.

Elizabeth’s teaching experiences in the southern region of the county where she was employed promoted her sensibilities to the stark disparities amongst the elementary schools in the other areas of the school district. She later became a principal in one of the
northern, predominantly white school communities in the school district where there were no Title I schools.

My first year, I probably had 32 students in seat, and we went on for about two months until they transferred some of the kids out of my classroom. Every year of my Title I experience, probably up until around 2003, 2004, I had anywhere from 25 to 28 kids in my classroom.

Jennifer taught students in grades nine through twelve at an inner city school in Chicago where the student population was 70% Latino and 30% African American. The faculty and staff population at the school was 75% white. She and 32 other teachers in the English department taught English, language arts, and reading to the three thousand students who were enrolled at the school. She taught at the school for ten years and felt that the experiences prepared her for her principalship in a predominantly white school community in Iowa.

Several of the participants reported that they performed administrative duties or other duties of leadership prior to their principal certification. The data showed that all of the participants served as assistant principals prior to their positions as principals. Their average (mean) amount of experience as assistant principals was five years. Half of the participants had more than five years of experience, and two of them served as assistant principals for ten or more years.

*Pathways From the Classroom to a Leadership Position.* There is no single pathway to leadership. Each story shared broadens our understanding of what shapes and inspires individuals to pursue leadership roles in education, providing lessons that resonate to benefit the collective whole. All of the participants provided an extensive account of their pathway from teaching in the classroom to taking a position of leadership
in their respective school communities. Eleven of the twelve participants described how they have obtained state certifications that authorize them to serve as administrators in public school systems. One participant, who has been the Head of Lower School for nine years, indicated that she does not have her principal certification. Linda took a different pathway to educational administration. She received a Bachelor’s degree in early childhood and a Master’s degree at the University of Penn in reading, writing, and literacy. She also took the Praxis Examination to get certifications in elementary education and also as a reading specialist. She began her career as a third grade teacher in a public school in Maryland. In 1991 Linda moved to the Philadelphia area and taught elementary for seven years in the local public school system. After a maternity leave in 1998, Linda asserted her desire to spend more time with her infant daughter and presented her superintendent with an innovative proposal that would have allowed her to work part time as a literacy coach. The superintendent denied her request, and Linda resigned from her position, in brazen rebuttal. She accepted a part-time position as a reading specialist at an independent school for boys and remained there for nine years. During her tenure, she was tenacious in grasping the opportunity to work with reading specialists, co-teach with teachers, and provided workshops for parents. Although she doesn’t have a principal’s certificate, Linda went from being a reading specialist to overseeing learning support at the elementary level to her last three years being the assistant principal of the elementary level. Spurred by colleagues and parents, Linda accepted a Head of Lower School position at a nearby independent school for girls. She has held the position for nine years. She described her pathway from teaching in the classroom to her leadership role in this way:
I guess a blessing and a curse, about being in the independent school world is that you do not need the certifications to do the work.

Seven of the participants reported that their principals or supervisors initiated their movement from the classroom to an administrative position. Barbara’s flexible schedule provided opportunities for Barbara to take advantage of her principal’s recruitment for leadership responsibilities.

I was a special education teacher. By my second or third year in this position, the principal started giving me all these leadership roles because it was easy for me to free myself from the classroom to manage other things she needed me to do. I was the coordinator between the teachers in my school and the administrators at the state who came in and we would walk into the randomly selected classrooms and we would walk in and see the work that my colleagues were doing, it just lit something inside of me.

Mary described how she was reluctantly persuaded to participate in leadership activities. She did not see herself as an administrator and felt content to be a teacher in the classroom.

Then from the beginning practically my administrators always pushed me in leadership roles and appointed me to do whatever it was that needed to be done. I enjoyed those things, but I never sought them out. I would be sent to some training, not sure why I was even going.

John enjoyed his teaching experience and thought that a leadership position would provide better opportunities for him to impact the learning community. He was drawn into a leadership position by the promptings of his mentors. A number of principals told him that he would be a really good administrator. “I had really good folk who encouraged me to be a leader.”
Transitions to Leadership

Successful principals engage their schools in the core processes of establishing, maintaining, evaluating, and improving their structures and cultures (Tucker & Codding, 2002). They develop their faculty, staff and parents as effective members of the school community who will sustain the performance of their students and support the goals that the school district wishes to accomplish. The school community creates social structures that unify the members and bind them to a set of shared values and ideas, shaping aspects of the internal operations of the school community where invisible frameworks have a formidable influence on the members of the group (Lortie, 2009). A school principal must be a leader who can transcend the internal politics and unconscious mindsets that dominate many communities to establish relational trust that will support student achievement (Bryk and Schneider, 2002). Effective schooling entails a long-term process of social exchanges among students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, whereby each party recognizes the important role that each person plays in a child’s education and the mutual dependencies that exist amongst various parties. For black administrators who serve within the social and political domains of predominantly white communities, establishing social capital becomes much more crucial to their success. For salience of this discussion, social capital refers to the relational trust amongst individuals within a social system that influence the effectiveness of its operations. The participants in this study described positive experiences that encouraged their efforts to build social capital with members of their school community. The positive experiences that occurred most frequently were: (1) supportive relationships (2) accessibility to advancement (3) sources of encouragement (4) acceptance. Supportive behaviors were
reported 50% more often than the number of times the participants denoted their accessibility to advancement. In contrast, sense of achievement and autonomy were reported the least number of times. (See Figure 4.1)

Figure 4.1

The principals also denoted challenges that created social barriers to their success. The data denoted the following recurrent incidents: (1) political hurdles (2) racial micro-aggressions (3) powerlessness (4) alienation (5) feeling under the microscope (6) anxiety (7) lack of support. (See Figure 4.2)
Political hurdles far exceeded the other reported challenges to relational trust by a large margin. Racial micro-aggressions and powerlessness were conveyed frequently as well. The participants recounted nine incidents that were described as blatantly racist.

Examining the same data in relation to the gender of the twelve participants, the trends indicated that male participants experienced more positive experiences from members of their school community than the female participants. In contrast, the female participants experienced more challenges in their efforts to build trust relations in their settings than the male principals. The tables below provide a list of some of the challenges and positive experiences the participants experienced.

Figure 4.3 shows that the male principals were the only participants to report having a sense of achievement or to express feelings of autonomy. Their accessibility to advancement was conveyed three times more frequently than that of the female
participants. The female participants outnumbered the male principals in reporting supportive behaviors, by a slight margin of 7%. Figure 4.4 indicates that the female principals reported feelings of anxiety and stress four times as often as the male participants. They far exceeded their male counterparts in every category except blatant racism.

Figure 4.3

![Positive Experiences Chart]

- **Supportive**: Female 43%, Male 57%
- **Sources of Encouragement**: Female 42%, Male 58%
- **Sense of Achievement**: Female 0%, Male 100%
- **Autonomy**: Female 0%, Male 100%
- **Appreciation of Leadership**: Female 28%, Male 75%
- **Acknowledgement of Success**: Female 33%, Male 67%
- **Accessibility to Advancement**: Female 26%, Male 74%
- **Acceptance**: Female 50%, Male 50%
Examining the data in reference to the participants’ years of administrative experience, principals with 3-5 years of experience reported having challenges five times as many times as they reported positive encounters. In contrast, participants with 12-15 years of experience reported having positive experiences twice as many times as they reported having challenges. (See Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6)
Figure 4.5

Positive Encounters Based Upon Yrs. of Admin. Experienced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Admin</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Accessibility to Advancement</th>
<th>Acknowledgement of Success</th>
<th>Appreciation of Leadership</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Sense of Achievement</th>
<th>Sources of Encouragement</th>
<th>Supportive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Years</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 Years</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-11 Years</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14 Years</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17 Years</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20 Years</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23 Years</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positive Encounters Based Upon Yrs. of Admin. Experienced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>100%</th>
<th>120%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-11 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, these building leaders experienced more challenges in their attempts to develop relational trust with their membership than positive reinforcements of their efforts. Trends in the data characterize the participants’ experiences with specific members in the school community: the superintendent, faculty members, their students, colleagues and parents. The twelve principals reported some relationships to be more problematic than others. Some of the relationships they experienced with members in their school community fostered mutual respect and some of the relationships fostered alienation and isolation.


Relationships Based On Mutual Respect and Support. The dependency and vulnerabilities of the principal-superintendent relationship can forge solid relationships that bring a team approach to challenges and strengthens the competence of every school leader (West, 2011). Four of the twelve participating principals in the study conveyed intentional, collaborative interactions with their superintendents to form interdependent relationships that challenged and strengthened their competence as school leaders. Five participants felt that support was available for them if they needed it. Although they mentioned frequent turnovers in the leadership of the school district during their tenure as principals, the overall trend of their interactions with the superintendents showed favorable relationships. For example, Richard, a middle school principal, expressed his appreciation for the autonomy that he was provided by his superintendent to accomplish the goals that his school community established.

I have never felt micro-managed. I felt like people were there to have my back, but also people gave me a space to try new things and go through things. They were always there to give me feedback. I had two superintendents. Actually, I had three; two that I worked under for a considerable length of time. Both are people who I still talk to. They were great. I think that they were very appreciative of me. I certainly am grateful for the opportunity that they gave me. They took a leap of faith to hire someone with no principal experience. I’m grateful for that.

Charles credited his first superintendent with providing the confidence that he lacked initially, when he was offered the principal position.

Our former superintendent was my dude. He’s one of my mentors. He’s the one who had faith in me as a building principal before I had faith in myself. So, he came to me and said, “We want you to be the interim principal.” I was like, “Come on, Doc, I’m not ready. I just finished one year.” It was interesting because he said, “Okay, what is one of the things that you’re fearful of?” And I was very honest with him; he’s the kind of guy I can have this conversation with,
very African-American friendly. I said, “Look, one of the things that I’m most worried about is, is this high school and this district ready for an African-American male to run this building?” And he said, “Well, when do you think you’re going to be ready?” I said, “If you give me another year, I’ll be good.” He said, “But in another year, you’re still going to be black.” And I said, “True. You’re absolutely right.” I said, “Maybe that’s not a good excuse that I just gave you.”

Five of the participants described how their superintendents provided leverage to support their entry into the principalship and assisted them during their transition period. Patricia described how her first administrative leader helped her to navigate through their affluent community by introducing her to influential members of the local society. John’s friendship with the superintendent assisted him in establishing his relationship with his colleagues.

I probably would not have applied to this district if not for my relationship with the superintendent, so it’s unique in that while I’m the only person of color on a team of all white supervisors and leaders, I do have a relationship with the superintendent, so if there is ever an issue, he and I can talk as friends.

While the majority of the participants experienced supportive relationships with their superintendents, three of the principals described negative relationships with their superintendents. In contrast to the other participants, Susan had an African American superintendent. Although he demonstrated his advocacy for Susan by persevering through political complaints from the local community when he hired her for the principalship, Susan did not feel fully supported by him.

There are times when people come from the district, and they come with their race card, which they will never admit to. But I will call him or email him to talk and say, “This is what’s going on, and I need you to do this… These people are disrespectful, this is what I need them to do.” Sometimes he doesn’t see it. He just doesn’t. He is married to a Caucasian woman, has been for years, so
sometimes he doesn’t see it. And as a man, he is huge; He is like 6 ft. 7 inches- 6 ft 8 inches tall. Sometimes I have to have that conversation with him. He’s huge. He is very intimidating, so some of the things I have to deal with as an African American woman, he doesn’t get it.

David reported feeling disconnected to his superintendents and described how difficult it was to establish a working relationship with them.

Oh, I had three superintendents. The first one was distant because he was on an exit plan. So, he didn’t really care because he was leaving. So, I didn’t feel the energy or the need to pursue a lot of stuff with him because it was his last year. And the third one, who is the current superintendent, it was pretty short because we only worked together a year, and so I wouldn’t say that our relationship was supportive. He wanted me to move central so he could make organizational changes in his favor of people in other positions.

Other African American principals enter into leadership positions, having stellar credentials and accomplishments from national and state conferences but received little acknowledgement for their contributions to their school community. One of the participating principals described how she was “passed over twice” for a district position shortly after receiving a national leadership award. James described the resentment he felt towards his superintendent for not receiving recognition for his school’s exemplar performance on state assessments.

We didn't hear from the superintendent. We didn't hear from a lot of the associate superintendents, "Awesome job. Your scores have sky rocketed." Other schools had scores that didn't sky rocket as much. Our school was never recognized. Never in the whole 6 or 7 years that I was at this school as a leader, a principal or an assistant principal. It was never publicly recognized.
These principals felt marginalized and questioned the equity of what could be described as typical oversights. Their responses reflected the insecurities that can surface due to their inability to differentiate which actions are racist and which are not.

The principal’s relationship with teachers affects job satisfaction and commitment levels of both parties (Bryk and Schneider, 2002). While principals hold formal authority over teachers, they remain dependent on teachers’ cooperative efforts to maintain the social order of the school and its reputation in the community. Principals have to trust that teachers will make good efforts at advancing student learning and sustain positive relationships with parents. Ten of the twelve participants talked about their success in building trust relationships with their faculty and staff.

Mary, with 21 years of administrative experience, has had no grievances from the teachers’ union in her district. She explained how she tries to be collaborative and leads by example.

I try to be responsive to my staff and my families. I'm in the building all the time, I'm at every event, and so I'm demonstrating my support. I troubleshoot where I can. If you're wrong, you're wrong and we're going to address that you're wrong but I would never just let an angry parent loose on my teachers, I would never do that. They know that. I advocate for our school if there are things that we need.

Charles talked about the accountability pressures that he experienced as a high school administrator in an affluent school district. He credited his success to his teaching staff.

The idea of principals being educational leaders can take a back seat to you just being a manager, just because there’s so much to do. I’ve got great teachers, so I’ve been able to do some things that keep us relevant, keep our academic standards rigorous, but at the same time do some stuff that’s outside-of-the-box.
Under much protest from her faculty and school community at large, Susan was hired as the principal of the elementary building, after three previous attempts to secure a principalship in her district. She described her difficult, but successful transition.

There were about 60 or 70 staff members at this time, and I got about five or so emails saying, “Welcome to our school. We heard a lot about you.” Again, I had worked in the district in the previous 5 years; so many other people started asking other people who knew me. My reputation says, “I’m fair; I’m kind.” I support teachers, I support students, and I support parents. So I really think that it helped soothe their fear of the unknown. It was a very interesting beginning for me, as an African American woman, stepping into a setting where essentially everybody was white. I’m a servant leader, and they know me now, it took a while. I like to give teachers as much autonomy as I can before I draw the line. I try to be there for them.

When discussing her relationship with her faculty and staff, Linda noted the precautions she takes when interacting with the other three African American employees. She is hyper-sensitive to the perceptions of ‘favorite’ that her white teachers may impose on her African American teachers, by nature of their ethnicity.

If two of us are together, we’re safe. If three of us are together, people start to wonder. We kind of joke about it when it happens, but it’s not comfortable joking. My fear is that other faculty members will think that I am giving special consideration to those teachers. That’s my biggest worry, my biggest anxiety, because I really work hard to try and create an environment where the teachers collaborate, where we really work as a team. That can’t happen if people think that certain among them are getting special treatment.

All of the participants indicated they had positive relationships with their students. Elizabeth described how she made concerted efforts to get acquainted with her students.

If they were in gym, I was in gym. If they were in music, I was singing and playing instruments. I did everything that I could to get to know the kids on a personal level so that in a few months' time, I knew everybody's name, and by the
end of the year, I knew which parent belonged to which child, and if they had extended family members.

When asked what makes you stay in such a challenging environment, Patricia responded immediately.

Oh my gosh, the children. I love seeing the children succeed and getting what they want. I know it should be other things, but it really is the kids. I just saw my grade six graduating class. When I arrived at the school they were in grade six, and now they just graduated high school. To see how much they've changed over the last seven years is incredible. But then to see their dreams fulfilled, that probably is the best for me, every single time.

James reiterated the same sentiments. “Students are going to be students. They really were appreciative, in spite of their parents and the lack of support that you get from them.”

In stark contrast, John, the principal of a Career Technical School, described a disturbing experience with one of his welding students that epitomized the mindset of members of his school community. One of the white students, who was affiliated with a Neo-Nazi group, welded N-I-G-G-E-R on a piece of metal. The student was arrested, charged with a hate crime and expelled from the school. To interrupt the student’s plans to dropout of school, John tried to advocate on the student’s behalf, but the student and his parents refused to speak with him. The student left the building and did not return to school.

*Relationships That Foster Alienation and Isolation.* The principal is a public figure and vulnerable to the peculiarities and preferences of his or her particular constituency. Considerable transparency is expected in their daily interactions with those around them, making differences in outlook between individuals and groups more likely
to foster than dampen conflict (Lortie, 2009). The public aspects of their work play an important part in the formation of the culture of the school community. Members of the public, particularly parents are asked to extend considerable trust toward schools and those who work in them, accepting the legitimacy and rule of the social order instituted and operated by the school (Lortie, 2009). There are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, and images that influence how they understand the world and make their actions unpredictable (Senge 2004). African American principals occupy a highly visible position within a community and are often not aware of the impact such assumptions have on others’ behavior, making dissentsions from community members difficult to transcend (Levitt & March, 1988).

All of the participants in this study experienced race-related turmoil with parents and community members, but in varying degrees. Many of the participants provided examples of challenges they faced in their daily interactions with members of their communities.

Two of the principals described situations that eventually led to their resignations. James described his “frustration and fatigue” in trying to establish a rapport with the parents in his school community.

This community was very racist in terms of what they wanted, explicitly. The PTA president shared a lot of what was said to her and became like an outcast with these white, female parents. One parent, who was upset about diversifying and giving all equal access, commented to the black principal at that time, "I never know who you are. You change your hair too much." We were going through an accreditation process, and an African American guy on the team came to us and said that several of the parents told him that they did not want another African American principal. They expressed that to the accreditation panel, which had nothing to do with why they were there, but it was also expressed through their actions and through a letter that one of the parents wrote. It came to us in the mail, that they wanted us to leave and take the black, Christian
administrators along with us. We didn't know where the letter came from, but it was very explicit. I said, "If the parents and this predominantly white community don't appreciate the work that we do and that we're doing for all kids, it's time to move on to some place where the community will appreciate it."

James left the school community and accepted a principal position in an urban, predominantly African American school community.

Elizabeth’s challenges with the parents in her school community made her feel powerless and insecure. Her tenure as school leader was marred by the dismissal of the previous, beloved principal who was removed from his position after ten years of service to the community when his certification expired. He had a close relationship with the faculty and many of the parents. He lived in the same community and shared many life experiences with the members of this small community. Elizabeth described her initial encounters with local parents after the community learned that she would be the next principal of the elementary school.

Parent came over to the school where I worked as an assistant principal just to see who I was. One parent came up to me and said, “You have some very big shoes to fill. We’re not happy about this.” She and another parent gave me a hard time every year. But I stood firm and continued to be who I was, and I was very strategic about the way I went about things for the first couple of years. I was an African American woman in the role of leadership. That was more challenging for my parents, particularly the men in the families. It was an adjustment for them. They questioned a lot of decisions that I made. When they had concerns, they would bypass me and go to my secretary or go to my supervisor about something that could have been handled in-house. But the secretary would go and move things around, making it very difficult. That was undermining my authority, and that became one of my biggest challenges. People would not come to me and talk about their concerns.

Linda recalled there were many parents at the independent school who were concerned that she was not going to be qualified enough to be the leader of the lower
school. Her transition “was not as difficult as it could have been” because some of the parents, who were prominent members of the community, spoke up on her behalf to shut down the nay-sayers.

Increasingly, many districts are engaged in reforms that have been centrally developed and driven by external agents that include staff developers, curriculum supervisors, and instructional coaches (Bryk and Schneider, 2002). These external members take on important roles in schools’ social networks, and their development of trust with school community members also becomes important (Bryk and Schneider, 2002). Individuals inside and outside a school community make discernments about each other using the same criteria of respect, personal regard, competence, and integrity. A mutual dependence for success exists across this expanded social network of internal and external actors (Bryk and Schneider, 2002). Any actions taken by external agents to reduce this vulnerability should go along way toward building trust across this expanded social network (Bryk and Schneider, 2002).

When asked to describe her experiences with district personnel and the other principals in the district, Susan indicated that she felt rejection and isolation from her colleagues.

There is no relationship. When I first started you are suppose to email other principals to ask for help and that really did not happen. I don’t know if they do it and just don’t include me. They’ll go out to lunch; they don’t ask me if I want to go. They’re cliquish, and I read well enough to know that. I don’t beg people to talk to me or like me or be with me. If you don’t show interest in having a relationship with me, then I am more than fine with that. I think race plays a lot into it. They think I have a relationship with the superintendent, because of course I’m black and he’s black so they automatically thing we have that kind of relationship, that maybe I talk to him. I feel there is some mistrust of me because they think that I will go back and report their conversations to the superintendent.
I don’t have that kind of relationship with the superintendent, and I never have. For whatever reason, they just don’t do me. They don’t trust me. I don’t know why, and I don’t care. I know that I should, but I don’t.

Susan reported that a new student services administrator frequently comes from her district office and tries to override decisions that Susan has established with her faculty. Susan described her lack of support as “condescending and disrespectful”. She described another scenario whereby a teacher contacted a student services administrator about a building-level concern and successfully circumvented Susan’s direction about it. “They doesn’t pull it with the other elementary principals.” To underscore her frustration, Susan noted that her school has the highest test scores in the district.

David noted his feelings of isolation and alienation as he described the political hurdles he experienced with district administrators and board members.

I continue to be reminded everyday that I’m black. Even as I establish good working relationships and work hard to have a good reputation in the district, there are certain factors that I cannot dismiss, nor do I let other people dismiss. I am not a darling of some of the board members. They were not in favor of me having the assistant superintendent title because they thought it would allow me to be too powerful in the district. So I continue to play this balancing act, I call it the “Sambo Dance”. But I refuse to take a shot in the belly and sit there like a Crispus Attucks. I am not going to be a lap dog. I am going to work hard, because if I don’t work hard I am going to be perceived as lazy. It’s so ingrained in the human nature of society that people have these biases. I have to always make sure that I do all of the things that need to be done so I don’t have the discussions they would love to have with me. At the same time, not being angry when I see the same people in other venues who have not fulfilled their professional obligations, and they slide through. So I sit in meetings and say nothing anymore because I used to say stuff, and it would all be quoted to me. When I turned around, no one was there to support me.

After accepting her position as head of Lower School, Linda, the first African American administrator hired in the history of her school, found out that no other
candidate did two full days of interviews. No other candidates had to meet with two members of the Board of Trustees, and no other candidate had to meet with members from the Parents Association.

I was vetted more than anyone else, yes, and once I got the job, the Head of School actually said to me at one point, “you know we took a real chance with you.” I was so pissed off that I wasn’t even thinking. I just looked at her, and I said, “You know what? I’m taking a real chance on you, too, and I hope you don’t screw it up.”

**Conclusion.** The central commitment of African American principals who work in predominantly white communities is to build and sustain mutually supportive relationships wherever and whenever they can, the most vital strategy can be described as building relational trust among parents and teachers and central personnel, of working to create pockets of social capital to buttress them for whatever confrontations might arise (Lortie, 2009).

**Their Lived Experiences**

Principals set the tone of the culture by carefully choosing the people with whom they surround themselves, by communicating a sense of purpose for the organization, and by reinforcing appropriate behavior. The manner in which school leaders interact and participate within the community, greatly influence their success as a leader. When support is lacking for African American principals, their success and effectiveness is greatly impeded.

**Coping Mechanisms.** There are historical, political, cultural, and organizational contexts that significantly impact the role of the principal and the relative success of this
school leader (Bryke and Schneider, 2002). They must take account of a number of possible tensions between key factors such as the values and culture of the school; and the social and cultural environment where the school is located. African American principals who work in predominantly white communities are subject to the effects of an array of factors that have the potential to impact negatively on their performance and continuing survival in the role. They must develop coping skills to navigate the challenges for their responsibilities and to renew and reinvigorate their professional performance (Lortie, 2009). All of the participants noted having feelings of stress and anxiety that is directly related to working in a predominantly white community. They attributed their solace and fortitude to their faith and trust in God. Through prayer and meditation they insulate themselves from the racial tensions that present themselves in countless ways from various members in their communities. The participants emphasized the need to take time away from their work environment. This was particularly difficult for those working in rural areas in the South, where their workday included long commutes to and from school. Most of the participants lived in diverse communities outside of the school community. They described a strong need to leave the work at the work place, allowing their home life to be separate and disconnected from their school communities. One participant of the study found revitalization from the stresses of her work environment by attending a conference that is designed for people of color who work in independent school systems.

I don’t always feel that I fit in as a person of color because my administrative position gets in the way, because I am people’s boss. It’s almost like I’m not allowed to be an African American. I’m not allowed to be black because I am the Head of Lower School. That trumps my race in my relationships with people,
other people of color. That’s hard. I can be both at the People of Color Conference because it is away from my school. I am surrounded ... there's upwards of three to four thousand people at this conference, and it's a pretty diverse group of people. But it is majority people of color, and so I know when I step into that space, I am sharing space with people who look like me, who are having very similar experiences of belonging or not, of dealing with microaggressions that you have to just take a breath and say, "Is this the day that I'm going to go to the fight that I'm invited to or not?" They have the same systemic structure in their organizations, and so that is a place where I can be both.

Four other participants described how they have learned to “pick your battles”. They have espoused an understanding that some situations need to be challenged and some need to be left alone until the right time to address them. Barbara provided her daily routine for releasing the stresses of her day.

There’s people outside of that whole education environment that I do have to rely on to kind of help me deal with certain things that I don’t know if I’d have to deal with if I were in a predominantly-black setting. Sometimes I text my godmother in Atlanta, and I’m just like ranting and raving. I have friends who I can vent to; you know, my best friend, I talk to her every, single morning. Because it’s almost…it’s like having two jobs.

The job of being an administrator, it’s also a job of being black. And how do you relinquish being black? They’re going to know I’m a black woman.

Most of the principals expressed concerns about establishing leadership credibility within the school community, along with fears of “not fitting in.” The principals described how they each sought to find someone, a white member of their community who was accepted and respected by others, someone who was willing to advocate on their behalf. Having that positive influence provided the support that was needed to navigate through the impediments they faced in establishing relational trust with varied members of their predominantly white school community.
Advice to Others. Principals themselves can play an important part in the professional advancement of aspiring principals and other school leaders. Those coming to the principalship for the first time are looking for informed and supportive sources of help and advice from those who have acquired rich experiences, practical wisdom, and professional intelligence during their own tenure, and who are willing to offer these resources to their successors. The participants of this study offered advice to African American educators who are seeking positions in predominantly white communities. Table 10 outlines some of the major recommendations provided by the twelve participants in the study, based upon their own experiences as black principals, working in predominantly white communities.
Table 10. Advice To Other Black Principals In Predominantly White Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mary</th>
<th>Patricia</th>
<th>James</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Be yourself.  
• Know what you are doing.  
• Recruit future leaders.  
• Be persistent. | • Be yourself.  
• Develop relationships.  
• Keep grounded.  
• Connect to black community. | • Be yourself.  
• Stand your ground.  
• Do what’s best for kids.  
• Confront racial divide. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elizabeth</th>
<th>John</th>
<th>Charles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Fly below the radar.  
• Be confident in yourself.  
• Stay ten steps ahead.  
• Know you will have challenges.  
• Keep good records.  
• Documentation is crucial.  
• Connect with someone who looks like you. | • Find a superintendent who will cultivate black leaders.  
• Don’t stay where you are just ‘tolerated’.  
• Seek out good mentors.  
• Select where you can grow.  
• Recruit others to the field. | • It’s best to know people on the inside before you take the job.  
• Careful, it’s a lot easier for you to be gone than the average person.  
• Don’t sell out.  
• Reinvent yourself. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linda</th>
<th>Richard</th>
<th>David</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Find your people to remind you there is life outside of the work.  
• There are many pressures on us to do the job, and to do it well.  
• Occasionally, it’s okay to be ‘the angry black woman’. Be strategic about it.  
• Don’t assume it’s not for you. It’s harder, but not impossible.  
• Provide effort to recruit others. | • Establish inroads with students. Parents love it.  
• Understand that you will be judged; you will be critiqued.  
• Give yourself space to be you outside of the leadership role.  
• Develop an entry plan that allows you to talk with community members.  
• Recruit other black leaders and provide support for them to be successful | • Be true to yourself.  
• Understand the racial realities you will be facing.  
• You will still be identified by certain stereotypes.  
• You must figure out how to navigate around it.  
• Identify people who can help you to navigate in a way that allows you to maintain your purpose.  
• Recruitment and retention are vital aspects and warrant attention. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jennifer</th>
<th>Susan</th>
<th>Barbara</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Know who you are, or they will tell you who they need you to be.</td>
<td>• Choose your battles.</td>
<td>• Build a strong network outside of work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Remember, it’s not about us. You are a principal. You are a real principal.</td>
<td>• Try to be present by embedding yourself in the community. Let them see you there.</td>
<td>• Find someone you trust to vent, cry, and scream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit black teachers to become future leaders.</td>
<td>• We need to support one another.</td>
<td>• Don’t give up who you are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recruit, retain, and support future black leaders.</td>
<td>• Develop other outlets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Recruit and retention is paramount for future leaders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An overwhelming majority of them referenced the importance of maintaining a healthy self-image and being true to the values that build self-confidence. The distrust and anxieties of their lived experiences were evident, as they all emphasized the need to identify allies, members of the community who can help to navigate within the environment in an honest and purposeful way. Other re-occurring themes included facing challenges and having to maintain a high standard of performance in the job, as noted in Elizabeth’s comments.

Just be confident in who you are and whose you are. Go in there knowing that you are going to face challenges, just because of who you are. But if you go in knowing that, and with an understanding that you're probably going to have to work a little bit harder, I think that's a way to stay grounded. Find someone to reach out to, a support system that you can trust.

Nine of the twelve participants recommended that future black principals in similar environments secure sources of support outside the school community. They described relationships and associations with diverse others such as family members, friends, church members, who provide grounding and affirmation for them. Focusing on
their prevailing feelings of isolation, eight of the principals indicated a need for concerted recruitment and retention efforts. Mary provided a viable plan of action.

I think that the biggest thing we need to do is really try to recruit and groom some of our black teachers to be those future leaders and give them the same pushes that I got. The funny thing is the pushes that I got when you heard me saying, my principals and supervisors were pushing me toward administration, they were all Caucasian. I didn't have any African American supervisors. I didn't have an African American principal that I worked for.

These experienced principals saw the enormous benefit that would come from the rich resources of new ideas and thinking that new appointees to principal positions could bring to them. Such exchanges benefit both parties immensely. They furnish principals and school leaders with a firm foundation on which future developments in the nature, roles, responsibilities, and values of school leaders may be more securely based and lay a strong professional basis for the development of African American principals in the future.
CHAPTER 5:
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify the experiences and challenges that beset black principals who work in predominantly white school settings. The study consisted of twelve African American principals who offered insights into their individual lives, providing narratives that outlined essential understandings of the challenges they faced in developing trusting relationships with members of their school communities. This chapter will discuss the interpretation of the findings highlighted in Chapter 4 and link them to scholarly work that addresses leadership in education.

This study examined the following discourse and norms related to African American principals: (1) their pathways to the principalship, (2) their transitions to leadership, and (3) the coping mechanisms that they used to navigate effectively in their environment. The key findings were developed from a thorough review of the data, and they represent themes that emerged during data analysis. Each finding addresses the primary research questions and provides additional insights into how African American principals who work in predominantly white school settings describe their coping mechanisms as they navigate effectively in their environment. This chapter discusses and draws conclusions related to the data presented in Chapter 4. This chapter is structured into three sections: (1) discussion of key findings in relation to research questions and relevant literature; (2) implications for future research and practice; and (3) summary and concluding statements.
Discussion of Key Findings

Data analysis in Chapter 4 revealed findings resulting from the primary research questions that guided this study: “How do African American principals who work in predominantly white school settings describe their experiences? What are the challenges they face in developing trusting relationships with the members of their school communities?

Much of the history of educational leadership has omitted the ‘other’ perspective, in general, and the principalship in particular (Gooden, 2012). We cannot forget that such matters as race play a vital role in the broader perspectives regarding the pathways that all educational leaders take from the classroom to the principalship. It is easy to fall into the habit of regarding the mechanics of school administration as something comparatively external and indifferent to the internal educational goals and purposes that are established for the continuance of the local community. The 12 participants in this study have lent their voices to provide a multi-dimensional perspective from the vantage point of African American principals who work in predominantly white school communities. Leadership that nurtures and supports inclusive practices requires new skills to build and assess the extent to which the schools share a common vision to challenge prevailing mental models (Gooden, 2012). Certainly their discourse is important to all leaders and adds strength and a common vision to challenge prevailing mental models. Their shared experiences resonated the following key concepts: a) pathways to leadership, b) transitions to leadership, c) relational trust, d) coping mechanisms, and e) recruitment, retention, and mentoring.
Pathways to Leadership. An overwhelming majority of the participants reported that their pathways to educational leadership were influenced by early interactions with family members, friends, teachers, or supervisors who cultivated their visions for leadership. Initially, they did not see themselves as leaders. Their relationships with family members, friends, and supervisors contributed to their development of leadership characteristics and fostered their visions for the principalship. I have had similar early influential experiences. As a young child, I developed my initial memories about learning during the day-to-day associations with the adults around me.

Both of my parents grew up in rural, segregated Virginia and followed the pathways of their parents and older siblings by attending school long enough to acquire the fundamentals of a formal education. Schooling was an interruption to the crucial routines that sustained life. Their gateways to adulthood were relegated by the social norms that forced most African Americans to the fringes of American society. At an early age, my father had to learned how to cook, clean and provide care for his six younger siblings; therefore, his formal education ended after the eleventh year of public school. My mother was the youngest of thirteen children in her family. Her mother married her father and started raising a family when she was seventeen years old. My mother was married with two children by the time she was eighteen years old. Like many poor blacks in the south, my parents migrated to the North and settled in a large metropolitan area in southeastern Pennsylvania to work and to raise their family. My father found seasonal work doing construction jobs, and my mother stayed at home to care for the family. She spent much of her day watching television while tending to her daily chores.
My parents were exhausted by their daily struggles to satisfy our basic needs and had a limited understanding for any needs that we might have had beyond that. They expected us to be obedient to their authority, and we did what we were told to do, without question or comment. Family expectations consisted of following the rules that were established by my parents and falling in line with the norms that were established by my three older sisters. They did not express any expectations or promotions for school attendance beyond high school. As the middle child, I was prepared to continue in the footsteps of my three older sisters who graduated from high school and went directly into the workforce. I was slated to live my life much like that of all the other members of my immediate and extended family.

My sisters and I attended Sunday School regularly at a local Baptist church. Our strong faith in God and our abiding love for one another have provided an enduring stronghold of support that remains intact today. Although my family has had many hardships, the spiritual beliefs that I espoused as a child have been the foundation and source of strength throughout my life. My personal pathway to school leadership was formulated by Mrs. Williams, my third grade teacher and fostered by many other teachers who nurtured the dreams that began in my third grade year of school. Mrs. Williams encouraged me to see myself as an individual, capable of thinking and developing my own ideas. She modeled behaviors that emphasized the importance of learning and provided the organized social practices that promoted my cognitive development. The lessons that I learned in her classroom introduced me to a world of inquiry and exploration that I had no idea existed. My middle school and high school teachers provided the encouragement and support that I needed to seek out college opportunities.
They promoted my academic talents, and I excelled in learning. School provided a safe haven for me to explore all the possibilities for a life that was in stark contrast to the unpredictable turmoil that I experienced at home. My life at home was unstable, but in the classroom I could forget about the troubles at home and immerse myself in the joys of learning.

Like myself, the participants in this study are educational leaders who have persevered their challenges, bolstered by the strength and confidence instilled in them by parents and early role models. They are highly qualified principals with advanced degrees in education. Their average years of teaching experience exceed the five-year minimum that some states require. All of the participants believe that Blacks must prepare and perform above and beyond their white peers in order for them to succeed in a society that devalues their abilities. Their viewpoints are salient to the historical accounts of black principals in the years before Brown vs. The Board of Education, whereby unwritten rules of the black principalship required a combination of educational expertise and creative communication skills. In order to build communities of academic excellence, African American principals excelled beyond the achievements of their white counterparts to harness the meager resources of the local black community and to shape and develop their personnel. Ironically, they often had higher levels of schooling and held significantly more authority and autonomy in their communities than their white counterparts (Rousmaniere, 2013). Despite their achievement, black principals had no real power or access to advancement outside their segregated school systems, and their working conditions and compensation were significantly inferior to whites in comparison.
For African American principals who work in predominantly white school settings, the adversities of black principals in the past elicit strong comparisons to the daily challenges they face. Their accounts suggest that racism comes between parties and creates invisible barriers that hinder the development of trust between black principals and their local white communities. I can attest to the frustrations that black principals face in their attempts to gain acceptance. There are parents in my school community who have a difficult time accepting the fact that I have succeeded in life beyond their expectations for any African American and beyond their own attainment. They cannot navigate past their pre-conceived notions to accept a black principal as the leader and person of authority in their community school. They try to circumvent interactions with me by directing their concerns to my secretary or contacting my school counselor. One parent told me that she would not accept anything that I had to say to her and demanded to speak with the superintendent regarding her concern. Such interactions with the members of the school community can create self-doubt and feeling of inferiority, prompting the need to seek the validation of higher achievement. As individuals go about their daily lives in schools, they are constantly engaged in a process of discerning the intentions in the actions of others (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). These discernments take into account the history of previous interactions that have occurred between the parties. They also rely on the general reputation of the other party or commonalities in terms of race, gender, age, and religion (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Black principals who work in predominantly white school communities must develop alternate avenues of communication that will foster trust and acceptance.
Half of the participants reported that during their formative years, they lived or attended school in predominantly white environments. They believe that their fortitude and self-confidence were born out of their childhood experiences. Their challenges of being ‘the only one’ prepared them for the varied encounters they experienced as black principals who work in predominantly white school communities. Their racial identity and self-efficacy as African American leaders remained intact, bolstered by their years of experiences in living or interacting with white peers. Through my painful experiences and reflections as a black child, growing up in a white community, I eventually embraced being different from all others around me in the classroom and learned to appreciate my individuality.

My parents did not prepare my siblings and I for the difficult transitions that we experienced, and I felt isolated and alienated from my peers at school, as I maneuvered through contradicting interactions with family, peers, and school life. I struggled through these challenging transitions in my new environment but eventually compensated for my insecurities by focusing on my academic successes. I still remember the relief that I felt when I finally realized that the rejections from my white peers were racially motivated and had nothing to do with anything that I had said or done. Although my mother was emotionally disconnected from the problems that I faced at school, my sisters provided a circle of support that promoted the development of a strong self-image.

Tatum (1997) supports these assertions with her description of Williams Cross’ Theory of Racial Identity Development. The process of racial identity development often beginning in adolescence and continuing into adulthood is not so much linear as it is circular (Tatum, 1997, p. 83). African Americans exit the immersion/emersion
developmental stage “characterized by a strong desire to surround oneself with symbols of one’s racial identity, and actively seek out opportunities to learn about one’s own history and culture with support of same-race peers, they move into the stage described as “internalization” which is characterized by a sense of security about one’s racial identity. He further noted that often the person at these stages is willing to establish meaningful relationship across group boundaries with others, including Whites, who are respectful of their new positions (Tatum, 1997, p.84). The model also suggests that it is equally critical that support networks exist, comprised of one or possibly several individuals who understand and affirm the ideologies, perspectives and perceptions of success and failure that African Americans may encounter (Butler, 1993). This condition is significant in educational leadership because African Americans often lack social capital ordinarily developed through ties in established cultures that Whites have more easily availed to themselves. Without these developed skills, African American principals may be left with intense feelings of isolation and alienation.

Transitions to Leadership. The participants in the study described some of their experiences that supported their efforts to establish positive relationships with members of their communities. The positive experiences that occurred most frequently included the following themes: (1) supportive relationships (2) accessibility to advancement (3) sources of encouragement (4) acceptance. The participants also identified challenges that created social barriers to their success. The data indicated the following incidents most frequently: (1) political hurdles (2) racial micro-aggressions (3) powerlessness (4) alienation (5) feeling under the microscope (6) anxiety (7) lack of support.
Lomotey (1989) and Monteiro (1977) argued that the successes of black principals in their communities rely on their interactions with the community. According to Lomotey, black principals seem to place a higher priority on community involvement in the educational milieu than do their white colleagues. They are more inclined, as a group to involve parents and other community members in school activities and to a degree, in decision-making. They view such involvement as fundamental to the overall success of the school and to their individual success and are often less threatened by a focus on community relations.

African American leadership has never been confined to the schoolhouse (Randolph & Tate, 2003). Historically, black principals were often called to be school administrators, family counselors, financial advisors, community leaders, and local politicians. They have understood their roles as multilayered leaders in their context and culture (Murtadha & Watts, 2005). In Chapter 2 of this report, we reviewed Bryk and Schneider’s (2002) concepts of relational trust in school communities. They described how trust is rooted in the micro-dynamics of day-to-day social interactions among teachers, principals, and parents and the discernments that various participants make about those interactions. The social exchanges that make up daily life in school communities fuse into distinct social patterns that generate or fail to generate organizational collaborations and trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). When school professionals trust each other and feel supported by parents, it feels safe to experiment with new practices and the risks that are associated with change are greatly reduced. When relational trust is strong, reform initiatives are more likely to be deeply engaged by school participants and to diffuse broadly across the organization (Bryk & Schneider,
2002). The superficial implementation or total absence of trust, however, as vividly expressed by several of the female participants, makes genuine conversations and interactions unlikely.

The male participants of the study experienced more positive experiences with their community members than the female participants. They found acceptance and established camaraderie with their parents and supervisors more readily than the female participants.

The African American females’ experiences in education and leadership in predominantly white communities was indicative of the discourse concerning gender and race subordination. According to the data, African American female principals have had the least opportunities in predominantly white school communities.

Since the late nineteenth century, the recruitment of men in educational leadership addresses a long-standing social anxiety regarding women having a feminine impact on children, especially young boys (Rousmaniere, 2013). As boy’s sports became more central to schools, coaches were positioned at the forefront of the school’s public image; a popular strategy for recruiting men into school administration has been through athletic coaching. The masculine, authoritative disciplinary image of the athletic coach aligned with the professional identity of the desired principal, disqualifying women from the physical work that the principalship required (Rousmaniere, 2013). The disparities noted in the reports of the participants of this study confirmed the notions that devalue women as change agents and exemplified the traditional system of patriarchy in educational leadership. Kimberle Crenshaw (2011) described the African American woman’s experience as “intersectional,” referencing the overlapping boundaries of black/male and
white/female positions of oppression. In a national survey of Black School
administrators, Doughty (1980) found that black women were most likely to be employed
as consultants, supervisors, elementary school principals, and administrative assistants.
Black women in the elementary principalship were more likely to lead in challenging
urban districts with predominantly black student populations. The black women in
Doughty’s study typically assumed their first leadership position in their middle 40’s to
early 50’s, and they were older than black or white men in such positions. The results of
this study provided further implications that support historical renderings of the black
female as subject to the restraints of race and gender in our society, proving it necessary
to further explore the perspective of the African American female and her struggles in
educational leadership.

*Relational Trust.* As noted in the review of literature in Chapter 2, claims about the
impact of trust relations in schools draw on a growing body of scholarship regarding
organizational behavior and management. Writings in this area suggest that trust is
especially important for organizations that operate in turbulent external environments,
that depend heavily on information sharing for success (Bryk and Schneider, 2002).
Organizational change entails major risks for all participants. Teachers must take on new
practices that may not work. Parents are asked to support initiatives whose value has yet
to be demonstrated. Principals must commit substantial personal effort to an uncertain
change process. The stakes are high and the demands for change are great. The presence
of relational trust moderates the sense of uncertainty and vulnerability that individuals
feel as they confront such demands (Bryk and Schneider, 2002). When trust is strong,
individual engagement with reform does feel like a call for heroic action. Relational trust
facilitates public problem solving. Trustworthiness across the organization helps coordinate meaningful collective action.

Trusting relationships are easier to maintain between parents and teachers in schools with more stable student populations. Social trust is built up over time through sustained social interactions. Although the reputations of individual school leaders can help to maintain trust in unstable social networks, social instability will tend to tax the overall level of trust and may ultimately undermine it. The absence of racial and ethnic tensions in the school community makes it easier to maintain social trust. In the context of racial division, maintaining a broad base of trust is difficult and highly unlikely (Bryke and Schneider, 2002).

The principal’s established trust with teachers is primarily influenced by direct exchanges among teachers with their principal. As expected, teacher-principal trust can be explained by the principal’s actions to develop supportive ties that relieve teachers’ sense of vulnerability (Bryke and Schneider, 2002). The presence of racial-ethnic tensions among the faculty clearly identified situations where principals had low levels of relational trust with their faculty members. The growth of relational trust in a school community fuel multiple strands in the school change process and thereby contribute to improved student learning (Bryke and Schneider, 2002).

All of the participants experienced race-related difficulties with parents and community members, no matter how diligent their efforts. Despite their undeniable progress, none of these African American principals were insulated from incidents of racial discrimination. They all experienced micro-aggressions that provoked feelings of powerlessness and frustration. According to Derrick Bell (1992), success does not
insulate Blacks from the social and political “snares” of racism. In *Faces At the Bottom of the Well*, Derrick Bell (1992) declared it impossible for black people to achieve full equity with Whites. Bell’s central argument rests on the assertion that “racism is an integral, permanent and indestructible component of this society…”

Black people are the magical faces at the bottom of society’s well. Even the poorest Whites, those who must live their lives only a few levels above, gain their self-esteem by gazing down on us. Surely, they must know that their deliverance depends on letting down their ropes. Only by working together is escape possible. Over time, many reach out, but most simply watch, mesmerized into maintaining their unspoken commitment to keeping us where we are, at whatever cost to them or to us.

At best, African Americans can hope for what Bell (1992) called temporary “peaks of progress, short-lived periods of improved conditions” that lasts until “white dominance reasserts itself”.

The lives of Whites who grow up in predominantly white communities are deeply shaped by racial segregation (DiAngelo, 2012). This isolation informs the collective perspective on what kind of space is most valuable. Whites still receive messages that achievement means upward mobility, and the social environment gets whiter the higher up one goes (DiAngelo, 2012). The manner in which we hear about “good schools” and “good neighborhoods” typically denotes the absence of people of color (DiAngelo, 2012). White flight has been shown to be triggered when a formerly white neighborhood reaches 7% black (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). DiAngelo (2012) sadly concluded that the most profound message of racial segregation for Whites is that there is no real loss in the absence of black people in their lives (p. 164). She asks us all to pause for a moment to consider the magnitude of this message:
We lose nothing of value by not having cross-racial relationships. In fact, the absence of people of color in our lives is in large part what defines our schools and neighborhoods as “good.” (p. 164).

Racism includes strong, positive images of Whites as well as strong, negative images of Blacks. Racial dominance leads to racial arrogance, whereby Whites feel free to dismiss informed perspectives rather than acknowledge that they are unfamiliar, reflect on them further, or seek more information (DiAngelo, 2012).

_Coping Mechanisms._ A detailed listing of the coping strategies that were used by the participants of this study was presented in Chapter 4. An overwhelming majority of them noted the importance of maintaining a healthy self-image and staying true to their convictions. The connection between success and self-efficacy for black principals is frequently connected with spiritual belonging. Religiosity among black Americans refers to the great importance of God and religion in their lives, high frequency of church membership, and the prevalence of prayer in their daily lives (Gallup, 2002). The black church has existed as a more encompassing institution when Blacks did not have the ability to participate fully in the economic, social, and political life of the majority society. It was the only institution controlled completely by Blacks. The role of the church in predominantly black social movements, such as the Civil Rights movement, created after school programs and promoted voter participation, and facilitated other civic actions. It continues to be a source of strength and endurance for black leaders. The participants also affirmed the significance of securing sources of support outside the school community.
Tatum (1997) tells us that we need to understand that in racially mixed settings, racial grouping is a developmental process in response to an environmental stressor, racism for adults as well as adolescents. Joining with one’s peers for support in the face of stress is a positive coping strategy. It becomes problematic when people are operating with a very limited definition of what it means to be black, based largely on cultural stereotypes. According to Tatum (1997), African Americans will avoid situations that set them apart from their black peers. Fordham (1996) describes one strategy as racelessness, wherein individuals assimilate into the dominant group by de-emphasizing characteristics that might identify them as members of the subordinate group. This strategy leads Blacks to avoid activities that are associated with blackness. Instead of becoming raceless, successful black leaders can become persons who own achievement as advancing the cause of the racial group. As one’s awareness of the daily challenges of living in a racist society increases, it is immensely helpful to be able to share one’s experiences with others who have lived it (Tatum, 1997). Even when white friends are willing and able to listen to one’s struggles, they cannot really share the experiences. The ability to see oneself as a part of a larger group from which one can draw support is an important coping strategy. When a black person walks into a room, white people notice. When there are several Blacks sitting together in a room, the Whites notice and become self-conscious about their whiteness in a way that they were not before (DiAngelo, 2012). Particularly in work settings where Blacks people are isolated and often in the minority, opportunities to connect with black peers are few and far between. White people are often unaware of how stressful such a situation can be (DiAngelo, 2012).
Experienced black leaders must also be able to look to system support, professional networks, and leadership institutes for the provision of renewal experiences and activities. These should include: sabbatical leaves; job sharing; professionally expanding work engagements; and the utilization and affirmation of their wisdom and competencies in the mentoring and coaching of the next generation of leaders.

Recruitment, Retention and Mentoring of Black Principals. The recruitment, retention, and mentoring of school principals are of great importance to all school systems because effective educational leadership is vital to bringing about improvements and fostering good policy and practice. Of particular concern in some settings is the difficulty of attracting and retaining black principals in white, suburban and rural areas.

Many studies (Schneider, 1991; Rooney, 2000; Moir & Bloom, 2003) have found that one of the most effective ways to prepare and support principals in their careers is to provide a mentoring program. Daresh (2001) believes mentoring is an ongoing process in which individuals in an organization provide support and guidance to those who can become effective contributors to the goals of the organization. He further contends, “Unlike many other views of mentoring, a mentor does not necessarily have to be an older person who is ready, willing, and able to provide all the answers. Usually mentors have a lot of experience and craft knowledge to share with others.”

Many states have created programs that enable aspiring principals, mentor principals, and support the recruitment of ethnic minorities. According to Enomoto, Gardiner, and Grogon, (2000) successful school principals are often mentored by professionals who have a vested interest in their well-being. Quality mentoring relationships can be distinguished by certain ways of relating, by expectations and
parameters placed on the relationship that serve to promote the protégés professional success and well-being. Enomoto et al, (2000) believe that it is important for historically underrepresented groups to be provided opportunities to participate in mentoring arrangements, and that it is essential that the mentoring experiences be culturally relevant.

**Implications**

*Research On Black Leadership.* Qualitative methods represent an effective approach to conducting research with black principals (Tillman, 2004). This method allows researchers to conduct in-depth interviews, observations, and document analyses that yield rich descriptions of black principals. As Tillman (2002) has argued, when research is approached from a cultural perspective, “the individual and collective knowledge of African Americans is placed at the center of the inquiry” (p.3). Nevertheless, there is also a need for more research about Blacks in the principalship in which quantitative methods are used. Survey research based on national samples can yield results that can be generalized to the broader population of black principals. Such studies are important given that recent large-scale principalship surveys have failed to illuminate the specific circumstances that affect the leadership of these principals (Tillman, 2004). Second, what is the relationship between African American school leadership and African American student achievement? Findings from the studies reviewed suggest that this relationship is positive. However, there is only limited evidence suggesting the specific ways in which same race/culture affiliation is directly linked to African American student achievement.
**Absence of Black Voices in the Literature.** Black leaders regularly contend with the historical and lingering effects of racism in American society. No matter the degree of success and accomplishment or no matter the comfort level that Blacks achieve within American society, there is always a persistent “otherness”, a need to prove oneself in response to the negative assumptions of the larger society (Bond, 2012). African American principals who work in predominantly white school communities are still considered atypical leaders who regularly confront issues of legitimacy and resistance. Their stories and contributions have not been incorporated as a central theme in the literature of school administration and leadership. Organizational and leadership theorists have not been attentive to the specific ways by which African Americans have contributed to the discourse regarding school leadership. Earlier scholars of leadership did not view the lack of research on people of color as a deficit, and current theorists remain inadequate in their treatment of African Americans, minimizing their impact with brief mentions of their presence in the field (Murtadha & Watts, 2005). Unfortunately, the omission of Black leadership narratives limits our ability to develop ways to improve schools and communities, not only for African American children, but also for all of our nation’s children (Murtadha & Watts, 2005).

As more African American men and women break through the traditional domains of educational administration, researchers must develop more interest in studying the work and experiences of marginalized groups, describing and acknowledging the different aspects and practices of their leadership. The history and consequences of racialized school leadership discourses can provide a vision for
dismantling the old architecture of education, as we currently know it (Murtadha & Watts, 2005).

*Conceptualizing Pre-Service Programs to Meet Diverse Needs of School Administrators.* Pre-service programs must go beyond the traditional universal approach to one of leadership preparation dedicated to preparing informed, skilled, and compassionate school leaders who can promote, inspire, and be accountable for real school change in service of social justice and equity. We need a model that will assume a more critical reflection of a multi-faceted approach to infuse social justice and equity in every phase of the program. By studying African American educational leadership, researchers find that mainstream theories are lacking in their understanding leadership from the perspectives of diverse cultural groups who fight for equity in this society (Murtadha & Watts, 2005). If we truly want to develop schools to meet the needs of diverse student populations today, the use of cultural knowledge from the historical biographies of successful African American educational leaders can serve as valuable resources.

*Changing the Role of Principalship.* Consideration needs to be given to strategies such as: re-conceptualizing the role of the principal; reviewing workplace conditions; and providing frameworks of mentoring and support. The process of principal selection and certification must be such that able candidate’s are confident about the process and not discouraged by aspects of the process itself. Approaches to leadership learning need to blend a number of approaches and experiences and acknowledge that some of the most effective mentors and facilitators of leadership learning are principals themselves, sharing good practice and experience based wisdom. Consideration should also be given to
features of leadership roles in order to identify ways in which the principalship might be re-conceived and re-designed to attract the interest of more members of underrepresented groups.

Summary and Conclusion

It is difficult to predict what 21st century schooling will look like 50 years from now, yet there are a few things we can reasonably assume about the future of schooling in the United States. Schools in this century will educate more students of color and non-Anglo culture than in any other time in the nation’s history. Population projections predict that in 2020, there will be more minority school-aged children than white school-aged children. While students of color tend to be associated with large urban districts, more of these children will likely attend schools in suburban and rural areas throughout this country. School systems that never had diversity issues will each see increasing numbers of students of color and be compelled to develop strategies or interventions to address the needs of students of color and poor students of all races. Twenty first century school leadership demands an understanding and commitment to social justice from an asset perspective, taking advantage of the values we all bring to the table. As leaders with broader perspectives, we need to see beyond ‘what has been in the past’ to achieve a vision of diversity that goes beyond the appearance of inclusion, to draw everyone into the circle of inclusion. Issues of race are as prevalent in schools as they are in the greater society. To assume or pretend otherwise is absurd and will do nothing more than reproduce the status quo.
As an African American principal who serves in a predominantly white school community, I am aware that my race is the first thing that people notice about me when I walk into a schoolroom. I am aware of the preconceived notions that will be there; ready to be validated by whatever I say or do not say. I am an African American educator who embraces my blackness in ways that I deem are authentic and true to me. The identities that I construct for myself gives me the strength and conviction to fight against the restraints and challenges of the status quo and to thrive where I deem appropriate for my sense of well-being. Those values that I learn and the identities that I construct across time, class, gender, and race enable me to lead in any setting.
## APPENDIX A

### TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Analysis and Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pilot Phase:</strong></td>
<td>Pilot interviews with 3-5 principals</td>
<td>Transcribe selections of interviews if necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>Informal conversations with administrators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 1:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Document analysis of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2015 –</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low-level coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bi-weekly research memos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 2:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Document analysis of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low-level coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Began reconstructive analysis on selected sections of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Biweekly researcher memos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 3:</strong></td>
<td>Follow-up interviews when necessary</td>
<td>Document analysis of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2015 –</td>
<td></td>
<td>Began high-level coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peer debriefing of initial analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Biweekly researcher memos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 4:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>High-level coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2015 –</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peer debriefing analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Further analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Michelle R. Wiley, Principal
Office: (215) 257-9200

Advisor: Dr. Vivian Gadsden
Office: (215) 573-3528

Research Protocol
Letter of Informed Consent

Date: ____________

My name is Michelle Wiley, and I am a black, female principal of a K-5 elementary school located in Bucks County, a predominantly white, blue-collar community approximately 40 miles from a major metropolitan city. I have been an elementary school principal in the district since 2009.

I am a doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania who is interested in studying black principals, specifically the challenges in leadership that beset black principals who work in predominantly white school communities. I respectfully request your permission to participate in my research dissertation, Challenges in Leadership that Beset Black Principals in Predominantly White School Communities.

The proposed study will attempt to gather current information about the experiences of black principals who work in predominantly white school communities. It will examine the nature of black principals’ experiences in a society in which race continues to occupy a significant place and to understand the nature of these experiences including the challenges that beset black principals who work in predominantly white school communities. I trust that this work will contribute to the limited scholarship that highlights the black educational leader in environments outside of urban areas. The data for the study will be collected during the summer of 2015, and the collected data will become an integral part of the discourse on how matters of race, discrimination, and racial politics configure with discussions of leadership.

Participation in this study is voluntary and consent can be discontinued at any time. As a participant, you will provide information about your personal story and experiences in leadership in a predominantly white community. Your participation in this study will include:

- Complete confidentiality and anonymity regarding the information shared and provided. There will be no identifiable reference in the data to any specific district, school, and principal, unless the participants grant written permission. Any information obtained will be considered confidential and will be used solely for research purposes in fulfillment of my dissertation.
- Face to face, face-time, and/or phone interviews (Approximately 1-2 hours)
• Permission to audiotape interviews. You will be entitled to review the transcripts and edit the contents, if you opt to do so.
• Participation in several email writing prompts-if further clarification is needed
• A visitation to your setting, if possible

I sincerely appreciate your time and willingness to participate in my research, and I hope that you will permit me to document your experiences. I trust that you realize there is no anticipated risk on your behalf for participation in this study. You may withdraw from the study at any time, and all collected data will be deleted or returned to you immediately.

Completion of the consent form will indicate your permission to use the data obtained in the study.

Research Protocol
Letter of Consent

Participant’s Signature__________________________ Date_______

Researcher’s Signature__________________________ Date_______

For further information regarding this study, please contact:
Michelle R. Wiley  Dr. Vivian Gadsden
University of Pennsylvania  University of Pennsylvania
Graduate School of Education  Graduate School of Education
Walnut Street  Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104  Philadelphia, PA 19104
APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol

Welcome and thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I am conducting this interview to support my research that will explore the experiences of black principals who work in predominantly white school communities and the ways in which matters of race, racial discrimination, and racial politics configure within discussions on leadership. I trust that my work will contribute to the limited scholarship that highlights black educational leaders.

You were selected as a participant of this study because you identify as African American and you presently (or in the past) served in a predominantly white school community. All participants in this study will be referred to by pseudonyms so your identities will remain confidential. At any time during the interview process, you may exercise your option to discontinue your participation in the study, and your responses to any interview questions will be deleted.

Demographic Information for Informant:

I will begin by asking a few questions about you and your background as an educator.

1. Tell me about yourself (education, personal information: age, family information, residency).

2. Why did you want to become a school administrator?

3. How many years of teaching experience (elementary/secondary) did you have before becoming an administrator?

4. How many years have you been an administrator in your present district?

5. Over the course of your career, you may have had different kinds of relationships with your colleagues. How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues and your supervisor/superintendent? Have these relationships changed over time, and if so, how have they changed?

Position and Reasons for Wanting the Position:
6. What interests, needs, expectations, etc. led you to seek the position? In other words, why did you want the position?

7. How did you learn about the position, and how did you obtain it? What led you to decide upon this setting? What attracted you? Probe: Examples of prompts—wanted a move, position presented challenges, looking for new opportunities, wanted better pay, etc.

8. What makes (made) you stay?

9. How did the community (teachers, parents, students) react to your hiring? What were your sources of information about the response?

10. In what ways, if any, did issues of race and/or gender play a role in the response?

11. How do (did) parents, students, and faculty interact with you?

12. How many people work with you (assistant principals, secretaries, etc.)? How would you describe the nature of your relationship with them? Has it changed over time, and if yes, in what ways?

13. How did the community (teachers, parents, students), react to your hiring?

14. How do (did) parents, students, and faculty treat you?

15. Do (did) you have an assistant? What is (was) the nature of your relationship with him or her?

Demographics of the Setting:

16. What are (were) the demographics of your setting?

17. Due to the demographics, what are (were) the challenges that your community faces (faced)?

18. What is unique about your setting that makes (made) this experience work/not work for you?
19. Have you experienced or made sense of what you perceive to be racist in this setting?

20. What is (was) easy about leading in this setting?  What is (was) difficult?

**Leadership Style:**

The road to becoming a successful leader for African Americans is often filled with challenges, especially for those who become leaders in non-traditional settings. Over the past several decades, researchers have attempted to determine the conditions under which success in leadership has occurred.

21. How would you describe your leadership style?

22. Would you say that it has changed as a result of this experience?  If so, how?

23. How would your staff and colleagues describe your leadership style?  Can you give an example to support your answer?

24. What methods have you used to gain commitment to your leadership from your faculty and staff members?

**Coping Factors**

Challenges such as those experienced by black principals who work in predominantly white school settings, can increase their social capital if they can endure and find success in the face of adversity.

25. Have you experienced any risks/stressors of working in a predominantly white school environment?  If so, can you identify them?

26. Who in your setting do (did) you lean on for support?  How do (did) they support your leadership?  What do (did) they do?  Who were your mentors?  Who do you consider your allies?

27. What would you describe as some of your coping strategies?

28. Has your leadership style changed as a result of this experience?  If so, how?

29. Have there been times when you felt like leaving this setting?  Why?  What makes (made) you stay?
Experiences with Race and Racism:

For black principals who serve within the social and political domains of predominantly white communities, the task of developing their staff and local community as transformative members of the organization becomes much more complex as they maneuver through social histories that shape their interactions with parents, faculty, and district members.

30. How do (did) you deal with issues of race? Share with me an experience that was challenging for you? Were there other factors involved that you were not cognizant of at the time?

31. Have you experienced any negative feedback from other black colleagues/family members regarding you choosing to work in a predominantly white school setting?

32. Do you ever feel that you are carrying the torch for your race? If so, how do you deal with those times?

33. In what ways do (did) you “fit in” or not “fit in”? In what ways do (did) you participate in shifting behaviors?

34. What are (were) some of the challenges/obstacles that you faced? What have been the most significant/disturbing challenges?

35. How have these challenges affected your personal/professional life?

36. What have been your greatest professional achievements?

37. Why do you think there are so few black principals/administrators in predominantly white environments?

38. Does race play a vital role in your ability to establish your leadership in your school community? If so, how?

39. Can you provide one or two examples of a time when your race impacted you in a negative way?

40. Can you provide one or two examples of a time when your race had no impact?

Implications:

41. What advice would you give to other black administrators in a similar setting?
42. How does your situation as a leader differ from non-black school administrators? What differences have you noted between your experiences and theirs?

43. Is there anything else you would like to share or discuss?
### APPENDIX D

Distribution (%) of school principals by race/ethnicity, school type, and selected school characteristics: 2003-2004

| School type and school characteristic | White, non-Hispanic | Black, non-Hispanic | American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic | Asian, non-Hispanic | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic | Hispanic, single or multiple races | Multiple races, non-Hispanic 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All schools</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All public schools</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School classification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional public</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter school</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central city</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban fringe/Large town</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/small town</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distribution (%) of school principals by race/ethnicity, school type, and selected school characteristics: 2003-04 -Continued
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type and school characteristic</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>American Indian/Alaska, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic, single or multiple races, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Multiple races, non-Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined school level</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student enrollment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 100</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-199</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-499</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-749</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750-999</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 or more</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All private schools</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distribution (%) of school principals by race/ethnicity, school type, and selected school characteristics: 2003-04 -Continued
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type and selected school characteristic</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic, single or multiple races</th>
<th>Multiple races, non-Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School classification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religious</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonsectarian</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central city</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban fringe/Large town</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/small town</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student enrollment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Black, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Asian, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Hispanic, single or multiple races</td>
<td>Multiple races, non-Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 100</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-199</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-499</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-749</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750 or more</td>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Rounds to zero.

2 Minority includes Black, non-Hispanic; American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic; Asian, non-Hispanic; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic; Hispanic, single or multiple races; and multiple races, non-Hispanic.

## APPENDIX E

### NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: 2011-2012

Total number of school principals and distribution (%) of school principals, by race/ethnicity, school type, and selected school characteristics: 2011–12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type and selected school characteristic</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Hispanic, regardless of race</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black or African American, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Other&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All schools</td>
<td>115,540</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All public schools</td>
<td>89,810</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School classification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional public</td>
<td>85,350</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter school</td>
<td>4,460</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>23,440</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>24,520</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>12,330</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>29,520</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2.
Total number of school principals and distribution (%) of school principals, by race/ethnicity, school type, and selected school characteristics: 2011–12 - Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School level</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Hispanic, regardless of race</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black or African American, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Other(^1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>50,210</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>13,930</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>18,390</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>7,280</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student enrollment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 100</td>
<td>6,600</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100–199</td>
<td>6,480</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200–499</td>
<td>37,140</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500–749</td>
<td>21,830</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750–999</td>
<td>8,680</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 or more</td>
<td>9,080</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School classification</td>
<td>Total number of principals</td>
<td>Hispanic, regardless of race</td>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Black or African American, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Other¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All private schools</td>
<td>25,730</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>6,760</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religious</td>
<td>12,590</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of principals by race/ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type and selected school characteristic</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Hispanic, regardless of race</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black or African American, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Other¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonsectarian</td>
<td>6,380</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>8,590</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>8,110</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>2,630</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>6,390</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>14,510</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Level</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>CV</td>
<td>Hit Rate</td>
<td>Dropout Rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2,660</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined school levels</td>
<td>8,570</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student enrollment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 100</td>
<td>12,740</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100–199</td>
<td>5,060</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200–499</td>
<td>6,150</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500–749</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750 or more</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Rounds to zero.

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

‡ Reporting standards not met. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 50 percent or greater (i.e., the standard error is 50 percent or more of the estimate).

1 Other includes American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic; Asian, non-Hispanic; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic; and two or more races, non-Hispanic.

NOTE: Hispanic includes Latino. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

## APPENDIX F

### DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY RACE AND LOCATION: 2007-2008

Total number of public school principals and distribution (%) of school principals, by race/ethnicity and location in the United States: 2007-08

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White, Non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, Non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Other¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>90,470</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>1,480</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>1,910</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>9,170</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>3,340</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>4,090</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>1,360</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total number of public school principals and distribution (%) of school principals, by race/ethnicity and location in the United States: 2007-08 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Race/ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>1,340</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>1,420</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>1,810</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>2,460</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>4,660</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>2,380</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>3,650</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>1,550</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>3,190</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total number of public school principals and distribution (%) of school principals, by race/ethnicity and location in the United States: 2007-08 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Race/ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>1,620</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>8,300</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>1,980</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>2,140</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>2,040</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Rounds to zero.

† Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).
‡ Reporting standards not met. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 50 percent or greater (i.e., the standard error is 50 percent or more of the estimate) or the response rate is below 50 percent.
¹ Other includes American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic; Asian, non-Hispanic; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic; and two or more races, non-Hispanic.

## APPENDIX G

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY RACE AND LOCATION: 2011-2012

Total number of public school principals and distribution (%) of school principals, by race/ethnicity and location in the United States: 2011–2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Hispanic, regardless of race</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black or African American, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Other$^1$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>89,810</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>1,390</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>9,690</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>3,520</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>2,370</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>3,920</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>1,770</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total number of public school principals and distribution (%) of school principals, by race/ethnicity and location in the United States: 2011–2012 - Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Hispanic, regardless of race</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black or African American, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Other¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>3,350</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>1,940</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>1,940</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>99.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>2,470</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>4,610</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>2,550</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>3,380</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>1,480</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total number of public school principals and distribution (%) of school principals, by race/ethnicity and location in the United States: 2011–2012 - Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total number of principals</th>
<th>Hispanic, regardless of race</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black or African American, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Other¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>3,160</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>1,710</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>8,270</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>2,040</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>‡</td>
<td>‡</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Rounds to zero.

¹ Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

‡ Reporting standards not met. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 50 percent or greater (i.e., the standard error is 50 percent or more of the estimate) or the response rate is below 50 percent.

¹ Other includes American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic; Asian, non-Hispanic; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic; and two or more races, non-Hispanic. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School Principal Data File,” 2011–12.


presentation at the Annual Meeting of the University Council of Educational Administration, New Orleans, LA.


