EXPLORING DISTRICT AND CAMPUS LEADERS' PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT

HOMELESS STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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This qualitative case study explored how school district and campus-level administrators coordinate resources and services for currently enrolled homeless students. Participants in this study included three district-level administrators designated as the homeless liaison and three campus principals. Data collected and analyzed included audio recordings of semi-structured interviews of each participant, documents at the district and campus-levels, school board meeting notes, and research field notes. The findings suggested that district and campus stakeholders embraced a shared vision of collaborative policy implementation to support the needs of students living in homelessness conditions. Findings also suggested that moral purpose is reflected through the intentional, collaborative efforts of district and campus administrators. Additionally, the findings suggested that social capital develops in the collaborative processes between district and campus leaders while they broker resources to foster developing social capital of this student population. Mobilization of resources through collaborative policy implementation can foster cohesion while supporting students and can counter the impact of living in homelessness conditions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

While driving one afternoon in an older established area of my city, that is experiencing rapid economic growth and development, I noticed several new entertainment, sports, and business venues with future building renovations, expansions, and construction. There were homes located in those areas scheduled for future development that would have to be razed to the ground to allow for building the new economic developments. These homes were apartment complexes, older homes, and duplexes. The public elementary schools, within and surrounding this area of development, are school-wide Title I programs based on the number of children who are economically disadvantaged according to census poverty estimates and free and reduced meal application eligibility.

As these various homes were being demolished to allow for future business development, I wondered about the families who lived there and which schools their children would attend. Curious about these events and following changes that would take place over several months, I discovered there were people, including families with school-aged children, living in tents in the woods near the newly constructed business complex. Out of these series of events was born my desire to learn more about how local school districts in cities surrounding me supported enrolled students living in homelessness conditions. This contemplation is the catalyst for establishing the problem of my exploratory research study.

Introduction to the Study

Student homelessness is a prevalent issue that school districts nationwide must address. The face of homelessness in the United States has changed dramatically in the past half century:

once comprised primarily of single men, the homeless population now includes a significant number of families with children. Therefore, homelessness no longer is evident on the periphery of society. The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (2004) suggests that families with children make up nearly half of the homeless population. The National Center on Family Homelessness (2009), surmised that children are a fast growing segment of the homelessness population. Possible factors contributing to this situation for families and children experiencing homelessness include the following: (1) the economic downturn, (2) foreclosure crisis, (3) insufficient wages or minimum wage jobs that provide less than what is needed to acquire and maintain stable housing, and (4) shortages in affordable housing (National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, 2010).

More than 3 million people each year experience homelessness, and approximately 1.3 million are children (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2008). According to the 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Texas reported approximately 29,615 homeless on a single night in January 2013. Additionally, Texas reported approximately 28,495 homeless individuals on a single night in January 2014. The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) estimates that approximately one-quarter of all homeless individuals are school-aged children, according to the broader Department of Education definition, in 2014 (NCHE, 2016). In a federal data summary of school years 2012-2013 and 2014-2015, in some cities, as many as five percent of all children ages 5-9 experienced an episode of homelessness in elementary school. Although, data sources may show decreases in homelessness in certain states, there remains numbers of homeless families, including school-aged children and youth needing support from public schools to positively influence their educational experience.

Experiences related to homelessness can threaten and thwart healthy development in children and youth. These experiences can contribute to a decrease in academic success, prevalence of emotional and behavioral challenges, and lower levels of competence. Families experiencing homelessness are more likely exposed to or experience risk factors like separation from each other, violence, and serious health conditions (National Center for Homeless Education, 2011). Homelessness is harmful to the emotional, social, and cognitive development and well-being of children and youth (Grothaus, Lorelle, Anderson, & Knight, 2011). Further, children experiencing homelessness may face high rates of abuse, neglect, mental health concerns, and additional risk factors that hinder opportunities for them to experience academic and social-emotional successes (Swick, 2008). Higher rates of mobility and absenteeism present difficulty for homeless children and youth to acquire a consistent education (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Therefore, young people and children without residential stability experience trauma that negatively impacts their capacity to fully engage in schooling. From this perspective, safety, predictability, and stability are absent from homeless children and youth's foundational experiences with potential to having further impact on their lives in future years. Hence the significant need for schools to consider implementing practices that develop homeless children and youths' ability to establish and maintain healthy relations with peers and adults in various settings, including school and places of employment.

Social capital contributes to comprehending and clarifying the struggles homeless children and youth may experience. Social capital related to homelessness supports the need for developing appropriate academic and social behaviors in children, including skills that focus on communication, emotion regulation, relationship skills, self-management, and responsible decision-making (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995). Moreover, social capital adds to

understanding how the development of academic and social behavior can improve interactions among the youth and their environment. Hence, positive social capital that results from academic and social skills development through positive, productive relationships may assist their success in overcoming trauma experienced due to homelessness and sustaining productive social networks that could lend to improved academic engagement, health and well-being, and healthy relations with others (Morrow, 2004).

The federal response to eradicate homelessness employed a comprehensive, multi-departmental approach. Various policies across several governmental departments, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Education, aimed to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness based on the intent and resources included within each department's mission and policy agenda. Instrumental as the catalyst for a comprehensive approach to supporting school-aged youth and children living in homelessness conditions was Congress's passage of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in 1987. This federal policy provided federal funds and resources to states to ensure protections for homeless youth and children with intentions of them attaining school stability (Samartino, 2014).

Statement of Problem

Trauma due to living in homeless conditions may cause students to display signs of depression, rage, or mental anguish during the instructional school day (Morrow, 2004). Schools are often considered as havens of support. Further, they offer routines and structures for students, particularly students experiencing homelessness, to learn the necessary skills and benefits of developing healthy relationships and social networks with others (Miller, 2011).

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Additionally, schools can provide a variety of services and programs for families to facilitate stability in a child's learning and social experiences (Samartino, 2014). With the challenges due to economic hardship and homelessness facing this vulnerable group, it is imperative to have policy and procedures that provide needed support. Due to the various needs to be addressed with many homeless students, it is equally critical that campus and district leaders continuously collaborate, coordinate, and mobilize resources.

Conceptual Framework

In this study, the conceptual framework centers on supporting the needs of homeless youth and children through the perspective of collaborative education policy. This viewpoint lends to policy implementation coherence by forming supportive relationships and structures of communication aimed to regularly flow throughout the local school system of practitioners and to state and federal policy intermediaries and developers. Key to collaboration is the supportive relationships between policy intermediaries, such as central office administrators, and policy service providers, such as campus administrators. Figure 1 illustrates the constructs in the conceptual framework for this study. It demonstrates the connections among collaborative educational policy implementation, supporting the needs of homeless children, and social capital. This approach of collaboration best facilitates maximizing resources and optimizing results with key stakeholders to strengthen sense-making and implementation of the policy needing enactment. Having said that, central office staff members are strategically positioned to broker necessary resources for the entire district, particularly high-needs campuses with significant numbers of students living in homeless conditions (Honig & Hatch, 2004).

Figure 1. This conceptual framework reflects the inter-relatedness of the major components of this research study with collaborative educational policy (Honig, 2003).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore how district administrators support campus level administrators in meeting the needs of students experiencing homelessness. Little research exists about how district leaders support campus leaders to address the needs of homeless students to positively impact the development of their social capital. This study seeks to examine how district and campus administrators work collaboratively to allocate, coordinate, and mobilize resources for students who experience homelessness. Relevant research on homelessness is presented and the theories that framed this study on homelessness, policy implementation, and social capital.

Research Questions

This qualitative study explores the practices of district and campus administrators from schools in the Dallas-Fort Worth area that support the development of programs, practices and interventions to meet the needs of students experiencing homelessness. This study focuses on the overarching question: How do district administrators support campus administrators in

addressing the needs of students who are homeless? The following sub-questions will also be addressed:

1) What programs, practices, and interventions are available to support homeless students at your school or district?

2) How do district administrators support campus administrators in implementing programs or interventions to meet the needs of homeless students?

3) What barriers hinder program implementation for homeless students?

The research questions were answered by data collected in interviews with district and campus administrators who are responsible for policy implementation supporting students experiencing homeless conditions. Additionally, data collection includes documents which will support triangulation of data and lend to the reliability of the research study. A detailed description of the methodology for this study is further explained in chapter 3.

Significance of the Study

A sparse amount of research exists about how district leaders support campus leaders to meet the needs of students who experience homelessness. This study seeks to examine how district and campus administrators work collectively to allocate, coordinate, and mobilize resources for students who experience homelessness. Finally, this research seeks to provide insight on how district and school leadership practices can support homeless students' needs in order to minimize the negative impact of homelessness during their academic careers and in citizenry.

Delimitations

Parameters have been created within this study to provide appropriate delimitations. Using a targeted, small sample size is one of this study's delimitations. This study focuses on

three school districts in the Dallas-Fort Worth area serving large numbers of students experiencing homelessness. Within these three school districts, the selection of participants is focused on the district administrator responsible for implementing federal policy to support homeless students at the central administration level. Additionally, two campuses from each district with the highest numbers of enrolled students identified as homeless are targeted for participation. These individuals are selected for participation because they are the key policy intermediaries and implementers of federal homeless law in a school district and at the school site level. Also, these individuals typically make key decisions on identifying needs and implementing supportive practices, including coordinating and mobilizing resources, to address the identified needs of homeless students. Collection of data from district and campus level leadership was also chosen to understand the collaborative practices from multiple perspectives that may exist. This sample size is crucial in obtaining in-depth interviews to answer the research questions for this research study.

A second delimitation of this study is that the participant interviews focus on policy implementation and supportive practices of administrators instead of other educational personnel who may provide support to students experiencing homelessness. Whereas the roles of other key employees, such as a school counselor, classroom teacher, or social worker, in a school or district are important to supporting homeless students, these individuals will not be included in the sample of participants as they are not directly held accountable for the implementation and allocation of resources to support homeless students.

Assumptions

This qualitative study will rely on the knowledge, perspectives, and experiences of

district level and campus level administrators directly responsible for implementing policy that addresses the needs of homeless students within three Dallas-Fort Worth area school districts with high numbers of students identified as homeless. An assumption of this study will be that the information shared from the targeted participants during the interviews is accurate and presents an accurate account of the support that is provided to address the needs of homeless students in these selected school districts. The documents that will be collected and analyzed through the document analysis process are assumed to be accurate.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they specifically relate to this study to support the readers' understanding.

- Campus level administrator. Principal or Assistant Principal.

- District level administrator – the Homeless Liaison. This individual has sole responsibility of implementing policy from the McKinney-Vento Act to address the needs of students identified as homeless.

- Homelessness. Student eligibility for federal support in public schools as required by McKinney-Vento Act (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2015).

- Social and emotional learning (SEL). Organized methods of teaching students social and emotional skills that can result in behavioral and conduct standards (Dusenbury & Wessberg, 2017).

- Social and emotional skills. Interrelated components of development through observed skills and behaviors involving self-awareness, emotional awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making (Dusenbury & Wessberg, 2017).

- Social capital. The value of the social networks of an individual or group of people (Miller, 2011).

Summary

The purpose of this study is to explore how district and campus administrators coordinate resources and services for currently enrolled homeless students to support their needs in districts near the Dallas-Fort Worth area with high numbers of students identified as homeless. This chapter provides a general overview of the purpose and organization of the study, and the conceptual framework which represents the relationship among the concepts included in this study.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation contains five chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the issue of homelessness, the problem and purpose of the research, the research questions, boundaries of the study, and possible significance of findings. Chapter 2 is a review of the related literature in the areas of homelessness, collaborative policy implementation for homeless children and youth, and social capital. The literature review bridges the critical ideas about supportive conditions at schools for students who are homelessness. Finally, in chapter 3, I explain the chosen methodology for the study, including the research design, population sampling, and data collection procedures. Chapter 4 includes an analysis of the data and a summary of the major findings, and chapter 5 consists of a discussion and conclusions of the study, implications, limitations, and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Homelessness creates challenges for students related to their success in school and

relating with their peers and adults (McCallion, 2012). Families experiencing homelessness

prioritize meeting their basic needs, including securing stable housing, transportation, and meals,

and appropriate clothing. Depending upon the residential conditions, homeless children and

youth may be exposed to trauma, violence, and forms of substance abuse. These challenges can

have considerable impact on homeless children and youths' participation in the schooling

process. With this in mind, it is important that school leaders create supportive educational

opportunities for homeless students (Samartino, 2014). Thus, an exploration of issues related to

how district leaders support the efforts of campus leaders in serving homeless children and youth

will be addressed in the following literature review. The following areas in the literature review

guided the constructs of the conceptual framework for this study, namely: (1) homelessness, (2),

collaborative policy implementation for homeless children and youth, and (3) social capital.

Homelessness

Defining Homelessness

In the 1970s and 1980s, the number of individuals and families experiencing

homelessness in the United States gained increased visibility following a decline in the economy,

a national trend lending to deinstitutionalization of mental health care, and federal budget cuts to

affordable housing programs (National Center for Homeless Education, 2016). Eventually, the

growth in homelessness became an issue that involved federal and state governments to seek

solutions. Newly adopted legislation provided funding to support various needs of homeless

people. To provide effective services, these programs needed to define homelessness to determine eligibility and reliable data on homeless populations (Congressional Research Service, 2015).

The Congressional Research Services (2015) notes that there is no single federal definition of what it means to be homeless, and the definitions among federal programs serving homeless individuals vary to some extent. Therefore, homeless populations served through federal programs may differ depending on the program. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Education (ED), and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provide majority of services to children, youth, and families. See Table 1 below for a comparison of definitions from these federal organizations.

HUD has traditionally defined homeless as "an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence" who resides in a "supervised publicly or privately-operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations" or "a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings" (HUD, 2010b). The Department of Education's definition, as expressed in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, is broader, including HUD's definition plus "children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason…abandoned in hospitals; or awaiting foster care placement" (National Center for Homeless Education [NCHE], 2011). The primary distinction between the two definitions is consideration of those who have no home, but 'doubled up' with friends or other family members – these individuals are identified as homeless by the Department of Education, but not by HUD. The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH)

Act, passed in 2009, expanded HUD's definition to include those who are 'doubled up', but the specifics have not yet been settled (HUD, 2010b). Health and Human Services defines homeless youth as individuals younger than age 18 and who have no other safe alternative living arrangement and for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative (Acuna, Shaw, Greeno, & Harburger, 2015).

Table 1

A Comparison of the Federal Definitions of Homelessness

	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	U.S. Department of Education (ED)	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Statutory Reference	McKinney-Vento Act	McKinney Vento Act	Runaway and Homeless Youth Act
Age	Young person under 25 years old	Accompanied or unaccompanied school-aged youth	Persons not more than 21 years old
Unsheltered Locations	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sheltered Locations and Transitional Housing	Yes	Yes	Yes, if youth cannot live with relatives and has no other safe place to go
Staying with Others ("Doubled-up")	No	Yes	Yes, if youth cannot live with relatives and has on other safe place to go

Measuring Homelessness

Counting the homeless can be a complicated process as there are various methodologies to collecting this data. Key stakeholders are cognizant of the importance of data to assist strategizing solutions to better serve homeless individuals and families. HUD is the forerunner of most data collection efforts because of the mandates that it implements so that communities

continue to receive certain federal funding (Pergamit, Cunningham, Burt, Lee, Howell, and Dumlao, 2014). Moreover, data collection methodology includes point-in-time counts, estimation, and local school district enrollment of students identified as homeless based on the Department of Education's definition. Most point-in-time counts are shelter-based and occur during a single night in January, typically using data from the Homeless Management Information System if the shelters participate in using this system. HUD enumerators access this point in time data directly from the system.

The United States Conference of Mayors reported that shelters turned away more than a quarter of all families due to lack of space, forcing them to reside in places unsuitable for human habitation such as sidewalks and cars, and also placing them outside the view of researchers using shelter-based counting approaches (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2009). Therefore, some point-in-time counts are likely to be underestimates (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2007b). Additionally, other point-in-time counts are customarily through census-type surveys. In these instances, volunteer enumerators interview individuals living in unsheltered conditions and locations. Likewise, counts also often miss those who are 'doubled up' with other families. To aid the process of counting more homeless individuals, HUD required communities to include homeless youth and young adults in point-in-time counts in 2013. In sum, the methodology for the HUD point-in-time count continues (HUD, 2012).

Society-level economic factors can impact homelessness data trends (Buckner, 2008). In times of relative prosperity at the societal level, homelessness mostly affects those families who suffer persistent severe poverty. These families often end up living in temporary shelters or transitional housing. Research indicates that the vast majority (72-80%) of families who end up in shelters have only one stay of relatively short duration, but as many as 20% experience a long

stay, and between two and eight percent experience repeated episodes of homelessness (Culhane, Metraux, Park, Schretzen, & Valente, 2007). Many so-called "near poor" and lower middle class families were in danger of losing their homes. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), these families may be more likely to 'double up' with relatives or friends making them nearly invisible to researchers. Whether these families experience recurring homelessness episodes remains to be seen (2015).

The Potential Effects of Homelessness on Children at School

Experiencing homelessness is difficult for adults and children. Particularly related to educational outcomes, achievement test scores (e.g., Canfield, 2015; Dworsky, 2008; Robertson, 1992; Rubin, Erickson, San Agustin, Cleary, Allen, & Cohen, 1996) and grades (e.g. Hong & Piescher, 2012; Rubin et al., 1996) are lower for homeless students, while dropout rates are higher (Masten, Sesma, Rekhet, Lawrence, Miliotis, & Dionne, 1997; Rouse & Fantuzzo, 2009; Tobin, 2016; Tucker, 1999). Homeless children are also more likely than the general population to be retained (Bassuk & Rubin, 1987; Hart-Shegos, 1999; Masten, Fiat, Labella, & Strack, 2015). Along with these risk factors, Miller (2011) purports that homeless children and youth tend to experience increased levels of family adversity and risks for poor developmental outcomes like educational, social, and health problems. Homelessness can present significant trauma for children and their families.

Children who are homeless may often display signs of depression, rage, and mental anguish. Further, they can also experience considerable behavioral problems that lead to feelings of failure early in their schooling (Haskett, Armstrong, & Tisdale, 2016; Quint, 1994). Homeless children and their families face emotional, physical, social, and behavioral problems that can

impact academic achievement. In general, the effects of homelessness on children can be separated into four categories. First, homeless children are commonly faced with logistical and procedural barriers to enrolling in school. Next, they are plagued by physical ailments. Homeless children also suffer from mental health issues at greater rates than children in the general population. Finally, homeless children often face educational readiness challenges. These factors come together to decrease the likelihood that homeless children will attain school stability (Stronge, 1993; Tobin, 2016).

Logistical and Procedural Issues

Although the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 attempts to remove logistical and procedural barriers, often they can keep homeless children from enrolling in school (Abdul, Fidel, & Elbedour, 2015; Stronge, 1993). Schools and districts before the McKinney-Vento Act commonly denied homeless students access to school if they or their parents could not produce proof of permanent residence within the district. Likewise, children 'doubled up' with friends or family were often prevented from enrolling because they did not have a legal guardian available to complete the paperwork. Homeless families often lose track of important documents like immunization records and birth certificates. Therefore, they are denied the right to enroll children in school without them. Finally, transportation is a challenge, especially for students attending a school in the district where they lived before they became homeless. Although the law requires schools to provide transportation and to be flexible with residency, guardianship, and paperwork requirements at enrollment, many homeless students still experience some of these challenges (Samuels, Shinn, & Buckner, 2010).

In addition to the above legal issues, there are some logistics that plague students

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experiencing homelessness, such as the loss of school supplies or adequate clothing during their relocation (Gewirtzman & Fodor, 1987). Homeless students may be unable to complete homework because of crowded and noisy shelters or transient living conditions which potentially decreases academic success and could result in academic underperformance (Buckner, Bassuk, Weinreb, & Brooks, 1999; Lubell & Brennan, 2007). Children who move frequently due to homelessness (i.e. highly mobile) tend to experience decline in academic success. Buckner (2008) contends that in a study, comparing homeless and highly mobile children in poverty (based on free and reduced lunch status) but not homeless or highly mobile, homeless and highly mobile groups scored significantly lower on reading and math achievement assessments. Therefore, the state of homelessness itself creates various school-related challenges for this population of students.

Physical Health

Children experiencing homelessness are likely to suffer both chronic and acute health problems (Brooks, Milburn, Borus-Rotheram, & Witkin, 2004). Unsanitary shelter conditions, exposure to varied weather conditions, and lack of regular medical care leave homeless children vulnerable to a host of illnesses. Although some cities have made great strides in the last decade to create and sustain supportive family shelter systems that protect children from these problems (Gewirtz, Hart-Shegos, & Medhanie, 2008), this is not the case everywhere. Infestations and infections (Hudson, Nyamathi, Greengold, Slagle, Koniak-Griffin, Khalilifard, & Getzoff, 2010; Ringwalt, Greene, & Robertson, 1998), asthma (Barry, Ensign, & Lippek, 2002; Karabanow, 2004a), and thermoregulatory disorders such as heat stroke and hypothermia (Miller, 2011; National League of Cities, 2004; Ropers, 1988) are common among homeless children. In

addition to other physical ailments, many children without homes experience hunger and

malnutrition. Children who are not adequately nourished and who are often ill may miss school.

When they do attend, children experiencing homelessness may find it difficult to focus (Hart-

Shegos, 1999). Hunger has a devastating impact on children (Weinreb, Wehler, Perloff, Scott,

Hosmer, Sagor, & Gundersen, 2002). It affects growth and physical health, leading to potential

mental health and behavior problems (Miller, 2011; Rafferty & Shinn, 1991).

Mental Health and Behavior

Children experiencing homelessness are also likely to suffer from mental health and

behavioral problems (Lubell & Brennan, 2007). Girls tend to evidence internalizing problems

like anxiety and depression, whereas boys more often exhibit externalizing problems such as

aggression (Bassuk & Rosenberg, 1990; Buckner et al., 1999). Other behavioral issues, such as

shyness, sleep problems, and attachment issues, are also common in this population (Bassuk &

Rubin, 1987; Masten et al., 1997). Yu, North, LaVesser, Osborne, and Spitznagel (2008) found

that many more homeless children than housed children were likely to have disruptive behavior

problems that impacted their schooling. Homeless children are more likely to be suspended or

expelled from school (Better Homes Fund, 1999).

Homeless children often suffer social isolation and withdrawal in school (Horowitz,

Springer, & Kose, 1988). When students who are disruptive in class miss out on the transmission

of lesson content or are excluded from class as punishment, their learning suffers. Additionally,

homeless students' anxieties, depressive thoughts, and social concerns may lead to

inattentiveness, causing them to be unable to absorb the material being taught (Stronge, 1993).

Educational Readiness

Educational readiness refers to describing how ready children are academically, socially, and physically to start formal schooling. Readiness means that each student starts school ready to engage in and benefit from learning experiences that best promote the student's success (United Nations Children's Fund, 2012). The instability of homelessness can impact children's readiness. Attendance is reported by many as a challenge for homeless students. Research in New York City (United Way of New York City, 2002) and Chicago (Dworsky, 2008) public schools revealed that homeless students had high rates of absenteeism. After the passage of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in 1987, which included provisions for the education of children, absenteeism for homeless students seemed to decline (Stronge, 1993). Dworsky (2008) surmised that absenteeism is still a concern for public schools, even though absenteeism declined as a whole because of the McKinney-Vento passage. Homeless children are also more likely than their peers to qualify for special education services but concomitantly less likely to receive them (Duffield, Heybach, & Julianelle, 2007), possibly related to their absenteeism and high mobility (Nunez & Collignon, 1997). This interferes with retention of learning and with the continuity needed for the lengthy special education referral process (Emerson & Lovitt, 2003; Stronge, 1993).

In short, homeless children experience a range of educational challenges that may impact their academic achievement. Homeless children suffer in all main areas of academic performance including standardized test scores and IQ test scores, grades, and rates of retention. Obradovic and team (2009) found that the homeless students in their study scored significantly lower in reading and math than stably-housed poor children. The homeless students in Yu and colleagues' (2008) study showed significantly lower scores on a standardized measure of intelligence. School performance, usually measured with grades and standardized achievement data, tend to

reveal homeless students underperforming academically when compared to their housed low-income peers as well as middle-class children (Nunez & Collignon, 1997; Rubin et al., 1996). Similarly, Shinn et al. (2008) concluded in their study that there is a higher rate of grade retention for homeless than middle class and housed low-income children. Possible contributing factors were high mobility and living conditions in shelters or unsheltered areas.

Collaborative Policy Implementation for Homeless Children and Youth

Collaborative school reform includes collaboration with various sectors of the community as a basic standard to supportive school improvement (Honig, 2003). Policies enacted through Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) create novel opportunities for schools; yet, place new demands on district central office administrators as they implement federal, state, and local policy in their role of supporting schools. Subsequently, the incorporation of district level to school site collaborative partnerships increases central office administration's active participation in using all resources to ensure meeting the needs of students. Policy coherence through collaborative educational policy recognizes the importance of actors beyond the schools' doors, particularly school district central office administrators, to help schools manage external demands (Honig 2003).

Honig and Hatch (2004) purport that policy coherence is a continuous, on-going process which school district central office administrators and campus leaders collaborate to assist schools in managing external requirements, as opposed to coherence merely manifesting as an end result of policy implementation. External requirements constitute federal, state, and local mandates through adopted policies, including standards that each local school district and school site must attain. Additionally, Honig and Hatch (2004) argue for the importance of central office

administrators' productive participation to policy implementation processes whereby external sources (i.e. federal and state policy developers) mandate the standards schools must achieve in order to meet accountability measures. School district central offices are instrumental in enabling campuses to develop and utilize campus plan goals and strategies to meet the needs of their students. Honig & Hatch (2004) suggest that the top-down policy implementation approach in education involves central office administration in a limited capacity by suggesting the main goal is policy mandate compliance. Typically, from this perspective, central office administrators are involved with campuses from a distance to ensure school sites adhere to policy guidelines.

Central administrators are considered important to policy sense-making and resource allocation for the schools to achieve compliance, from this perspective. On the other hand, bottom-up policy implementation strategies engage school leaders in setting their own goals and improvement strategies that may align with local conditions. These practices can limit central office administration participation and tend not to fully utilize district-wide resources as support for goal-attainment. As with both of these approaches, existing limitations can be root causes to schools failing to meet compliance standards and insufficiently meeting the needs of students. Therefore, a combined approach of fusing both top-down and bottom-up practices through collaborative policy implementation will garner more productive results in the process of developing coherence (Honig & Hatch, 2004).

Related to collaborative policy implementation lending to coherence, Honig and Hatch (2004) surmise that school sites should develop school goals and strategies aligned with external policy demands. School goals and strategies are open and adaptable lending to school-based participatory decision-making activities. Central office administrators support campuses by collaboratively bridging policy practices with campus decision-making processes. Decision-

making processes may include campus sites offering external stakeholders' input into the campus daily operations and expense of resources to achieve compliance of policy mandates. Shared decision-making options lend to schools garnering this information and seeking consensus from central office administrators, community members, and parents/guardians of enrolled students (Honig, 2003). Central office administrators enable school-level decision-making when they use the input of stakeholders as a primary source to align resources to advance policy implementation for particular campus sites or system-wide (Honig & Hatch, 2004).

Moral Purpose and Moral Imperative to Address Conditions of the Homeless in Schools

No one escapes the call for moral purpose when it comes to the education of all students, including students identified as homeless. This concept of moral purpose driving schools is most evident in a June 2013 article Fullan wrote with Andrew Hargreaves, titled *The Power of Professional Capital*. Fullan and Hargreaves asserted that teacher development begins with a dedicated, driven moral purpose that enables educators to do much more than what he calls "capability" to do the job (2013, p. 37). With a dedicated and driven moral purpose, teachers become "enthusiastic…and create decisional capital" to change school culture (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013, p. 38). Therefore, moral responsibility and school purpose cannot be separated. Additionally, moral purpose should be the driver of school improvement and culture change for the benefit of student achievement. Moral purpose is a foundation to schools and the process of schooling serving the good of society. This society level focus refers to teachers, principals, districts, and policy makers as having a moral purpose upon which to base their daily work to ensure students are equipped to establish and maintain supportive and productive relationships in and out of school.

Fullan (2009) expanded his ideas on moral purpose to include stakeholders who are critical to processes of schooling outside of classrooms. These stakeholders, including district administrators, legislators and policy makers, are not called to possess a moral purpose but to follow a moral imperative. The difference here is that a moral purpose is sought for educators to produce a school culture of continual success inclusive of all students; while a moral imperative is reserved for policy developers, policy implementers, and state and local administrators to do what is necessary to enable campus level educators to discover, employ, and be continually driven by moral purpose. In short, the moral imperative is imperative because it requires out-of-the-classroom stakeholders to create an environment where in-the-classroom educators are operating with a moral purpose. The end wish of both the moral purpose and imperative is "student engagement and success" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 1). Moral purpose and moral imperative bridge the importance of educators collectively mobilizing resources to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness.

Federal Policy Implementation Addressing Homelessness

Policy implementation is a critical stage in the overall policy-making process. This process of developing successful policy is very dependent on the effectiveness of implementation. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) define implementation as the actions of "carrying out a basic policy decision, usually incorporated in a statue but which can also take the form of important executive orders or court decisions" (p. 20). Additionally, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) support that policy decisions commonly involve these components: (1) identifying the problem(s) that need addressing, (2) prioritizing the objective(s) for discussion, and (3) structuring the process for implementation. Fullan (2009) asserts that effective

implementation suggests that agencies have complied with the directives of the statutes, local goals realize achievement, or there is improved acceptance of the policy for implementation. Others contrast this perspective:

> There is still no widespread agreement among those who do implementation research about what actually constitutes a case of implementation. There is still some confusion over when implementation begins, when it ends, and how many types of implementation there are. (Goggin, Bowman, Lester, & O'Toole, 1990, p. 9)

The confusion begins with a consistent definition of implementation for use. Paul Berman and his team asserted that implementation is the process of carrying out an authoritative decision (Berman, McLaughlin, Bass-Golod, Pauly, & Zellman, 1977). Considering a more precise definition, Van Meter and Van Horn (1975, p. 447) contend that "policy implementation encompasses those actions by public or private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions". In sum, policy implementation is a series of actions within the policy cycle where key actors execute and operationalize formulated policies, agendas, visions, and plans.

Approaches to Policy Implementation

Policy implementation literature distinguishes various approaches. Factors contributing to the differentiation of implementation approaches involve the role of the actors, their relationships, and the type of policies to which the approaches can apply. Communication patterns between decision makers, implementers who will carry out the policy, and the actual target groups are additionally crucial (Goggin, Bowman, Lester, & O'Toole, 1990). Implementation approaches include top-down, bottom-up, and a hybrid-participatory model.

Top-down implementation reflects several characteristics. Matland (1995) describes this approach with the authoritarian decision as the starting point. Centrally located actors,

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commonly bureaucrats or political figures, are the most relevant to producing the policy's intended desired outcome. This type of implementation reflects some of its practices within a system of command and control, for example, from the government to the people. The top-down system prioritizes structure and hierarchy, which aids in providing accountability measures for progress monitoring and overall policy implementation effectiveness. Also, Matland (1995) suggested that the top-down approach centralizes policy implementation from the bureaucratic level of actors who focus on explicit statements of clear policy objectives, probable root causes of the problem(s), actions during the implementation process that could impact results, and outcome criteria. In sum, top-down actors aim to maximize goal clarity and minimize key forms of ambiguity during the implementation process.

The top-down approach associates its own strengths and weaknesses. A plausible strength of the approach targets efforts in generalizing policy advice and structuring recognizable behavior patterns across various policy areas (Matland, 1995). Administrative processes are paramount in the implementation process as they can provide clarity in aligning resources to meet the identified needs, monitoring practices that support achieving desired policy goals, and continuous assessment of implementers' needs for resource allocation. Additionally, top-down implementation lends to identifying root causes of the problem serving as catalyst for the initial policy or statute for implementation (Sabatier, 1986).

In contrast, weaknesses of this approach are also noteworthy. The approach reflects policy framers as the main actors in the process and does not prioritize local actors who will carry out the targeted policy. Subsequently, the approach inadequately offers opportunities for collaborative communication among key actors that would serve to improve the implementation process. Therefore, it is probable that implementers and target groups sense that their opinions

and implementation strategies do not matter as much as those who developed the initial policy. Finally, Sabatier (1986) asserted that the top-down approach is challenging to utilize in instances where there is no dominant policy, statute, or agency, yet rather numerous bureaucratic actors and directors. A common result of this challenge is ineffective implementation of the statute realizing altered outcomes than initially planned prior to statute or policy enactment.

Bottom-up implementation seeks to provide contrasting benefits not commonly experienced with the top-down orientation. Bottom-up implementation asserted that street-level bureaucrats and service deliverers served as key actors to successful implementation. From their perspective, effective implementation occurred when those who the policy or statute would primarily impact were actively part of the planning and execution processes of the policy. Consequently, bottom-up supporters assert increased ability to capture the details of the implementation process. Hjern, Hull, Hanf, and Porter (1978) elaborated on this idea as they studied manpower training programs in Sweden. The study reviewed the interactions of unions, governmental agencies, local governments, and industrial firms in various areas. Additionally, the study identified people actually involved in planning, financing, and executing the programs. The conclusion reflected that program success depended more upon the skills of the implementing actors than the efforts of the central government officials.

Key advantages lend to the success of the bottom-up approach. Bottom-up actors commonly begin implementation strategy formation with actual implementers of the policy, such as the target groups and service deliverers. Additionally, because various actors tend to focus on implementation strategies with this approach, on-going communication and strategic interactions between and among these actors are necessary and more common. Matland (1995) asserted that if local bureaucrats and service deliverers were not allowed input and discretion in the

implementation process, then the policy stood a greater chance of not succeeding. Another advantage reflected the idea that since the local implementer has greater ability to identify problems, perceived challenges and adapt appropriate strategies during implementation, they are better able to assess the impact of viable strategies that support modifying implementation practices and realigning necessary resources to achieve the intended outcome. Finally, the insight of local actors can inform necessary modifications during implementation (Hjern et al., 1978). de Leon and de Leon (2002) support that the bottom-up approach reflects the interests of the targeted community during the implementation process, in comparison to the top-down approach. Hence, this type of implementation allows for more flexibility in communication throughout the local actors' networks. In support of this, success greatly depended on implementation interaction among the multiple actors at the local level.

Contrast to the advantages of the bottom-up approach are limitations worthy of review. First, in terms of accountability, local actors and service deliverers are customarily not accountable to the targeted group(s). A related limitation to this lack of accountability is the ease of local actors engaging their own hidden agendas and possibly undermining the authority of elected officials' policy goals during the implementation process (Matland, 1995). Also, many who ascribe to the bottom-up approach tend to not focus on the fact that nor the root causes of why many policies originate from a top-down implementation approach. This would indicate that the processes and procedures utilized with the top-down approach possibly served to increase the chances of achieving the intended outcome with available resources. Hjern et al. (1978) supported that policy originators structure the policies and align resources in a specific way to maximize probability of the policy's successful outcome. Therefore, bottom-up actors insufficiently inquire about the efforts of others and structures of the policy.

Finally, the bottom-up approach actors can be limited in realizing associated costs and resources needed for successful implementation. During the process, implementation and organization modifications may be needed. These changes most likely involve additional expenditure of resources, including time, finances, and other implementation resources. This can be problematic if local actors and organizations are operating on a strict budget and had not taken these probabilities into account and aligning resources for them prior to implementation (deLeon & deLeon, 2002). This approach can realize policy implementation success reflecting more democratic participation, however, local actors and service deliverers are wise to consider and adequately plan for the impact of the implementation process on the existing infrastructure to minimize increased, unforeseen costs and limitations to policy enactment success.

A more hybrid approach of combining top-down and bottom-up implementation approaches considers the strengths of each and seeks to minimize the related limitations. Combining the two approaches illuminates the option of differentiating between various areas of policy. Suggett (2011) supports applying the hybrid approach when stakeholders seek to reduce conflict and ambiguity with certain policies. This occurs when there is possibly significant controversy around certain policies and either the goal is not clearly defined or there is no clarity in the path to achieve the goal. Nevertheless, both of these contribute to the conflicting ideas about what the goals should be and what the process should entail. Therefore, implementing this alternative hybrid approach varies according to different types of policies. For instance, policies centered on health care or taxes are more suitable for using the top-down approach. Goals and policy for these topics are clear with control remaining largely at a centralized level of implementation. Additionally, implementation is customarily uniform and highly monitored, and local autonomy is essentially eliminated (Suggett, 2011). Also, universal preschool policy is

a better match for the bottom-up approach as there seems to be limited conflict about the policy and local conditions play a critical role serving as the catalyst for implementation. Finally, when considering policy related to climate change, a hybrid approach is better suited for implementation success. When policies such as this reflect new paths of innovation, ambiguous plans of action, and stakeholders' interests are often related to the policy definition, the hybrid approach would appear more applicable.

Considering a hybrid, more democratic, participatory approach, deLeon and deLeon (2002) suggests that increased participation by allowing additional opportunities for various stakeholders to voice their input and top bureaucrats intentionally considering their suggestions could improve strategizing details of the implementation process to realizing the intended policy outcome. A democratic, participatory approach affords increased communication between top bureaucrats, local bureaucrats, and service deliverers. Consequently, communication flows throughout the system and not merely from the top-down or bottom-up. Deliberations centered on policy formulation and implementation as a means to assist defining policy goals and identifying best strategies for policy enactment occur through interactions with various stakeholders, including impacted and targeted groups, before the policy adoption and policy authorization (Matland, 1995).

The Federal Response to Homelessness

Homelessness in the United States always existed. Unfortunately, it rose to public attention in the 1970s and 1980s as a national issue as the faces of homelessness and their living conditions changed. Early and mid-20th century America characterized homelessness as transient, single White males living in areas with hotels and single-room occupancy edifices.

These areas developed into "skid rows" which were usually isolated from densely inhabited cities. During these eras, it was uncommon to see homeless individuals living on the streets (Rossi, 1989). During the 1970s and part of the 1980s, the homeless population began to grow in number and diversity. The faces of homelessness were no longer exclusively white but included younger and more ethnically diverse populations and women with children. The changing demographics of homelessness experienced increased unemployment owing to their high-risk of poverty status; included higher proportions of mental illness than in previous decades; and experienced an increase in drug abuse, (Rossi, 1989).

Congress began the initial stages of deliberating comprehensive legislation to address homelessness in 1986 as more homeless individuals and families emerged and comprised this population. This comprehensive approach birthed new federal interdepartmental collaboration and provided additional resources to research homelessness program effectiveness after policy implementation. The Homeless Persons' Survival Act of 1986 provided governmental funding to aid more stability for homeless individuals. Months later that same year, this act expanded provisions for emergency relief to include shelter, food, mobile health care, and transitional housing. Congress introduced this new provision as the Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act (National Coalition for Homeless, 2006). In 1987, Congress renamed the act as the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. Congress later renamed the act in 2000 after another of its prominent sponsors Bruce F. Vento. In 1987 President Reagan signed the act into law as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (National Center for Homeless Education, 2011).

The Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) emerged from the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in 1987. Through various presidential administrations since that time, the council's mission has remained to coordinate the national response to homelessness. The ICH is

composed of directors from 19 federal departments and agencies whose policies and programs have some provisions or responsibilities for supporting homelessness, including U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Labor (DOL), and Veterans' Administration (VA).

In 2000, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) introduced a report which focused on ending homelessness. This report outlined a strategy to end homelessness in 10 years. The plan identified four recommendations: developing local, data-driven plans to address homelessness; using mainstream programs to prevent homelessness; utilizing a strategy to find housing first to assist those finding themselves homeless; and developing a national infrastructure of supports for low-income families and individuals such as housing, income, and other services. While many groups welcomed the idea of ending homelessness for all people, the Bush Administration and federal government focused the strategic plan on ending homelessness among chronically homeless individuals specifically. For most of the duration of the strategic plan, the chronically homeless meant "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continually homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years" (NAEH, 2000). The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act through HUD changed the definition to include families with an adult member head of household with a disabling condition.

After Congressional review and President Bush's involvement to align federal funding to support the strategic plan, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) engaged to implement the 10-year plan. As a result, multiple federal initiatives through various departments allocated funding and efforts to achieve the goal of ending homelessness. Through the initial stages of implementation, advocates for homeless individuals raised concern that

allocating funding and resources comes at the expense of families with children experiencing homelessness, homeless youth, and other vulnerable populations (USICH, 2013). These groups would not experience benefits of resources provided through the strategic plan according to the working definition outlined in the NAEH 2000 report, especially as these groups were the new faces of homelessness at the time. The HEARTH Act then mandated that the USICH draft a Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness among specifically targeted groups: families with children, unaccompanied youth, veterans, and chronically homeless individuals (Congressional Research Service, 2015).

According to their 2010 report entitled *Opening Doors*, USICH updated the strategies from the previous plan. Based on this report, five overarching strategies exist to aid accomplishing the goal of ending homelessness for the specific targeted groups: (1) increasing leadership, collaboration, and civic engagement; (2) increasing access to affordable and stable housing; (3) increasing economic security; (4) improving health and stability (5); retooling the homeless crisis response. Current practices include that USICH annually reviews and modifies the embedded strategic plan objectives, updates change in the demographics of homelessness, and updates the report as needed with the council of members over the next 10 years.

Federal Policies Supporting Homeless Youth

The number of students living in transient and homelessness conditions continues to rise across the country. Homeless youth are the most vulnerable groups of individuals of the nation's homeless population (Tobin & Murphy, 2013). According to a report in 2013, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) surmised that various federal programs have specific directives to assist homeless youth. The McKinney Homeless Assistance Act 1987

authorized provisions for the homeless through each of the various federal agencies and programs. Several of these programs exist in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Education. Although, these departments' serve the nation's general citizenry, they contain provisions to support homeless youth and their families. Many of these services include special provisions for availability of homeless shelters, support for homeless youth with developmental delays, physical, mental, or emotional disorders, and support for the academic success of homeless students. Therefore, federal agencies and programs specifically target support for persons experiencing homelessness or at risk for homelessness, while other support programs, also considered "mainstream" programs, on the whole support low-income populations (Government Accountability Office, 2012).

Through the Department of Education, several federal initiatives support the education of homeless children and youth. Due to the potentially high mobility of homeless youth, several barriers exist that can hinder their educational success (Educational Rights Project 2014). Barriers include school procedural barriers, strategies and systems to meet the educational and basic needs of homeless students, and options for transportation services to and from school. Federal education policies that aim to support academic success include the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, (amended as No Child Left Behind Act [NCLB], 2001 and Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA], 2015), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as amended in 2004, and the McKinney-Vento Act. With the provisions included in these initiatives, educators can monitor specific data points of homeless students including enrollment, attendance, performance on state assessments, graduation and dropout rates compared to housed students, other economically disadvantaged students, and economically advantaged students.

These practices are part of the effort to ensure equitable academic support for homeless students. Acquiring needed provisions for basic needs such as food, clothes, and shelter present challenges for homeless youth due to various factors. Additionally, academic services such as tutoring, counseling, school supplies, acquiring official documentation for enrollment and transportation, include hardships for homeless students as compared to even their economically disadvantaged, housed peers (Tobin & Murphy, 2013). Therefore, with these supporting systems enacted through federal policy, schools can offer homeless students necessary skills, security, and stability to improve their ability to escape poverty and homelessness.

These legislative efforts have influenced the role of school educators in supporting homeless students. Federal mandates to achieve specific educational outcomes charge schools to implement targeted efforts to remove educational barriers, such as economic status, language, ethnicity, and disability, identify and implement practices to positively respond to student academic and social emotional needs, and leverage students' strengths in the academic setting to achieve goal fulfillment. Regularly, educators engage in school practices that inevitably promote students' legal right to a free and appropriate education and ensure students have access to support that will build their skills enabling them to positively contribute to our citizenry (Griffin & Farris, 2010).

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965, through Title I, Part A, provides federal funds to local school districts and Title I schools with high numbers of students from economically disadvantaged households. The purpose of Title I funding is to meet the educational needs of economically disadvantaged students, including homeless students. Also,

this federal initiative mandates that schools and school districts include homeless students in

district and state academic assessments, reporting and accountability systems (Department of

Education, 2010).

Since the passage of NCLB, now ESSA (2015), schools have applied data-informed

decision-making strategies to examine school-wide practices that improve student outcomes for

all students. As a result of these practices, schools can customize their daily operations and

systems to address the needs of the school setting, the needs of the school climate and culture,

and the professional development needs of instructional faculty and staff in order to improve the

academic outcomes for their growing diverse student bodies. These federal educational policies

provide resources and legal guidance to ensure equitable access to academically or economically

disadvantaged students. Schools receiving these funds and accompanying resources engage in

prevention, monitoring, and intervention to improve academic performance of their learners.

Furthermore, the Department of Education requires schools and school districts to meet the needs

of all students and mandates providing intensive support with progress monitoring, effective

interventions, and a wide range of allowable services to homeless students including tutoring,

clothing/school uniforms, transportation subsidies, school supplies, extended class time, and

advanced placement fee waivers (McCallion, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires schools to identify academic

and behavioral special education needs of all students. This federal law also requires schools to

identify and include all homeless students for special education needs and remove barriers

relating to processing delays of homeless students' identifications. It also offers schools

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provisions and immediate access to various federal program services to meet the educational needs of homeless students (Department of Education, 2004). In addition, Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act provide protections to homeless students with disabilities.

Federal law since 2002 has offered school agencies and local school districts serving homeless youth access to these federal programs to support their unique conditions and meet their educational needs, including individual needs assessments and homeless students' exceptional challenges (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). In general, these various federal initiatives enacted for decades have well-intended provisions to address the need to support the general population of students regardless of ethnicity, disability, or social-economic status. Since 2002 federal education policy has required school districts, administrators and teachers be held accountable for improving the academic outcomes for all students, including homeless students. Whereas homeless students are included in the educational accountability system for academic progress each year, federal initiatives lack a comprehensive, coordinated action plan or clear expectations of how to meet their academic and social needs (USICH, 2013).

According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS) study in 2013, federal homeless youth initiatives should have a more proactive position in ensuring federal supports are specifically designated for homeless youth. Additionally, CRS suggests monitoring and accountability measures need inclusion in the initiative's mandates. These measures would help gauge progress of spending, ensure homeless-directed programs are meeting their goals and objectives, and if agencies serving homeless youth are maximizing federal funding. Finally, CRS supports that federal homeless youth initiatives can improve program efficiency and subsequent outcomes by implementing periodic reviews and program evaluation. If included in

the support process, program evaluations can help guide federal programs to increase meeting the various needs of homeless youth.

McKinney-Vento Act

The McKinney-Vento Act directly provides support specifically for students experiencing homelessness and primarily ensures homeless youth have access to school. Since 1988, school districts have had access to McKinney-Vento funds to support homeless students' educational needs (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The focus of this federal initiative is to provide states and school districts additional resources to stabilize school access through providing transportation, school supplies, and removing other barriers that hinder or impact consistent school enrollment and attendance. Since its passage, McKinney-Vento law has been modified and updated. Amendments in 1990 established that homelessness alone is not a sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment. This change allowed a student enrolled in school on one side of a city or another city, for example, from having to enroll in a new school if the student transferred to a shelter or dwelling in another city. This change resulted in allowing the student to enroll in the school of origin or the school of choice.

McKinney-Vento Act defines the school of origin as the school within the attendance zone that the child and family reside. School districts could provide transportation support to promote increased attendance and decrease potential truancy. In 1994, Congress required district liaisons to provide eligible homeless families and children with educational services including Head Start, Even Start, and other local, available pre-school programs. Exposing homeless children to stable school environment early in their academic career through pre-school programs

could decrease the risk of dropping out of high school, decrease homelessness, and decrease instability (Institute for Children, Poverty, & Homelessness, 2017).

In 2001, as Part of NCLB reauthorization, the McKinney-Vento Act mandated that every school district must have a homeless liaison and provide parents and unaccompanied youth with the ability to request and receive transportation to and from school of origin. This required school districts to allocate specific resources and a key contact person ensuring the academic needs, including transportation, of homeless students. With the Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015, reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and NCLB in 2001, McKinney-Vento focuses on additional specifications lending to long-term school stability, from early childhood through high school graduation, and the transition to post-secondary education that is essential for earning living wages and contribution to citizenry. This reauthorization aims to ensure support for the overall well-being of the whole child, not just academic components (Institute for Children, Poverty, & Homelessness, 2017). Beginning school year 2017-2018, states must track and report high school graduation rates for homeless students, just as they are required to report the rates for economically disadvantaged students, gender, and students of color. This information will prove insightful to identifying additional needs of homeless students, as well as school district and state leaders developing and implementing further support strategies to remove barriers thwarting school stability and graduation efforts of homeless youth (Institute for Children, Poverty, & Homelessness, 2017).

Social Capital

Portes (1998) contends that social capital developed roots in the work of Durkheim, the classical sociologist. His theory emphasized group life as an antidote to self-destruction and

anomie. Based on his theory, anomie reflects social instability or personal alienation resulting

from a decline of values or standards. Interactions and building networks with people could

reverse the impact of this decline. He further notes that the influence of social capital derives

from two sources. Initially, social capital focuses on the positive consequences of sociability.

Secondly, social capital compacts those positive consequences of sociability in the framework of

a broader perspective of capital and how its non-monetary factors can generate personal

influence or a sense of belonging. However, the concept potentially relates to developing

academic and social skills related to homeless youth based on the work of Pierre Bourdieu,

James Coleman, and Robert Putnam. Bourdieu (1986) sought to distinguish economic capital,

cultural capital, and social capital. He supported that social inequity existed because of the

levels of people's ownership of cultural capital. Cultural capital refers to a person's social

strengths or assets that promote social mobility. Social assets include style of speech, intellect,

and education. Groups of people with strong cultural capital would likely experience increases

in economic capital. He supported that an individual's contacts within networks result in an

accumulation of exchanges, obligations, and shared identities that, therefore, provide potential

support and access to social resources such as information or knowledge (McPherson, Kerr,

McGee, Morgan, Cheater, McLean, & Egan, 2013). Therefore, Bourdieu theorized social capital

in terms of social connections and networks.

Coleman (1988) promoted that social capital is a resource of social relations between

families and communities that they are linked. Coleman defined social capital by its function as

a resource because it includes the expectation of reciprocity. Additionally, it goes beyond

individuals to involve larger networks with relationships that rely on an elevated degree of trust

and shared ideals and values. These characteristics of a broader group reflect the importance of

norms, shared beliefs, and trust which strengthen the productivity of social capital. Coleman's perspective is grounded in Durkheim's work which focused on social integration. Durkheim proposed that an individual's importance depended on his/her identity within the group. Continuous interactions with group members result in the individual and the group reassuring their mutual identity. The foundation of these repeated interactions is based on active participation and through network development. Social norms, rules, and social trust can build group assets for group members. With effective enforcement of norms and rules within a group, the group members are more likely to act within trusting relations with one another (Coleman, 1988).

According to Putnam (2000), his political science lens supported social capital extending beyond the idea of being a resource. His idea of social capital incorporates people's sense of belonging to their community, community cohesion, trust and reciprocity at the community level, and positive attitudes to community institutions which include participation in civic engagement and community activities (McPherson et al., 2013). The body of his work reflects the declining of American society where the networks of citizens have grown more disconnected because of citizens' decreasing participation in voting and the decline in trusting social networks (Putnam, 2000). He asserted that individuals could develop strong networks through participation in formal and informal organizations. His idea of bonding and bridging members between groups is customary in organizational activities and the political activities in which they engage. The resulting opportunities of participation and exchange of information increase the chances of individuals achieving their basic self-improvement or career goals. Therefore, individuals would benefit more from networks and social contacts by participating in organizations (Putnam, 2000).

Reflecting each of these theorists' disciplinary backgrounds, they define social capital under different lenses, and have generated debate about how future researchers and theorists should conceptualize and extend the definition of social capital. However, these pioneers expose the common factor of social capital by relating to the significance of various forms and sizes of positive social networks in impacting social change to improve social, economic, and health development among various groups of people (McPherson et al., 2013). Based on these and other researchers' body of work, social capital emerged as a construct that developed within an adult framework. This framework may pose limitations when relating to children and youth. Additionally, the traditional adult framework reflected in social capital, could pose incomplete in the context of children and young people, which possibly differs in their sense of connectedness to others and social spaces. Social capital, therefore, allows exploration in the impact and influence of approaches to health and wellness of children and youth.

Social Capital Theory Related to Children and Youth

Regarding social capital in context of the health and well-being of children and youth, as differences in the definition of social capital exist, critical components that constitute social capital are the following: (1) contact with a person or group of people considered family, (2) the family mush have access to valued resources, and (3) have shared norms of trust and reciprocity. Critical to developing positive social capital is the central idea that social relationships and supportive networks are instrumental for children and youth. Morrow (2004) argues that Bourdieu's concept of sociability (the ability and disposition to sustain networks) may be more appropriate and relevant for children and youth, as it reinforces networks and connections that are not bound by their neighborhood and geographical areas. Networks and social relations

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within families, between individuals and families, and with the community at large can be valuable resources, as Coleman supported. While the family provides the first social context for infants and young children, the school setting and friendships take a larger role as children age and mature. Enlarged social contexts as these, in addition to the influence of the family, can be crucial to how children and youth access and manage their own health and wellness, including how they access and mobilize their social capital (Morrow, 2004).

In addition to the family, school, and peer social contexts, with increased access to social media and internet, children and youth have expanded social spaces, which can pose positive and negative aspects of social capital. A sense of belonging and the tangible experiences of social networks, including associated trust and learned tolerance, can serve beneficial to children's health and well-being (Morrow, 2004). The more opportunities and exposure children and youth have to experience and accumulate the positive effects of a range of supportive factors, the more likely they are able to attain health and well-being (Morrow, (2001c). Support through positive social capital can minimize effects of various risk factors, including poverty and substance abuse that can negatively impact children and youth.

Social Capital and Education

Implementation of social capital theory in the academic setting revealed two perspectives: Norm-oriented and resource-oriented. First, norm-oriented focused on the norms, rules, and trust difficulties faced by marginalized groups, including minority groups. Horvat and Lewis (2003) researched the socialization of African American students regarding their academic success. They focused their study on how this student group achieved academic success by navigating between social interactions with their African American peers. The academically

successful group used camouflaging techniques to assist countering negative interactions with the African American peer group that accused them of "acting white" because of their academic success. Additionally, when these successful African American students interacted with other high achieving students, they engaged in positive discussion related to their academic activities and future goals. This research concluded how the students strategically embraced the norms but avoided negative social interactions.

Resource-oriented view of social capital relates to access to social resources. This perspective coincides with Bourdieu's (1986) concept of social capital which depends on two objectives: (1) access to resources that a certain group of individuals own, and (2) the volume of social networks and amounts of contacts institutional resources own. A resource-oriented perspective of social capital theory related to education can facilitate understanding the reasons students may perform differently in different schools. Achievement gaps and school behavior are associated with an individual's network and contacts considering they have appropriate resources.

Social capital theory connects with the educational processes of certain minority students. Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch (1995) suggested that economically disadvantaged minority students experienced more difficulty in accessing school resources than their middle-class peers. According to their research, resources embedded in social networks of working-class minorities can be limited or unavailable as a result of inaccessibility to social resources for parents and possible limitations within their social networks. Stanton-Salazar (1997) reinforced the importance of key school personnel remaining available to increase the opportunities of minority students' success in school. According to this research study, it is advantageous for

economically disadvantaged minority students to increase their network by including

appropriate, resourceful school personnel.

Miller (2011) conducted a qualitative research study on schooling homeless and highly

mobile students. The purpose of his research was to develop a better understanding of how

schools and shelters assisted creating educational social capital for students and their families

who experienced homelessness. His study found that students and their families experiencing

homelessness had insufficient productive social capital. Whereas schools and the homeless

shelters provided some relationships and resources to enable additional opportunities of access to

more stable housing, less mobility in school, and more developed school connections, these

organizational leaders fell short in bridging the students and families' social capital to realize

more educational stability and academic success. His study findings deemed appropriate to

suggest that schools and shelters should prioritize social capital development and improve

establishing inter-organizational networks (Miller, 2011).

Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) asserted that social capital in school settings is visible in the

interactions and relationships among school personnel, between school personnel and students,

and among students. Interpersonal trust and individual expertise complement one another

toward realizing better and more results. Social capital can therefore increase each individual's

knowledge because it enables access to other people's knowledge and skills through networking

and strengthening professional connections. Additionally, Fullan espoused that it is critical to

build social capital of the broader community, especially with underserved and economically

disadvantaged communities. This perspective for social capital reflects the central idea of

schools, parents, and the community collaboratively working to support meeting the diverse

needs of students for their academic success (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

Conclusion

        The central idea of social capital is that social connectedness and social networks have values. It emphasizes the benefits of social networks, such as trust and proactive communication structures. The collective worth of these social networks and benefits that become tangible can help people resolve individual and collective problems (Miller, 2011). In education, social connectedness and networks foster removing barriers that impede student success.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore how school district and campus-level administrators coordinate resources and services for currently enrolled homeless students. This chapter explains the methodology of the research study, including an explanation of the research design, population and sampling procedures, instrumentation, methods of data collection, data analysis procedures, relevant ethical considerations, and limitations. This chapter also restates the research questions that lend to framing the conceptual underpinnings that guide this study. Regarding transparency, the chapter explains how trustworthiness is established, weaknesses of the study, and related assumptions of the study. Finally, the significance of the study is explained.

The study's research questions seek to understand how the school district supports campuses with programs that meet the needs of homeless students. As a result of this focus, a qualitative design is appropriate to focus on the following overarching question:

How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in addressing the needs of students who are homeless? The following sub-questions are also considered:

1. What programs, practices, and interventions are available to support homeless students at your school or district?

2. How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in implementing programs or interventions to meet the needs of homeless students?

3. What barriers hinder program implementation for homeless students at your school or district?

Research Design

Qualitative research strives to understand "how people interpret their experiences, how

they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). Qualitative research methodology is most appropriate to understand how district level administrators support campus level administrators in addressing the needs of students experiencing homelessness. Additionally, a theoretical perspective commonly associated with qualitative research is phenomenology. With this approach, the research attempts to understand meanings in experiences and interactions of people under study (Grbich, 2013). We naturally approach our daily experiences by subconsciously creating meaning from observations and descriptions of phenomena around us. Related to phenomenology, research of this type seeks the descriptions of the structures of daily experiences as experienced firsthand (Grbich, 2013). Patton (2002) stated that the phenomenological approach seeks to understand how individuals explore, describe, and analyze meaning from their lived experience: "how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others" (p. 104). Considering whether this approach is appropriate for the research under review, since the aim is to gain a deeper understanding about a phenomenon or to better comprehend individuals shared or common experiences in order to develop or refine practices or policies, then phenomenology is appropriate (Creswell, 2013).

<div align="center">Research Method</div>

I selected case study as the methodology because this research includes current practices from the perspective and experiences of district level homeless liaison administrators and campus leaders. To gain more understanding of how district and campus leaders support students living in homeless conditions, I utilized case study methodology seeking commonalities and themes from each school and district. Case study research aims to understand particular

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phenomenon through in depth, holistic exploration of one or more instances of the phenomenon (Yin, 2014). Case study allows for a small number of sites to be studied intensely, including various observations related to the same variables in attempts to answer the overarching and related research questions. During the case study process, the researcher proposes a process, determines and designs which data are relevant to collect, develops a collection protocol, and conducts the case study research for each single case (Yin, 2014).

Defining the Case

The case is defined with an emphasis on the collaboration between district and campus administrators as they support the needs of homeless students in their schools. The district leaders invited to participate in this study were the district homeless liaisons required by the McKinney-Vento Act, as the federal legislature reauthorized in 2001. These individuals are designated persons in each district to oversee the McKinney-Vento and ESSA mandates within the district as related to ensuring identification of homeless students, coordinating transportation to and from school, mobilizing resources to support academic needs, and coordinating referrals for supplemental services (e.g., mental and physical health) possibly needed to support the students' overall participation in their enrolled schools. Therefore, the homeless liaison supports the academic needs of homeless students through facilitating district resources to stabilize school access. Also, campus leaders participating in this study are principals at campuses with enrolled homeless students. Campus principals at the school site are required to review federal, state, and local policy and procedures to ensure needs of homeless students are regularly identified and supported. The collaborative work between homeless liaisons and campus principals to identify and support the various needs of enrolled homeless students is critical in ensuring their inclusion

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in the learning environment. These collaborative interactions provide increased resources for homeless students and their families as they seek increased access to support systems to move them toward more economic stability. Thus, social capital can strengthen between district homeless liaisons and principals during their collaborative efforts in supporting the needs of homeless students and their families. In turn, the homeless student and family are connected to available resources and programs that can stabilize and improve their living conditions and lives.

Population and Participants

Participants in this study include employees from three school districts in Texas with a minimum of 400 students identified as homeless. Public Education Information System (PEIMS), the Texas student information system, helped determine enrollment of homeless students by district according to the latest data generated on the state's required snapshot date. The snapshot date is customarily the final Friday in October of each year and provides an overview of data related to Texas public schools at both the district and state levels. Invited participants in each district include the district level homeless liaison and principals at two high poverty campuses at each district with 40% or more economically disadvantaged students in school districts surrounding the Dallas-Fort Worth area (within a 50 mile radius). Public Education Information System (PEIMS), the Texas student information system data informed the school sites to narrow the search. The homeless liaisons in each district also recommended which campuses to participate in the study based on the purpose of the research study, which is to explore how district and campus administrators coordinate resources and services for currently enrolled homeless students to support their academic needs.

Data Collection

Data collection involved two elements: preparation and implementation. In preparing to collect the data, I reviewed data from PEIMS information. These data assisted in narrowing the schools to the three selected school districts for participation.

Preparation

I planned semi-structured interviews with each district: district level administrators (homeless liaisons) from three districts and two campus level administrators from each of the three school districts. I generated research questions based on review of literature related to collaboratively supporting the needs of homeless students. Additionally, the interview questions were previously sampled with district and campus level administrators from other districts (not included in this study) with similar homelessness student demographics. I modified and refined the questions based on their responses from the questions and post-interview feedback. Finally, my dissertation review committee advised the context and the relevancy of the questions in achieving the intended goals and benefits of the study relevant to the overarching question of the study: How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in meeting the needs of students who are homeless?

To comply with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the procedures of University of North Texas-Denton Toulouse Graduate School, I gained approval to access human subjects pertinent to this study: district level homeless liaisons and campus principals. Protection of participant privacy is paramount to this study. I submitted research applications to each of the three district's research review administrators for review and subsequent approval of my study.

To prepare for the interviews with the participants, I ensured operation of my recording

devices and access of my research journal to document what I heard and observed during the interviews. I prepared a disposition of curiosity with the ability to refrain from communicating personal bias, and I sought to gain insight from the verbal and non-verbal messages in the dialogue with the participants (Yin, 2014).

Implementation

With approval from my committee, IRB approval, and district approval, I began data collection in July 2018 and maintained a timeline of research activities throughout the study to focus the work. A timeline of my research process is in Appendix H. Once I gained approval from each school district's review board with each sending me a letter informing approval of my research study in their individual districts, I notified each district level homeless liaison and principal via email to inform the purpose of the study and invitation to participate in the study. I followed each district's process in notifying participants. A copy of the email invitation is in Appendix A. After sending an email invitation, I also called the invited participants. The intent of these phone calls were to ensure receipt of the email invitation. A copy of the phone script is in Appendix B. Additionally, to the email invitation, I attached the approval letter from the research review administrators in their district to conduct the research and interview protocol for their specific interview based on their district assignment as either homeless liaison or principal. Using the contact information I shared in the invitation email, participants then contacted me expressing interest in participating in the study. Collaboratively, the participants and I scheduled the time and place of each interview. I sent a follow-up email message to each participant detailing our interview date and the informed consent notice for their review prior to the interview. A copy of the follow-up email message is in Appendix C. At each participant's

scheduled interview, I brought a hard copy of the informed consent notice and reviewed it. After

review and signatures obtained, each participant signed the consent notice and the interview

ensued. I collected data from semi-structured interview protocols used to interview the homeless

liaisons and campus administrators responsible for making decisions and implementing policy

related to supporting homeless students. A copy of the interview protocols is in Appendix D and

Appendix E.

To establish trustworthiness in this qualitative study, I triangulated multiple sources of

data (Yin, 2014). Yin surmised critical sources of evidence customarily used in case studies

research include interviews, archival records, documentation, physical artifacts, participant-

observation, and direct observation. For this research study, I conducted interviews, collected

documents, collected archival records from school district's school board meetings from the

previous school year, and my research field notes.

Document Collection

I accessed documents from each school district that could provide additional insight to

how these administrators collaboratively support the needs of homeless students. For document

collection, I utilized each district's website via internet to locate current versions of the following

documents:

- School board meeting minutes

- District plan

- Campus plan

I assigned a pseudonym to each district and campus and coded all documents according to the

pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality.

Trustworthiness of Collecting Documents

Trustworthiness in qualitative research addresses how researchers establish the research findings as credible, transferable, confirmable, and dependable (Grbich, 2013). I established trustworthiness of the data collection by the consistent process I used for the document analysis. I also conducted member-checking with the participants and gained additional clarity of the documents under review during the semi-structured interviews. These triangulation strategies further solidified trustworthiness. Purposive sampling was central to the trustworthiness of this research, as it was necessary to include key school district personnel directly related to supporting the needs of homeless students as these personnel's experiences can expand understanding relevant to the research questions of the study.

Interviews of Participants

I interviewed specific individuals in each district who are primarily responsible at the district and campus level for making the direct decisions that facilitate and mobilize resources supporting homeless students. To gain perspective on how school districts and campuses support the needs of homeless students, semi-structured interviews with the homeless liaison and campus-level leaders were designed to provide a deeper understanding of their practices and obtain replies that assist answering my research questions.

These interviews assisted identifying the strategies and processes for coordinating support to homeless students attending these campuses. Moreover, these interviews sought to provide needed information related to policy implementation to support homeless students' social capital development. Semi-structured interviews formed the basis of data collection for this study. Interviews "are most likely to provide the depth of information that might be useful"

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(Harrell & Bradley, 2009, p. 10). Semi-structured interviews also afford the researcher opportunities to ask follow-up questions to clarify and ensure full understanding of the participants' experiences. This research design—a qualitative study utilizing semi-structured interviews—was the most appropriate design for answering the study's research questions.

I conducted interviews approximately 60-90 minutes in length with clear, singular, and open-ended questions using sequencing of questions in conversational style. My intent in using this interview strategy sought to establish a positive rapport and assist the interviewee feeling at ease in sharing their experiences of supporting homeless students in their daily practice. The interview questions were previously sampled with district and campus level administrators from other districts with similar demographics and homelessness in order to make refinements based on the answers from the questions and post-interview feedback. All interviews were recorded using the same recording device for each to aid consistency. During each interview, I took notes and reviewed the transcripts using my notes to ensure accuracy. I asked probing questions as appropriate depending on the response from the interview participant. Probing questions were included in the transcript to maintain trustworthiness of the data collection. The interviews assisted in answering the research questions:

Overarching question: How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in meeting the needs of students who are homeless?

- What programs, practices, and interventions are available to support homeless students at your school or district?

- How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in implementing programs or interventions to meet needs of homeless students?

- What barriers hinder program implementation for homeless students at your district or school?

Trustworthiness of the Interview Questions

To determine the trustworthiness of the interview questions, I field tested the interview protocol for the district homeless liaison with two district homeless liaisons in school districts outside the Dallas-Fort Worth who are not included in this study. Additionally, I field tested the principals' interview protocol with three principals supporting homeless students in schools not part of this study. I modified the questions based on the feedback I received from them. Questions eliciting responses that were outside of the scope of the conceptual framework were rephrased to ensure alignment. Also, questions that elicited redundant responses were eliminated.

Data Analysis

Document Analysis

Documents of the districts' strategic plan and school board minutes from the current school year, along with copies of the campus improvement plan from each participating principal's schools were obtained from the main website for each school district. The research field notes provide additional insight from the interviews and document analysis. The data collection from these sources was focused on items related to the conceptual framework. The document analysis process map is included in Appendix F.

The purpose of the interviews was a means to collect data in exploring how school district and campus-level administrators coordinate resources to address the needs of currently enrolled homeless students. Interview questions were designed to obtain data and relevant information pertaining to their experiences. While listening during the individual interviews with the district level homeless liaisons and campus leaders, I wrote field notes. Additionally, I

transcribed the recorded interviews into written format for coding analysis. In vivo coding of

these transcripts assisted my identifying the codes based on the wording in the respondents'

interview replies (Saldaña, 2016). This data analysis was manual and iterative including three

rounds of reading and analysis. Each interviewee's set of responses involved an inductive

approach of analysis to identify crucial themes. The themes offered insight to the essence of the

school administrators' experiences as they collaboratively mobilized resources to support eligible

students. Moreover, I utilized an iterative process of repetitive reading and coding to ensure

familiarity with the interview content and exhaustion of concepts or themes relevant to the

research questions. This processing helped identify the administrators' shared or common

practices of ensuring the needs of the homeless students attending schools in their districts

(Creswell, 2013).

Triangulation of data sources was critical to the analysis process. Triangulation involved

document review and analysis of district and campus improvement plans and maintaining

transparent field notes in a personal research journal. These practices assisted me in maintaining

objectivity of the research data and process. Additionally, trustworthiness in qualitative research

can raise notions of doubt as the phenomenological approach involves subjectivity in the data

analysis process (Grbich, 2013). While understanding that meaning can be subjective and could

vary based on various individuals' experiences, the researcher has the charge to utilize specific

practices to increase objectivity. Controlling for researcher bias in this study began with my

development of neutral, open-ended questions for the interviews. Clarifying questions to

reinforce the initial question were asked to ensure clarity and specificity of the responses.

Additionally, critical to reducing researcher bias is analyzing the data specifically as the

respondents stated in their interview responses. Consistently removing my biases from what each interviewee's interview data was paramount to establishing objectivity.

Using an iterative process in the reading and coding process during the analysis of each interview transcription was key to the trustworthiness of this research. Additionally, transparency in each phase of the data collection and analysis processes was critical. I conducted content analysis of the documents, interview transcripts, and field notes, using word frequency to discern the themes that emerged. The analysis processes for the interview transcriptions and the research field notes are included in Appendices G and H, respectively.

Data were first read to discern an overall sense of the information and to ponder the meaning (Creswell, 2013). I conducted a reading of the documents and interview transcripts making notes in the margins of potential key words in alignment with the conceptual framework of this study. Next, the data were analyzed carefully to identify words, phrases, and ideas that repeated as patterns (Saldaña, 2016). I applied these keywords and codes to the documents and interview transcripts manually. Patterns that I identified from the data were analyzed in alignment to the study's purpose, research questions, and conceptual framework. Coding of the emerging ideas and patterns helped me identify the themes from the data. I identified descriptors that further defined the themes, when applicable.

During my preliminary work of writing my literature review and sampling the research questions, I maintained a journal of field notes that documents my progress. Related to transparency practices, interview questions, responses, and analysis notes are available to inform further research or to document actions and any changes throughout the research processes. Finally, I shared analyses of interview transcripts with participants after the coding phase to clarify any misconceptions in interpretation of the data and to clarify previously shared

information from the interview. Member checking included each participant reviewing the

transcription and the identified themes. The identified themes were listed on the transcription

also to confirm the data and analysis. Member checking provided opportunities for the

interviewees to ensure accuracy of the analyzed data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Written summary and graphic diagrams explain the data and identified themes from the

analysis process. The graphic additions, including charts or tables, provide succinct overviews

of the details of the analysis results in representing the data (Saldaña, 2016). The use of tables in

qualitative research synthesizes the data obtained during the interviews and seeks to establish

connections to the research questions. As another form of transparency, utilizing graphic aids

and strengthens the trustworthiness of this methodological approach (Marshall & Rossman,

2016).

Role of the Researcher

The researcher was the primary instrument for data collection in this qualitative case

study (Grbich, 2013). The role of the researcher for this study was primarily as an external

observer. Creation of the research questions and protocols along with analysis and interpretation

of the data were filtered through the researcher's prior experiences with the targeted group of this

study. The history and personal experiences of the researcher minimally contributed to the

interpretation of the study's data.

Having professional experience as a teacher, campus, and district administrator, I

supported at-risk learners. From this experience, my core values have centered my decisions and

professional practice on ensuring all students have access to a quality education: learning,

advocacy, collaboration, equity, and servant-leadership. Therefore, I expended time and effort to

supporting the needs of all learners I have had the honor of serving during my career. However, with having limited, prior experiences supporting homeless students, yet operating from core values regarding supporting all learners, I employed strategies to objectively represent the views, ideas, and perspectives of the participants and to ensure trustworthiness of the research study (Grbich, 2013).

Limitations

The proposed study utilizes a qualitative, case study research approach, involving the use of the semi-structured interviews and document analysis as the primary methods of data collection. Additionally, since McKinney-Vento law mandates only one homeless liaison per school district, there are no other personnel within each district serving in a similar role to corroborate accuracy of district level practices to support homeless students. Finally, the research case study is limited to three school districts with no more than nine interview participants because of the time constraints involved in the work with districts and schools. This relatively small sample size allows for relatability; however, this research may not allow for generalizability to the broader population of public schools. Additionally, this research may lend to establishing connections to concepts and themes with application to daily practice in other public school districts and schools with enrolled homeless students.

Ethical Considerations

The ethics and protection of human subjects is assured throughout the study.

Completion of the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) online course regarding protection of human research subjects and completion of the University of North Texas'

Institutional Review Board (IRB) established protocols to ensure protection of human

participants. I provided all participants information regarding the purpose of the study, specific

research procedures, and risks and benefits of participation in the study. Participants signed

consent forms agreeing to their voluntary participation in the study and understanding of the

purpose of the study. Member checking and preliminary findings were shared with participants

at appropriate intervals in the study. I assigned all participants and school districts a pseudonym

to further maintain confidentiality. Pseudonyms connected to participants and participating

school districts are stored in a separate, locked location from the research files. This information

is stored on a secure hard drive with password protection. Assurances of privacy and standards

for research were discussed prior to the interview with each participant.

Summary

By conducting a qualitative case study, seeking themes and similarities from each school

district, I aimed to explore how school district and campus-level administrators coordinate

resources and services to meet the needs of currently enrolled homeless students. A sparse

amount of research exists about how district and campus leaders collaboratively support students

who experience homelessness and the resources they offer to make a positive impact on their

academic experience. To address the literature gap, this study sought to examine how district and

campus administrators work collectively to allocate, coordinate, and mobilize resources for

students who experience homelessness. Finally, this research aimed to provide insight on district

and school leadership practices of supporting homeless students' and the related connection to

strengthening their social capital in order to assist minimizing the negative impact of

homelessness during their academic careers and in citizenry. I used and triangulated multiple

data sources to strengthen trustworthiness of the study, including interviews, field notes, and document analysis. Using an iterative process with three rounds of inductive analysis, manual coding of the interviews and documents sought to identify and understand emerging themes. The sample size was small, yet purposive for the study. The small sample size allows for relatability; however, generalization may not be possible. Assuring the protection of the participants was my priority throughout the study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore how school district and campus-level administrators collaboratively coordinate resources and services to meet the needs of currently enrolled homeless students. In this study, I explored these practices in three school district by conducting interviews with district and campus leaders and analyzing relevant district and campus documents. This chapter presents the findings and themes that emerged from the collected data in Hazelton Crest Valley ISD, Winding Willows ISD, and Peak Haven ISD.

The organization of this chapter is by the themes that emerged from the analysis of the research data. The following themes were extracted and answer the overarching research question: How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in meeting the needs of students who are homeless?

1. What programs, practices, and interventions are available to support homeless students at your school or district?

    Theme 1: Policy Implementation

2. How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in implementing programs or interventions to meet needs of homeless students?

    Theme 2: Moral Purpose

    Theme 3: Collaboration

3. What barriers hinder program implementation for homeless students at your school or district?

    Theme 4: Building Capacity to overcome the Perception of Homelessness

    Theme 5: Accessibility to overcome the Perception of Homelessness

A conceptual framework guided the analysis of the data but is not specifically outlined in the various sections; therefore, I provide discussion on the conceptual framework before proceeding with the themes.

Table 2

Identified Themes Connected to Research Question

Research Question	Theme	Related Descriptor
1. What programs, practices, and interventions are available to support homeless students?	Theme 1: Policy Implementation	Sense-making Ensuring compliance
2. How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in implementing programs or interventions to meet the needs of homeless students?	Theme 2: Moral Purpose Theme 3: Collaboration	Doing what it takes Partnerships
3. What perceived barriers hinder program implementation for homeless students at your school or in your district?	Theme 4: Building Capacity Theme 5: Accessibility	

Conceptual Framework

In this study, the conceptual framework centers on supporting the needs of homeless youth and children through the perspective of collaborative education policy implementation. This viewpoint lends to policy implementation coherence by forming supportive relationships and utilizing various tools of communication to allow regularly flowing, relevant information throughout the local school system of practitioners and to state and federal policy intermediaries and developers (Honig, 2003). Key to collaboration is the supportive relationships between policy intermediaries, such as central office administrators, and policy service providers, such as campus administrators. The conceptual framework illuminates the connections among the collaborative educational policy implementation (Honig, 2003), supporting the needs of homeless children, and social capital (Morrow, 2004; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995). This

approach of collaboration best facilitates maximizing resources and optimizing results with key

stakeholders to strengthen sense-making and implementation of the policy needing enactment.

Hence, central office staff members are strategically positioned to broker necessary resources for

the entire district, particularly high-needs campuses with significant numbers of students living

in homeless conditions (Honig & Hatch, 2004).

The following sections describe the background of the districts and campuses

participating in the study followed by themes, which resulted from the data analysis through the

use of the conceptual framework described above. Names of districts, schools, and participants

are pseudonyms.

Background of the Participating School Districts and Campuses

Hazelton Crest Valley Independent School District

Hazelton Crest Valley Independent School District (HCVISD) (pseudonym) serves

approximately 156,000 students in a North Texas urban area covering over 380 square miles,

with an estimated 4,000 students identified as homeless. The district serves students residing in

16 neighboring cities. The school district is among the top five percent of the largest districts in

the state and educates a diverse population of learners. The district is comprised of 70%

Hispanic students, 23% African American students, 5% Caucasian students, 1.4% Asian

students, .34% students of Two or More races, .25% American Indian students, and .04% Pacific

Islander students. The district is located in a diverse business environment with informational

technology and data industries, defense, financial services, transportation, telecommunications,

real estate, and life sciences. Between school years 2003 - 2018, the district experienced an

approximate 18% gradual decline in its student population. One reason for the decline is the

move of families to area suburbs in search for changes in quality housing and increased

opportunities for economic growth (Educational Resource Group, 2018). While approximately

60% of school children in Texas are economically disadvantaged, HCVISD serves an estimated

87% economically disadvantaged students. I interviewed Luz Enso, the district level Homeless

Liaison in HCVISD. With the size of the school district and numbers of identified homeless

students across the district, her primary role is to coordinate programs that support the academic

needs of students identified as homeless. She also manages the homeless center for the district.

The homeless center is the central place in the district that provides homeless families, children

and youth with referrals to health, dental, mental health, housing, substance abuse and other

appropriate services.

Barrington Hollow Academy is located in an area of HCVISD that has experienced shifts

in demographics over the past 20 years due to the economic development transitions in the

surrounding city. The campus serves a student body of approximately 1,300 students, with 195

students identified as homeless. The student population is comprised of 77% Hispanic students,

16% African American students, 2.5% Caucasian students, and 4.5% students of other

ethnicities. Barrington Haven Academy has 94% economically disadvantaged students with a

mobility rate of approximately 22% and English Learner population of 35%. The campus

principal at Barrington Hollow Academy, Emilia Cartwright, participated in a separate interview,

as well. She has served as principal for six years while serving the last two years at this campus.

Winding Willows Independent School District

Winding Willows Independent School District (WWISD) serves approximately 38,000

students in a suburban area in North Texas covering approximately 50 square miles, with 1,075

students identified as homeless. The district serves students in portions of four cities nearby. The district is comprised of 72% Hispanic students, 12.8% African American students, 9% Caucasian students, 3.3% Asian students, 1.1% students of Two or More races, 1.6% American Indian students, and .2% Pacific Islander students. WWISD serves 78% economically disadvantaged students and 41% English Learners. While the school district has majority of its students designated economically disadvantaged, most of the campuses earned the 'met standard' rating on the state's accountability system for academic performance. This rating is the highest ranking schools can earn. The district is located near the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex with technology, aerospace, aviation, manufacturing, healthcare, and life sciences as the major industries. I interviewed Ava Bucklay, the district level Homeless Liaison in WWISD. With the numbers of identified homeless students in the district and the scope of their needs, her role is to coordinate programs within the district and serve as liaison to bridge related community services that support the academic needs of students identified as homeless. Additionally, she is responsible for facilitating the professional development related to implementation of McKinney-Vento law to district level and campus level staff.

Peak Haven Independent School District

Peak Haven Independent School District (PHISD) serves approximately 35,000 students in a North Texas suburb covering approximately 51 square miles, with 650 students identified as homeless. The district serves students in portions of nine cities nearby. The district is comprised of 55% Caucasian students, 23% Hispanic students, 8.6% African American students, 8.3% Asian students, 4.2% students of Two or More races, .5% American Indian students, and .2% Pacific Islander students. PHISD serves approximately 25% economically disadvantaged

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students and 9% English Learners. This school district serves a fast growing and diverse community with major industries including retail, healthcare, social assistance, and manufacturing. I interviewed Joy McRead, the district level Homeless Liaison in PHISD. Considering the organizational structure of the district level administrators in PHISD, the role of the Homeless Liaison is added to the job responsibilities of the Federal Programs Director. Ms. McRead's primary role involves oversight and compliance of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) grant. Under this grant, provisions for supplemental academic supports are available through Titles I, II, III, and IV to ensure equitable access to public education for eligible students in the district. Additionally, as the Homeless Liaison, she facilitates professional learning to district employees on homelessness and coordinates necessary resources to support the academic needs of identified homeless students. In PHISD, I interviewed the principals from Huntington Springs Elementary and Orion Peaks Elementary schools.

Huntington Springs has a diverse population with approximately 430 students. There are 48.2% Hispanic students, 33% Caucasian students, 9.2% African American students, 4.4% Asian students, 3.7% students identified as having Two or more races, and 1.2% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students. There are approximately 12 languages other than English spoken in homes of these currently enrolled students reflecting 24.8% of the student body identified as English Learners. Additionally, Huntington Springs's mobility rate is 12%. The mobility rate is contributed to families seeking employment opportunities, improved housing conditions, and availability of public services. Economically disadvantaged students comprise 53% of the school's population. Approximately 3% of the student body is identified as homeless making it a campus with one of the highest numbers of students identified as homeless in PHISD. I interviewed Dawnyelle Jones, principal at Huntington Springs Elementary.

Orion Peaks, the second school explored in PHISD, has an enrollment of approximately 600 students. There are 32% Hispanic students, 47% Caucasian students, 9% African American students, 8% Asian students, 3% students identified as having Two or more races, .2% American Indian students, and .8% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students. There is a diversity of special education programs to support the varied learning differences that comprise 11% of the student body. Additionally, economically disadvantaged students comprise an estimated 43% of the school's population. Approximately 2.8% of the student body is identified as homeless making it another campus in PHISD with one of the highest enrollments of identified homeless students. I interviewed Patricia Morris, principal at Orion Peaks Elementary in PHISD.

Elaboration of Themes

The findings provide answers to each research question and are reported in themes that have been identified. Theme 1 reports the findings related to the policy implementation process specifically sense-making and ensuring compliance of the policy through monitoring. Theme 2 presents findings related to moral purpose. Related to moral purpose in Theme 2, advocacy further defined this theme and connected to motivation for the efforts of district and campus administrators in supporting homeless students. Theme 3 presents findings aligned with collaboration between district administrators and campus administrators, among district administrators, and with external stakeholders. Partnerships added additional insight to this theme. Theme 4 presents findings connected to building capacity in all stakeholders who support students experiencing homelessness, including parents and guardians, and students as a solution to remove perceived barriers. Theme 5 presented findings related to accessibility of resources to provide solutions to remove barriers, also.

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Theme 1: Policy Implementation – Sense Making and Ensuring Compliance

Theme 1 reports the findings related to the policy implementation process specifically sense-making and ensuring compliance of the policy through monitoring. This question seeks to understand how the district and school may or may not collaborate to coordinate and provide various services to meet the needs of students living in homelessness conditions that support their academic success according to the goals of the McKinney-Vento Act. The educational goals of the McKinney-Vento Act are the following:

- Ensure educational equality

- Collaborate to meet outside of school needs of eligible students

- Keep students enrolled

- Prepare for homeless students' needs

- Increase school accessibility

Examination of the data indicate that each school district provides similar support services to ensure the goals of the McKinney-Vento Act are realized and policy implementation at the district and campus levels is achieved. In the daily work of each homeless liaison, policy sense making is critical for ensuring compliance. Understanding the intent of McKinney-Vento Act for each homeless liaison is central to their role. The intent of the law is to ensure that students experiencing homelessness receive all protections and services necessary for them to succeed in school (NCHE, 2016). Ms. Bucklay, the homeless liaison in WWISD, shared:

> As part of my role, it's paramount that I continuously consult McKinney-Vento Act policy for specific, unique situations not usually common to other homeless students in my district. When needed, I call the state's homeless liaison at Texas Education Agency or I may contact the homeless liaison for my region of school districts at the regional education service center to understand implementation of policy related to my students' situations.

Ms. McRead, the homeless liaison in PHISD described collaboration beyond her district to

provide solutions for students who are homeless in her district:

> I reach out occasionally to other district's homeless liaisons to inquire how they may provide transportation for students living outside the district in shelters. This helps me seek innovative ways to help our students. Also, I consult with my supervisor and the state's homeless liaison to seek additional ideas of ways to support our homeless students. The state's homeless network provides me additional learning opportunities to make sense of the policy, especially when there are changes to it.

In HCVISD, Ms. Enso, the homeless liaison, shared that her experience with sense making involved remaining abreast of the latest research and promising practices in supporting students in larger districts:

> I consult McKinney-Vento policy and review my district's procedures to ensure timely identification of students experiencing homelessness and provision of appropriate services that support them. I also consult the state's homeless consortium where online training sessions are available. This helps me to remain apprised of any updates to the McKinney-Vento policy.

Additionally, each homeless liaison stated the importance of ensuring compliance of meeting the requirements of McKinney-Vento Act. Overall, school districts are required to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness and to connect them with educational and other needed supports. There was a variety of strategies the liaisons stated of how they ensure compliance in their districts, yet the intent was to assure timeliness and accessibility of available resources to support the academic needs of homeless students. The homeless liaison at HCVISD stated:

> Monitoring our overall system of practices was critical due to the size of the district and the number of students served. We monitor and receive feedback at each point in our process from registration of the student and establishing eligibility to confirming transportation and meals to garnering appropriate school supplies for the student experiencing homelessness. We seek to ensure our processes run smoothly for our families and that we are timely in responding to parent and guardians' requests for assistance.

The campus site is the initial step to identifying and collaboratively coordinating and supporting the needs of students. Confirming transportation is a key mandate of the McKinney-

Vento Act as the intent is to ensure stability and access to school. Therefore, arranging

transportation is the initial priority of the homeless liaison. The homeless liaison at HCVISD

describes the importance of identifying students' eligibility for transportation to ensure

compliance of the policy:

> Since we have several homeless students living outside of our school district, they need reliable transportation to school. Our biggest challenge is keeping them in their school of origin, especially if the school is a magnet school or if they had to audition to get accepted into the school, so my department arranges either public transportation or school buses to get them to school and back to their parents or guardians safely. Therefore, transportation is one of the larger, more critical services they need. We arrange this service at the district level, and we need the information from the campuses when they enroll students.

Homeless liaison at WWISD discussed ensuring compliance with assistance from the principals:

> I work very closely with the campuses to identify where the homeless students' struggle and we seek to determine the root causes related to these struggles. This happens after the student has enrolled. We have meetings with the parents and the families to identify if there are any barriers that exist that will hinder school attendance and their grades. So, we generate solutions and put things in place like transportation, academic opportunities such as tutoring, and we have to sometimes think outside the box at times to help the student.

Many times, districts and school level administrators must coordinate other supports to

remove barriers that impact academic stability of homeless students. Additional supplemental

support services are made available upon eligibility and as the needs arise. Ms. Jones, the

principal at Huntington Springs Elementary, ensures policy compliance by stating:

> Once our students enroll and our counselor identifies the student as eligible for receiving support through the McKinney-Vento Act, she informs me of the need for transportation. Once I inform the district's homeless liaison of the need for transportation, we contact our cafeteria manager to ensure the student receives meals each day in our cafeteria beginning with the student's first day of classes. So, whenever a student becomes eligible for our program, then we connect them with meal services and provide clothing for them from our clothing closet automatically. We follow up with food services over the course of the year to ensure the students' meal plans are active and show no gaps in services.

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Ms. Morris, Principal at Orion Peaks Elementary, discussed how her campus ensures compliance

of McKinney-Vento by collaborating within and outside of the school:

> Once our students become eligible for McKinney-Vento Act support, my counselor and I contact our homeless liaison for transportation. We have also a weekend food option for our homeless students where they receive a backpack of food for the weekend. These food items are donated by the local food bank. When the students return to school from the weekend, they take their empty backpack to the counselor to be refilled to take home again on Friday. This weekend food option helps provide our students with additional snacks over the weekend especially if food is not readily available in their home at the time. We monitor our support services by maintaining contact with our families through parent conferences and with the help of our classroom teachers to identify any additional needs of or students.

As part of the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act, students experiencing

homelessness are eligible for academic supplemental support to ensure successful academic

engagement. The principal at Barrington Hollow Academy, Ms. Enso, offers several options of

academic support during the regular school day and extended day (before or after school). She

stated:

> Our homeless students' needs are identified based on their experiences when they were living in unstable housing conditions. During their times of high mobility, some of our students need other wrap-around services to supplement their academics to address any gaps in their learning. Therefore, we provide tutoring before school to reinforce concepts learned during the school day. Also, we have a partnership with a non-profit community organization across the street from our school that provides additional tutoring after school for homeless students also. Finally, we offer academic interventions during the school day to support the immediate learning needs of students. We try to offer as many wrap-around academic support options as possible to support our students. Our school's student support coordinator assists me in monitoring the on-going process of ensuring these supplemental supports and the transportation continue without interruption for our identified homeless students. She also maintains the paperwork and eligibility status of our students to ensure they continue receiving the services. We reach out to teachers throughout the year inquiring if living arrangements of any students in our building have changed to ensure proper identification of and eligibility of services for our students.

In sum, these school districts collaboratively expend time and effort to support students living in

homeless conditions through the available provisions within the McKinney-Vento Act. Whereas

a district's homeless liaison is mainly responsible for facilitating the priorities to support school

stability with transportation and meal options through food services, the campus level must align its procedures to McKinney-Vento policy intent by facilitating and sharing information about students to confirm program identification and eligibility status to receive the various support options they may need. Policy implementation and ensuring compliance of the McKinney-Vento Act involves both the district liaison and campus administrators' collaborative efforts.

Theme 2: Moral Purpose

Theme 2 presents findings related to moral purpose. Related to moral purpose in Theme 2, advocacy further defined and connected to the motivation for the efforts of district and campus administrators in supporting homeless students. A recurring statement from each homeless liaison and each principal centered on the idea that they would do what was necessary to ensure supporting the academic needs of homeless students. Ms. McRead, the Homeless Liaison in PHISD elaborated on how her district supported the academic needs of high school seniors living in homeless conditions:

> We were able to create a technology lending program for seniors, particularly seniors living in homeless conditions, needing high school credit to graduate. These students did not have access to technology at home. Therefore, out of about 40 seniors, approximately 38 of them were able to graduate on time due to how we worked together with the Technology department to get them this technology to use at home to assist credit recovery, prepare for end of course exams, and getting homework completed.

She went on to explain the barriers previous to students having access to technology at home.

> Previously, we relied on before and after school tutoring or summer school to help them get their credits for graduation. Several of our students were unable to stay after school or get to school early due to transportation glitches. So, from this initiative we were able to get our seniors graduated on time without them having to attend tutoring or summer school with the help of them taking home the technology. We would provide transportation for them to summer school if needed, but the technology support was a good option for them. Also, we had no issues with technology not getting returned to us, so we were glad this worked for them and they graduated on time.

Ms. Jones, principal at Huntington Springs Elementary in PHISD, shared an additional sentiment of enacting on moral purpose:

> At our school, depending on what they need, we try to find it and whatever will help bring them to school on time and keep them in school we will do what it takes.

> Strengthening the support system of options for homeless students began with district and campus level administrators assuring that students experiencing homelessness can succeed in school. These administrators navigated various systems to get support services in place, and they inspired others to go above and beyond to benefit students in homeless situations. Also, the homeless liaison in WWISD shared:

> While seeking available resources to help our students, whether it be locating school uniforms, securing transportation from sources outside of the district, we will do what it takes for our kids to ensure they get to school and are engaged in learning.

It is critical that homeless liaisons and campus principals believe that students experiencing homelessness need and deserve equitable support to succeed, and their decisions as brokers of resources reflected what was in the best interest of the student in their respective districts and schools. There was also a keen focus on removing educational barriers. The homeless liaison in HCVISD shared her example of how her district goes beyond compliance requirements and maximizes resources and to meet the needs of homeless students:

> My district has an advisory committee that seeks to identify needs of at-risk students across their district and generate solutions to remove the barriers to meet the needs. The committee comprises various stakeholders of the district and community at-large. One of the solutions enacted from this committee is a center designed to support eligible at-risk students, including homeless students, across the street from one of the high schools in the district.

She continues by explaining the purpose of the center and how it came about.

> This center is part of a non-profit organization that is partnered with the district and provides after school support in various areas where students may need assistance. Several services offered include tutoring assistance, social and emotional counseling, mentors that assist with college and career readiness support, and clothes laundering

assistance. This is an example of advocacy through innovation at the district and community level to operationalize moral purpose for the greater good of supporting the needs of potentially academically vulnerable students.

Ms. Cartwright, the principal in HCVISD, offers insight about moral purpose in actions taken at her school:

> We keep track of our students and review their progress regularly in intervention meetings with teachers and with our social services counselor. From these update meetings, we can determine the needs of our students and generate ideas of ways to support their needs as quickly as possible and while students are on campus. Yes, we have support from our homeless liaison, however, we find it more feasible, at times, to have our own food pantry housed on site here and we can reach out to our community partners near our school to provide other services not on the campus.

Ms. Cartwright explain how teachers are deployed to actualize moral purpose through a school wide effort.

> Also, we strengthen teachers' understanding of common and current experiences of students who are homeless, while maintaining privacy of students' identity. This helps to build stronger student-teacher partnerships so we can know how to help our students better. We work to support the students as quickly as we can once we know their needs. These actions in turn teaches the student about their rights and what they are eligible for while they are experiencing instability in their living conditions. Therefore, students learn how to advocate for their own needs, as well.

Moral purpose as defined by the actions of these districts is acting with the intention of making a positive difference in the lives of their students who are impacted by homelessness. These examples indicate how the actions of individuals in the learning environment are ignited from a deeper understanding of the impact of collaboratively supporting the diverse needs of this population of students. Moral purpose enables them to intentionally pool their resources together each day to expose homeless students to a more stable network of positive solutions to academic and economic stability.

Theme 3: Collaboration

Throughout the interviews, several examples of collaboration emerged. Collaboration

within each district occurs regularly with the intent of equitably supporting the needs of

homelessness. Common to each district, the liaisons and campus principals collaboratively

coordinated needed medical support services and interventions for homeless students. Homeless

liaisons for each participating district had established professional relationships with community

contacts readily available to support eligible families. In WWISD, the homeless liaison stated:

> It is customary for the campus principal to refer parents to the homeless liaison when in need of behavior counseling or medical assistance. Let's say for instance, a student needs eyeglasses or behavior therapy, I have information of community organizations who can provide those services to parents at no charge. Those are considered types of wrap-around services for our district.

District and campus administrators demonstrated a commitment to building

programmatic linkages among organizations while partnering with the district or campus site.

Administrators described a continuous process of developing and maintaining collaborative

relationships with community agencies to ensure that students eligible for support under

McKinney-Vento Act are connected to services beyond what the district or school provides. Ms.

Morris, principal in PHISD, elaborated on ways her campus coordinates support for her students:

> We have students in need of clothing and food on the weekends, so I contact the district's homeless liaison and arrange for our district community partners to provide school uniforms for the students. Many times the uniforms can be delivered to the school if the sizes are correct. Also, there may be times when we go to the food bank and pick up the weekend food or uniforms and bring them back to the campus for the students. We can go to them or they can come to us. It is a team effort to meet the needs of our students.

Ms. Cartwright, the principal in HCVISD, discussed the growing need to establish more

partnerships within her district and with organizations in the community:

> Since we have such a large number of homeless students at our school and the number has increased over the years, we have a community partnership with the local food bank and they provide food for our homeless students for the weekend. This is our weekend backpack food program. We have a representative of this organization on our campus leadership committee so they are a campus stakeholder and regularly attend our decision-making team meetings. We also have a partnership with our community organizations and local churches near the school that provide mentoring for students. This helps them

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with college and career preparation with workshops on writing college essays and interviewing skills. We seek to provide a stable social network for students because they want the needed skills to improve their future housing and financial stability.

The inclusion of community partnerships strengthens the support and affords additional options to a school district or campus site. Adding community members to district or campus decision – making teams fosters improving the quality of schooling and increasing stability for all students, which homeless students can benefit. The multiple resources that community partners can bring to the collaborative process of meeting the needs of students adds to the overall pool of resources that can foster increased active student participation and growth in the learning process at school.

Since transportation is a critical service to coordinate for homeless students, this area of support repeated throughout the interview responses. Homeless liaisons in each participating district stressed the importance of their continued collaboration and frequent communication with their district's transportation department to ensure appropriate transportation options are offered and provided to the families. When I asked each homeless liaison to describe the available district-level support to assist in meeting the needs of homeless students, all liaisons replied initially that their main priority was to ensure the timeliness of coordinating transportation for their homeless students so they could experience stability and participation in academics and extra-curricular programs at their enrolled campuses.

Also, equally important to coordinating transportation services with their own district's transportation department is the reality of coordinating transportation with other nearby school districts' homeless liaisons and transportation departments in the event an eligible student lives outside of the currently enrolled school district and needs transportation. Each district liaison stated that a trend they experience in their school districts is an increase in the numbers of

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homeless students residing outside of their currently enrolled school district and requesting to attend school in another school district.

To maintain school stability, the McKinney-Vento Act allows homeless students school choice. Under this provision, students who are experiencing homelessness have the right to attend school in their school of origin or in the school attendance area where the family or youth is currently living. School of origin is the school in which the student was last enrolled. In Texas, students experiencing homelessness may enroll in any district they choose, regardless of the location of their residence, school of origin or attendance zone campus. All homeless liaisons surmised that they expend additional effort collaborating with other districts homeless liaisons and transportation departments to assist determining the appropriate school district and campus that can serve the best interests of the students and coordinating transportation when students live outside of the district's attendance zone. There is also shared financial responsibility of transportation when families elect to benefit from this provision of the law. Once the homeless liaisons finalize the transportation arrangements and schedules for students, campus principals receive this information and make further contact with parents/guardians to communicate campus procedures for daily arrival to and departure from school. The homeless liaison in PHISD shared her experience with coordinating transportation with other school districts:

> We have an increased number of homeless students living in housing outside of our district, and with the school of origin provision in the McKinney-Vento Act, a lot of these parents want their children to continue attending schools where they last attended. That involves me coordinating transportation many times with other school districts. I will also contact the parent to help get the transportation arranged. If there is a bus coming from a neighboring district, I will inform parents about it. I also inform the parents if PHISD is picking up the student and a neighboring district is dropping them off. Transportation departments from my district and the cooperating district will also contact the parents to confirm the details of the transportation arrangements. This process can be lengthy and costly for my district at times, particularly when another district does not reply to our requests for this type of transportation arrangement for the students. In those cases, my

district has just provided the transportation and taken the additional costs out of our budget for supporting homeless students' transportation costs.

Similarly, the homeless liaison in WWISD discussed this:

> A lot of times families will choose to come to WWISD although under McKinney-Vento they can stay at their school of origin, and they can come to WWISD but they might live in another area. So, it may present a challenge because the transportation arrangements make the day longer for the students. Transportation is a big issue, but we have to get students here for school. So, I will coordinate with other school districts.

> An additional transportation reality occurs in HCVISD. The homeless liaison discussed

that their situation is unique from many other districts that may not have access to public

transportation. She states:

> My department hired a full time person for my department to assist me in coordinating the transportation for our district's homeless students due to the size of our district and number of students we serve. She and I collaborate with the public transit service in the major city near us. Since our district is in a large city and our schools are spread across the city, many of our students need transportation on a city bus or city train, and sometimes both. Many of our students attend their school of origin, especially if it is a magnet school or a school where they had to audition.

She continues to describe the elaborate process of working as a team with the city's public transit

specialists and parents to ensure safety for students needing to take public transportation

services.

> As a team, we work along with the public transit specialists to ensure safety and a reasonable time of transport for a student to ride on public transportation each day. We also consider the appropriateness of the age of the student who may be in need of these transportation arrangements because we don't want students on public transportation in areas that may appear unsafe, either due to construction or other factors. We work to coordinate routes to school and back home that require the least number of stops and the least number of types of vehicles a students need to ride. There may be the best route to and from school that may involve a student riding the public bus, then catch the train, and finally walk the remaining way to school. We have to determine as a team if that is the best option for our students. With all transportation options, we inform the parents because their input is important to us, too. The student's safety and what is in the best interest of the student drives our collaborative decisions when arranging transportation with providers outside the district.

Along with coordinating transportation, ensuring meal services is another high priority of collaborative support for eligible students. At the point of enrollment at the campus site and upon determining eligibility of receiving assistance under the McKinney-Vento Act, students can immediately participate in the school's free meal plan under the provision of Title I, Part A of ESSA. This plan affords the students opportunities to eat breakfast and lunch while at school. There are specific campuses within districts that provide dinner after school for eligible students. The homeless liaison at HCVISD shared:

> Several of our campus sites provide a dinner option for homeless students each day and they eat before going home. To coordinate the dinners and to designate which campus locations will be a site to serve the dinners, it is a joint effort involving food services, myself, and the campus administrator. We must have regular communication to ensure all necessary components are available to serve students, including preparing quality, healthy meals on site after school, ensuring reasonable staff is present to help serve the meals, and ensuring transportation for these students after the meals are served. So, we consider it a team effort.

Collaborating with organizations outside of the school district to providing additional food options for homeless students is common. Each homeless liaison arranges with the local food bank to have schools in their district included to receive food each week or on the weekend based on the needs of the campus and student eligibility. The campus principal will then inform the partnering organization of the number of students and make arrangements for delivery or pick-up. The intent of this service is to ensure meal options for homeless students on the weekends. PHISD schools coordinate a weekend meals backpack food program for their eligible students. Ms. Jones, principal at Huntington Springs shared her collaborative process:

> I work with my school counselor to inform the parents/guardian of eligible students of this available program and provide them the details. They are aware of the backpack that will come home with the food items and they are made aware of how to continue the service if they need it during the year. Our parents appreciate this service for their children. So this service has been helpful for providing food options for parents and their students. I've seen that securing these meal options for homeless students requires timely

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and consistent communication between the homeless liaison and the campus principal to ensure needs are addressed.

Additionally, Ms. Morris, principal at Orion Peaks further added:

> When we find out information at my campus about a student needing food or meals at school, I initiate contact with the district homeless liaison and food services departments to ensure we can get breakfast and lunch for the students as soon as they start school along with the weekend backpack food program.

Therefore, principals proactively collaborate with the district's homeless liaison to facilitate stability in nutritional services for homeless students. The administrators' combined efforts advocate for students and serve as a model for students of how teams of people work together to ensure student growth. Also, these combined efforts increase the likelihood of developing students' relational skills so that achieving academic success and experiencing stability are achievable.

Another service homeless liaison and campus principals collaboratively coordinate medical services and interventions. Campuses have an intervention team that regularly identifies and monitors the needs and progress of services provided to homeless students. At the campus level, the intervention team consists of these core members: the principal, the assistant principal, school counselor, and the classroom teacher. Depending on the support structures of the district, the intervention team may have additional members. For instance, the homeless liaison in PHISD offered insight about intervention teams:

> Regarding our intervention teams, we have them at the campus and district level. At the district level, I meet with our counseling director to discuss trends and patterns in our district related to all of our students and seek district-wide solutions that will benefit them, including homeless students. We then put in action interventions that support their needs. One main action that came from our meetings were coordinating with a local clinic to provide additional vision care for students, including getting prescription eyeglasses. This extra service was helpful for students who participated and many of them were not identified as homeless.

Unique in HCVISD, the homeless liaison discussed how several of the school board members were actively involved in supporting students by serving on the district team that brainstorms solutions for students across the district:

> Our school board may not discuss or make decisions specifically for homeless students at board meetings, because the members seek solutions for all students in the district. We have members who attend smaller district level meetings with core stakeholders to discuss trends and patterns of the needs of specific groups of enrolled students. Then these discussion items and possible solutions are shared in the next level of intervention meetings with district personnel who can broker the resources to meet the student needs discussed in these meetings. This is how we partnered with the non-profit organization across the street from Barrington Hollow. One of our school board members connected with individuals in the city and other community organizations and championed for our homeless students. A local hospital also partners with this non-profit organization and they send a mobile unit a few times each week to support student concerns and related medical needs, mainly after school. Our school district does not lead this organization or provide financial support or resources for it, but a community group leads it. The group receives private donations to sustain the services it provides our students. This partnership is important since our students need and benefit from the services.

These examples show how the collaborative efforts of the district level intervention teams, including the school board members, can impact meeting needs of students by arranging additional support options. At times, solutions lie outside of the funding allowances provided by federal or state grants for supporting homeless students, yet these potential challenges open opportunities for district advocates to seek and coordinate resource solutions outside of the district.

To discuss additional support options for students at the campus level, the participating campuses have a core intervention team of staff members that includes a campus administrator, school counselor, and the teacher of the student needing additional support. Depending on the observed needs of the students, other personnel may attend such as the school nurse, an instructional specialist, or a behavior specialist. The intervention team is instrumental in providing additional solutions to support the academic success of students, including homeless

students. Related health and medical needs include dental services, eye exams for prescription eyeglasses, and behavior and mental health support. The homeless liaison from WWISD stated:

> This team serves to remove the identified barriers that hinder the homeless students from accessing the necessary health and medical support they need. Our district created extra positions, such as an advocate counselor and an attendance administrator to serve on the team. The campuses will initiate the meetings because generally the teacher is the first contact with students in the classroom to observe things that may hinder academic success. Most of the time, school counselors will make referrals for the families based on the resources they have. They will contact me to assist with other referrals of services when it is a critical or highly sensitive situation, such as traumatic impact from extreme living conditions or exposure to domestic violence.

The principal at Huntington Springs Elementary elaborated on the collaborative process that occurs on her campus:

> At our school, we have student intervention team meetings every Friday. The meetings allow us to identify student needs, potential barriers, and recommend interventions to support the students' academic participation in their classes. When we need additional support personnel to assist, my counselor or I will call a behavior specialist to visit our school to speak with our student several times a month in counseling sessions as another layer of support. We do what is necessary to coordinate wrap-around services from our community partners with the assistance of our homeless liaison.

Moral purpose and collaboration were a mindset and critical to serving the needs of students who were homeless. Collaborative decision-making and the consistency of communication to support students involved trust. The district and campus administrators trusted that they would be able to broker the various systems of resources and coordinate several options of support continuously with various individuals, groups, and organizations. They trusted each other to provide the specific support that was requested based on the specific the needs and the job role and responsibilities of the individual or collective group. Creating effective collaboration comes from building relationships over time and from regular communication for a specific focus or cause. Based on the interview data from the homeless liaisons and campus principals, trusting relations among campus administrators, homeless

liaisons, and community organizations to provide a continuum of support services for homeless

students in these districts. By modeling these relational skills and processes with homeless

students and their families, district and campus administrators show how to develop and sustain

positive relations with others who can coordinate needed resources to help these students

overcome educational challenges related to homelessness.

Theme 4: Building Capacity

Theme 4 presents findings connected to building capacity in all stakeholders who support

students experiencing homelessness, including parents and guardians, and students. While

implementing policy that is intended to support homeless students, challenges can arise that have

the potential to hinder the process of brokering the necessary resources. Each district and school

elaborated on various opportunities to learn more about homelessness and opportunities available

to support academic success. Building capacity emerged as a strong theme in the data. The

homeless liaison in PHISD shared this insight:

> To combat common misperceptions of the definition of homelessness in my community,
> we offer professional learning for district employees, campus principals, instructional
> support staff members, teachers, parents and guardians, and students, as appropriate.
> Many in our community think that since most of our community is educated, live in
> stable housing, and usually have careers or work on jobs with competitive salaries, then
> we don't really have homelessness issues.

She shared some the realities that help to break down some of the misconceptions or

misunderstandings.

> Majority of our families experiencing homelessness are living in doubled-up situations
> with relatives or friends, so they think they are not homeless. Under the McKinney-
> Vento Act definition of homelessness, the students living in those types of housing
> situations would be eligible for services. Yet, since they don't understand this as a type
> of temporary living situation under the law, they refuse services for which they would be
> eligible. We spend much effort teaching parents and guardians the different living
> situations considered homeless and the support available to their children. We also train

other district personnel and campus principals about the federal law related to homelessness and the provisions for this group of students to support their academics.

She further explained that principals conduct professional development at their schools to prepare staff on how to identify and support students. She described now she also attends state, regional, and national conferences focused on homelessness to build her capacity and to learn strategies to use in her district to better assist families.

The homeless liaison in WWISD supports her district and campus employees, and families through regular training sessions and individual family home visits:

> I train all my principals each year to identify needs of homeless students, identify the related barriers, and how to align available resources that support the needs. I work closely with the school counselors in the district and conduct regular training opportunities for them, especially to keep them abreast of the trends and patterns of our students throughout the district. These sessions with the counselors may also involve additional problem-solving for unique situations to our district.

Like the homeless liaison at PHISD, she described the necessity of educating high school students who may not be aware that they are eligible for services. She indicated that many of them do not understand that homelessness is when they are living with grandparents or a friend from school. She noted that this qualifies as a "doubled-up living situation." She went on to discuss the training,

> I then explain to them the support that is available to them if they choose. I provide training for counselors who later teach parents and guardians and students at their middle and high school campuses about the rights and provisions of the law that can help support them. We also teach the older students how to better advocate for themselves and seek out their school counselors for additional support. Self- advocacy is critical for our older students, especially at our secondary campuses. With every interaction, when appropriate, we seek to build capacity with families and staff members who support homeless students to identify needs of homelessness and use resources to remove the existing barriers.

Campus principals provide updates and overviews of the law to keep their campus personnel apprised of homelessness in their communities. Ms. Jones, principal at Huntington Springs shared how she facilitated this learning at her campus:

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My school demographics were changing with an increase in economically disadvantaged students and students living in homeless conditions. Therefore, I requested a professional development session for my entire faculty . . . a poverty simulation that not only taught teachers and staff how to identify needs and barriers of students living in poverty, they had to actually assume a fictitious identity that they were given by the instructors of this simulation and make decisions if they were really that person living in poverty. This session was an eye-opener for many of my staff members because they had to think from the perspective of the person living in poverty.

She went on to share the collaborative effort with the school counselor on building capacity at

her campus.

Our counselor also teaches our faculty the various types of crisis that children in our community may encounter based on the trends and patterns discussed at the counselors' training sessions. Along with this, the counselor provides an overview of crisis intervention solutions that are available to the students and their families. These sessions help us all to work more vigilantly to support our families.

Ms. Cartwright, principal in HCVISD, relates the need to continuously participate and offer

various professional learning opportunities:

Remaining abreast of the current provisions of federal and state policy on homelessness is critical to my role at my campus. Yet there are times that I may rely on my social services coordinator to keep me and our faculty apprised of any changes to the law and to review key provisions and guidelines. This helps us to better identify student needs and helps us to know how to support them. In individual conferences, we also teach students self-advocacy skills and why they should remain aware of their rights and what's available to them if they are living in unsheltered conditions or doubled-up. The more we learn as campus leaders how to better support homeless students by attending different learning sessions, then we can teach our staff, families, and students how to navigate various systems of resources that are available to them.

Document analysis of district plans and campus plans revealed no goals, strategies, or

opportunities specifically for homeless students related to these themes. Therefore, the needs for

homeless students were included with all students of the district and addressed as resources are

allocated to meet the needs of any eligible student for any intervention support, including

supplemental academic support (i.e. tutoring) or mentoring, for example. Therefore, homeless

students are not isolated but included in the overall written plans. Additionally, document

analysis of school board minutes for the school year 2017-2018 revealed no school board

meetings included agenda items for discussion or for action that specifically addressed homeless

students. Again, students experiencing homelessness are included in the overall student body of

the school district with necessary resources aligned to meet the needs of all students, which

homeless students can benefit, as well.

Theme 5: Accessibility

Theme 5 presented findings related to the accessibility of resources to provide solutions

to meeting the needs of students experiencing homelessness. Each district and school

interviewed had ways of ensuring convenience of providing support to students. This is

especially necessary as all three participating districts have many of their students living outside

of the district. Therefore, if ways to ensure accessibility through convenience is achieved with

these students, then homeless students living within district boundaries would benefit, also.

Homeless liaison in WWISD shared:

> It is important to me that once our students are identified and become eligible for
> services, then services begin right at that moment for them. We look for ways to
> streamline our paperwork processes for parents and guardians. We also assist with
> additional services to help them get enrolled, such as with a non-profit organization that
> helps parents and guardians get birth certificates at no cost to expedite completing
> registration. Also, we have qualifying students who need school uniforms, so we have a
> clothing closet in our district to provide them immediate clothing services. We can use
> grant funds to keep these uniforms and other needed clothing items at hand when a
> family needs them. Our goal is to cut down the time that families will spend trying to
> acquire what they need to get enrolled and remain actively engaged in learning while at
> school.

The homeless liaison in HCVISD provided insight related to ensuring accessibility through

convenience:

> With our district being part of a large city, many of our support services and resources are
> spread across town. So our district created safe haven centers at specific campuses that

house specific services for our families. Services include a consistent stock of needed school supplies, hygiene items, clothes and school uniforms, a limited but reasonable supply of snacks if students need them during the school day, and breakfast is also served. At the centers located on our high school campuses, students are offered mentoring by individuals from community organizations on topics most relevant to teens, resume writing sessions, training to teach the teens interviewing tips, and talking with them about college enrollment. We have a partnership with our local community college where our students can go to community college for free for three years.

The principal at Huntington Springs assists her families by facilitating a smoother enrollment process and garnering additional support:

When families are enrolling students, our attendance clerk and counselor work together to identify needs based on the information included on the enrollment paperwork. They work discreetly in the event a family has sensitive information to disclose. The counselor will take the family into a private conference area and discuss eligibility, rights, and available transportation and related support services for their enrolled child. If parents and guardians need additional documents like previous school district information or shot records, my office staff will make the necessary phone calls to locate this information. This way the parent is not going all over the district or across town attempting to secure these documents. We can do that work for them. Our intent is to get the child in a classroom as soon as possible. We also have a clothing closet and keep a storage of school supplies on our campus for students. It is important to us that we cut down the time parents and guardians expend to getting all of these items to enroll their child.

Accessibility is either provided by the community through various organizations, the district, or the campus. This can also be achieved with a combination of all of these entities operating together. The principal at Barrington Hollow explained how the non-profit organization that developed the wrap-around services in the building across the street from her school contributes to accessibility for her homeless students:

This organization partners with my school specifically to provide a one-stop shop of support services within their building. Students can do their laundry there after school and shower, if needed. Since that partnership provides various medical options through its agreement with one of the largest hospitals in the city, eligible students can go there for assistance with health related concerns, including vision and hearing screenings, and dental services. Any other support the students may need that are not offered at our school or through this partnership, additional referrals can be made and support can be provided relatively quickly. The goal is to provide a safe place outside of school hours for our students to retreat to and experience a fun atmosphere, and to receive the care that is provided to them based on their needs. Student safety is priority because we want to

help keep students off the streets and in safe environments until their parents and guardians come to pick them up.

Review of school board minutes for HVCISD during the school year 2017-2018 revealed a discussion item related to the safe haven centers. The school board discussed the benefits of having these centers located in various zones of the district providing additional support services for eligible students. The school board approves the contracts for the centers in August 2017, with the homeless liaison communicating the details of the plans to the school counselors or campus assigned community liaisons. Each center may have a different person who manages it at each campus.

Summary of Data Analysis

In sum, these themes provided additional insight regarding how districts overcome the identified barriers when implementing federal and state policy to support homeless students. District and campus administrators participate in various opportunities to ensure academic stability of homeless students despite their extenuating circumstances. Building capacity from several professional, parent, and student development options on the rights and the support options under McKinney-Vento Act, and making academic and other support services readily accessible to eligible students can rapidly increase stability and decease impacting barriers that can potentially stunt the development of the student's social capital. These are various options aimed at ultimately helping students get out of homelessness conditions into a more stable living situation.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite the varied challenges homeless children and youth encounter, many of them

experience academic success and graduate from high school. The challenges they face while

living in unstable housing conditions can afford them opportunities to benefit from available

support systems through their school settings as a result of federal policies that assist

homelessness, including the McKinney-Vento Act. With school districts and individual campus

sites having access to multiple networks and support options to collaboratively meet the needs of

homeless students, this vulnerable population can realize school stability and develop their social

capital while in school and after high school graduation.

The purpose of this study was to explore how school district and campus-level

administrators collaboratively coordinate resources and services according to provisions in

federal policy to meet the needs of currently enrolled homeless students, therefore developing

this student population's social capital. This study contributes to the literature related to district

and campus administrators' collaborative efforts to support the academic needs of homeless

students to develop these students' social capital while in school and after graduation.

In this qualitative case study, I explored practices in three school districts in North Texas,

near the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, in order to answer the following research questions:

Overarching question: How do district level administrators support campus level
administrators in meeting the needs of students who are homeless?

- What programs, practices, and interventions are available to support homeless
  students at your school or district?

- How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in
  implementing programs or interventions to meet needs of homeless students?

- What barriers hinder program implementation for homeless students at your
  district or school?

The method of data collection used to address these questions involved interviews, documents, and research field notes. Interview participants were district-level homeless liaisons and campus principals. Documents for analysis were district plans, school board minutes, and campus plans. Research field notes also contributed to the data collection process. Interview responses, documents, and field notes were analyzed and coded to identify themes related to the conceptual framework and research questions.

Discussion of Findings

From these methods, the trend was discovered that the numbers of students living in homeless conditions have increased in the participating districts, either due to weather-related events or economic factors, with families doubled-up in homes or living in hotels or motels. To meet the educational needs of these students, schools can offer the necessary support through federal initiatives, such as McKinney-Vento Act and Every Student Succeeds Act. The district's homeless liaison has the primary responsibility of implementing this federal policy to support the needs of homeless students through the McKinney-Vento Act. By coordinating other federal policies such as Every Student Succeeds Act, the homeless liaison has resources available within their school districts to aid their efforts to realize school stability and academic success for this student group.

Campus principals are instrumental in the process of meeting the needs of this population of students as the school site is the initial place of enrollment for students. School attendance clerks, school counselors, or social workers assigned to the campus site assisted in identifying student eligibility of support under homeless federal policy. The campus principals or campus designee would inform the district homeless liaison in the event additional wrap-around services

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were needed, including transportation, medical support, school uniforms and clothing, additional food options, and school supplies. It was also discovered that the participating schools had various on-campus support options that provided for students with less wait time.

Each district and campus participating in the study also had community partners that provided additional support for homeless families. These community partnerships supplemented the resources where federal, state, or district funds were limited or were unallowable to purchase. Since schools are one of few stable and secure environments assisting homeless students in developing their academic and social skills to escape poverty, homeless liaisons and campus principals broker available resources and support options for homeless students with additional support from the local community.

Findings also revealed that a misperception of homelessness interfered with mobilizing resources during policy implementation. With the definition of homelessness to include doubled-up living situations as a condition for eligibility, it is initially common to perceive that living in a home with friends or family members is not an indication of homelessness. Data analysis revealed that homelessness is misunderstood as individuals living only in homeless shelters or in unsheltered living conditions, such as in cars or in tree line, wooded areas. Doubled-up living arrangements constitute student eligibility for provisions under federal McKinney-Vento Act. Without this understanding, students and their families lack access to appropriate resources they need that school districts and schools provide. Therefore, districts participating in the study provided additional training for teachers, parents, and students to assist building their knowledge of the conditions for eligibility and providing information about their rights of the available provisions under the federal policy. Therefore, misperception of homelessness is a common barrier prompting each participating district to provide various

training options to overcome. For parents and students, particularly students at the secondary level, training involved the school counselors at the school site conferring in private counseling sessions to ensure privacy. Also, homeless liaisons were supportive in conducting private counseling sessions either in person or via telephone conference with potentially eligible families.

Several professional development options were provided for instructional staff, including teachers at the individual campus sites. Principals participating in the study customarily enlisted assistance from the school counselors or social workers in the district to assist conducting professional development sessions, such as annual updates and common characteristics of families and students living in homelessness conditions, biweekly intervention meetings to discuss at risk learners' development in the classrooms to brainstorm appropriate solutions to support their growth, and poverty simulation workshops so that staff members get a better understanding of the daily experiences of students from their perspective. Additionally, homeless liaisons from the district level assist conducting these various training options at school sites or in private consultation with families. The misunderstanding of living in homelessness conditions is a perceived barrier to implementing policy and ensuring eligibility of provisions for families in need of the support. Without illuminating key characteristics of homelessness according to the schools' enrollment data, campuses and districts suffer underserving this vulnerable population which impacts supporting their academic success and future graduation date. School principals and homeless liaisons collaboratively provide additional training to assist removing this barrier. Therefore, providing these training sessions is to increase awareness and skills to increase advocacy for homeless students with intention of implementing new strategies to assist building positive connections to garner additional, needed support.

Findings also revealed that while ensuring support for homeless students through the collaborative efforts of district homeless liaisons and campus principals, the potential was evident for strengthening social capital of all stakeholders in the process of making decisions and while providing the supportive services. It was discovered that while collaboratively implementing McKinney-Vento policy, establishing partnerships with new community stakeholders for the support of this population of students became evident. Additionally, strengthening existing partnerships with individuals or organizations within a campus, within district, or with community entities was evident. Also related to this, it was discovered that the partnerships developed into lasting relationships that involved exchanges of ideas and valuing the resources and contributions of each partner, instead of having transactional relations where partners merely provided services.

Community partners served on district and campus decision-making committees and attended available training sessions when possible to become more informed of the conditions of homelessness and to deliberate how their organizations could assist with their available resources. Consistent and clear communication was frequently referenced in the data as one of the priorities for coordinating appropriate support for the students through the various partnerships and within district administrators. Also, the district leaders and community partners communicated the goals of their efforts to ensure additional support for homeless students, which fueled the on-going communication.

An additional finding discovered based on data analysis revealed that with each opportunity to build capacity in either students, families, or district staff members, including homeless liaisons and campus principals is the opportunity for increasing decisional capital or the ability to make productive decisions. With the various opportunities to increase awareness of

the conditions of homelessness and available support provisions allowed students from federal policy, individuals are able to make more decisions to further counter the impact of the transient experiences of homeless students. Data revealed, that by using various training options available to district homeless liaisons and campus principals, they are enabled to foster an increase in identifying the needs of homeless students, identifying root causes and barriers, and coordinating services to minimize the effects of the barriers that impede student growth. These factors are key to increasing decisional capital in order to maximize the collective potential of educational leaders.

Assisting this process of developing decision-making skills is the availability of support resources to assist key stakeholders providing or coordinating services. For the homeless liaison, training options included support from their immediate supervisors and state and regional homeless liaisons. These support opportunities assisted the participating homeless liaisons to make sense of federal policy and apply policy appropriately to unique student situations. A benefit of policy sense-making is that it fosters decisional capital. Homeless liaisons can further support campus principals' decisional capital during the collaborative process. Campus principals then facilitate professional development or training for teachers, students, when appropriate, and parents and guardians. As campus staff and families are educated about homelessness and provisions of federal policy, the more opportunities to advocate for the rights of the students to ensure support is provided in a timely manner. Discovered in the data analysis is the practice of both homeless liaisons and principals assisting community partners in their understanding of the federal policy and related provisions. As the various partners participate in these training options, their collective sense of efficacy increases in making decisions of what is best when meeting student needs. As homeless liaisons and principals build understanding of the

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rights of homeless students with families through several private training options, the students, parents, and guardians become a part of the solution.

Findings Connected to Literature

Minimizing the Impact of Homelessness

Experiencing homelessness is challenging for adults and children. Children who are homeless represent one of the highest need and most challenging to serve groups. They are ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse, and can experience high mobility due to their unstable living conditions. Many of the students have varied economic, social, educational, and health needs that require support services from a variety of service providers. Appropriate support for students in this group includes multiple options ranging from supplemental academic services to support options that are nonacademic that enable them school stability and academic success (Miller, 2011; Tobin, 2016).

Homeless liaisons and campus principals participating in this study acknowledged the challenges associated with homelessness and implemented various interventions to minimize the effects of housing instability. Findings for the data revealed that moral purpose fueled the efforts of district and campus leaders to support the increasing numbers of homeless students. Homeless liaisons and campus principals consistently mobilized available resources to provide immediate assistance to families. The motivation was to ensure a more stable experience and encourage active participation in the academic setting for the student while attending school. Data analysis revealed that when homeless liaisons and campus principals personally communicated with parents about various support options available to them, the parents actively pursued the recommendations to realize improvements in their homelessness conditions. Data

analysis also revealed that district and campus leaders would do what was appropriately

necessary to ensure stability for their students, even if it involved their using personal resources

to acquire supplies or other resources not possible through other district and community

resources. Additionally, campus leaders supported families and students in ways not required by

federal policy but would foster an increased sense of inclusion and community. Examples from

the data included conducting home visits to meet with families in private about available

resources, greeting students at the school entrances welcoming students to another day of

learning, calling parents to ensure their children were on their way to school, traveling in their

personal vehicles alongside school buses to ensure students were home safely after school events

ended. Not only are these actions indicative of establishing the end result of ensuring school

stability for homeless students, they show educational leaders' process to ensure a welcoming

and inclusive school environment communicating to this student group how their presence at

school is valued. Moral purpose manifests from various intentional actions that make a positive

difference in the lives of the people if affects (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). The process of

supporting the academic needs of homeless students in these participating districts reveal that

acting with moral purpose brings focus to the efforts of school district and campus leaders.

While principals and homeless liaisons broker various resources to support students, they

are also mindful of additional resources available from other academic services in their districts

to support learning goals, such as special education and English language acquisition. Findings

from the data revealed how district and campus leaders consulted special education and language

acquisition leaders in their districts for additional specialized or supplemental services offered

through these available resources. Therefore, noted was the consistent coordination of additional

academic services that are available when homeless students become eligible. In essence, a

homeless student could receive layered support services. Similarly connected to moral purpose

is the idea of focusing the various strategies and demands on one critical goal. With several

support options available to support homeless students' academic growth, homeless liaisons and

campus principals sought to align various strategies and provisions allowed by other systemic

supports. Several communication sources enable consistency in coordinating needed

assessments, parent meetings to review available additional academic support from these

specialized services, and implementation of these services. Through these related processes,

continuous monitoring and adjusting the academic support ensues for the student. These

academic services afforded additional supplemental academic assistance either through extended

day or during the day tutorials and interventions supporting academic growth. These additional

specialized academic support services are layered on the services provided under McKinney-

Vento. District and campus leaders aligned all service options for homeless students to

supporting the goal of ensuring their academic growth. In sum, the findings revealed that there

are several service options available for eligible homeless students in addition to what is allowed

through McKinney-Vento Act. District and campus leaders' efforts sought to align and monitor

these different supports to ensure a sense of accomplishment for students. This further enables

coherency in implementing McKinney-Vento policy.

While district and campus leaders have universal resources to assist all students' behavior

and social and emotional development, the study's findings revealed that there were no specific

strategies tailored for homeless students. The participating districts echoed the literature in

confirming the need for behavior and social and emotional support for students, however these

support options were provided through the districts' overall systems of universal positive

behavior supports. Review of the needs of homeless students in each participating district

showed that what these districts currently offer for all students universally sufficiently support

the needs of homeless students. Additionally, the myriad of community partners to these

participating districts and schools provide services to assist the behavior development of

students, if it is deemed necessary, and homeless students are included as the need arises. For

example, non-profit organizations provide mentors to students during the academic school year

which are also available to homeless students. Community hospitals, nearby clinics, and private

counseling agencies provide additional behavior and mental health support for nominal fees or at

no cost to eligible students. Therefore, these supplemental wrap-around services are available

for all students inclusive of students experiencing homelessness. Homelessness conditions may

expose children and youth to various traumatic events that could threaten their sense of safety

and security, including domestic violence, parental stress, and risk from separation from family

members. Exposure to trauma can have a negative effect on healthy development and can impair

a student's ability to cope with requirements of a regular school day (Gross, 2015). Through

various monitoring strategies, the participating campus principals review the needs of all

enrolled students and connect students to available behavior interventions to minimize learning

disruptions and foster their active participation in the classroom. Campus intervention teams

include a variety of instructional and behavior specialists and serve to identify needs, potential

barriers, solutions to ensure development of students' behavior skills. As these intervention

meetings are conducted to review the needs of all students, the needs of struggling homeless

students are discussed, as well, to ensure strategic support for their social and emotional growth.

Related findings suggested that participating school districts sought to ensure homeless students'

behavior and social and emotional needs were addressed through the universal continuum of

mainstream services offered by the local school system. Additional services warranted beyond

the school district were available and could be provided by local community partners and service providers. The homeless liaison and campus principal facilitated acquiring these services for eligible families, as needed, from the universal system of behavior supports available for all students.

Collaborative Policy Implementation

District homeless liaisons and campus leaders collaboratively mobilize various resources allowed through McKinney-Vento to support eligible students. The study's findings revealed the shared vision across district and campus levels of stakeholders supporting the needs of homeless students. The shared vision focuses the efforts of collaborative policy implementation. Whereas, compliance is intended from implementing policy, educational leaders participating in the study focused their collaborative efforts on ensuring academic success of students. The study's findings reveal these leaders' practices seek to enable stabilizing student participation and eventually on-time graduation of secondary students. With the focus on engaging students, participating educational leaders' experiences reflect that compliance mandates are achieved. Consistent collaboration drives the actions of the district and campus leaders' communication and affords this focus on student participation and success. Through the communication systems shared in the interviews, an integration of the system of supports for homeless students strengthens and deepens the alignment of district and campus goals for student growth, coordination of policies to support homeless students, and data sharing that is needed to continuously monitor and broker the needed services. The proactive, timely, and on-going communication that occurred in intervention team meetings at both district and campus levels, and bottom-up contact from principals via telephone, emails, or in meetings with district leaders

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articulated the shared vision of ensuring homeless students' growth. Likewise, top-down communication strategies from the participating district liaisons to campus principals enacted the shared vision as inspiration to keep the collaboration on track. Honig (2003) asserted that a hybrid policy implementation approach affords participating stakeholders voice in the policy implementation process. In supporting eligible students, the study's data reveals that a hybrid approach to collaborative policy implementation through on-going, timely communication encourages proactive support to ensure services are mobilized to lessen the impact of homelessness. Shared vision that is centered on student growth then enables communication between the district and campus leaders, therefore, empowering the collaborative efforts of educational leaders. Additionally, when district and campus leaders' efforts included support from community partners as revealed in the findings, the result of using these various communication options with more stakeholders afforded additional opportunities to broker resources for students.

Research study findings based on interviews and field notes, revealed district and campus administrators' sense of empowerment resulting from trust established in the collaborative relationships to mobilize the resources for students. Building trust is an essential building block to any collaboration, especially when implementing federal policy to support academic success (Miller, 2011). Building trust often comes from building relationships over time and from regular communication. The findings revealed that, from the various communication structures, a pattern of transparency and inclusiveness surfaced and fostered trust. Stakeholders participated in support options for building capacity such as staff development and training opportunities. From the various intervention meetings that happened between campus staff, among district leaders, with community partners, and inclusive of parents and students, a shared understanding

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enabling trust fueled proactive and productive relations among all collaborators. Empowerment that resulted from these trusting relationships seemed to build stakeholders' efficacy in positively impacting eligible students. Related to this, research findings revealed that as district and campus administrators sensed empowerment due to trusting relationships, provisions for eligible students mobilized immediately after student enrollment. Based on interviews, student provisions began the same day of enrollment. Therefore, empowerment emerging from the trusting, interconnected relations among the study's participating educational leaders fostered rapid mobilization of services and stabilizing academic participation of the students.

Benefactors of Social Capital

District homeless liaisons and campus principals employ various systemic practices, such as communication structures, through collaborative policy implementation, that enhance trust among employees and with community stakeholders. Additionally, these practices foster on-going information sharing to make sense of policy, to decrease the effects of homelessness, and focus a collective sense of purpose. These systemic practices and the potential impact of these practices are based on the relations among all stakeholders, particularly district and campus leaders. The quality of these relationships and subsequent interactions constitute social capital. Social capital provides everyone a voice by facilitating focused, solutions-oriented discussions on ways to assist others in meeting their planned goals. Research study findings reveal that social capital develops in the collaborative processes between district and campus leaders as they collaboratively mobilize resources that foster developing social capital in homeless students. Mobilization of resources for eligible students through positive and productive relations can have an impact to counter the impact of living in homeless conditions. Research findings reveal that

when educational leaders' collaborative relations foster increased trust, and a tangible outcome

of these trusting relations is rapid mobilization of resources, then these leaders foster

strengthening social capital within the district's system and consequently model the process of

developing social capital for eligible students and their families. School district and campus

leaders customarily have access to myriad of resources to support vulnerable student

populations. Decision-making opportunities through trusting relations afford school leaders the

opportunity to model productive communication strategies. These strategies reflect shared vision

and focus on making a positive difference in the lives of students. Homeless students

additionally benefit from the strengthened social capital of educational leaders. As leaders

collaborate to support homelessness, social capital develops within the professional environment

fostering a greater sense of collective efficacy. In turn homeless students benefit from leaders'

development of social capital in tangible service options to support their academic needs. Also,

the study's findings revealed that participating educational leaders utilized various strategies to

inform students and families of the educational and related opportunities available to them under

federal policy. These strategies fostered increasing families' understanding of their provisional

rights and fostered developing self-advocacy skills. With high mobility associated with

homelessness, students and families experience limited opportunities outside of the school

environment to connect in relations that can assist moving them beyond the poverty and mobile

living conditions they experience (Miller, 2011). Therefore, schools are instrumental in

developing social capital through support provisions to address students' needs and through

developing interpersonal and communication skills that assist successful transition to

postsecondary school settings to potentially increase their options of residence stability.

Social capital in the educational setting benefits all contributors and recipients, including school district and campus level employees, community partners, families, and students (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). As the educational setting is a social environment, educating students and mobilizing resources to support their academic needs necessitates connected interactions among all persons impacting students. Through the daily interactions of advocates in their schools, homeless students can learn appropriate ways of establishing trust, how to advocate for their academic and social needs, and how their provisional rights can enable them more stable living conditions during school matriculation and post-high school graduation. The intent of developing social capital in the school setting for students is to enable skills that would afford them increased opportunities to contribute to society as adults.

At the center of social capital lies the social connectedness of individuals and groups. Social connectedness in schools offers the needed interactions for individuals to access resources and options of support. The added value of each individual potentially strengthens the group or network and in turn increases its benefit to stakeholders involved. In this sense, district and campus leaders serve as agents who are able to teach, model, and facilitate appropriate social interactions while supporting academic success (Miller, 2011). Research study findings revealed that through educational leaders' process of collaborative efforts to support homeless students, social capital developed from the social interactions of the employees where they experienced collective efficacy. Students and families benefitted as they learned ways to develop their social capital through the support offered them through federal provisions and through the relational interactions with school district and school personnel advocating for them.

Implications for Action

The study's findings imply that with the trend of realizing increasing numbers of

homeless students in each school district, there are additional students who are potentially

eligible for support from McKinney-Vento Act. However, they may be unidentified due to

unawareness of eligibility criteria or challenges with families under-reporting on the residency

surveys due to perception of or stigma associated with homelessness. Whereas each

participating district liaison and campus principal employed available options to inform and

advocate for potentially eligible families, the ultimate decision rests with the parents and

guardians to consent to receiving the supports for their students offered by McKinney-Vento Act.

This can potentially limit a campus's ability to fully support eligible students who could

otherwise qualify for these services. Additionally, students can experience decrease in needed

services to stabilize their unstable living conditions. Whereas, unidentified homeless students

attending schools receiving additional federal funding through ESSA, Title I, Part A could

benefit from supplemental provisions to support their academic needs due to their economically

disadvantaged status, other campuses not receiving these funds would provide support to

potentially eligible students from a possible limited reservoir of resources. Therefore, federal

policy could provide further recommendations for school districts and schools of ways to

proactively support the needs of unidentified students.

The study's findings additionally reveal that school districts' employ positive behavior

support to develop behavior and social and emotional skills for all students. Whereas homeless

students are eligible for these support options also, the findings imply that funding is limited

through federal policy to support additional mental health and behavior therapy beyond

provisions of the school district and school setting. As school districts participating in the study

enrolled students experiencing traumatic effects of homelessness due to weather-related events,

additional federal funding would have addressed additional behavior and social and emotional

needs to further stabilize these students in their new academic settings. Participating school districts further collaborated with community partners for additional support for students to advocate for these needs, however, additional financial provisions for social and emotional development is necessary to combat the traumatic effects associated with homelessness.

The study's findings imply a need for additional support staff at the district level's homeless department that can support schools in more innovative ways. Each participating school district worked efficiently and strategically with all stakeholders to mobilize resources address students' needs. Also, each school district and school desired to employ additional strategies to address needs of eligible students, including making additional home visits during the school year as part of family outreach to address additional needs that arise as the school year progresses. Other innovative ideas included the desire to increase technology use at home for students with the need for an additional staff member to coordinate procuring and inventorying these resources. Finally, additional resources to fund extra staff to specifically address reducing the absentee rates of homeless students is reasonable to support campus staff. The high rate of mobility that accompanies homelessness is the biggest obstacle that threatens the extent to which schools can assist homeless students. Having attendance champions that advocate for homeless students' attendance can relieve campus and other district level employees who have large caseloads of at-risk learners to support. These additional support staff options can lend to a school district and school increasing the level of proactive support for eligible students.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this study was to explore how school district and campus-level administrators collaboratively coordinate resources and services to meet the needs of currently

enrolled homeless students. While the focus of this study explored collaborative practices of homeless students in general, the study has implications regarding additional collaborative support structures needed as school districts' trends begin to show an increased need to support particular student groups within the general homeless student population, such as students experiencing homelessness because of mobility due to immigration and youth identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. Whereas the stigmatization of these specific groups of homeless students would possibly be under-reported in order to mobilize necessary support services, these students could potentially benefit from available resources to address related effects of their unique experiences in addition to the other conditions associated with homelessness.

An additional recommendation for further research would be to collect data for analysis related to the post-secondary activities of homeless students within five years after high school graduation to track college and career experiences. These data would provide insight into the collective impact of resources expended in PK-12 school opportunities to enable increased social capital to improve their economic stability. These data could also suggest recommended improvements for schools during the process of schooling. This data could also provide recommendations for policy makers and implementers of ways to further expand funding resources and service options to meet potentially changing needs of this population of students.

Conclusion

This research study's purpose was to explore how school district and campus-level administrators collaboratively coordinate resources and services to meet the needs of currently enrolled homeless students. Collaborative practices of district and campus administrators foster

the development of students' social capital during the process of realizing tangible support to meet their various needs. School district and campus leaders collaborate with other district and community partners to connect students and their families to available support options, work to remove barriers to academic success and implement responsive intervention programs under federal policy.

McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA, outlines the rights and provisions of homeless students. Public schools are charged to ensure students have equitable access to a free and appropriate education through the removal of institutional barriers within schools. These barriers include transportation, residency, birth certificate requirements, and lack of school records that could impede homeless families' ability to enroll their children in schools. Additionally, once students are enrolled, provisions of this federal policy require school districts and schools to support the academic needs of the students. The intent of the policy is to ensure stabilization of the schooling experience.

Federal policy makers continue to collaboratively review provision of services for homeless families through the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. The Interagency Council aims to coordinate the federal response to homelessness and promotes initiatives across federal agencies. This council seeks to coordinate efforts at the federal level to assist states and local school districts to streamline support for homeless students and their families. At the local school district level of implementing policy, district level and school leaders coordinate efforts and mobilize resources to address the needs of students with the least interruption in services. Study findings reveal that participating educational leaders understand the challenges of coordinating support to overcome the barriers related to homelessness. Overall, student success is priority for these educators, and addressing the academic needs of this at-risk student

population through collaborative support is not only significant to the student's individual

growth but also to the growth of citizenry as they transition to safe living arrangements and

garner career or employment opportunities moving them forward out of poverty.

APPENDIX A

INVITATION LETTER

Greetings,

My name is Tonia Walker. I have been granted approval to conduct research in your school district as part of my Ph.D. dissertation in the Department of Education Leadership/Administration at the University of North Texas at Denton. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide take part.

In past recent years, the numbers of enrolled homeless students have increased in our public schools because of various reasons, including the economic downturn, insufficient wages, and decline in affordable housing. Because of these factors, many of our students experiencing homelessness may require additional resources to meet their needs. Owing to this, public schools remain accountable to ensuring the success of all students, including students identified as homeless. The purpose of this study is to explore how district and campus leaders collaboratively mobilize resources to meet the needs of enrolled students identified as homeless.

I would like your organization to be involved in my study. I believe that because you are actively involved in the management and operations of your organization, district and campus administrators are best suited to speak to how your district mobilizes resources for the needs of this student group. With your permission, I would like to schedule a date and time to meet with the Homeless Liaison at the district administration level and two school principals at campuses in the district with the highest numbers of students identified as homeless according to the Public Education Information System (PEIMS).

Participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve an interview of approximately 60-90 minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location. I will briefly explain my research, ask participants to sign a consent form, and then proceed with the interview. You may

decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by advising the researcher. With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the interview has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish.

All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, however, with your permission anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained for a minimum of three (3) years on a disk drive in a locked cabinet in my office. Only researchers associated with this project will have access. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

I hope that the results of my study will be of benefit to the organizations directly involved in the study, other organizations not directly involved in the study, as well as to the broader research community.

Please let me know if you are willing to participate I my study. I greatly appreciate your consideration and willingness to help with my research. If you'd like to participate or have any questions about the study, you are welcome to contact me directly at xxx-xxx-xxxx or via email at ToniaWalker@my.unt.edu.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and willingness to assist with my research. I look forward to hearing from you

Sincerely,
Tonia Walker
Doctoral Student
University of North Texas-Denton

APPENDIX B

INVITATION – VERBAL SCRIPT FOR TELEPHONE CALLS

Hello,

My name is Tonia Walker. I am a student from the Department of Education

Leadership/Administration at the University of North Texas-Denton. I am calling to talk with

you about participating in my research study. This study is about how district and campus

administrators collaborate and mobilize resources to meet the needs of enrolled students

identified as homeless. You are eligible to be in this study because your school district is located

near or within the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and has a minimum of 400 students identified as

homeless in Public Education Information System (PEIMS). I obtained your contact information

from the school district's website.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be interviewed for approximately 60-90

minutes in a mutually agreed upon location. I will briefly explain my research, ask participants to

sign a consent form, and then proceed with the interview. You may decline to answer any of the

interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any

time without any negative consequences by advising the researcher. With your permission, the

interview will be tape-recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for

analysis. I will transcribe the tape-recorded interviews myself. Shortly after the interview has

been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm

the accuracy of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish. The confidential,

transcribed information will be included in my written dissertation about ways participating

school districts in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex support the needs of homeless students.

Remember, this is completely voluntary. You can choose to be in the study or not. If

you'd like to participate, we can go ahead and schedule a time for us to meet to give you more

information. If you need more time to decide if you would like to participate, you may also call or email me with your decision.

Do you have any questions for me at this time?

You are welcome to contact me directly at xxx-xxx-xxxx or via email at ToniaWalker@my.unt.edu.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and willingness to assist with my research.

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

Dear _____,

Thank you for volunteering to participate in my research study: Exploring District and Campus Leaders' Practices That Support Homeless Students in Public Schools. It was a pleasure speaking with you via telephone about the research study and to schedule a date for the interview. This message confirms our interview information:

- Day of week, mm/dd/year
- Time

Please review this information. If this information is incorrect or should you need another date and time for our appointment, feel free to contact me via email or my cell phone. Additionally, I have attached a copy of the research consent form for your review to this email. I will also review the consent form with you at the time of the interview and request your signature on it.

Thank you again and I look forward to the interview.

Sincerely,

Tonia Walker,
Doctoral Student,
University of North Texas Denton
Cell phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx

APPENDIX D

DISTRICT LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Establishing a professionally comfortable interview experience is critical to collecting authentic, reflective data from interviewees. I will inform the interviewees about my background related to the study and the purpose of the study. I will explain to the interviewees that I will use a tape recorder to collect their interview responses for analysis at a later time. Recording their replies will also allow me to engage with them in the interview discussion. I will also explain that their responses will be held in strict confidence. Additionally, I will provide the interviewees a copy of their interview transcript, including the identified themes, after the interview for their review (member checking). Finally, I will inform the interviewee that I would stop the recording of the interview in the event there is information he/she would share off tape.

To further establish rapport, I will honor the interviewees' time and willingness to share their experiences with me.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me.

Background Questions

1. Please describe your role in the district.

2. How does your role support students living in homeless conditions?

3. How many students does your district serve (total)?

4. How many homeless students does your district currently serve (PK-12)?

5. Please describe trends in data related to homeless students' enrollment. (*Research Question 1)*

6. Please describe the living conditions of the homeless students attending this district. (*Research Question 1)*

      Probe: Can you please provide examples?

7. Please describe the trends/patterns of academic and behavior skills of homeless students?

      Probe: What resources are available for homeless students needing further support *(Research Questions 1)*

      District-level Strategies

8. Please describe available supports to the principals at campuses with the highest number of homeless students.

      Probe: What supports are available to coordinate resources for homeless students? *(Research Question 2)*

9. What ways do your district administrators include principals in making decisions in coordinating resources for homeless students? *(Research Question 2)*

      Probe: Please provide an example.

10. After decisions are made to support homeless students at these high needs campuses, what's the process of communication with the campus principals?

      Probe: How are supports implemented? Monitored? *(Research Question 2)*

11. Please describe the available district-level support to assist in meeting the needs of homeless students. (*Research Question 1)*

      Probe: Please provide examples.

12. In what ways are staff members prepared for the challenges of meeting the various needs of homeless students at their school? (*Research Question 3*)

Probe: Please provide examples.

13. Please describe additional programs and practices outside of the district/school to support homeless students. (*Research Question 2)*

Probe: Describe these supports. How are they activated?

14. Please describe the support you receive in order to implement policy related to meeting the needs of homeless students in your district. *(Research Question 2 – probing question)*

Probe: Who provides that support? What's the process for receiving that support?

Challenges

15. What challenges does your school district encounter in educating homeless students? (*Research Question 3)*

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me. May I please call or email if I have further questions?

Research Questions

Overarching question: How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in meeting the needs of students who are homeless?

1.   What programs, practices, and interventions are available to support homeless students at your school or in your district?

2.   How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in implementing programs or interventions to meet needs of homeless students?

3.   What barriers hinder program implementation for homeless students at your district or school?

Additional sub-questions (to discuss after aforementioned questions have been answered by participants):

1.   How are the social and emotional needs of homeless students identified at schools with the highest enrollment of students experiencing homelessness? *(Research Question 1)*

2.   What social and emotional learning (SEL) programs, practices, and interventions are available to support your enrolled homeless students' social and emotional development? *(Research Question 2)*

3.   How do district level administrators support campus administrators in implementing SEL programs or interventions to meet the needs of homeless students? *(Research Question 2)*

APPENDIX E

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Establishing a professionally comfortable interview experience is critical to collecting authentic, reflective data from interviewees. I will inform the interviewees about my background related to the study and the purpose of the study. I will explain to the interviewees that I will use a tape recorder to collect their interview responses for analysis at a later time. Recording their replies will also allow me to engage with them in the interview discussion. I will also explain that their responses will be held in strict confidence. Additionally, I will provide the interviewees a copy of their interview transcript, including the identified themes, after the interview for their review (member checking). Finally, I will inform the interviewee that I would stop the recording of the interview in the event there is information he/she would share off tape.

To further establish rapport, I will honor the interviewees' time and willingness to share their experiences with me.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me.

Background Questions

1.   How long have you been a principal?

2.   How long have you been principal at this school and how do you describe your role here?

3.   Can you please describe the school demographics?

Probing: How many students? Student background, race/ethnicity, socio-economic, etc.? Teacher background?

4.   How many homeless students does your school serve currently?

5.   Please describe trends in data related to homeless students' enrollment. (*Research Question 1)*

6.   Please describe the living conditions of the homeless students attending your campus. (*Research Question 1)*

Probe: Can you provide an example?

7.   Please describe the needs of homeless students at your school?

Probe: Can you please provide an example? How are those needs met? (*Research Question 1)*

District-level Strategies

8.   Describe the support you receive from your school district administrators to coordinate resources for homeless students (*Research Question 2)*

Probe for examples.

9.   What ways do your district administrators include you in making decisions regarding coordinating resources for homeless students? (*Research Question 2)*

Probe: Please provide an example.

10.   After decisions are made to support homeless students at your school, how does the information get to you and your assistant principal to implement? (*Research Question 2)*

Probe: Please provide an example.

Campus-Level Strategies

11.   Please describe your processes of identifying homeless students and their needs. (*Research Question 1*)

        Probe: Academic needs, social needs, emotional needs?

12.   Please describe the resources available at your school to support homeless students' needs. (*Research Question 1*)

13.   In what ways are staff members prepared to meet the needs of homeless students at your school? (*Research Question 2*)

        Probe: Describe times when staff members were challenged with meeting the needs of a homeless student.

14.   Please describe additional programs and practices outside of your school to support homeless students. (*Research Question 2*)

Challenges

15.   What challenges does your school encounter in educating homeless students? (*Research Question 3*)

Thank you so much for your time. May I call or email you if I have additional questions?

Research Questions

Overarching question: How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in meeting the needs of students who are homeless?

1.   What programs, practices, and interventions are available to support homeless students at your school or in your district?

2.   How do district level administrators support campus level administrators in implementing programs or interventions to meet needs of homeless students?

3.   What barriers hinder program implementation for homeless students at your district or school?

Additional sub-questions:

1.   How are the social and emotional needs of homeless students identified at schools with the highest enrollment of students experiencing homelessness? *(Research Question 1)*

2.   What social and emotional learning (SEL) programs, practices, and interventions are available to support your enrolled homeless students' social and emotional development? *(Research Question 2)*

3.   How do district level administrators support campus administrators in implementing SEL programs or interventions to meet the needs of homeless students? *(Research Question 2)*

APPENDIX F

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROCESS MAP

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┌──────────────────────┐         ┌──────────────────────┐
│                      │   ▶     │  Note key words and  │
│   Read through the   │  ───▶   │ phrases in the margins│
│  document entirely - │         │   while reading -    │
│      Round 1         │         │      Round 2         │
│                      │         │                      │
└──────────────────────┘         └──────────────────────┘
                                              │
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┌──────────────────────┐         ┌──────────────────────┐
│                      │   ◀     │                      │
│ Identify common themes│  ◀───  │ Identify common themes│
│  from each document  │         │ while reading - Round 3│
│                      │         │                      │
└──────────────────────┘         └──────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼

┌──────────────────────┐
│                      │
│ Connect identified   │
│ themes to the        │
│ conceptual framework │
│                      │
└──────────────────────┘
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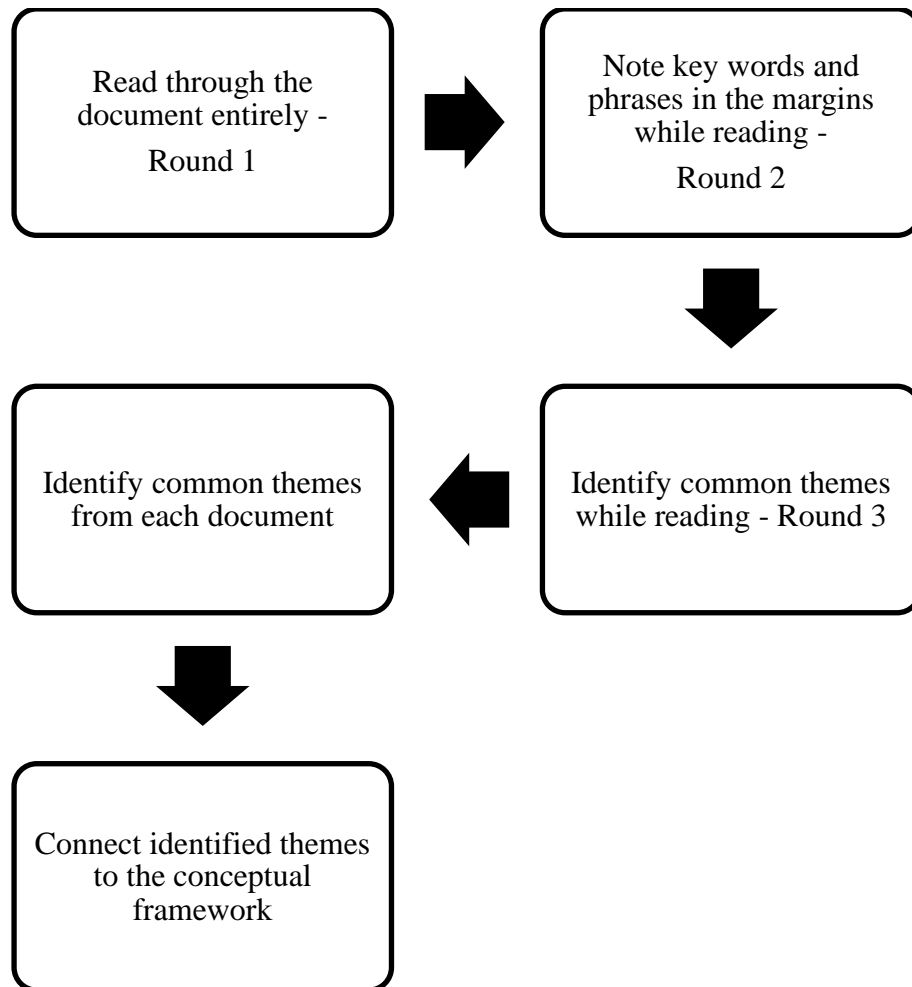
APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS ANALYSIS PROCESS MAP

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┌─────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────┐
│   Read through each     │        │   Note key words and    │
│ interview transcription │  ──▶   │  phrases in the margins │
│        entirely -       │        │      while reading -    │
│        Round 1          │        │        Round 2          │
└─────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────┘
                                                │
                                                ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Identify common themes │  ◀──   │  Identify common themes │
│    from each interview  │        │  while reading - Round 3│
└─────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────┘
            │
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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Connect identified themes│
│    to the conceptual     │
│       framework          │
└─────────────────────────┘
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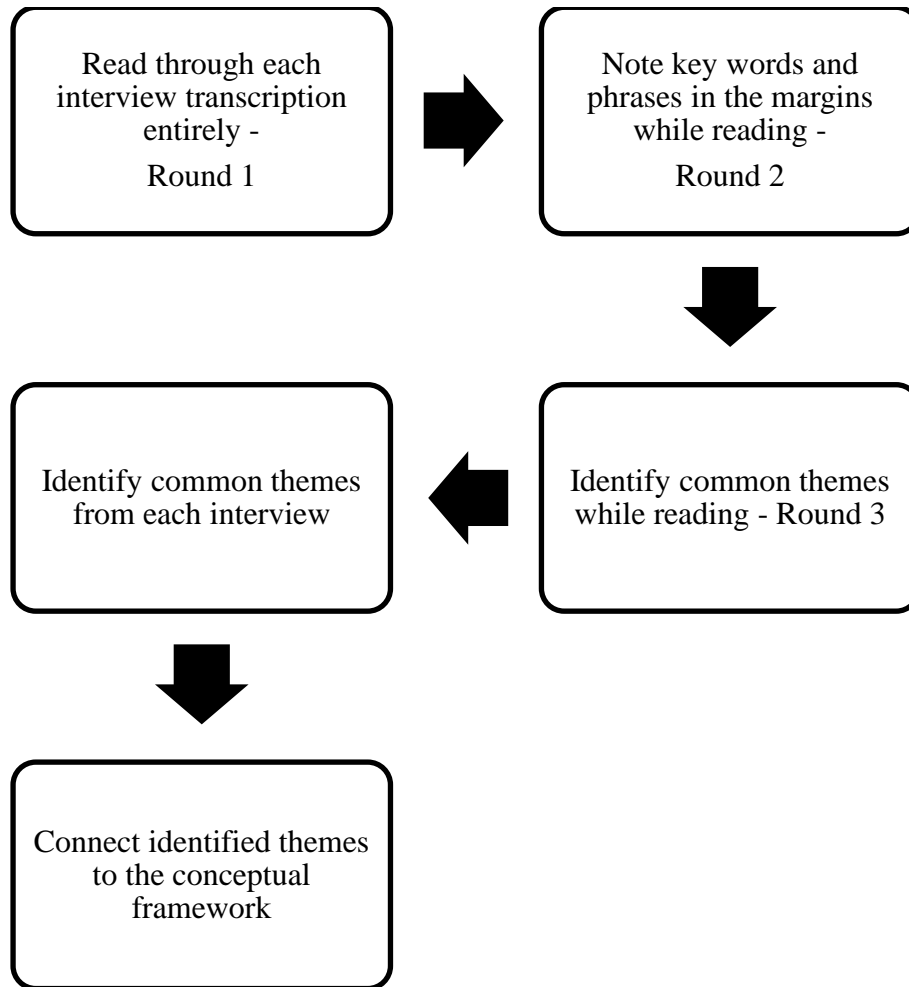
APPENDIX H

RESEARCH FIELD NOTES ANALYSIS PROCESS MAP

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┌─────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Read completely through │        │   Note key words and    │
│  each day's journal entry│  ▶     │  phrases in the margins  │
│      of field notes -    │        │     while reading -      │
│        Round 1           │        │        Round 2           │
└─────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────┘
                                                 │
                                                 ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Identify themes from the│  ◀     │  Identify common themes  │
│   sum of each week of    │        │  while reading - Round 3 │
│      journal notes       │        │                          │
└─────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│   Align/connecct themes  │
│ from the field notes to  │
│  the conceptual framework│
└─────────────────────────┘
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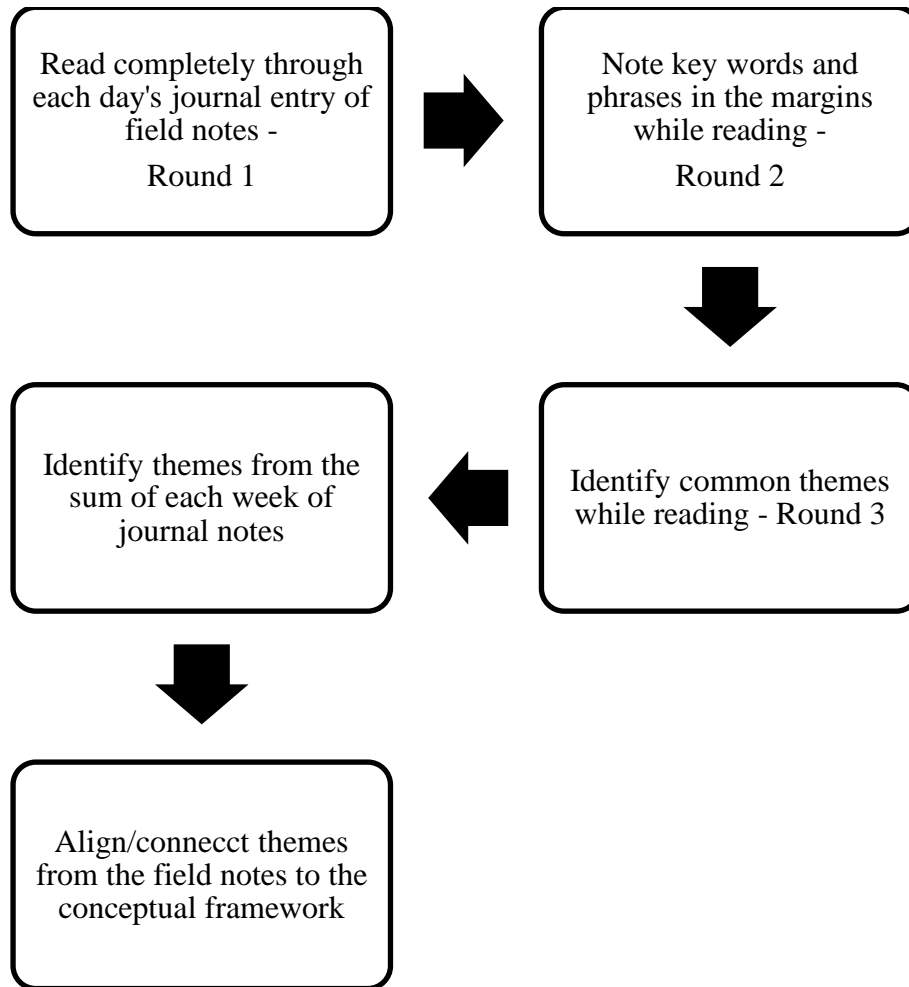
APPENDIX I

TIMELINE OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES FROM DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE

TO DISSERTATION DEFENSE DATE

	Activity
May 12, 2018	Dissertation Proposal Defense
May 31, 2018	Submitted additional corrections made to chapters 1 – 3 of dissertation for feedback
June 1-18, 2018	Made additional corrections to chapters 1-3 based on feedback from committee
June 19, 2018	Approvals finalized via letter from each participating district
June 19, 2018	Confirmed the contact information of each participating homeless liaison and campus principals
June 19, 2018	Sent invitation emails to participants
June 19, 2018	Accessed district and campus plans and school board minutes from districts websites to prepare for analysis
June 20, 2018	Confirmed interviews with participating homeless liaisons
June 21, 2018	Confirmed interviews with participating principals
July 27, 2018	Completed Document Reviews and Analysis
August 30, 2018	Completed conducting all Participant Interviews
September 7, 2018	Completed all Interview Transcriptions and Data Analysis
September 18 , 2018	Completed and received all member checking feedback
September 21, 2018	Completed analysis of research field notes
September 28, 2018	Completion of data analysis table of themes connected to research questions
October 31, 2018	Completion of Chapter 4; submitted to committee chair for feedback
November 1 – 15, 2018	Revisions to Chapter 4 completed; began writing Chapter 5
November 18, 2018	Completion of Chapter 5; submitted to committee chair for feedback
November 28, 2018	Revisions to Chapter 5 completed; Submitted to committee for review
November 30, 2018	Began preparing presentation for defense
December 14, 2018	Dissertation Defense

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