

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Kim E. Stoloski for the degree of Doctor of Education in Learning, Leadership, and Community presented on July 15, 2014

Title: In Principal We Trust: A Qualitative Study Exploring the Lived Experience of Beginning Catholic School Principals Establishing Trust with Teachers.

Abstract approved:

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Beginning principals are faced with many challenges when entering a new building; including learning the culture and identifying the needs of staff and students. It is the role of the principal to lead the school in change meant to improve outcomes for students. Establishing trusting relationships with teachers increases the likelihood that change will take hold. The purpose of this study was to highlight the experiences of three Catholic school principals who were successful in establishing trust to inform all beginning principals as they attempt to do the same. Findings indicate that Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust: benevolence, reliability, openness, competence, and honesty were present for each principal. In addition, follow-through, shared and transparent decision-making and frequent and meaningful teacher contact (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007) were critical to establishing trust. Presence as a leadership characteristic was identified as a subject for future study.

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IN PRINCIPAL WE TRUST

In Principal We Trust: A Qualitative Study Exploring the Lived Experience of Beginning  
Catholic School Principals Establishing Trust with Teachers

By

Kim E. Stoloski

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IN PRINCIPAL WE TRUST

Dissertation of Kim E. Stoloski

Presented on July 15, 2014

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release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Kim E. Stoloski

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. My parents instilled in me a desire to learn and always grow intellectually, personally, and spiritually. My husband, who has read and critiqued countless papers in my 'gradual school' journey and supported me in pursuing my passion, is my partner in all things. My children, who have been piling books by my nightstand that I 'have to read when' I finish my dissertation, are the reason I remain so passionate about improving education for all. Thank you all for your patience and unending support.

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### Abstract

Beginning principals are faced with many challenges when entering a new building; including learning the culture and identifying the needs of staff and students. It is the role of the principal to lead the school in change meant to improve outcomes for students. Establishing trusting relationships with teachers increases the likelihood that change will take hold. The purpose of this study was to highlight the experiences of three Catholic school principals who were successful in establishing trust to inform all beginning principals as they attempt to do the same. Findings indicate that Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust: benevolence, reliability, openness, competence, and honesty were present for each principal. In addition, follow-through, shared and transparent decision-making and frequent and meaningful teacher contact (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007) were critical to establishing trust. Presence as a leadership characteristic was identified as a subject for future study.

## **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

Although we do not think of it often, trust is critical to our daily existence. When we buy food in supermarkets, we must trust that it is safe to consume and will not poison us. When we drive down the street, we must trust that the person approaching will stay on their side of the road as they pass. When we go to doctors, we must trust that they will prescribe treatments that will make us well. Without trust, what would our world be like?

Warren Buffett said, “Trust is like the air we breathe - when it's present, nobody really notices; when it's absent, everybody notices” (Sandlund, 2002, p. 1). With the recent worldwide catastrophe in the financial markets, there has been an increase in attention to trust. Trust is a valuable commodity in business. Higher levels of trust within an organization yield better financial performance, lower employee turnover, increased innovation, and higher morale (Cosner, 2009; Hitch, 2012). Trust is also critical in learning (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Moolenaar, Daly, & Slegers, 2010; Tschannen-Moran, 2009) as it allows for risk-taking in an environment that is safe (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Daly, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

### **Trust in Schools**

Historically, the purpose of formal schooling has been to educate students to participate in society. In the United States, an education is provided to sustain and enrich a democratic way of life (Beane, 1998). As our society has become more global, fast paced and demanding, schools have had to change to meet these new demands. These changes have come in the form of educational reforms. Implementing education reforms for improved outcomes for students is the task of school leaders (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Cosner, 2009; Daly, Moolenaar, & Liou, 2014; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). The

principal of a school must support teachers with coaching and resources to implement changes necessary (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). In turn, teachers must make changes to their practice in order to increase student achievement.

Trust is a necessary component for implementing and sustaining school reforms in the classroom (Daly, Moolenaar, & Liou, 2014). Without trust between teacher and principal it is unlikely that the changes will be made (Blase & Blase, 2001; Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Teachers who lack trust in their principal avoid, neglect, or refuse change (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). These responses from teachers can have a negative impact on student achievement (Daly, 2009; Sebring & Bryk, 2000). It is for this reason that an understanding of the cultivation of trust is important.

Within a school there are several possible trust relationships that are critical to success; student-teacher, teacher-parent, teacher-principal, etc. Given the importance of implementing and sustaining educational reforms, this study will focus on the trust between the principal and the teacher. A climate of trust between principal and teacher provides fertile soil for the growth necessary for change (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007; Cosner, 2009; Daly, 2009; Daly & Chrispeels, 2005; Daly, Moolenaar, & Liou, 2014; Gillespie & Mann, 2004; Louis, 2007; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008).

### **Researcher's Perspective**

As an elementary school principal, I have been responsible for building-wide implementation of educational reforms. Typically these reforms are passed down from federal legislation to state interpretation to district level action plans. No Child Left Behind ("No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001," 2002) has changed the educational

landscape for all involved in education (Daly, 2009; Daly & Chrispeels, 2005). Provisions within NCLB have added layers of accountability that tie federal funding to achievement measures. In addition, teacher and administrator performance evaluations and, in some cases, teacher and administrator pay and retention are tied to student achievement in some states ("Student Success Act," 2011). Already cash-strapped schools work hard to increase the achievement of subgroups of students consisting of students with disabilities, students of poverty, students of color, and students whose primary language is not English. These are daunting tasks due to the significant needs of our most vulnerable students.

Although Catholic school principals do not have the stressors of NCLB, they are plagued with similar pressures to improve outcomes for students. Due to declining enrollments across all schools, Catholic schools are competing for a diminishing number of students with independent, other Catholic, charter and public schools (Davis & Bauman, 2008). A high level of commitment and extra effort is required on the part of all stakeholders to make needed changes.

I have found teachers are willing to do whatever it takes to meet the needs of the students; unfortunately, there are many schools of thought as to what needs to be done to increase student achievement. Proponents suggestions range from a longer day and longer year (Aronson, Zimmerman, & Carlos, 1998) to flipped classrooms (Goodwin, 2013) and individualized learning through technology (Barth, 2013). With each new initiative, teachers can become weary of the next great thing that will cure all. In my twenty-five years as an educator, the pendulum has swung from phonics to 'whole language' to phonics to balanced literacy and from closed doors in classrooms to 'open

concept' learning with no walls. Witness the movement toward specialization, special education and then toward inclusion. The teachers who remain in education can become resistant to change due to the frequency with which it occurs (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). Because of this resistance, trust, between teacher and principal, is even more important to implementing change for student growth.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Catholic school principals, along with their colleagues in the public schools who are new to their buildings have many competing demands. In addition to learning the curriculum, culture, unique demands of the position, and expectations of the administration, beginning principals must also learn the needs of the teachers. Within the first few years of tenure, a principal must also develop trust with teachers so that teachers can engage in meaningful learning and adapt their practices to incorporate reforms meant to improve outcomes for students (Batiste, 2013; Fenc-Bagwell, 2013). Examining the reflections of new Catholic school principals on developing trust with their teachers will serve to inform future beginning Catholic school principals in developing trust with their teachers.

### **Conceptual Underpinnings of the Study**

Trust is a multi-faceted construct. Researchers Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) examined the literature on trust and found that along with a general willingness to risk vulnerability there existed common threads which they termed five faces of trust: benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. In her book *Trust Matters* (2004), Tschannen-Moran defines trust thusly: "Trust is one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open,

reliable, and competent” (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 17). The interdependence between teachers and the principal create vulnerability (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Because teachers rely on the principal to provide resources and support, they are vulnerable if that is not forthcoming. Principals rely on teachers to teach the students the required curriculum in such a way that the students achieve the standard. With increased accountability for all principals, when students do not meet standards principals are vulnerable to sanctions and possible termination (Barrett & McNamara, 1994).

In this climate of vulnerability the presence of benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence in a leader greatly increases the likelihood of trust developing. Recognizing the vulnerability of teachers in a caring way indicates benevolence. Telling the truth and keeping promises demonstrates honesty. Sharing decision making and relaying important information shows openness. Indications of reliability include being consistent and dependable. Engaging in problem solving and working hard establishes competence. When school leaders exhibit the above skills and competencies trust is likely to develop (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

### **Research Questions**

What are the stories of three beginning (in the first or second year) principals in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston relative to building trust with their teachers? How can these stories help all new principals when it comes to building trust? How do Tschannen-Moran’s (2004) five facets of trust relate to these reflections?

**Definition of Key Terms**

Trust – making oneself vulnerable to another with the expectation of benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty and openness on the part of the other (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Catholic School – characterized by an archdiocesan-approved religious education program that ensures that Catholic teachings are integrated into and permeate the whole educational process at the school (Wuerl, 2008).

Lay Person – Catholic person that has not been ordained or taken religious vows.

Catholic Identity – marked by an active faith community, prayer, worship, and Christian service (Convey, 2012).

**Methodology, Limitations, & Delimitations**

This qualitative research study will utilize a mixed-method research design (Creswell, 2003). Purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) will be utilized to identify schools within the Archdiocese of Boston, Massachusetts with new lay principals. Principals and teachers will be surveyed using Tschannen-Moran's principal and teachers trust scales (2004) to determine levels of trust between the principal and teachers. Three schools with the highest levels of measured trust will be selected for participation in the study. In-depth, semi-structured interviews of the principals and teachers will take place and the results will be analyzed for lived experience, common themes, and evidence of the five facets of trust. Although the small sample size and regional nature of the sample will limit generalizability, the richness of the data will seek to inform principals who wish to establish trust with their teachers.

**Relevant Research**

Two research studies with similar questions were completed, one by Batiste (2013) and one by Femic-Bagwell (2013). In his study of new heads of independent schools establishing trust with teachers, Batiste utilized a multi-case study design to examine the development of trust. He interviewed both new school heads and veteran faculty and staff to determine how each head built and leveraged trust during their first year. Batiste found support for four elements of trust: competence, integrity, personal regard for others, and respect. Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust was used as the theoretical framework for Femic-Bagwell's (2013) study of beginning urban principals' cultivation of trust with teachers. In his study of the five facets only honesty was identified as important. Other important facets included personal characteristics, communication, and developing relationships.

Both studies identified recommendations for new principals for cultivating trust to initiate and sustain educational reforms. This study will add to the field of cultivation of trust by including beginning Catholic school principals.

**Summary**

The ability to establish trust with teachers is a core resource for new principals. Without teacher trust in the principal, it is unlikely that the important changes that teachers need to make to meet the changing needs of our students will occur. It is widely accepted that the education of the young is the most important duty of a society. The future of that society depends of the ability of the next generation to provide for the needs of the previous, present, and future citizens. All aspects of education reform are important, but the literature has clearly indicated the importance of emotional relations

among educators, especially the trust between teachers and their principal in supporting reform. This study will explore the lived experiences of beginning, Catholic school principals in high-trust schools. It is anticipated that by identifying common themes from the stories of these principals and relating those themes to the five facets of trust, insights will be gained that may benefit other beginning Catholic school principals.

## Chapter 2 - Review of Literature

School leaders are tasked with implementing educational reforms in their buildings to improve outcomes for students (Daly, Moolenaar, & Liou, 2014; "No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001," 2002). The purpose of these reforms is to better meet the changing needs of our world and increase student achievement and better prepare them to meet the new challenges of our world. As instructional leaders of schools, principals are tasked with implementing reforms at the building level (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Cosner, 2009; Daly, Moolenaar, & Liou, 2014; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). They are responsible for interpreting and explaining changes to practice to teachers and providing resources and support. Typically teachers are charged by principals with making changes to their practice in order to meet the new demands of these reforms. Trust between teachers and the principal is a necessary component for implementing and sustaining school reforms in the classroom (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Bryk & Schneider, 2002). As the review of the literature presented in this chapter confirms, without this trust, it is unlikely that the changes will be made (Blase & Blase, 2001; Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

Being a new leader is both a blessing and a curse in cultivating trust with staff. Without prior experience with a school leader, teachers may rely on general reputation and common race, gender, age, religion, and upbringing to assess his/her trustworthiness (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Although a leader's status as new to the building provides a clean slate on which to build trust, without history it may be slow in coming. However, if principals are able to cultivate trust, there may be an increase in the willingness to

implement educational reform and, in turn, increase student achievement and better prepare our students for our changing world (Sebring & Bryk, 2000). New Catholic school leaders may have an advantage in building trust with their teachers due to the environment in which they work. Catholic school teachers are unique in their voluntary association and propensity toward faith (Bryk, 2008). Establishing trust requires propensity toward faith or disposition to trust, shared values, and positive moods or emotions (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

In order to establish a context for understanding the importance of principal and teacher trust, critical areas are investigated in the literature review. School climate is first defined, and its relevance to trust explained. Leadership style as a factor of school climate and its impact on the development of trust is framed. Next trust is defined and studies of trust in schools are reviewed. Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust; benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competency are examined as the theoretical framework for this study. Finally, the context of Catholic schools as it relates to climate and trust will be explored.

### **School Climate**

Early conceptualization of school climate by Halpin and Croft (1962) yielded the perspective that school climate was likened to the personality of the school and could be measured from open, at one end of the continuum, to closed at the other end of the continuum. This openness is observed when, "teachers and principals respect one another and are 'straight' with each other" (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002, p. 39). Being straight with one another implies openness and honesty, both components of trust

(Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Noonan, Walker, & Kutsyuruba, 2008). This openness increases vulnerability for the open person. The study of school climate is well documented (Anderson, 1982; Bulach & Malone, 1994; Cohen, 2010; Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009; Gottfredson, 1989; Peterson, 1997). Although researchers differ in their definitions of school climate, they typically include the following variables: environment and student, teacher, parent, and administrator experiences (Cohen, 2010; Gottfredson, 1989; Peterson, 1997). Definitions abound, but one that encompasses many of the variables suggests that school climate “reflects students’, school personnel’s, and parents’ experiences of school life socially, emotionally, civically, ethically as well as academically” (Cohen, 2010, p. 5). These factors are further divided and combined to increase the measurable variables exponentially (Anderson, 1982). Positive school climate has been correlated with increased student achievement (Bulach & Lunenberg, 1995; Johnson & Stevens, 2006; Peterson, 1997) attendance (Gottfredson, 1989; Johnson, 2009), connectedness (Loukas & Suzuki, 2006), and teacher retention (Cohen, Pickeral, & McCloskey, 2009). School climate has also been identified as a major contributing factor in sustaining school reform (Bulach & Malone, 1994; Daly, 2009).

Studies attribute administrator leadership style as a major contributory factor in forming school climate (Benda & Wright, 2002; Bulach, Boothe, & Price, 1999; Bulach & Malone, 1994; Miller, 1981). Leadership style is closely aligned with school climate, due to the fact that leadership impacts most aspects of a school environment including: teachers, parents, students, and culture. Miller (1981) asserts “a positive school climate is characterized by staff and student cohesiveness, high morale, and an environment where caring, mutual respect, and trust are evident” (p. 485). This trust is critical between

teacher and administrator. When administrators trust teachers to do their jobs and do not assume a bureaucratic orientation focused on authority, division of labor and rules and policies, then school climate improves (Bulach, Boothe, & Price, 1999; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). When teachers trust administrators, the changes teachers are asked to make in the name of reform will likely have a chance of being implemented (Daly & Chrispeels, 2005). In a study of school climate and trust, researchers found a predictive correlation between positive aspects of school climate and trust (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2003). Hoy and colleagues also found that, “Faculty trust is also a salient ingredient of healthy and open school climate.” (2003, p. 47)

## **Trust**

As trust is a component of school climate, and positive school climate impacts critical variables connected with school success, further exploration of trust is important.

**Trust Defined.** Cummings and Bromiley (1996) defined trust thusly:

... an individual’s belief or a common belief among a group of individuals that another individual or group (a) makes good-faith efforts to behave in accordance with any commitments both explicit or implicit, (b) is honest in whatever negotiations preceded such commitments, and (c) does not take excessive advantage of another even when the opportunity is available. (p. 303)

Zand (1997) defines trust as consisting, “of a willingness to increase your vulnerability to another person whose behavior you cannot control, in a situation in which your potential benefit is much less than your potential loss if the other person abuses your vulnerability”

(p. 91). In their study on task and relationship-oriented trust in leaders, Sherwood and DePaolo (2005) defined trust as “a psychological state entailing the willingness to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviors of others in the relationship based context” (p. 67). In a study by Noonan, Walker, and Kutsyuruba (2008) school principals defined trust as, “based on predictability; that is, knowing what to expect, doing the right thing, showing empathy and honesty, communicating with others, and accepting accountability” (p. 12). In applying Tshannen-Moran’s Five Facets of Trust as the theoretical construct the researchers found that honesty was observed as principals openly communicating with colleagues and staff and that this open communication lead to a sense of being vulnerable.

For the purposes of this study Tshcannen-Moran’s (2004) definition of trust including her five facets of trust will be used for the basis of this study. In her book *Trust Matters*, Tschannen-Moran (2004) defines trust as a multifaceted construct that can be context dependent and dynamic. Tschannen-Moran’s definition of trust is: “Trust is one’s willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent” (2004, p. 17). In describing vulnerability she explains that when interdependence is present trust matters most. This is true because the person trusting is aware of the potential for betrayal, thus a risk is taken when trusting. Educating students requires interdependence between teachers and principals; each is vulnerable to the other. When making a decision to trust, people rely on five facets (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Each definition implies honoring commitments, being vulnerable in some way, or the expectation of honesty. Two other aspects that are not common to all definitions are

the ideas of empathy and competency (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

**Five Facets of Trust.** Trust is a multifaceted and complex concept. In breaking down trust as a construct, researchers have operationalized trust as having a minimum of five facets (Femc-Bagwell, 2013; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). The facets of trust must be delineated in order to understand their importance and relevance to the relationship between the principal and the teachers, as well as school climate in general.

***Benevolence.*** The first facet of trust is benevolence (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Benevolence is caring for the other in a relationship. It is the extent to which the trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995a). Benevolence suggests a dependent relationship between the trustor and the trustee. Evidence suggests that there is a biological basis toward benevolence (Riedl & Javor, 2012; Schulman, 2002). Kagan (2006) states, “Although humans inherit a biological bias that permits them to feel anger, jealousy, selfishness and envy...they inherit an even stronger biological bias for kindness, compassion, cooperation, love and nurture...” (p. 62). Benevolence-based trust, in which the individual will not intentionally harm the other when given the opportunity to do so, is a critical factor in establishing trusting business relationships as well (Levin, Cross, Abrams, & Lesser, 2002; Samier, 2010).

“When there is no trust in the benevolence of the principal, teachers become excessively concerned about both real and imagined harm” (Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006,

p. 241). When benevolence is absent, productivity suffers due to time and energy being spent protecting oneself (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

**Honesty.** Honesty, a fundamental facet of trust, is the second facet (Cummings & Bromiley, 1996; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Honesty is the extent to which a person accurately represents situations and is dependent on a person's character, integrity, and authenticity (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006; Scarr, 2011). Integrity, according to Kochanek (2005) is "demonstrated by espousing beliefs that are based on doing what is in the best interest of children and carrying through with actions that are consistent with those beliefs" (p. 8). Authentic behavior is characterized by accountability, avoiding manipulation, and being 'real' even in the face of role expectations (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Studies from fields including business, health care management, and higher education have identified honesty or integrity as the most important facet of trust (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Gabarro, 1978; Schindler & Thomas, 1993). Trust is unlikely to develop if a person's word cannot be relied on.

**Openness.** Zand (1997) defines openness, the third facet of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004), as people's willingness to make themselves vulnerable by sharing information, influence, and control. Leaders who share information make themselves vulnerable by disclosing facts, judgments, intentions, and feelings (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Knowledge is power. When a leader shares information they give up some of their power, hence making themselves vulnerable. Openness in control involves trusting others by delegating important tasks to them. A leader trusts that the other will perform the task. A leader is open to the influence of others when allowing them to change plans, goals, and directions. "Openness initiates a kind of reciprocal trust, signaling that neither

the information nor the individual will be exploited, so that recipients can feel that same confidence in return” (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 25). Leaders who withhold information create suspicion and distrust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004; Zand, 1997).

***Reliability.*** Reliability is another important facet of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). “Reliability refers to the extent to which you can depend upon another party to come through for you, to act consistently, and to follow through” (Brewster & Railsback, 2003, p. 4). Teachers trust principals more when they observe their principal predictably stepping up to support them (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Predictability reduces the perceived level of threat and therefore increases safety (Vodicka, 2006). Reliability alone will not increase trust, particularly if a person reliably treats others badly, but it sets the stage for the development of trust (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995b).

***Competence.*** Competence, the final facet of trust, “is the ability to perform a task as expected, according to appropriate standards” (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 30). In a school setting, teachers rely on school leaders to do their job well. Teachers depend on school leaders to provide materials, support a safe environment, remove ineffective teachers, and communicate effectively (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995b). A study of fire fighters and government workers identified ability as one of five important factors for managerial trustworthiness. Ability, defined as professional skill and managerial skill, was critical to trust relationships with managers (Perry & Mankin, 2007). When these expectations are not met trust is unlikely to develop.

**Leadership Style and Trust.** In contrasting the leadership styles of two principals in the same district Tschannen-Moran (2004) described outcomes for differing

levels of teacher trust of the principal. In the building with a high degree of trust, the teachers were engaged and worked above and beyond their contractual agreements. In the building with low-trust, the teachers were disengaged and the principal focused on the rules, policies, and holding teachers accountable to the contract so teachers worked only to the contract. The school with low-trust was led by a principal with a bureaucratic orientation and the high-trust school was led by a principal with a professional orientation. A principal with a professional orientation is characterized by his/her creation of a problem-solving, not a problem hiding, environment. He/she typifies mistakes as an opportunity for learning; open communication is also a defining characteristic (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Conversely, a principal with a bureaucratic orientation is characterized by his/her creation of an environment with a hierarchical governance structure with the goal of control (Tschannen-Moran, 2009).

**Establishing Trust.** When trust is evident in an organization it can lead to increased performance, better communication, improved customer service, and innovation (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002). In establishing trust in business, managers are tasked with establishing a common understanding of how the business works, modeling receptivity and discretion, and bringing people together (Levin, Cross, Abrams, & Lesser, 2002). Similarly, in education school leaders must communicate a unified vision, model trustworthy behavior, coach teachers toward improvement, manage collaboratively, and mediate conflict (Kochanek, 2005; San Antonio & Gamage, 2007; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). A study by Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly and Chrispeels (2007) yielded several implications for districts interested in establishing trust relationships. Follow-through, encompassing both reliability and integrity was a key aspect in developing trust.

In interviews with respondents, they found that if administration acted quickly to respond to suggestions of faculty trust was enhanced (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007). In addition, they found that decision-making needed to be shared and transparent. Leaders that offered to share decision-making or offered the thought process behind the decision were more likely to develop trust (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007). The third and final implication was redesigning the system. This redesign included more frequent interaction between faculty and leadership and more frequent professional development. This increased communication and competence (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007).

According to Tschannen-Moran (2004) the establishment of trust is influenced by three factors; disposition to trust, values and attitudes, and moods and emotions. Disposition to trust is developed through a person's history of relationships. Have promises been kept or broken? "A person with a disposition to trust is likely to have both faith in humanity and a trusting stance" (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 47). People have a tendency to trust when they assume shared values and attitudes. Moods and emotions provide a context for trust judgments; hence, positive moods are more likely to foster trust. Interestingly, increased spirituality leads to an increase in honesty and trust as well (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002).

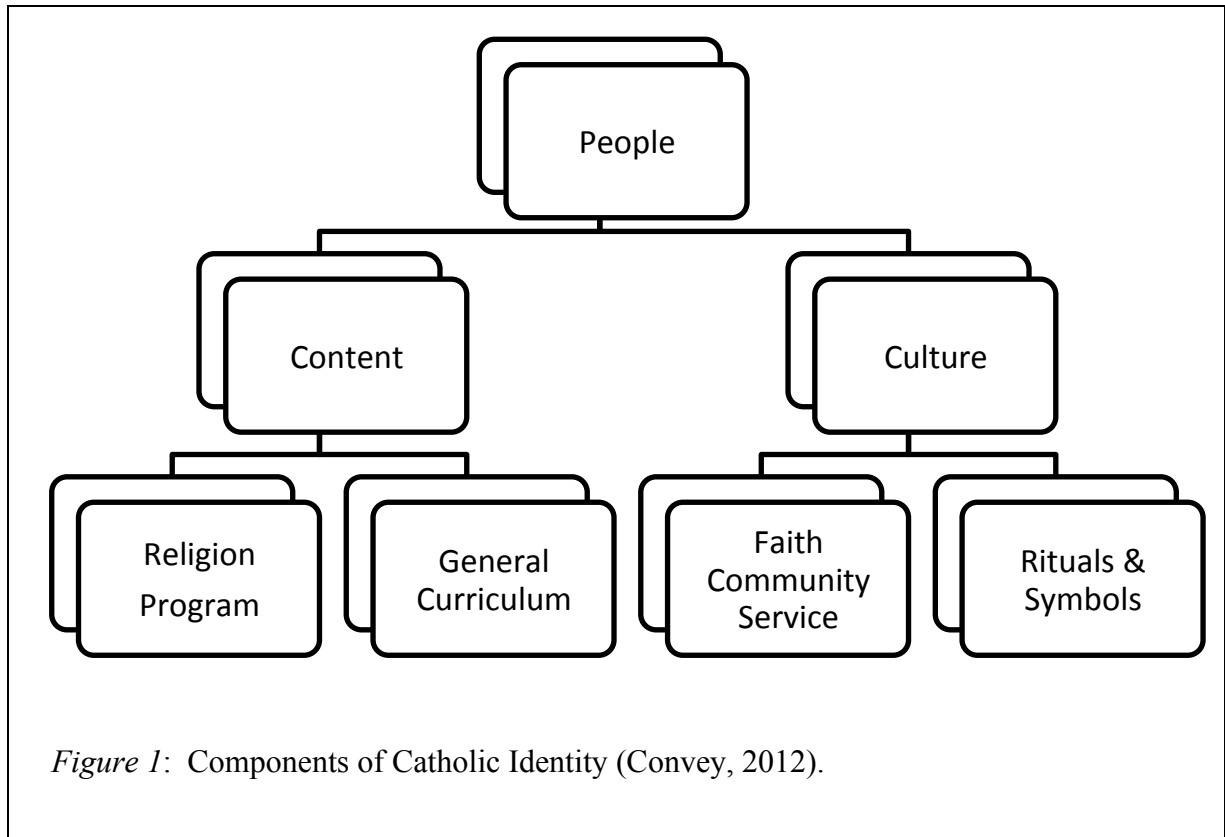
The establishment of trust is influenced by faith in humanity, shared values and positive moods, and is enhanced by increased spirituality. Catholic school culture is defined by faith, shared values, and community (Bryk, 2008; Convey, 2012; Schuttloffel, 2012). Thus, this culture is the culture of trust and warrants further examination.

### **Catholic School Culture**

Catholic Culture, according to the National Council of Catholic Bishops ("To teach as Jesus did," 1972), involves integration of faith and values into everyday life through Catholic education and the creation of a Catholic faith community.

In their book, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*, Bryk, Lee, and Holland (1993) provide the reader with a detailed history of Catholic schools. Among the oldest educational institutions in the United States, Catholic schools were established in colonial times by Catholic communities. Catholic Colonists viewed educating the young as a moral imperative. Grounded in the values of the Catholic Church, these local schools were supported by the community. The goal was to infuse Catholic values into the education of the community's young. Later, religious orders would start academies for girls, and seminaries, liberal arts colleges, and secondary schools for boys (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). These schools were an extension of the Catholic faith community.

The study of Catholic school culture begins with the components that comprise the Catholic identity. Convey (2012) in outlining his model of Catholic identity identifies the following visual representation:



People, including administrators, teachers, parents, and pastors, communicate the content of religious programming and curriculum and create the environment (culture) through faith, community, service, and rituals and symbols (Convey, 2012). The culture of a Catholic school, being comprised of faith, community, and service is fertile ground to establish trust. Kochanek (2005) argued that people are predisposed to trust others that are socially similar to each other, such as those who share faith and community.

In comparing enrollment data for schools from the year 2000 to the year 2006, the United States Census Bureau (Davis & Bauman, 2008) reported that although there were more students in high school and college, there were significantly fewer students in nursery, kindergarten, and elementary schools in 2006. In an era of declining enrollments

in schools, Catholic schools must adjust to reforms and increase rigor while living their mission in an effort to remain competitive with public, independent, and charter schools for a declining student population (Wuerl, 2008). According to the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (Ozar & Weitzel-O'Neill, 2012), Catholic schools must provide curricular experiences which are, “rigorous, relevant, research-based and infused with Catholic faith and tradition” (p. 21). In order to meet these standards Catholic school principals must keep current with educational reforms and facilitate change within their schools. Cultivation of trust with teachers is crucial to implementing and sustaining educational reforms and changes (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

**Role of the Catholic School Principal.** Catholic school principals are expected to function like their public school counterparts as chief educational officers and managerial leaders, tasked with many of the same responsibilities and regulations, in addition they are the spiritual leaders of the school (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009; Ciriello, 1998). This added responsibility may be daunting especially for beginning lay principals of Catholic schools.

Catholic school principals have an advantage over most public school principals in that they tend to educate somewhat better-than-average students and the students and their families make an active choice to attend (Bryk, 2008). Thus, stakeholders have a voluntary association. This choice factor has been shown to “create important social resources for improvement” (Bryk, 2008, p. 137). Teachers too, choose Catholic schools over public schools for the faith communities, mission driven values, commonly shared goals, high expectations, and discipline (Brown, 2013; Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993).

...Catholic schools benefit from a network of social relations characterized by trust, that constitute a form of ‘social capital.’ In this regard, voluntary association functions as a facilitating condition. Trust accrues because school participants, both students and faculty, choose to be there. To be sure, voluntary association does not automatically create social capital, but is harder to create social capital in its absence. (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993, p. 314)

Additionally, principals are strongly encouraged to hire candidates that are practicing Catholics. This is important due to the requirements for teaching religion.

Given the Catholic identity of schools, administrators have a right and duty to inform potential employees of the expectation that the applicants fulfill the mission of the Catholic Church and the school prior to employee appointment, so that a clear understanding of responsibilities and obligations is established.

While specific statutory exemptions in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 allow for the lawful hiring of persons of a particular religion when the school’s curriculum is directed toward the propagation of a particular religion, it does not allow the religious institution to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, and national origin. (Williby, 2004, p. 187)

When principals hire teachers who are practicing Catholics, there is an expectation that the teacher will participate in the faith community at church and participate in the faith community of the school. A shared faith community is one of the defining characteristics of the Catholic school.

### Summary

Schools have the daunting responsibility to prepare our students for success in work and further education. As the demands of our world change, the reforms schools must make become more important. In an effort to prepare our students, teachers must work closely with school leaders to make the necessary changes. This can happen most efficiently in a positive school climate (Daly & Chrispeels, 2005). Trust is a major component of school climate (Anderson, 1982; Bulach & Malone, 1994). When teachers trust school leaders, they are more likely to implement change. Trust development between school leaders and teachers is reliant on three factors; disposition to trust, values and attitudes, and moods and emotions (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Catholic school principals may be uniquely poised to take advantage of the predisposition of Catholic school teachers to faith, shared values, and spirituality.

The research reviewed clearly presents the need for school leaders to establish trust with teachers. The following questions are the basis for the present study.

1. What are the stories of three beginning (in the first or second year) principals in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston relative to building trust with their teachers?
2. How can these stories help all new principals when it comes to building trust?
3. How do Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust relate to these reflections?

### **Chapter 3 – Research Methods**

The research methods used in this study are explained in this chapter. The purpose and research questions are presented. In the first section settings, methods and procedures used for the study are described. Selection and recruitment of participants along with a description of the data sources used comprises the second section. In the concluding section limitations and trustworthiness of the study are examined.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the lived experiences of new Catholic school principals as they establish trust with their teachers in the beginning of their tenure. The following research questions are presented:

1. What are the stories of three beginning (in the first or second year) principals in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston relative to building trust with their teachers?
2. How can these stories help all new principals when it comes to building trust?
3. How do Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust relate to these reflections?

#### **Research Settings**

The settings for this research are three Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston, Massachusetts. The Archdiocese of Boston is located in eastern Massachusetts and is the fourth largest archdiocese in the United States providing Catholic education to over 2600 students in 124 schools (Archdiocese of Boston, 2013). The settings were selected from the available schools with new principals within the Archdiocese of Boston. Teachers and principals at all available schools were asked to complete trust surveys. The three schools selected for further study were purposefully selected. The

schools with the highest scores on Hoy and Tschannen-Moran's (2004) measure of teacher-principal trust were recruited for the study.

### **Methods and Procedures**

A mixed method research design was employed for this study. In his book on survey research Yin states that, "mixed methods research can permit investigators to address more complicated research questions and collect a richer and stronger array of evidence than can be accomplished by any single method alone." (p. 63) Yin (2009) goes on to suggest two types of nested arrangement; a case study within a survey and a survey within a case study. This study utilized a multiple case study within a survey, nested design.

A survey with quantitative results was used to purposefully select research settings. A qualitative multi-site case study design was used to gather relevant experiences from beginning Catholic school principals in this study. Purposeful sampling was used to identify schools within the Archdiocese of Boston with high trust. Purposeful sampling is recommended for qualitative studies such as this due to the richness of information cases provide to answer the questions posed (Patton, 2002). When studying trust between teachers and their beginning principal, settings must be found where new principals and trust reside. To this end, schools within the Archdiocese of Boston with principals in their first or second year were surveyed with Tschannen-Moran's Principal Trust in Teachers subscale (2004) (see Appendix A).

### **Triangulation**

Triangulation is a method of strengthening a study by use of combining methods and data sources (Patton, 2002). Increased strength can be achieved by: using a variety of data sources, using different researchers, using multiple theoretical constructs to interpret data, or using multiple methods to study a question (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009). For the purposes of this study, triangulation will be achieved by, both combining methods and combining data sources. First quantitative and qualitative methods will be employed. To purposefully select settings for this study a survey was given to the principals and teachers at Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of Boston, Massachusetts with principals in their first or second year. A survey “provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population” (Creswell, 2003, p. 153). Quantitative data was analyzed to determine which schools have the highest combined trust ratings. The three schools with the highest ratings were asked to participate in the study.

Next multiple data sources were used: surveys, in-depth interviews with teachers and principals, a teacher focus group, and artifacts /documents. The specific uses are defined in the following section.

### **Data Sources**

Four different data sources were used to collect data in this study: surveys, interviews, a teacher focus group, and artifacts/documents. The use of both quantitative and qualitative measures will strengthen the study (Patton, 2002).

*Surveys.* Faculty Trust in Principal is an eight item, sub-component of the Faculty Trust Survey developed by Tschannen-Moran (2004). Norms of the Faculty

Trust Survey are based on a sample of ninety-seven high schools, sixty-six middle schools and 146 elementary schools. The Trust in the Principal sub-scale was measured to have a .98 reliability coefficient and factor analytic studies support the construct of the measure (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Principal Trust in Teachers is a sub-component of the Principal Trust Survey (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Norms of the Principal Trust Survey are based on 642 principals and the reliability was .87 in the norming sample for the Principal Trust in Teachers sub-scale (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Factor analysis supported the construct validity of this measure (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004).

Principal and teacher trust scales were used for purposeful selection of schools for the study. Permission for use was granted by the author (Tschannen-Moran, 2013).

**Interviews.** Interviews are used to: find out from people what we cannot observe (Patton, 2002), understand the lived experience and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman, 2006), and understand and reconstruct past events (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). As this study is focused on the lived experience of beginning Catholic school principals establishing trust with teachers, in-depth interviewing was the primary choice of data collection for this study.

In-depth, semi-structured, and open-ended interviews with the principal and three teachers at each of the three schools with high trust were conducted. The interview protocol was adapted and used with permission from the author (Femc-Bagwell, 2013).

**Focus Group.** A focus group is an interview of a group of people who have knowledge of a topic (Merriam, 2009). Interaction among participants of focus groups

enhances the quality of the data (Patton, 2002). Focus groups can assist a researcher to identify major themes (Patton, 2002).

A Focus group of teachers from a fourth school with high trust scores was convened once data from interviews was examined to determine if the identified trends and ideas ‘held water’. The focus group protocol was adapted and used with permission of the author (Batiste, 2013).

***Documents.*** Yin (2009) confirms that, “documentary information is likely to be relevant to every case study topic” (p. 101). Documents are important to case study research as they support and augment information from other data sources (Yin, 2009). Documents are unobtrusive, easy to obtain, stable, and a product of the context in which they were produced (Merriam, 2009), hence valuable as a data source. Documents for the purpose of this study could include: letters, memoranda, email, notes, cards, agendas, announcements, evaluations, meeting minutes, etc.

Principals were asked to select three written documents or artifacts representative of their efforts to build trust with teachers.

### **Selection of Participants**

Beginning principals of thirty-one schools identified by the Archdiocese of Boston were contacted via email and follow-up phone calls to recruit participants. Informed consent for participation was secured. The researcher administered teacher and principal surveys via email. Twelve schools responded to the survey. Once surveys were scored, the three schools with the highest scores on trust were selected for participation. Principals and teachers from high trust schools were contacted by the researcher and asked to participate in the study. Incentive for participation was not offered. Three

teachers, from each participating school, were selected by the principal for in-depth interviews. The principal of the three participating schools was interviewed as well.

### **Data Analysis**

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experience of beginning Catholic school principals as they establish trust with their teachers. Principals and teachers at high trust schools within the Archdiocese of Boston, Massachusetts were interviewed in an attempt to gather rich data to answer the study questions:

1. What are the stories of three beginning (in the first or second year) principals in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston relative to building trust with their teachers?
2. How can these stories help all new principals when it comes to building trust?
3. How do Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust relate to these reflections?

Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions were checked for accuracy by the researcher. To triangulate data (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009) interview transcriptions, documents, and focus groups responses were analyzed by the researcher.

The first phase of analysis was comprised of two parts, preparation of transcripts and coding the interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Transcripts were prepared by direct transcription from digitally recorded interviews with each subject. Transcripts were read for accuracy and completeness. Summaries of each interview were prepared by the researcher with attention to main points that address the research questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). A code is a word or short phrase describing a concept, theme, event, or

topic that is salient to the questions asked in the study (Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Saldaña, 2009). The initial review of the data employed open coding (Merriam, 2009) where all segments of that data that may be useful are coded. In Vivo Coding (Charmaz, 2006) was used for the first cycle. This method was employed to, “prioritize and honor the participant’s voice” (Saldaña, 2009, p. 91). Then codes were grouped into categories. Categories were developed relative to the principals’ experience of establishing trust with teachers. The second phase of analysis was examining the coded data for meaning, implications and patterns (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Categories were reviewed to determine how they relate to the Five Facets of Trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). In addition, categories emerged related to Chhuon et al (2007) findings relative to follow-through, shared decision-making, and frequency of teacher-administrator contact and professional development. Focused coding (Charmaz, 2006) was used to determine relationships between the open coding categories.

## Chapter 4 – Results

As trust is a necessary component for implementing and sustaining school reforms in the classroom (Daly, Moolenaar, & Liou, 2014) and without trust between teacher and principal it is unlikely that the changes will be made (Blase & Blase, 2001; Bryk & Schneider, 2002) an understanding of the cultivation of trust is important. Because teachers who lack trust in their principal avoid, neglect, or refuse change (Tschannen-Moran, 2004), it can have a negative impact on student achievement (Daly, 2009; Sebring & Bryk, 2000). The purpose of schooling is to increase academic achievement so that students can actively participate in our society. The results of this study will inform beginning principals in the establishment of trust with teachers so that reforms leading to a positive change in academic achievement can take place.

The methods of data collection, organization, and analysis will be described in this study. A brief overview of each site is presented. Case studies of the three principals of high trust schools are presented. The data are examined and results reported in light of the following research questions:

1. What are the stories of three beginning (in the first or second year) principals in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston relative to building trust with their teachers?
2. How can these stories help all new principals when it comes to building trust?
3. How do Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust relate to these reflections?

### **Data Collection and Organization**

This study incorporates a mixed method approach (Creswell, 2003), a quantitative survey used to purposefully select the participants and a qualitative, multiple case study design used once participants were selected. Yin refers to a multiple case study within a survey nested design (2009). Qualitative methods are used when the researcher wishes to study a phenomenon in depth and detail (Patton, 2002). Each phenomenon studied can be examined within a specific hermeneutic or cultural context (Patton, 2002). The phenomenon that was investigated in this study was beginning Catholic school principals establishing trust with teachers. This phenomenon was examined within the context of this researcher's experience and study of establishing trust as a new principal.

Hermeneutics allow the researcher to construct "the 'reality' on the basis of their interpretations of the data with the help of the participants who provide the data in the study" (Eichelberger, 1989, p. 9). Having been a beginning principal twice and a beginning Catholic school principal once, this researcher's interest in this phenomenon is meaningful and professional.

### **Underlying Theoretical Constructs**

In preparation for data collection an analytic strategy was devised. Yin (2009) recommends four general strategies for case study research: relying on theoretical propositions, developing a case description, using both quantitative and qualitative data, and examining rival explanations. Of the four general strategies for initial data analysis this researcher relied on two theoretical propositions: Tschannen-Moran's (2004) five facets of trust: benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence and, after initial coding, Chhuon's, et al. (2007) follow-through, shared decision-making, and

frequent teacher administrator interaction along with frequent professional development. Using this method helped the researcher determine what data was salient and what was interesting, but not related to the questions posed.

The data for this study was collected from January through May 2014, and included surveys, in-depth interviews, artifacts, observations, and a focus group interview. Multiple data sources are used to validate and crosscheck findings (Patton, 2002). The major strength of case study research is opportunity to utilize many different sources of evidence (Yin, 2009).

### **Participant Selection Process**

As this study focuses on the stories of three beginning Catholic school principals within the Archdiocese of Boston as they establish trust with teachers, schools with high trust were purposely selected. This choice was necessary because in order to study the phenomenon of beginning principals establishing trust with teachers, schools that had high trust needed to be studied.

The Teacher and Principal Trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004) subscales were used to identify schools with high trust. In order to identify schools with beginning principals, the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Boston was contacted and they provided an email list of principals that had recently (in the first or second year) begun their principalships. Thirty-three names and emails were provided. The researcher and her colleague at the upper school were on the list. These names were not included in the pool of principals, as it would present a conflict of interest. The teacher trust scale is not appropriate for use in the practitioner realm and should only be used for research purposes (Tschannen-Moran, personal communication, 2013). The remaining thirty-one

principals were sent an email with a link to the teacher trust survey. Eleven principals responded to the survey indicating their willingness to participate in the study. Principals were asked to rate statements related to trust of teachers on a scale of 1, strongly disagree to 6, strongly agree. Results of the surveys are represented in Figure 2. As is demonstrated in Figure 2, most principals responded with strong trust scores. Sr. Sara had perfect scores displaying a high level of trust for her teachers. It may be that only those experiencing high levels of trust responded. This is an acceptable result, given that this study is focused on schools with established high trust.

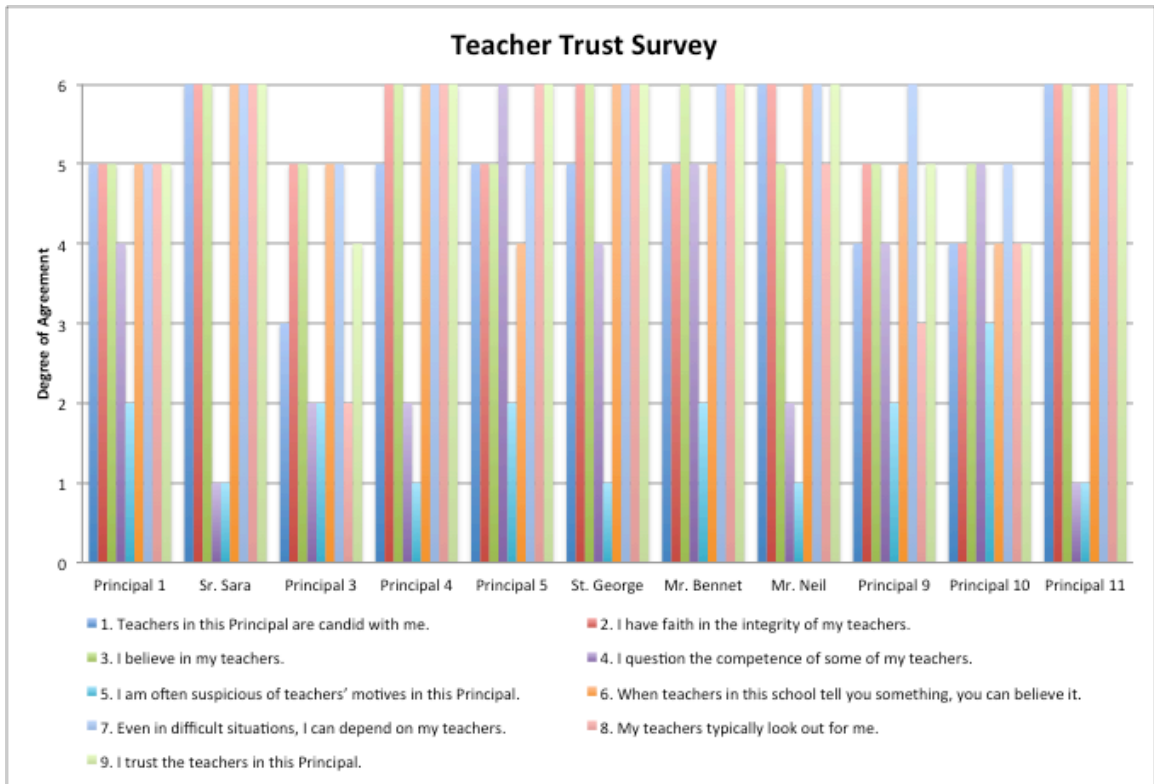


Figure 2: *Principal Response to Teacher Trust Survey*

Teachers from the eleven schools were then invited via email to participate in the principal trust survey. Of the eleven schools, teachers at ten schools responded to the invitation. Teacher participation rates per school ranged from a low of 15% to a high of

77%. Only those schools with the participation rates higher than 50% were considered for in-depth interviewing. One school withdrew from participation after the principal and three teachers had responded. The three schools with the highest combined scores on the teacher and principal trust scales were invited to participate in the in-depth interviews. Each school invited agreed to take part in the study. Principals from each of the three schools were asked to select three teachers from their staff to participate. Each principal emailed staff members to determine interest and, at two schools, more than three teachers volunteered and random drawings were held to determine who would participate. The interviews were conducted on-site for each participating school with the principal arranging the times and locations. Once informed consent was secured from each participant a semi-structured interview protocol was used. The questions were adapted and used with permission from Michelle Fenc-Bagwell (2013, pp. 116, 117). Fenc-Bagwell researched beginning urban school principals establishing trust with teachers.

The results of the principal trust survey for the study schools are presented in Figure 3. These schools were selected due to a combination of the high scores of the teacher trust scale (Figure 2) and the high scores on the principal trust scale (Figure 3). It is interesting to note that there are near perfect scores for Sr. Sara's school, St. Matilda's. Her teacher's responses mirror her own perfect scores displayed in Figure 2, indicating a very high degree of measured trust. The score of the two remaining schools selected for in-depth interviewing and the focus group school enjoyed high trust ratings as well.

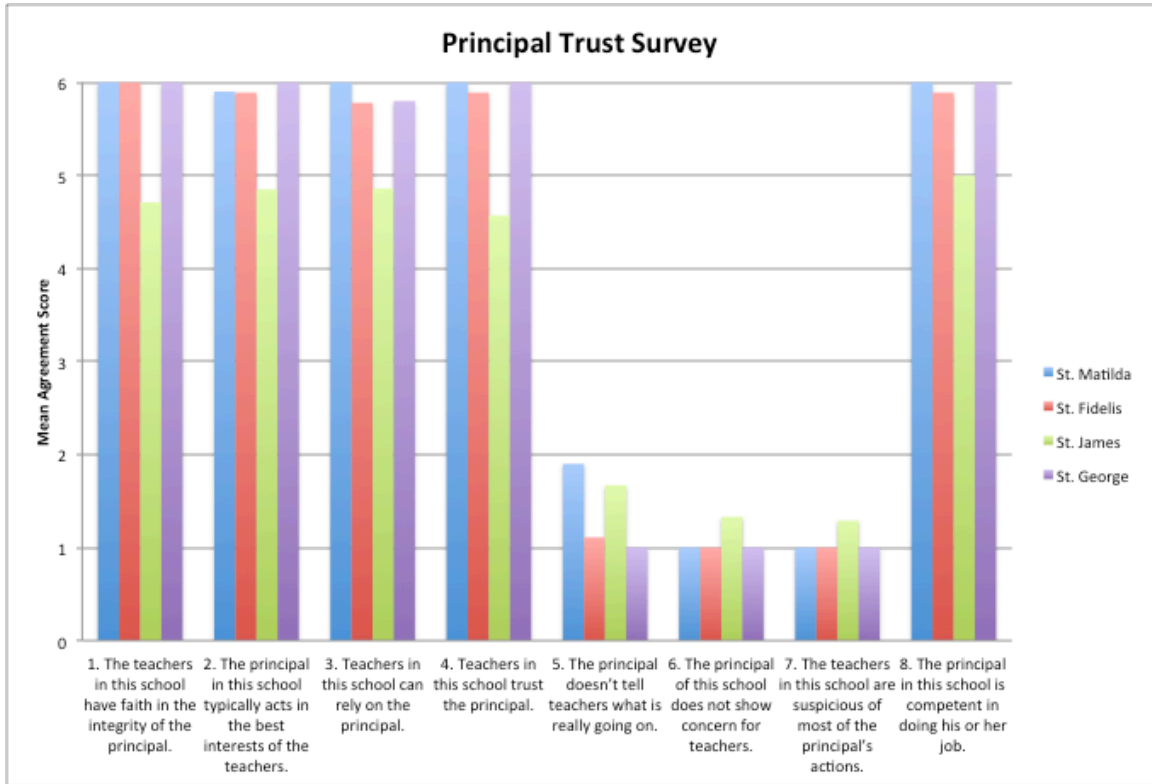


Figure 3: *Teacher Response to Principal Trust Survey*

Interviews were digitally recorded and were transcribed by the researcher and a volunteer. The volunteer signed a confidentiality pledge. Transcripts were checked by the researcher for accuracy.

### Thematic Analysis

Initial coding of the printed transcripts was completed with a focus on the five facets of trust (benevolence, reliability, openness, competence, and honesty) (Tschannen-Moran, 2004) related to the third research question asking how the five facets of trust relate to the reflections of beginning Catholic school principals. Each time one of the facets was present it was highlighted in a specific color. Each of the twelve interviews yielded much evidence of the five facets. Next, each of the principal interviews was coded for themes related to the facets of trust and follow-through, shared decision-

making and frequency of teacher-administrator contact and professional development (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007). Themes were then checked for in the corresponding teacher interviews. Thematic units having strong evidence, several occurrences in the teacher interviews, were kept and those with weak evidence, few or no mention in the teachers' interviews, were discarded.

### **Setting**

Three Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of Boston were selected for this study. Each school had a beginning principal in the first or second year of principalship at that school. The schools were purposefully selected with high principal-teacher trust scale scores. Each principal completed a survey of teacher trust. Teachers from each selected school were invited to participate in a principal trust survey. Average teacher response rate across the three schools was 64%. A fourth school with a lower response rate, but high trust scores was selected as the focus group school. Each school and principal was assigned a pseudonym to protect the identity of participants.

St. Matilda School is located in Magellan, Massachusetts. Magellan is a growing city of just under 50,000 people located north of Boston. The coeducational school was established in 1958 by the Sisters of Notre Dame as a parish school. It is the only remaining Catholic school in Magellan and houses grades Kindergarten through eight with a population of approximately 200 students. St. Fidelis School is one of three Catholic schools located in Baltic, Massachusetts. Baltic is a town south of Boston of approximately 35,000 people. The Sisters of St. Joseph founded the school in 1959. This private, parish school services approximately 340 children in prekindergarten through eighth grades. St. James High School is an independent, coeducational, college

preparatory high school located in Eveling, Massachusetts. Eveling is a city of 42,000 people located just north of Boston. It was established in 1965 and houses approximately 250 students in grades nine through twelve. The focus group school is St. George School in Westerly, Massachusetts. Westerly is a town of about 27,000 people just west of Boston. This coeducational parish school was established in 1954 by the Sisters of Charity. It serves approximately 175 students in grades Kindergarten through eight.

Table 1

*Summary of Participant Schools*

Name	Type	Demographic	Population	Students	Faculty	Principal	Grades
St. Matilda	Parish	City	50,000	200	10	Religious	K-8
St. Fidelis	Parish	Town	35,000	340	17	Lay	Pre-K-8
St. James	Independent	City	42,000	250	24	Lay	9-12
St. George	Parish	Town	27,000	175	13	Lay	K-8

**Case Studies of Principals**

***Case Study # 1: Sr. Sara – St. Matilda School***

Sr. Sara is a vowed religious of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters. Their mission is “to identify with the victim, the poor and the marginalized, especially women and children, in seeking a peace built on justice” (Driscoll, 2014). She was asked by the pastor at St. Matilda Parish to consider leading the school. Sr. Sara was born in East Boston. She has been a sister with the Franciscan Order for 40 years, inspired by the same order of nuns who taught her at Our Lady of Good Counsel Grammar School in

East Boston. Sr. Sara has a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Newton College of the Sacred Heart, an all-women's college, which later merged with Boston College and a Master of Theology degree from St. Bonaventure University in Western, N.Y. She also took courses in administration at Boston College. Sr. Sara taught at St. Clare, an all-girls high school, and served 11 years as principal at Mt. Alverina School and Our Lady of Holy Peace in Brooklyn, N.Y. Sr. Sara was principal at Holy Trinity School in Lawrence until it closed in 2006. After leaving Lawrence, she served as Provincial of the Franciscan Order for eight years working with the sisters in the United States, Canada, Australia, Papua Guinea, Bolivia and Peru. A provincial is a superior of a religious order from a specific province. After that, she taught theology at Mt. Alverina for two years. Sr. Sara was on sabbatical, spending half the year in a renewal program in Assisi, Italy and the other half at the Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio, Texas learning Spanish. The Bible passage she lives by comes from John 14:1, which reads, "Don't let your heart be troubled." "What you carry in your heart is the center of love, the love of God and the people," she said. She incorporates her Franciscan values at the school by reciting the prayer of St. Francis in the morning as a whole school faith community. "He wants us to be a symbol of peace and how the world can come together," she said. While Sr. Sara is an experienced educator, she was in her second year as principal at St. Matilda's and this limited her experience with the staff.

### ***Case Study # 2: Mr. Bennet – St. Fidelis***

After receiving his Bachelor of Music Degree from the Boston Conservatory of Music Mr. Bennet began his teaching career at Cardinal Cushing School, a private residential and commuter school for students with developmental disabilities. He taught

there for eleven years and while at Cardinal Cushing Mr. Bennet studied at Bridgewater State College, earning his Master of Arts in Teaching. He then went on to pursue an administrator's license through an internship at Hopewell Elementary. Soon after completing his internship, Mr. Bennet was hired as principal at a Catholic primary school serving students in preschool through grade 5. While there Mr. Bennet focused on creating a community of faith "where all are treated with dignity and respect within a safe, welcoming, caring and Christ-like learning environment." During his sixteen years as principal there Mr. Bennet continued his education by earning a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Educational Leadership at Bridgewater State College. Through his work with the Independent School Commission of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), Mr. Bennet served on the re-accreditation visiting committee for St. Fidelis. At that time he met many of the teachers and was afforded an in-depth view of the school and community. When hearing of the opening for principal Mr. Bennet applied and was hired. He is in his second year as principal of St. Fidelis. Mr. Bennet is passionate about life-long learning and continues to model that for both his staff and students.

### ***Case Study # 3: Mr. Neil– St. James High School***

Mr. Neil is a St. James alumnus who taught math at St. James for two years prior to being appointed principal one year ago. He assumed the day-to-day leadership role so that the Head of School could focus more on "big picture" issues. Before returning to St. James, Mr. Neil worked at Middle High School for 26 years serving as a teacher and in the administration. Prior to that he taught math in Chelsea Public Schools, his hometown. Mr. Neil is one of four alumnae currently working at St. James from the first graduating

class in 1970. After leaving St. James, Mr. Neil earned a bachelor degree from Boston College, where he majored in secondary education and English, with a minor in mathematics. Mr. Neil followed in the footsteps of his father, a math teacher in the Chelsea Public Schools and his grandfather, an administrator in the Boston Public Schools. While teaching in Chelsea Public Schools he earned a master of education degree from Worcester State College in secondary education. Mr. Neil is married to his wife of 28 years and has three grown children. When interviewed for this study, Mr. Neil had just lost his father. He graciously kept his commitment to this researcher and provided quality data for this study.

### **Research Questions**

#### ***Emerging Themes: Research Question One***

*What are the stories of three beginning (in the first or second year) principals in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston relative to building trust with their teachers?*

**She came to help out.** Sr. Sara, as a vowed religious of the Franciscan Order, is focused on helping. Although she did not see herself in an elementary school, when she was asked to lead St. Matilda's by the Pastor of the parish, she went willingly. She had been a principal before, but of a high school.

They were in a tough situation before I came. They had 4 principals and 5 pastors in the last ten years. I came on the scene only because Fr. Patrick called me and asked me to help out. They had been hurting. They had really been hurting with all the transition, and all of the changes so, I think, if nothing else if I provide stability, at least for now.

This willingness to help out demonstrates her benevolence and caring for the plight of her teachers and the school. Her teachers feel a sense of stability knowing that Sr. Sara has experience and she really wants to be at St. Matilda's "Everything, we know, is gonna go smoothly. It may not be to everybody's liking, but it will go smoothly, and it will be the best thing for the school and the best thing for Magellan."

Though she was to be at St. Matilda's temporarily, she now has a reason to stay. At one time there were many more Catholic schools in the area surrounding St. Matilda's. Sr. Sara stresses, "the reality of life is, if this is going to continue, and you know it is the only Catholic school in Magellan. Everything else is closed. Let's give it our best shot." Sr. Sara shared that some of the teachers that work currently at St. Matilda's had worked at other Catholic schools in the area that closed and she is sensitive to the fears that teachers have regarding possible closure of St. Matilda's. A recent reorganization of parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston combined smaller parishes into collaboratives. These groups of parishes were then administered by a single parish council and a single pastor (Overbeck, personal communication, 2013). Sr. Sara describes the teachers' anxiety in response to this change.

When there was a new pastor, we, in the collaborative, were going crazy with all these meetings. When monsignor came over to see them, that was their first question, 'Are you going to close the school?' They need to be in the know, of what's happening, because that is a major concern.

She works to keep them informed in an effort to reduce anxiety. "I try to keep them in the loop. But you know if we say we are a community, I think we have to trust one another and they live up to that." Her openness to sharing information with her staff

helps to reduce anxiety. In remarking on the recent accreditation report one teacher noted, “we were kind of surprised with some of the things we got back in the accreditation. She was very clear. She showed us the whole report. She let us know everything.” Information sharing of this kind builds trust as it imparts a trusting stance and it makes the principal vulnerable to her teachers (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Sr. Sara has empathy for her teachers. She hopes that they understand that she wants what is best for St. Matilda’s.

I want them to trust that I have no ulterior motives. You know they are women. Women worry about their jobs but also to a couple of them are the breadwinner in their families. Now you say now that not a reason to keep them in the school or in these jobs, but people only become stagnant if we allow that and if we give them reason to keep growing and feel good about what they are doing then I think they will do it.”

With this in mind Sr. Sara is on a mission to save St. Matilda’s. She has a plan to increase enrollment. She recently opened a second Kindergarten class. The three teachers interviewed repeatedly shared their confidence that Sr. Sara has the best interests of the school at heart. “She works in the best interest of St. Matilda’s.” A second teacher shared, “There have been many changes that she has brought in, in the last year. But it is all for the best and it has all made us calmer. It’s gonna be the best for the school.” A third echoed, “I think she acts in the best interest of all. Not just teachers, not just students, not just parents, I think the whole group. She does act in our best interest, but not just our best interest. Everyone involved.” A third teacher remarked on Sister’s

efforts to improve the school. “Sr. Sara is very ambitious, but not in the way of egotistical ambitious, just in the way of helping the school and promoting the school, for the school.”

**She is witness to the lives of her teachers.** Sr. Sara sums up her philosophy with a quote from the movie *Shall We Dance* (Chelsom, 2004).

There is just something about the presence of leadership. I’ll never forget that line. It was a husband and a wife, ‘Marriage gives witness to the other person’s life.’ It is important. That teacher’s life is important and you need to be here for that. You need to be present for the moment.

Sr. Sara is present to her teachers. She is witness to their lives. She gives witness by listening, being fair, identifying and filling needs, and letting the teachers know they are valued.

She listens to them. “You have to listen and learn first.” When she first began at St. Matilda’s the teachers requested that they meet her. She came to the meeting armed with a notebook and a willing ear. “I listened to them. I was writing down, then I could spend time in July before activity began plotting some of the ways I could do it.” “I knew some of their needs. They gave me a whole road map of what to begin.” Each teacher interviewed supported this willingness of Sr. Sara to listen to his or her concerns. Sr. Sara is “always asking us how things are going not just in our school life but also in our personal life. She always has a genuine concern for what is behind the scenes for us as people, as well as teachers. So she is always easy to talk with and always available to listen to anything that we have.” A second teacher shared, “the open door policy thing,

she does really try to listen to the concerns of her staff and she doesn't push you aside and make you feel like that is not important." A third teacher supported, "She will listen when we are ranting and raving and then just step back and say, 'OK we can't change it but this is what we can do.' She listens when we are happy. She listens when we have questions." When principals encourage teachers to voice frustrations candidly trust is enhanced (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Sr. Sara, as a Franciscan, sees all people as brothers and sisters, "we see the whole world as one." This makes seeing both sides of an issue with compassion easier for her. Her teachers see her, "delegating authority in a fair-minded way" and appreciate that, "She will give us that chance, even if we know we were wrong. She will still sit and listen to our explanation and apology. She is just." Sr. Sara sums it up thusly, "While I know there is a sense of fairness, at the same time, you want to be that everyone is important."

When Sr. Sara arrived at St. Matilda's she recognized that there were many needs. She identified a lack of technology, supervision, and teachers had not had raises in years. She also felt that there was a need for stability. Sr. Sara sees her position as more than a job, "It can't be just a job it is ministry and you minister to each one in their need. When I come each day and I say, 'OK God I am going back to be there for the need.'" Her teachers feel as though she is present to their needs and that has helped them to trust her. One teacher commented, "It's like she just senses, now that she knows us more, she just senses what we need." The ability to identify and fill the needs of teachers is critical to the competence of principals (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995b). Sr. Sara has a talent for identifying and filling the needs of her staff.

Sr. Sara values her staff and relates that to them on a regular basis. When she arrived faculty had not been supervised or evaluated and they had not had a pay increase in years. She was not able to immediately increase their pay but she shares, “I gave the day after New Years off. You’d think that was the greatest thing.” She did what she could to show her appreciation. She also wants each to ‘shine in their own way’ and believes that “they ought to go home and feel good about what they have done each day.” Her teachers agree that they are appreciated. Sr. Sara sends a weekly email to the teachers on Sunday night. Each week she tells them she appreciates them in that correspondence. A review of artifacts revealed a recent communication in which she writes, “thank you again for all that you are and do for St Matilda’s students and our Church.”

**She has shared vision.** In coming to St. Matilda’s Sr. Sara was able to quickly identify that she had a competent staff that was underpaid and lacking resources. She brought them together as a community. First she listened, then she acted, and then they prayed. Each faculty member is a practicing Catholic. As Catholics they are accustomed to participating in a faith community. When Sr. Sara joined them as the leader of their faith community she instituted Morning Prayer as a whole school community. “Prayer is central here. We begin every day as a community outside, the parents, the teachers, the students with the Peace Prayer of St. Francis.” In creating this vision she included her teachers, “I want to bring it together as a shared vision.” She wants her teachers to be a community of learners as well, “part of my job is to help them continue their education. We are life-long learners.” Supporting professional development for teachers is implicated in the establishment of trust (Chhuon, et al.2007).

Sr. Sara's story of establishing trust as a beginning principal with the teachers of St. Matilda's is one of helping, witnessing, and building community. Her path was one informed by her vowed religious background. Her caring and compassion, openness and competence provide fertile ground for the development of trust. She views her principalship as a ministry in the sense that she is aware of and responsive to the needs of her teachers.

**He had a plan.** When Mr. Bennet learned of the opening at St. Fidelis, he was very interested in leading the school. His interest was, in part, due to his work on the school's re-accreditation for the NEASC visiting team. The work of a visiting team is to review the self-study and gather evidence to determine if the member schools meet criteria for accreditation (NEASC, 2014). The self-study and visit provide team members with much information about curriculum, culture, staff, and demographics (NEASC-CIS, 2014). They do not provide all the information necessary to a school leader. When Mr. Bennet accepted the position, he developed an entry plan that included listening to the needs of stakeholders, observing the strengths and weaknesses of the school, modeling desired behavior, and embracing a shared vision.

Mr. Bennet began his principalship by getting to know his teachers. He wanted to, "really listen to the teachers who are here. To meet with them individually to get to know them personally and professionally." He also wanted them to know about him so that they had an understanding that he, 'is in the same boat.' He occasionally spends time in the teacher's room at lunchtime so he can actively listen to their conversations. His teachers shared many stories related to his commitment to listen. When answering a question regarding the integrity of her principal one teacher remarked, "I know if I spoke

to him, he would listen. He is a great listener. The door is always open.” When asked how her principal cares for her, a second teacher commented, “He takes his time to listen to you and carefully listens, not just to make a response.” Yet another teacher shared when asked a question about the reliability of her principal, “if we have a problem, and we go to him, he is there to listen. He has our back.” Listening appears to be a common factor across the different facets of trust.

Being present to his teachers by observing in the classrooms and in the cafeteria was also part of Mr. Bennet’s plan. He was forthcoming about his visibility in the school. He acknowledged being a realist. He states, “I try as much as I can to get into classrooms. Even though it is a major part of our jobs, it is still probably on the bottom of the list. I try to see every classroom every day.” He is all around the school, not just in his office and that helps teachers see him taking leadership. One teacher shared that she sees Mr. Bennet checking in with students when he knows that they are having a hard time. It means a lot to her that he notices and engages with both students and teachers. “He can tell when you are not doing well or you are having a problem and he will take over. He is there ready to help out.” Another teacher noticed that, “he wanted to see and observe and see how things worked out and then slowly make changes when we were ready.” A third teacher felt that his frequent visits to her classroom showed that he cared for her and was there for her if she needed him. In this way Mr. Bennet shows he is benevolent, reliable and open.

Modeling the behavior he would like to see in his stakeholders is very important to Mr. Bennet. He encourages professional development for his staff and he models professional growth by continuously learning. Mr. Bennet reported that a new iPad

initiative had him learning to troubleshoot technology issues. He models goal setting to, “help them establish their own goals.” Modeling trustworthy behavior and coaching teachers toward improvement are skills that are common to leaders who are able to establish trust (Kochanek, 2005; San Antonio & Gamage, 2007). He went on the eighth grade trip to Washington, D.C. recently because he wants his teachers to see that he is taking leadership. He sets the tone, “I try to do that every year by setting what I expect. And I am also going to be following that expectation.” His teachers take notice, as one commented, “A couple of times I said, ‘wow, he is doing the same things we are doing. He is right out there with us.’ I think that builds trust and community sense as well.” In this way Mr. Bennet is honestly representing expectations for self and others and displaying his professional competence by modeling professional behavior, two facets of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). He thinks it is important for teachers to see him being accountable, “if I have made a mistake, and certainly I have made many, I do let them know that I made a bad choice or judgment in whatever decision I have made.” Accountability is a critical component to honesty, which is a fundamental facet of trust (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006; Scarr, 2011).

**He established relationships.** Tschannen-Moran (2004) purports the establishment of trust is enhanced by three factors: a disposition to trust, shared values and attitudes, and positive moods and emotions, and that disposition to trust is developed through a person’s history of relationships. Mr. Bennet adeptly focused on creating relationships by supporting and communicating with his teachers.

He supported his teachers by telling them that, “family is first before the job, because if a teacher is coming to school with family problems on their mind, they are not

100% on target here with the kids.” He gives them time off if they need it. When there is a concern, he will call a teacher into his office. He shared that the conversation would start with words of support. “We’re having this conversation, because I want to back you, and I want to support you.” He then creates an improvement plan with the staff member. He checks in regularly and routinely shares, “I care about you as an individual and what’s going on in your life. And I’m here to support you in any way that I can.” His teachers resoundingly confirm his support of them. A teacher commented on his support when she was involved in a big project with her students, “I know just like last year he will be there the day before, two days before, and he’ll be saying, ‘Is there anything I can do?’ And he does that whenever we have something.” A second teacher related a story of her attempt to recertify through the online portal for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. She related that he sat with her through the whole process, “He was there in case I needed him.” Trust is enhanced when teachers observe their principal predictably step-up and support them (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Teachers appreciate Mr. Bennet’s clear, frequent, and informative communication. One teacher cited how impressed she was regarding his breadth of knowledge and his ability to impart it in a collegial way. “It’s not a superior type of thing. It’s a conversation about education that you can have with him.” All three teachers indicated that Mr. Bennet was easy to talk to. Mr. Bennet shares his weekly communication electronically and via teacher mailboxes with his staff. It is very comprehensive and informative. A review of artifacts revealed that this weekly communication included important dates, biblical passages, special thanks and other

important information for the teachers. Teachers depend on effective communication as a function of a leader's competence (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995b).

**He collaborates.** When there is a decision to be made at St. Fidelis, the data indicated that it is typically made in a collaborative fashion. School leaders that manage collaboratively encourage the development of trust with faculty (Cosner, 2009; Kochanek, 2005). As reported in the interviews with Mr. Bennet and his teachers, he seeks and listens to teacher input and builds consensus while inviting feedback.

Mr. Bennet values his teachers' input. "I ask for input. I want them to establish leadership qualities. So I'm trying to cultivate them in the decision-making process, because, if they don't own part of the decision, no change is ever going to happen." When he began his tenure at St. Fidelis, Mr. Bennet's first responsibility was to hire twelve new teachers. He invited two veteran teachers to help with the process. "So even the teachers that had remained here saw that I sought the assistance of their colleagues, and just didn't wing it, to pick anybody to come into St. Fidelis." Teachers support that Mr. Bennet seeks and values their input. Each stated that he sought their voice, even if he didn't always do what they desired.

Mr. Bennet invites criticism and seeks consensus. "I have also given them the opportunity to share and identify weaknesses that they see with the school." He wants teachers to feel as a part of the process and, "foster ownership with some of the decisions that are made for the school." He believes that this builds trust. If decisions are made without input, teachers may feel 'stuck' with the decision. "And I think once you go that

route, even once, you've lost some of the integrity and some of the trust of some of the staff.”

Mr. Bennet's story of establishing trust, as a beginning principal with the teachers of St. Fidelis, started with a gesture that defined his entry. He included teachers in the hiring of the new staff. This was an early indication of his collaborative leadership style. This style facilitated the establishment of trust. He built relationships by supporting, appreciating and communicating. His support and competent communication also increased the level of trust.

**He had a vision.** An effective leader clearly articulates a vision and enhances trust relations when he or she demonstrates behavior that advances that vision (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Mr. Neil's vision includes a plan to support improvement in teacher quality through collaboration and action.

Having been a teacher at St. James for two years prior to assuming the role of principal, Mr. Neil had a good sense of what needed to be addressed. He had a strong sense of the school culture having been a student there as well. Mr. Neil shares, “you have to have an idea of where you are going. I think that if teachers think that we are going down a blind alley, that wouldn't be good.” Having been a teacher for many years he can relate to the ‘fad of the moment.’ At St. James teachers have appeared to buy in to the plans of their principal. One teacher spoke about trusting the decisions and vision of the principal due to his trust in his judgment. “I know that he knows what he's doing. He thinks seriously about the issues that he has to face. And that he confronts them in a

smart intelligent way, based on reliable data.” This confidence in the competence of the principal is a contributing factor to the development of trust at St. James.

In building the plan for his team, Mr. Neil included teachers in the development. Collaborative leadership, according to Kochanek, “offers a forum for trust development and promotes positive discernments of others’ integrity and competence” (2005, p. 30). His collaborative style has helped to gain the buy-in necessary to make change happen. He describes listening to his teachers voice their concerns and responding with a teacher’s perspective. “So I always look at things from the teacher’s point of view.” Teachers at St. James believe their principal listens to their concerns. They are clear that he does not always do what they ask, but their views are considered and valued. One teacher remarked, “If you come in, he asks for input, both positive and negative, people have to buy into in. If they don’t buy in, you can be the best principal around, nothing’s going to be done.” The data clearly show that the teachers at St. James buy in. When asked about trust and school reform one teacher commented Mr. Neil is, “making changes in reforming things and doing things smoother. And I have a sense that he knows what he’s doing. So check me off for following along. He’s got my support for whatever he does.”

Mr. Neil understands the needs of his teachers and enacts plans to address them. He shares that the pay scale at St. James is not ‘generous’ so he was compelled to find other ways to support his teachers. One way that he identified fit with his vision of instructional improvement. He was able to increase the ability of teachers to attend professional development offered during the school day. “I like teachers to feel like they can go out there and improve themselves.” He utilizes other teachers to cover the classes

of a teacher out for professional development. He understands that, “They are going to be better teachers if they use it effectively and I think that, that is important for me too, at least to bring these things to the front so that teachers can investigate.” One of the teachers compared the former administration to the current in this way,

So now I feel like everything is moving smoothly. I have only good things to say about both of our leaders, both of our administrators. We’ve struggled a little bit with enrollment for several reasons. And I think that the pieces are in place here. And it’s just a question now of the greater community realizing that, because it takes a long time for that stuff to get out there. And it quickly does the opposite. Right? Bad news gets out there so quickly and it takes a long time to change it around. And we are in the process of changing it around.

The actions that Mr. Neil has taken are in line with his vision of a school where teachers are supported in their professional growth. He is bringing in a professional development company to provide classes for the needs of his teachers. He has made it possible for teachers to attend professional development during the school day and he continues to coach teachers toward improvement.

Mr. Neil has a unified vision to support teacher with professional improvement. He worked collaboratively to build his plan. He has taken action to coach teachers toward improvement. All of these actions have been shown to increase the establishment of trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Kochanek, 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

**He maintained and built his connections to teachers.** As Mr. Neil had been a teacher at St. James and had attended the school as a young man with a few of his current

colleagues, he had relationships with most of the staff prior to becoming their principal. He decided to eschew the common practice of social separation when elevated from teacher to administrator. He continues to have close personal relationships with his teachers.

Mr. Neil has an 'open door' policy, but he does not wait for teachers to come to him. He is out of his office walking the halls, visiting classrooms, and monitoring the cafeteria. He thinks it is important to listen and, "hear them out. I think all my stakeholders have legitimate concerns." Evidence abounds that his teachers feel heard. When asked about how his principal showed concern for him, one teacher shared, "He has an open-door policy and you can go in right away and he takes your questions right then. He's very, very, open to both criticism or constructive criticism." Principals who actively invite teachers to voice frustrations and criticism are increasing trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). A second teacher shared, that when intervening with a parent-teacher conflict, "he would listen very attentively not only to what I said, but also to what they said, and I think that he would do it in a supportive way to all the parties." Yet a third teacher shared when comparing Mr. Neil to the previous administration, "there is consideration of your idea or your question and there's a quick response to it." This timeliness of response has been shown to increase trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). This openness to his staff is one of the initiates of a reciprocal trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Mr. Neil doesn't just listen; he takes the teachers', or students', or parents' perspective. "I want to treat people as if I were on the other side." Mr. Neil shared specific examples of taking the other's perspective for each stakeholder group. This is

central to his approach as a principal. He has a special reverence for his teachers though. When speaking about them he shared, “I love teaching. I think it is the greatest profession, the most noble profession. You know, in the Bible, they didn’t call Jesus a doctor or lawyer, they called him teacher.” His teachers have labeled him empathetic, completely honest, morally sound, fun, friendly, open, fair, approachable, and straightforward. Many of these words are present in definitions of trust (Noonan, Walker, & Kutsyuruba, 2008; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

**He supports his teachers.** He supports his teachers professionally, personally and spiritually. Mr. Neil shared a story of a young teacher. The teacher is a young married man and although Mr. Neil would love to have the teacher stay at St. James for the duration of his career, he knows that this young man needs to teach in the public sector as the pay and benefits are so much better. He is looking out for this teacher’s best interest at the expense of his own. “On the professional level I want teachers to do what is right professionally for themselves.” He encourages professional development, “I like teachers to feel like they can go out there and improve themselves.” His teachers feel supported professionally. One commented that he feels he can go to him and he will listen and, “he is willing to react. He doesn’t always do what I would want him to do. He doesn’t always do what any of us would want him to do, but I think we know we will get a fair hearing.”

Mr. Neil continues to interact socially with his teachers. When he became an assistant principal, a fellow administrator explained that since he was now an administrator, he could no longer be a friend with his teachers. He replied, “Just because I became an administrator doesn’t mean I going to become unfriendly.” He is aware that

he cannot be seen to have favorites and he makes an effort to spread himself out to all of his teachers. Mr. Neil is able to be empathetic to his teachers. They know he has ‘been there.’ He was a teacher. He has a family. He is connected to his faith. They feel that they can go to him with anything and he will support them. Of the many comments supporting this personal support, one teacher stated, “I felt like, when I’ve gone to him, it’s been worked out smoothly and, like I said, with a sense of competence. So I do think he addresses those things personally and head on.”

Mr. Neil exudes a quiet spiritual grace. He is present and compassionate. Ever the teacher, he models morality and compassion. His teachers were not surprised by how he handled the recent death of his father. One teacher particularly admired the way Mr. Neil was during this time.

He knew that it was coming and he knew that it would be for the best. And so he was even, it sounds odd to say, humorous about that. He kept his sense of humor and kept everything, kind of, in context as the end was coming.

Mr. Neil’s story of establishing trust, as a beginning principal with the teachers of St. James High School is informed by his years as a teacher. He could begin to make changes quickly due to his knowledge of the issues and culture. While the other principals had to really get to know the staff and issues, Mr. Neil was able to begin with a plan, which he built collaboratively and acted upon. His connections to his teachers and students were strengthened as he listened and responded to the voices of his teachers and students. His openness, honesty and morality helped to increase trust. He supported his

teachers personally, professionally and spiritually. His empathic response and reliability in consistently supporting his teachers also supported strong trust.

***Emerging Themes: Research Question Two***

*How can these stories help all new principals when it comes to building trust?*

Tschannen-Moran purports, “Trust can no longer be taken for granted in schools. It must be conscientiously cultivated and sustained” (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 12). It is the purpose of this study to contribute to the field by telling the stories of three beginning Catholic school principals with the intention of assisting all new Catholic school principals in cultivating and sustaining trust. Each school in this study was purposely selected due to high levels of trust, ascertained through principal and teacher surveys. Identifying common behaviors, attitudes, and practices of the three beginning Catholic school principals with high trust established will inform other beginning principals as they begin their tenure in a new building establishing trust with their teachers. Trust exists within a positive school climate led by a principal with professional orientation and is influenced by a disposition to trust, shared values and attitudes, and positive moods and emotions (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). A principal with a professional orientation is characterized by his/her creation of a problem-solving, not a problem hiding, environment. He/she typifies mistakes as an opportunity for learning; open communication is also a defining characteristic (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). The following areas of strength were identified, and were present in each school, as supported by the survey, interviews, artifacts, and observations: shared decision-making, open-door policy, support for professional development and growth, and cultivation of relationships.

**Shared decision-making.** Collective decision-making increases teacher buy-in and occurs in school with high levels of trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Each principal included and encouraged teacher voices in building their vision and addressing the needs of their respective schools. This was evident for Sr. Sara as one teacher commented, “She asks our input. She just doesn’t put things into place.” A collaborative leadership style was central to Mr. Bennet’s stated objectives. “I want to hear what they have to say and listen and come to some agreement of how we’re going to improve whatever the concern is coming up.” He clearly understands that if teachers, “don’t own part of the decision, no change is ever going to happen.” Establishing inclusive decision-making procedures that authentically include the voices of teachers reduces vulnerability and increases trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Mr. Neil routinely seeks input from teachers in the form of formal surveys as well as informal questioning. One teacher described the process for adopting rotating schedules. Mr. Neil held a meeting to ask for teacher feedback; he then had a smaller group of teachers work on the project. It was then presented to the larger group again for their input and approval. Shared decision-making requires a culture of trust, and trust increases in a collaborative culture (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Kochanek, 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

**Open-door policy.** Openness in information includes sharing facts, alternatives, judgments, intentions, and feelings (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Every teacher interviewed for this study commented on his/her principal’s open-door policy. Each stated that they could approach their principal and share concerns, suggestions, humor, and criticism. One teacher commented, “He’s very, very open to criticism or constructive criticism as well as when things went well.” This approachability increased the interactions with staff

and as Bryk and Schneider found, “trust is forged in daily social exchanges” (2002, p. 136). Interviews indicated that teachers felt that they could share personal as well as professional issues with their principals. In order to create an atmosphere of candor principals must actively encourage teachers to vent frustrations and criticism, even if directed at the decisions of that principal (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

**Supported professional development and growth.** Each principal focused on supporting his or her teachers professionally. Mr. Neil has focused on making sure his teachers have access to professional development during the school day in addition to getting a professional development solution that is tailored to the needs of his teachers. Sr. Sara and Mr. Bennet brought in iPads and training to enhance the teachers’ skills. They are both learning along with their teachers. All modeled life-long learning as they continued to develop new skills and further his or her professional growth as well. Each commented on 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning skills and actively working to stay current. Mr. Neil has enrolled in the Emmaus Principal Leadership Series through the Lynch School of Education at Boston College to help him meet the challenges of his role. A study by Chhoun et al. (2007) found that providing ongoing professional development to meet the needs of teachers and principals led to fertile ground for the development of trust. In a study by Cosner (2009) an increase in site-based professional development was linked to increased trust.

**Cultivated relationships.** In her study of beginning urban principals establishing trust with teachers Femic-Bagwell found that as important as other factors was the ability of principals to establish positive relationships with teachers. While Sr. Sara wanted to be a witness to the lives of her teachers and be sure that they were leaving each day

feeling good about what they had done that day, Mr. Bennet made it his number one goal, “to establish relationships with all stakeholders.” He concluded that, “he knows each one of them personally and professionally.” Mr. Neil had already developed strong professional and personal relationships with many of his teachers before becoming principal and he made a conscious decision to continue and enhance those relationships. He was also attentive to spreading himself out to groups the he, “was not always so comfortable with,” so there would not be a perception of favoritism. Each got to know his or her teachers’ families, their concerns, and their point of view. Each tried to identify and meet the needs of teachers personally and professionally. Each principal rated relationship building as very important in the context of all the other things they are responsible for as a school leader. As Sr. Sara aptly summed it up, “Well relationship, that is most important, with the teachers, students, parents, and the priest. I think that is our whole center. It can’t be just a job; it is ministry and you minister to each one in their need.”

***Emerging Themes: Research Question Three***

*How do Tschannen-Moran’s (2004) five facets of trust relate to these reflections?*

Megan Tschannen-Moran’s research on trust in schools included a multi-site case study of three urban elementary school principals and their efforts to establish trust with their teachers. The culmination of her research led to the book, *Trust Matters: Leadership for Successful Schools* (2004). In her book, she details the experience of one of the three principals successfully establishing trust by displaying proficiency in all five facets of trust: benevolence, reliability, openness, competency and honesty. She goes on to share the stories of the other two principals and their failure to develop trust

relationships with their teachers. The focus of this study was to identify and study schools with high trust established and then determine if Tschannen-Moran's five facets were present for each principal.

In her research study exploring beginning urban principals' cultivation of trust with teachers, Fenc-Bagwell (2013) found only one of the five facets emerged in building trust for these principals; that facet was honesty. Teachers did not support any of the facets for establishing trust. It is important to note that although purposeful selection was used in the Fenc-Bagwell study, schools were not first evaluated for a level of trust. The level of trust present in each school was not measured. It is unclear whether trust had been established with the teachers interviewed.

Second phase coding employed focused coding (Charmaz, 2006) for the five facets of trust. "Focused coding enables you to compare newly constructed codes during this cycle across other participants' data to assess comparability and transferability" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 217). Although the codes were not newly constructed, this method allowed the researcher to compare responses related to the facets across participants and settings. The definitions for each of the facets identified in chapter two were used to determine 'saliency' of statements to each facet (Charmaz, 2006). Each of the thirteen interviews and nine artifacts was reviewed for statements supporting benevolence, reliability, openness, competency, and honesty and those statements were highlighted for tabulation. Each occurrence of a statement relating to a facet was counted under that facet in either the principal or teachers interviews. A frequency distribution of the tabulated responses for teachers and principals supporting the presence of the five facets is presented in Figure 4.

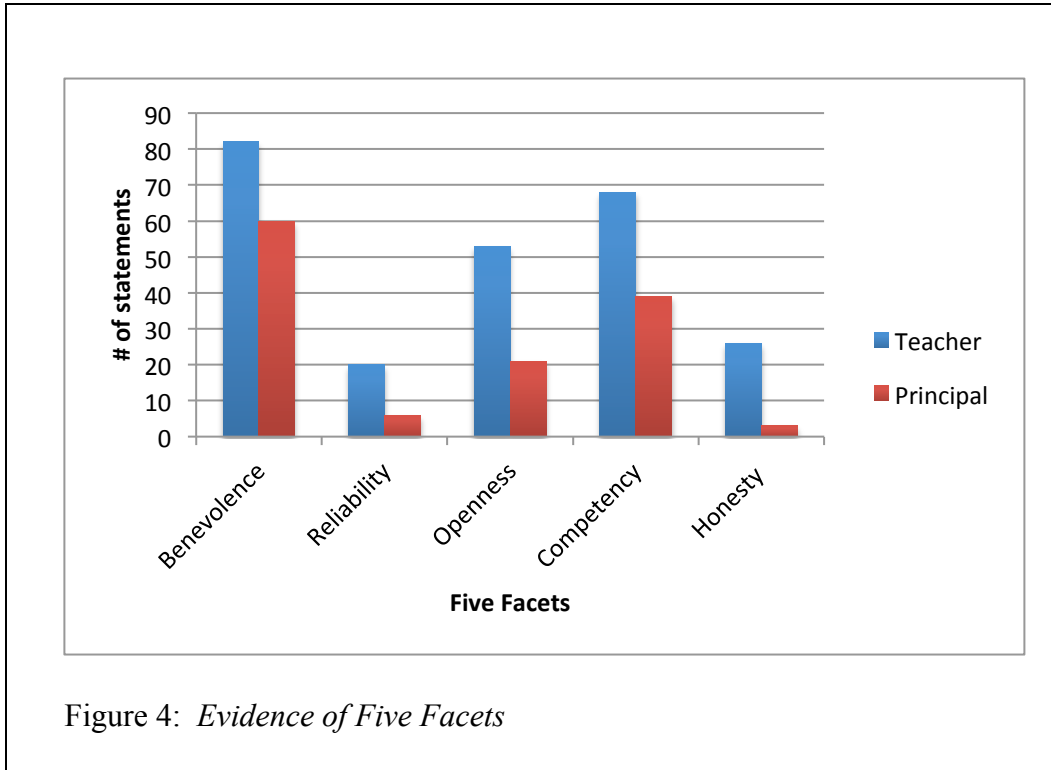


Figure 3 represents the number of times teachers or principals made a statement supporting one of the five facets. Three teachers were interviewed for each principal hence the number of possible responses for the teachers is greater than for the principals. Although there was evidence present for each of the five facets, the strength of that evidence varied. Strongest evidence was found for benevolence, openness, and competency. Teachers and principals repeatedly reinforced the need for kindness and concern. Examples of statements supporting benevolence, openness, and competency are provided below in table 2.

Table 2

*Participant Statements Supporting the Five Facets of Trust*

<p><b>Benevolence</b> - caring for the other in a relationship. It is the extent to which the trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor (Mayer, Davis, &amp; Schoorman, 1995a).</p> <p>-She always has a genuine concerned for what is behind the scenes for us as people as well as</p>
--

teachers

-She might be tired, we all get tired, but she is always very compassionate to her teachers and her teachers concerns

-She tries to make our life easier

- I took the kids to the funeral Mass; she thought that was extraordinary

-They ought to go home feeling good about what they've done each day

-He's genuinely concerned with the needs of the teachers

-He cares about the kids and the school, the teachers too

-He makes a personal connection with us

-He supports you, supports the school

-He keeps our personal and emotional interests at hand

-He comes to the class to see how we are

-He listens and is sympathetic; he cares about people

-I appreciate what they are doing

-We are having this conversation because I want to support you

-I treat everyone respectfully

-Warm, empathetic, supportive to all parties

-Friendly, collegial

**Openness** - people's willingness to make themselves vulnerable by sharing information, influence, and control (Zand, 1997).

-She doesn't keep anything secret, hidden she tells us what we need to know

-Open-door policy

- I don't think sister hides anything from us. I think she is as up front as far as what is going on in the school

-Open communication all the time

-Open-

-She believes in being transparent

-She was very clear; showed us the whole report

-Open book

-Openness to come in and say anything

-Door is open

-Straightforward

-Collaborative

-Communicates freely and completely

- I have also given them the opportunity to share and identify weaknesses that they see with the school

-Collaborative style

-Everyone has a voice

-Uses good judgment in sharing information

-Open to criticism and praise

-Open discussion

-Addresses head-on

**Competency** – the ability to perform a task as expected (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

-She is very skilled in the day-to-day running of the school

-She has a wonderful array of skills

-She is excellent at promotional efforts, marketing the school

-Good promoter; works well with collaborations developing between to parishes

-Very organized and she is a mediator

-Knows when to step back and when to be in front

-Knows what is best for school

- Aware of staff strengths and capabilities
- Bring out the best in teachers
- Help them continue their education
- Knowledgeable, talented
- Collaborative leadership style
- Knows what he is talking about
- Fair, accessible, builds trust and community
- Welcoming
- Makes decisions
- Listens, unbiased
- Models mission and vision
- Invites criticism
- Establishes leadership in teachers
- Fosters a safe and healthy environment
- I own my mistakes
- Training in curriculum
- Plan B in place

Support for the remaining reliability and honesty, while present, was not as strong.

### **Summary**

This chapter presented the results of the study. The methods of data collection, organization, and analysis were described. An overview of the participating schools and case studies of the high trust school principals were presented. Data were examined in light of the three research questions. The following chapter presents findings, conclusions and implications for practice and further study.

## Chapter 5 – Discussion

The importance of trust in our daily lives cannot be overstated. We trust that the food we eat is safe, the medicines we take will make us well and the teachers that teach our children will not harm them. Warren Buffett said, “Trust is like the air we breathe – when it’s present, nobody really notices; when it’s absent everybody notices” (Sandlund, 2002, p. 1). There are many benefits to cultivating trust in both business and educational settings. Higher levels of trust are associated with improved financial performance, lower employee turnover, increased innovation, and higher morale (Cosner, 2009; Hitch, 2012). Trust is important in educational settings as well.

Trust is critical in learning (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Moolenaar, Daly, & Slegers, 2010; Tschannen-Moran, 2009) because a safe environment is crucial for the risk-taking required (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Daly, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Much like trust being necessary for student learning in a classroom, trust is necessary for teachers learning and implementing educational reforms (Daly, Moolenaar, & Liou, 2014; Fenc-Bagwell, 2013). Given the importance of implementing and sustaining educational reforms for improved outcomes for students, this study focused on the trust between the principal and the teacher. A climate of trust between principal and teacher provides fertile soil for the growth of trust necessary for change (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007; Cosner, 2009; Daly, 2009; Daly & Chrispeels, 2005; Daly, Moolenaar, & Liou, 2014; Gillespie & Mann, 2004; Louis, 2007; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). The beginning Catholic school principal, in the first year or two of his or her tenure in a

building, establishing trust with his or her teachers was selected due to the importance of establishing trust from the beginning of a relationship.

Trust is a multi-faceted construct. Researchers Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) examined the literature on trust and found that along with a general willingness to risk vulnerability, there existed common threads which they termed five facets of trust. They named these facets benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. In her book *Trust Matters* (2004), Tschannen-Moran defines trust thusly: “Trust is one’s willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent” (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 17).

In this study, Catholic schools with high levels of trust, as measured by the principal and teacher trust scales, were selected for further study. The principal and three teachers from each school were interviewed with a semi-structured interview protocol. Transcribed interviews, artifacts, observations and a focus group interview were analyzed for emerging themes in light of the following research questions: What are the stories of three beginning (in the first or second year) principals in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston relative to building trust with their teachers? How can these stories help all new principals when it comes to building trust? How do Tschannen-Moran’s (2004) five facets of trust relate to these reflections?

### **Five Facets of Trust in Action**

Three different principals were interviewed for this study. Each had been principal of their respective school for less than two years and in that time they all managed to develop a high degree of trust with their teachers. The focus of this study was to learn from their stories in an effort to inform all beginning Catholic school

principals as they enter new schools and establish trust with teachers. Although evidence was found in each building for each of the five facets of trust, the strength of the evidence varied. The facets are presented here in order of the strength of the evidence found in this study.

### **Benevolence**

**Defined.** Benevolence is caring for the other in a relationship. It is the extent to which the trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995a). Benevolence suggests a dependent relationship between the trustor and the trustee. Evidence suggests that there is a biological bias toward benevolence (Riedl & Javor, 2012; Schulman, 2002). Kagan (2006) states, “Although humans inherit a biological bias that permits them to feel anger, jealousy, selfishness and envy...they inherit an even stronger biological bias for kindness, compassion, cooperation, love and nurture...” (p. 62). Benevolence-based trust, in which the individual will not intentionally harm the other when given the opportunity to do so, is a critical factor in establishing trusting business relationships as well (Levin, Cross, Abrams, & Lesser, 2002; Samier, 2010).

**Teachers.** The teachers believed they were well cared for by their principal. They believed that if they had a problem, not only could they go to their principal with the problem, but also the principal would actively help problem-solve or give advice. When this type of relationship is present, anxiety is reduced and teachers can devote more time to their teaching and less time worrying (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). When asked if they thought it was easy for their principal to show care, teachers responded that they thought it was easy, as it was ‘who they were as a person.’

This was first, and foremost the facet that was supported by the evidence. Each time a teacher would speak of the kindness of their principal, a noticeable change in demeanor would occur. On one such occurrence, the teacher looked up toward the ceiling and smiled, lowered her voice, and remembered when the principal came to her and told her not to go to a certain event, because her principal knew that she was overwhelmed and could use the time to herself. It was evident that this was a very special memory for the teacher. It was apparent that this act of kindness had touched her deeply. This alone makes this facet important above others.

**Principal.** Each principal spoke about getting to know the teachers both personally and professionally. They talked about getting to know the families of the teachers, about spending time with them. This was important to this facet, as the kindness showed to the teachers was personal and specific. The teachers did not speak about broad gestures such as days off or pay increases, as one might expect in the business world. They spoke of seemingly small gestures, which meant a lot to them, such as: asking how they were after being sick, asking how the daughter's graduation party was, calling the morning after the funeral to share a memory of a teacher's mother who had passed. The principals' kindness, caring, and genuine concern for the teacher as a person came across in each interview. Each principal spoke of supporting teachers, students and families in good times and bad. Acts of kindness included thank you notes, prayer groups, funeral Mass attendance, allowing teachers to vent, covering classes, noticing when a teacher was down, checking in on family members, etc. In this way, principals were able to convey kindness to their staff.

**Catholic.** Benevolence is central to Catholic social teaching. Care of the poor, the ill, and the vulnerable are actively taught and supported in Catholic schools (Bishops, 1998). All subjects interviewed for this study were practicing Catholics. It may be that, due to their roles as spiritual leaders in a Catholic school, these principals had a propensity toward benevolence and that is why it was so well observed.

### **Competence**

**Defined.** Competence, “is the ability to perform a task as expected, according to appropriate standards” (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 30). In a school setting, teachers rely on school leaders to do their job well. Teachers depend on school leaders to provide materials, support a safe environment, remove ineffective teachers, and communicate effectively (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995b). A study of fire fighters and government workers identified ability as one of five important factors for managerial trustworthiness. Ability, defined as professional skill and managerial skill, was critical to trust relationships with managers (Perry & Mankin, 2007).

**Teachers.** The principals in this study were characterized as hard working, dedicated and knowledgeable. The teachers felt as though the schools were in good hands. They commented that the principals had the best interests of the school at heart and would act accordingly. Teachers spoke of the principal as always being there. One joked that his principal should get a cot for his office.

**Principal.** The principals also had faith in the competency of their teachers. Principals described themselves as competent when asked, but each was clear to say they were still learning and seeking to improve their knowledge base. Each was reflective in

his/her practice, seeking input from teachers, coursework, or the Archdiocese of Boston to further their learning.

**Catholic.** Catholic school principals act as the faith community leaders of the school. Self-reflection is an important part of faith formation (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). As a matter of faith Catholics are continuously reflecting on their fallibility and offering gratitude for their blessings when they pray. In this way the principals reflect on their practice and work hard to improve.

### **Openness**

**Defined.** Zand (1997) defines openness as people's willingness to make themselves vulnerable by sharing information, influence, and control. Leaders who share information make themselves vulnerable by disclosing facts, judgments, intentions, and feelings (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Knowledge is power. When leaders share information, they give up some of their power, hence making themselves vulnerable. Openness in control involves trusting others by delegating important tasks to them. A leader trusts that the other will perform the task. A leader is open to the influence of others when allowing them to change plans, goals, and directions. "Openness initiates a kind of reciprocal trust, signaling that neither the information nor the individual will be exploited, so that recipients can feel that same confidence in return" (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 25). Openness is important in that it allows a reciprocal vulnerability to strengthen the development of trust. As one gives trust she increases the likelihood that trust will be returned.

**Teachers.** Each teacher interviewed spoke about the openness of the principals. Each said that there was an open-door policy. Teachers commented that the principals

shared important, timely, and sensitive information with them. Each was clear that there were things that were confidential and they did not expect for the principal to share those things. This sharing of information renders the principal vulnerable to the teachers. This vulnerability is a component of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004; Zand, 1997). By making themselves vulnerable to their teachers these principals gave the teachers the message that they trusted them to handle sensitive and important information. They were treated with respect and as professionals. Teachers shared information with their principal as well.

**Principal.** In the process of supporting professional growth for teachers, principals must know what the growth areas are for each teacher in order to properly support that teacher's growth. Openness on the part of the principal can lead to a teacher revealing vulnerabilities in his/her practice in a goal-setting meeting. If there is not a high level of trust, goals could remain general and superficial. One of the principals interviewed revealed that he shares his professional goals with his teachers in an effort to model reflective practice. This openness likely increases the willingness of his teachers to candidly share their vulnerabilities and work toward improvement as well.

**Catholic.** One principal spoke of Jesus Christ. He said, "You know, in the Bible, they didn't call Jesus a doctor or lawyer, they called him teacher." There is no greater example of making oneself vulnerable than that of Jesus Christ. He was fully open and shared all with his followers. He shared God's plan including his eventual death. This is the example that Catholic school principals are asked to emulate, to be Christ-like (Grahm, 2011).

**Honesty**

**Defined.** Honesty is the extent to which a person accurately represents situations and is dependent on a person's character, integrity, and authenticity (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006; Scarr, 2011). Integrity, according to Kochanek (2005) is "demonstrated by espousing beliefs that are based on doing what is in the best interest of children and carrying through with actions that are consistent with those beliefs" (p. 8). Authentic behavior is characterized by accountability, avoiding manipulation and being 'real' even in the face of role expectations (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Studies from fields including business, health care management, and higher education have identified honesty or integrity as the most important facet of trust (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Gabarro, 1978; Schindler & Thomas, 1993).

**Teachers.** Each teacher commented that principals were direct in addressing issues with staff members. They also believed that they could ask questions and receive honest answers regarding concerns. They shared that principals were sharing information routinely. They said they had information they needed and could trust that it was accurate. Teachers characterized principals as honest, upfront, authentic, sincere, direct, transparent, and as having integrity.

**Principal.** When asked if they told teachers what was really going on, principals qualified their answers. They stated that they did share important information, which the teachers needed and wanted, but that they did withhold information that was of a confidential nature or that could cause needless worry. One principal shared that, "you are not the town crier, it is not your job to tell everything. You have to filter, but you can't be dishonest." The principals did filter the information they gave to teachers, but

not in an attempt to retain power. They filter the information so that the teachers could focus on teaching.

**Catholic.** Catholic schools are steeped in a Catholic worldview, which includes the desire to seek wisdom and truth and are shaped by community, both educational and faith communities (Ozar & Weitzel-O'Neill, 2012). Teachers and principals are models for this worldview and active participants in community. Honesty and integrity are key to establishing authentic representation of data and operational vitality (Ozar & Weitzel-O'Neill, 2012).

### **Reliability**

**Defined.** “Reliability refers to the extent to which you can depend upon another party to come through for you, to act consistently, and to follow through” (Brewster & Railsback, 2003, p. 4). Teachers trust principals more when they observe their principal predictably stepping up to support them (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Predictability reduces the perceived level of threat and therefore increases safety (Vodicka, 2006). Reliability alone will not increase trust, particularly if a person reliably treats others badly, but it sets the stage for the development of trust (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995b).

**Teachers.** When commenting on reliability, teachers spoke of their principals' efforts to be there for them even when they were tired, frustrated or busy. Each principal was portrayed as human, in that, they get tired, frustrated, or distracted. When asked a question regarding principal support when stakeholders question a teacher's actions, teachers said that their principal would support them. They said that the principal would listen and fairly address concerns of the parents, but they all stated that the principal

would support them. “He’s got our back,” was a common sentiment among teachers. Interestingly, most teachers had not actually experienced the need to have their principal support them. Yet, they believed the principal would support them.

**Principal.** When asked a similar question, the principals unanimously agreed that they would support their teachers. This was followed by a few examples of uncomfortable meetings or situations when the teacher was in the wrong and the principal still supported them in the meeting or with the parent, but then helped the teacher to see the error of his/her ways and work to grow the teacher’s practice.

**Catholic.** This researcher observed that the principals put others before themselves and displayed behaviors consistent with servant leadership. The servant leader’s primary concern is service to his/her followers (Grahn, 2011). This is a hallmark of the Catholic faith. Christ was first and foremost a servant leader (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

### **Building Trust in Action**

In their study of building trust within a school district, Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly and Chrispeels (2007) yielded several implications for establishing trust relationships. Follow-through, encompassing both reliability and integrity, was a key aspect in developing trust. In interviews with respondents, the researchers found that if administration acted quickly to respond to suggestions of faculty, trust was enhanced. In addition, they found that decision-making needed to be shared and transparent. Leaders that offered to share decision-making or offered the thought process behind the decision were more likely to develop trust. The third and final implication was redesigning the system. This redesign included more frequent interaction between faculty and leadership

and more frequent professional development. This increased communication and competence (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007). Although there were no direct questions asked regarding building trust, there were themes that emerged to support these implications for building trust.

**Follow-Through.** Chhuon et al defined follow-through as, “In a situation of interdependence, when something is required from another person, the individual can be counted on to supply it” (2007, p. 235). Teachers were asked if they could count on their principal to support them if questioned by a stakeholder. Each teacher believed, that his or her principal would support him or her, although few had experienced it. One teacher commented that, “She means what she says,” indicating that her principal can be counted on to follow-through. Follow-through, like trust, is most obvious when it is lacking. No evidence of a lack of follow-through was found in any of the schools. Teachers did share stories of principals always helping, or always being there, or always listening. This would indicate that there was consistency in the principals’ behaviors.

**Shared and Transparent Decision-Making.** Trust was increased when administrators either shared the decision-making or shared the comprehensive rationale and the thought process for decisions made (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007). Each principal shared how teachers were involved in the decision making process and how the rationale behind decisions made without teacher input was communicated. One principal included teachers in the selection of the reading and math series, another consulted all teachers in a scheduling change and then assigned a small group of teachers to develop the plan and share it, and the third included teachers in the hiring process for new teachers. In addition, one principal shared the process for very

clear communication of the decisions of the realigned parish council, which did not include teacher input. Each principal articulated a personal belief that allowing teachers a voice in decisions increased the teacher buy-in and, hence, the likelihood that teachers would implement the changes. Teachers shared that they had been asked for input in faculty meetings, through surveys, or more casual conversations. They believed that their voices were considered, if not always honored. One teacher shared, “He has so many other things to consider, the big picture. Sure I might think my idea is best, but he has more to consider. Do I think he should take my idea every time? No.”

**Teacher Contact.** Frequent and meaningful contact and the provision of ongoing professional development and support for teacher growth enhance the building of trust (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzalez, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2007). When principals spoke about the contact with teachers, it was clear that they made teacher contact a priority. One principal commented that he went in to every classroom everyday; another shared that he joins conversations in the hall or in the teacher lunchroom and a third joked that she was running a sorority. Each principal appeared to enjoy these frequent interactions with teachers. They talked about getting to know the teachers on a personal level as well as a professional level. The teachers supported the notion of frequent contact sharing that principals were not behind their desks with the door closed. In contrast, they were out around the building visiting with teachers and students, in the classrooms, in the halls, and in the cafeteria. When asked how does your principal show care for you, teachers responded that they were there for them; asking them what they needed, asking them how they were, and noticing when things were wrong.

Professional development and supported teacher growth were two areas that the principals found lacking when they arrived at their new schools. Each developed a plan for regular teachers observation and evaluation and connected those plans to professional development. One principal was in the process of vetting a professional development company that was offering to provide teachers at the school with personalized professional development. This was something that was very important to this principal. A second principal was in the process of developing a teacher development practice, as her teachers had not had that support previously. She was going in to teacher classrooms to observe and support her teachers frequently. The third principal had brought in a one-to-one computer program with iPads and the training to go with them. Teachers were clearly open to the changes in professional development and support for their professional growth. One teacher spoke about change being hard; but that her principal listened to her frustrations and that made her feel better. She came to realize that it was for the good of the students and the good of the school so she was embracing the change. A teacher commented that her principal had a ‘sixth sense’ for knowing what the teachers needed and quickly discerned the strengths and weaknesses of her staff. Another teacher added that she enjoyed the professional conversations she had with her knowledgeable principal.

### **Catholic School Setting**

The setting for this study was purposefully chosen. Each school was a Catholic school with high trust and a beginning principal. In Convey’s (2012) visual representation of Catholic identity (see Figure 1, p. 27) at the top of the model are the people responsible for creating the content and building the culture. Convey says

although content is important, it is the culture that has been tied to effectiveness of the development of Catholic identity. The culture or climate of a Catholic school is imbued with faith, service, and community. These components of a Catholic school culture are fertile ground for establishing trust. A disposition to trust, shared values and attitudes, as well as positive moods and emotions influence the development of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Tschannen-Moran goes on to state that having faith is inherent in a trusting disposition (2004). Belonging to a faith community, as Catholic school principals and teachers do, infers shared Catholic values. These factors, combined with the presence of the five facets, likely increased the development of trust in these Catholic schools.

**Presence**

During the initial phase of coding, a theme was identified in addition to the five facets of trust. ‘Presence’ was a word repeated in several of the interviews and led to further examination and categorization. Each interview was then reviewed for further evidence. Examples of quotes considered in this category are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

*Participant Statements Supporting Presence*

Presence Daily interactions Available to us on a personal level Just her being present They can feel the presence of their administrator Be a presence for them She wanted to make sure she was there She wants to be there for us Visible She knows that she wants to be here I am here for them You have to listen and learn first I think presence is important
--

You need to be here  
There is just something about the presence of leadership  
Presence among your people is a key thing for trust and building up relationships  
He is never too busy for us  
Good listener  
Approachable  
It just makes the whole building sing when someone is easy to talk to  
He is there with us, part of us  
You always have to be there  
Always available  
Going into the classroom  
Active listening  
I am all around the school  
Really listen/learn them  
Listen very attentively  
Proactive presence  
Join in conversation  
Stopping-in all rooms  
Informal walk-a-rounds  
See every teacher every day  
Present to students in the lunchroom  
Speak daily/daily interaction  
His heart is in it  
Breathes St. James day in and day out  
Speaks with them face-to-face

There is little research relative to the concept of presence as a leadership quality and less as a component of trust development. What definitions exist, range from the simple to the complex. Presence is defined by Lubar and Halpern as, “the ability to connect authentically with the thoughts and feelings of others” (2004). In their book, *Presence*, Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers (2005) posit:

We first thought of presence as being fully conscious and aware in the present moment. Then we began to appreciate presence as deep listening, of being open beyond one’s preconceptions and historical ways of making sense. We came to see the importance of letting go of old identities and the need to control and, as Saulk said, making choices to serve the evolution of life. Ultimately, we came to see all these aspects of presence

as leading to a state of ‘letting come,’ of consciously participating in the larger field for change. When this happens, the field shifts, and the forces shaping a situation can move from recreating the past to manifesting or realizing an emerging future.

In his study of relational trust for new independent heads of schools, Batiste included presence, conveyed as “respectful engagement” (2013, p. 84), with others as a subcategory of his engagement dimension. He found that new heads of school leveraged relational trust by being present and visible. Examples of his observations of new heads of school in this subcategory included attendance at school functions, athletic events, ‘walk-a-bouts’ in the buildings, welcoming students in the morning, and spending time in the cafeteria (Batiste, 2013).

Researchers examining the influence of presence on leadership defined presence thusly, “an overarching personal quality possessed by leaders who invest and are skilful in building trusting and supportive relationships, which enhances individual agency” (Marsh, Waniganayake, & De Nobile, 2014, p. 24) where individual agency is characterized as making a difference for teachers.

In her conceptual analysis of presence within the field of nursing, Tavernier (2006) reviewed several definitions of presence in nursing. One, in particular, resonated with the data in this study. “An unconditionally loving, non-routinized way of being with, in which nurse bears witness to changing health patterns of personal and families” (Bernardo, 1998, p. 41).

The definitions encompass many concepts: connections, change, letting go and ‘letting come,’ engagement, trust, support, love, and bearing witness. As each principal

stewards his or her school toward change, he or she authentically connects to engage and support those who do the work, letting go of the past inefficient practices while still honoring the traditions that make each school special. By letting come or welcoming the co-created future with love, while bearing witness to the lives of those in the school community, each principal has built strong trust with his or her teachers and made a difference. Each of the principals in this study clearly embodied these components of presence. Teachers believed that their principals valued the relationship and routinely engaged them in decision-making. Because principals had this type of relationship with teachers, the teachers were able to let go of past practices and, secure in the principal's commitment to what is best for the school, let come the future of the school they helped create.

### **Implications**

#### **Practitioners**

Establishing trust with teachers is critical to implementing and sustaining reforms or change. Each principal in this study came from a different background and entered a different situation upon beginning his or her principalship. Each had a plan to build or enhance relationships with teachers. Principals, who establish personal as well as professional relationships with teachers, increase the likelihood of establishing trust relationships. If principals want to build trust with teachers, they need to convey benevolence, reliability, openness, competence, and honesty. In addition, follow-through, shared decision-making, and teacher development must be a focus.

Benevolence, as a facet of trust, can be more effective in establishing trust if the kindness shown is personal and specific to the teacher. Small gestures can have a greater

impact if made in this way. The stories of these principals reveal that benevolence can be conveyed by:

- Actively identifying and meeting teacher needs
- Checking-in with teachers and students
- Praising teachers specifically and often
- Listening with empathy and showing care for teachers and students
- Developing supportive personal and professional relationships with teachers

Knowing what to expect reduces uncertainty, hence lessens vulnerability. When teachers can count on their principal to act reliably they are less vulnerable. The teachers in this study shared that their principals were reliably there for them, supporting them, and working for the best interest of the school. Principals shared that they backed their teachers, particularly in the presence of others. The stories of these principals indicate that reliability can be conveyed by:

- Frequently and reliably visiting with teachers and students
- Communicating weekly about coming events and providing feedback for the accomplishments of the week past
- Supporting teachers with stakeholders
- Responding consistently with receptivity, regardless of present demands

The importance of remaining open, in providing timely information and delegating authority, cannot be overstated. Knowledge is power. When principals share information with teachers they make themselves vulnerable to teachers and that is a key component in developing trust. The benefits of that vulnerability far outweigh the

consequences. When principals are forthright with teachers, reciprocity ensues and teachers are more likely to divulge areas of insecurity in their practice, making it easier for principals to coach toward improvement. The stories of these principals reveal that openness can be conveyed by:

- Telling teachers what they need to know in a timely manner – not keeping secrets
- Having an open-door policy
- Giving immediate attention to teacher concerns
- Soliciting teacher input, suggestions, and critique
- Cultivating transparency in decision-making

Competence is another important facet of trust. Hard work is noticed and appreciated by teachers. Support for professional development and improvement of practice need to be ongoing. Having candid conversations regarding improvement of practice conveys doing what is best for the school. Principals need to model self-reflective practice. The stories of these principals reveal that competence can be conveyed by:

- Routinely sharing new information regarding best practices with teachers
- Anticipating and preparing for obstacles to smooth operation of the school
- Collaboratively identifying and addressing areas of needed improvement in curriculum development and teacher practice
- Providing teachers with necessary tools, technology, and support to continuously improve their practice

- A willingness to work along side teachers and put in the time necessary to get the job done

Honesty, as a facet, has the most face validity in establishing trust. When thinking about trust, the first thing that comes to mind is honesty. If a person is honest then they can be trusted. Teachers in this study valued the honesty of their principals. When asked questions regarding the principals' integrity, teachers' answers were unhesitatingly delivered in the affirmative. The stories of these principals reveal that honesty can be conveyed by:

- Telling the truth
- Directly addressing difficult situations
- Modeling a no-gossip policy
- Sharing personal information with teachers
- Living their faith with sincerity

Frequent and reliable positive contact with teachers is necessary to establish a trusting relationship. This is not to say that principals should avoid difficult conversations, on the contrary. Difficult conversations are better received if the principal has reliably maintained positive contact in the past. Teachers routinely stated that their principals treated them well even when stressed or tired.

As beginning principals building trust at the start of tenure in a building, follow-through, shared decision-making and teacher development must be a focus. In this study, teachers commented that they could count on their principals' constant support and presence during the day. Each study participant spoke clearly about the participatory decision-making in each building. It was clear that teacher buy-in, to changes and

reforms, was strengthened by giving the teachers a voice. Improvement of practice was also a focus of the principals in this study. Each was a self-proclaimed life-long learner continuously striving for, and modeling, growth of practice. Each was actively supporting teachers in a strategic way to improve practice. Sr. Sara said it best, “people only become stagnant if we allow that. If we give them reason to keep growing and feel good about what they are doing, then I think they will do it and it has to start with myself.”

### **Further Research**

There is need to further examine the role of presence in the development of trust and in leadership. Conceptual understanding of what is meant by presence in relation to building trust and the role presence plays in leadership could further assist school leaders. In addition, an understanding of how leaders can develop or enhance presence could be instructive.

### **Conclusion**

This study was conducted to examine principal and teacher trust as it relates to creating a supportive environment for change and reform. As such, the lived experiences of three beginning Catholic school principals from schools with high trust, as they established trust with their teachers, were studied with a mixed method design. The resulting data were examined for information that would be helpful to all beginning principals and to determine relation to Tschannen-Moran’s five facets of trust.

The results indicated that principals in the study displayed each of the five facets of trust: benevolence, reliability, openness, competence, and honesty. Principals made establishing and maintaining positive personal and professional relationships a priority.

They each actively sought out and included teacher voices in decision-making in addition to planning and providing for professional development to support teacher growth.

Principals were present for their teachers. They made a point of frequent meaningful contact with teachers and students.

This study gave principals and teachers at these schools the opportunity to shine a light on the positive development of trust in their buildings. This study adds to the limited research on principal and teacher trust. In addition, presence, as it relates to trust and leadership effectiveness, was identified as an emerging concept for future study.

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**Appendix A**  
Teacher Trust Survey

Dissertation Research Principal Survey

**School Name**

**1. Teachers in this school are candid with me.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**2. I have faith in the integrity of my teachers.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**3. I believe in my teachers.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**4. I question the competence of some of my teachers.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**5. I am often suspicious of teachers' motives in this school.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**6. When teachers in this school tell you something, you can believe it.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**7. Even in difficult situations, I can depend on my teachers.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**8. My teachers typically look out for me.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**9. I trust the teachers in this school.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**Appendix B**

Principal Trust Survey

**St. Fidelis Elementary Teacher Survey**

This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the quality of relationships in schools. Your answers are confidential. Please indicate the extent that you agree or disagree with each of the statements about your school, marking in the columns on the right, ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (6) Strongly Agree, filling the bubbles completely.

**1. The teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of the principal.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**2. The principal in this school typically acts in the best interests of the teachers.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**3. Teachers in this school can rely on the principal.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**4. Teachers in this school trust the principal.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**5. The principal doesn't tell teachers what is really going on.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**6. The principal of this school does not show concern for teachers.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**7. The teachers in this school are suspicious of most of the principal's actions.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**8. The principal in this school is competent in doing his or her job.**

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree       Strongly Agree

**Appendix C**

## IRB Approval Letter

## Plymouth State University Institutional Review Board

December 12, 2013

Dear Kim Stoloski:

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Plymouth State University, your project entitled "Trusting the Principal" has been granted approval for one year effective December 12, 2013.

If, during the course of your project you intend to make changes which may significantly affect the human subjects involved (particularly methodological changes), you must obtain IRB approval prior to implementing these changes. Any unanticipated problems related to your use of human subjects must be promptly reported to the IRB. The IRB may be contacted through Dr. David Mackey, Chair of the IRB. This is required so that the IRB can update or revise protective measures for human subjects as may be necessary.

You are expected to maintain as an essential part of your project records, any records pertaining to the use of humans as subjects in your research. This includes any information or materials conveyed to and received from the subjects as well as any executed forms, data and analysis results. If this is a funded project (federal, state, private, other organization), you should be aware that these records are subject to inspection and review by authorized representatives of the University, State of New Hampshire, and/or the federal government.

Please note that IRB approval cannot exceed one year. If you expect your project to continue beyond this approval period, you must submit a request for continuance to the IRB for renewal of IRB approval. IRB approval must be obtained and maintained for the entire term of your project or award.

Upon completion of your interaction and involvement with human subjects, please complete and submit the "End of research report" located on the IRB website. Upon notification we will close our files pertaining to your project. Any subsequent reactivation of the project will require a new IRB application.

Please do not hesitate to contact the IRB if you have any questions or require assistance. We will be happy to assist you in any way we can. Thank you for your cooperation and efforts throughout this review process. We wish you success in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

*David Mackey*

David A. Mackey, Chair

Institutional Review Board

Plymouth State University

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Consent Form  
Trusting the Principal

Principal Investigator: Kim Stoloski, CAGS  
Doctoral Candidate, Plymouth State University

**Purpose:** You are invited to participate in the research study project called, *Trusting the Principal*, which is being conducted at Plymouth State University under the direction of Dr. Kathleen C. McCabe. The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of beginning (in their first or second year) Catholic school principals as they establish trust with their teachers. You are being asked to participate because you are a teacher in a Catholic school with a beginning principal.

**Description of the Study:** This research will take place in the participant's classroom or other agreeable location suited to the participant. You will be asked to answer questions regarding how your principal builds trust with teachers. Your participation will consist of one 90 minute initial interview and one 90 minute focus group interview. Both interviews will be audiotaped for accurate transcription.

**Risks and Discomforts:** There are minimal risks to participation in this study, including loss of confidentiality. Other risks associated with participation in this study may include anxiety or upset. If so you may stop at any time without repercussions or fear of reprisal.

**Injury Compensation Statement:** Neither Plymouth State University nor any government or other agency funding this research project will provide special services, free care, or compensation for any injuries resulting from this research. Treatment for such injuries will be at the expense of the participant and/or paid through the participant's medical plan.

**Benefits:** The only direct benefit to you is that you may learn more about how education research projects are run and you may learn more about how your principal establishes trust with teachers. Other may benefit by learning from the results of this research.

**Alternative Procedures:** The only alternative procedure for this study is to not participate.

**Confidentiality:** All documents and information pertaining to this research study will be kept confidential in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. I understand that data generated by the study may be reviewed by Plymouth State University's Institutional Review Board, which is the committee responsible for ensuring my welfare and rights as a research participant, to assure proper conduct of the study and compliance with university regulations. If any presentations or publication result from this research, I will not be identified by name. Digitally recorded interviews will be destroyed after transcription. No personally identifiable information will be kept with transcriptions. Consent forms will be kept separate from transcriptions and in a locked file cabinet.

**Voluntary Participation:** Your refusal to participate in this study will involve no penalty or

loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. In addition you may end participation at any time without penalty. All data collected will be destroyed if you withdraw from the study.

**Compensation:** There is minimal compensation for participation in this study. Study participants may receive snacks and beverages as a token of appreciation.

**Questions:** Before you decide to participate in this study you may ask any questions that you might have. If you have any questions before, during or after participation in this study or you experience any distress as a result of this research you should contact the researcher, Kim Stoloski, 508-272-1426 or her supervising faculty member, Dr. Kathleen C. McCabe, 603-279-4753.

All of my questions were answered to my satisfaction before I consented to participate in this study, but if I have any further questions about the study I may call Kim Stoloski at telephone number 508-272-1426. If I have any questions about the rights of research participants I may call the Chairperson of Plymouth State University's Institutional Review Board at 603-535-3193.

**Voluntary Consent:** I am free to withdraw or refuse my consent at any time without penalty or consequence.

**Signatures:**

I voluntarily give my consent to participate in this research study. I understand I will be given a copy of this consent form.

Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge, the subject signing this consent form has had the study fully and carefully explained by me and have been given an opportunity to ask any questions regarding the nature, risks, and benefits of participation in this research study.

Kim Stoloski  
Investigator's Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**IRB Approval:**

Plymouth State University's IRB has approved the solicitation of participants for the study until December 12, 2014.

## Appendix E

### Principal Interview Questions

As a beginning principal you have many responsibilities. I would like to ask a few questions about how you build trust with teachers. For each question please provide specific examples. (B= benevolence R= reliability O= openness C= competency H= honesty)

1. How do you show concern for teachers? (B)
2. Is it easy or difficult to show you care? (B)
3. Can your teachers count on you to support them when other stakeholders (parents, central office, community members) question their professionalism? (R)
4. Do you think your teachers have faith in your integrity? (R)
5. How do you address personal or professional issues of concern with teachers? (O)
6. Do you think that you act in the best interest of teachers? (O)
7. Do you think that you are skilled in all aspects of your job? What are your strengths? (C)
8. What do you see as areas in need of improvement? (C)
9. Are you direct in addressing personal or professional concerns with teachers? (H)
10. Do you always tell the teachers what is really going on? (H)
11. What factors do you see as necessary or related to building trust?
12. There are many strategies for addressing school reform how important do you feel trust is to implementing and sustaining school reform?
13. How important is relationship building when you have so many other things to be accountable for as a school leader? (Example: closing the achievement gap)
14. Let's spend some time reviewing the three artifacts that you selected as representative of your efforts to cultivate trust. Why did you select artifact 1, 2, 3?
15. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being the most important and 10 being the least important) how important is cultivating trust with teachers in relation to your other administrative duties?
16. In reflecting on your beginning principalship, what recommendations would you have for other beginning principals regarding building trust with teachers?
17. Are there any other thoughts that you have regarding the importance of your cultivation of trust with teachers that we have not talked about?

Thank you for your time.

(Adapted and used with permission, Tschannen-Moran, 2004)

**Appendix F**

## Teacher Interview Questions

A beginning principal has many responsibilities. I would like to ask a few questions about how your principal builds trust with teachers. For each question please provide specific examples. (B= benevolence R= reliability O= openness C= competency H= honesty)

18. How does your principal show concern for you? (B)
19. Do you think it is easy or difficult for your principal to show care? (B)
20. Can you depend on your principal to support you when other stakeholders (parents, central office, community members) question your professionalism? (R)
21. Do you have faith in the integrity of your principal? (R)
22. How does your principal address personal or professional issues of concern with teachers? (O)
23. Do you think that your principal acts in the best interest of teachers? (O)
24. Do you think that your principal is skilled in all aspects of his/her job? What are his/her strengths? (C)
25. What do you see as areas in need of improvement? (C)
26. Is your principal direct in addressing personal or professional concerns with teachers? (H)
27. Does your principal always tell the teachers what is really going on? (H)
28. What factors do you see as necessary or related to building trust?
29. There are many strategies for addressing school reform how important do you feel trust is to implementing and sustaining school reform?
30. How important is a principal's attention to relationship building when he/she has so many other things to be accountable for as a school leader? (Example: closing the achievement gap)
31. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being the most important and 10 being the least important) how important is a principal's cultivation of trust with teachers in relation to his/her other administrative duties?
32. What recommendations would you have for beginning principals regarding building trust with teachers?
33. Are there any other thoughts that you have regarding your principal's cultivation of trust with teachers that we have not talked about?

Thank you for your time.

(Adapted and used with permission, Tschannen-Moran, 2004)

**Appendix G**

## Focus Group Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group on how beginning Catholic school principals establish trust with teachers. Please select a pseudonym for this interview and respond by saying your pseudonym first. This interview will be recorded for transcription.

1. How long have you been employed by this school?
2. The survey results indicate that there is a high level of trust at this school. What have you experienced that supports that rating?

Trust is based on Benevolence, Reliability, Openness, Competence, and Honesty.

3. During your time at this school how have you experienced benevolence?

I would define benevolence as caring for the other in a relationship.

4. During your time at this school how have you experienced reliability?

I would define reliability as the extent to which you can count on the other to come through for you, to act consistently, and follow through.

5. During your time at this school how have you experienced openness?

I would define openness as the willingness to make themselves vulnerable by sharing information, influence, and control.

6. During your time at this school how have you experienced competence?

I would define competence as the ability to perform a task as expected, according to appropriate standards.

7. During your time at this school how have you experienced honesty?

I would define honesty as the extent to which a person accurately represents situations and is dependent on a person's character, integrity, and authenticity.