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Improving the Leadership of P-12 Administrative Teams

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Improving the Leadership of P-12 Administrative Teams

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Abstract

Traditional individualistic approaches to leadership and learning have failed to create the systems change and continual improvement school districts need. As a result, school districts have increasingly turned to use administrative teams to solve complex systems issues. Unfortunately, many of these groups fail to become a real team. Facilitating a groups transformation into a team that effectively engages learning is not easy.

The primary goal of this case study is to assist team leaders in improving their leadership of P-12 administrative teams, primarily by gaining the perspectives of team members. These perspectives have been gathered from ten exceptional P-12 administrative team members (five district directors and five principals). This qualitative case study uses their interviews and follow-up focus groups to delve deeper into their initial insights and perspectives on the guiding research question: What are the insights and suggestions of a team of P-12 principals and district directors that could benefit team leaders who are creating teams to collaborate and learn together? The significant findings and implications outline what leaders should do to increase the likelihood of a group becoming a high performing team, and what may hinder leaders from transforming a group into a team. The most critical finding: The leader makes or breaks the team. Fortunately, leaders can learn to be effective, transformational team leaders.

Keywords: Team Learning; Transformational Leaders; P-12 Administrative Leadership Teams; Team Leaders; Incompetent, Insecure, and Destructive Leadership

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Dr. Art Jarvis has committed his life to developing others and reforming antiquated, inequitable educational systems. He is a genuine mentor, advocate, innovator, teacher, and superintendent. For his contributions to mentoring countless educational leaders and improving teams and school districts, I dedicate this dissertation to him.

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Improving the Leadership of P-12 Administrative Teams

Traditional individualistic approaches to leadership and learning have failed to create the systems change and continual improvement necessary in a complex, globalized world (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Clarke, 2012; Fisser & Browaeys, 2010; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017; Senge, 2006). Conventional approaches often fail because individuals working alone do not learn from other people with diverse perspectives, expertise, and positions of leadership in different departments or school levels. Collaborative groups working and learning together increase buy-in, ownership, learning from the insights of other people's perspectives and co-construction of new understanding and agreement (Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017; Senge, 2006). When group members collaborate, learn from one another, dialogue, explore different perspectives, discuss, challenge assumptions, identify fatal flaws in the system, and reflect, the collective learning becomes part of the organization's culture. This approach to collaborative learning is referred to as team learning, and it has become the go-to strategy for organizations and school districts (Bell, Kozlowski, and Blawath, 2012; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017; Senge, 2006).

The transition from individualistic leadership approaches to the use of teams gained traction in the 1990s (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012). Towards the end of the Cold War, Peter Senge's book, *The Fifth Discipline*, highlighted how using teams is more powerful than relying on individual leaders for change. This shift was groundbreaking because the culture of U.S. organizations historically promoted the power of rugged individualism; individualism was then—and still is—a significant mental model for many Americans. Collectivist ideology was viewed as anti-American; however, Senge's and other researchers brought to light the power of using teams. The Fifth Discipline demonstrated how teams should

be used to define an organization's purpose, dismantle existing assumptions, create a shared mission, and use team learning to implement systems change. When Senge's research popularized team learning, organizations and school districts took notice. Since the 1990s, many organizations have shifted from traditional top-down, transactional, individualistic decision-making approaches to the increased use of teams for decision making and creating solutions (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson, Dillon, and Roloff 2007; Jansen, Kostopoulos, Mihalache, & Papalexandris, 2016; Kozlowski, Watola, Jensen, Kim, & Botero, 2008; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017; Senge, 2006).

Organizations have found that, when a group becomes a high performing team that learns and works together, these teams outperform individual decision makers. These high performing teams are solving complex systems issues that traditional approaches created, enabled, or were unable to solve. Their members have diverse perspectives, roles, and mindsets. They feel safe and are encouraged to push one another to collaboratively create solutions that no individual member could have created. The energy of these teams' collaboration and learning changes how the members view the world through a new shared mental model. These teams:

- are engaging, inspiring, and motivational.
- use dialogue, discussion, and constructive conflict.
- increase the likelihood that everyone learns and improves.
- analyze the entire system, learning to view the system differently because of the diverse team's discourse and learning.
- benefit districts that are siloed in departments with members who are experts in part of the system, but who do not typically analyze how to improve the system as a whole.
- outperform individual efforts.

- benefit both the organization and the members.

Teams succeed when they learn together by leveraging the strengths, perspectives, and leadership of diverse members. Leaders and districts must understand that the common elements and benefits of team learning are directly impacted by the leader's approaches, the perceptions of team members, and the culture of the organization. Teams are more likely to be successful when team leaders and districts understand and support team learning.

The foundation of effective teams' success is team learning (Raes, Decuyper, Lismont, Van den Bossche, Kyndt, Demeyere, & Dochy, 2013; Senge, 2006). Team learning is the reason why teams are used, why successful teams outperform individuals, and why districts continue to prioritize collaborative teams when the faster and more straightforward approach appears to be top-down, transactional leadership (Raes et al., 2013).

Team learning has common essential elements: The group identifies itself as a team; the team works toward a common goal; it uses systems for formal and informal learning; it sets goals that motivate members; an effective leader guides it; it has ownership when creating solutions; the team dialogues and discusses when sharing information; and the team maintains a healthy balance between conflict and cohesion when learning and working together. The outcome: organizations and school districts using team learning are more likely to be successful when they implement systems that support team learning and have effective team leaders that support the elements of team learning.

Teams succeed when their members are empowered to collaborate and learn together. Successful teams leverage the strengths, perspectives, and leadership of the members. Team learning increases when the leader intentionally recruits diverse members, creates safe spaces for

collaboration, ensures the members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability, and members create (Raes et al., 2013).

While there are significant benefits to team learning, leading teams to collaboratively create and engage in team learning is not easy. Each team has its own culture that's impacted by a variety of factors. These factors include the roles and perspectives of members of the team, specific learning opportunities, the culture of the organization or district, the context and goal of the team, the beliefs of the team leader, and the approaches, strategies and structures the team leader uses to support the team's collaboration and learning (Bass, 1999; Bell et al., 2012; Clarke, 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Yorks & Sauquet, 2003; Senge, 2006). To alleviate some of the challenges of team leadership, Bernard Bass, a scholar in leadership studies and organizational behavior, published the book *Transformational Leadership* in 1997, which expanded upon an earlier 1970s theory called transformational leadership theory.

Bass' leadership approach focused on improving leadership of teams and building the leadership capacity of the members of the team. Transformational leadership increases team motivation, morale, performance, collective purpose, ownership, and it improves the results of the team's collaboration (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leadership aligns with and can support team learning approaches. The success of a team increases if the leader intentionally uses transformational leadership and team learning approaches (Decuyper et al., 2010; Raes et al., 2013).

During the 2017-18 school year, while engaged in my superintendent internship, I had the opportunity to co-create and facilitate a district-level administrative leadership team called the Partnership Principal Advisory Team (PPA). With specific guidance from a mentor, I intentionally sought out and recruited a diverse team of highly effective administrators. The PPA

included five P-12 principals and five district directors who focused on improving districtwide family and community partnerships. The goal of the PPA was to create a system to support schools in establishing culturally responsive family partnerships. Ideally, this system would help disrupt inequity, support all families, build capacity in staff and families to partner for student learning, and help families navigate our school systems to support their children.

My challenge when leading the PPA is echoed in leadership teams in other schools, districts, and organizations: determining how I, as the team leader, would turn the group into a team that would collaborate and learn together. Initially, I stumbled in my leadership. I was fortunate, however, to have three outstanding superintendent mentors and the PPA members' insights and suggestions to shape and improve my leadership, so the group ultimately evolved into a team that accomplished our goal. Without my mentors' and team members' insights, suggestions, coaching, and support, I would have failed to help the group transition into an effective team. This qualitative case study was born from that learning, and it examines the insights and suggestions of PPA members for the benefit of future team leaders when creating a team to collaborate and learn together.

Statement of the Problem: We Need Teams, but Teams Often Fail

While using a team of school district administrative leaders to solve problems has become commonplace, teams often fail to collaborate and learn together, fall short of their intended outcomes, and fail to unite as a team. Both practical and empirical research have demonstrated that team learning is not easily achieved in real-world teams (Decuyper, Dochy, & Van Den Bossche, 2010; Raes et al., 2013; Senge, 2006). Teams seldom learn well together, and the factors are myriad: incompetent leadership, insecure leadership, destructive leadership, groupthink, destructive conflict among members, lack of diversity of members, unclear purpose,

unsafe collaboration space, lack of ownership, micromanagement, lack of structure for collaboration, predetermined outcomes of the leader, interpersonal tension, lack of commitment to goals, lack of accountability or diffusion of responsibility, members not sharing information, failure to challenge one another's ideas, not thinking outside the box, not challenging the status quo, and not expressing their ideas or true feelings when decisions are being made (Senge, 2006). When members experience ineffective committees or groups, what group failure looks like can vary. Some examples may include:

- a few people can monopolize the discussion, while others do not talk
- the absence of a clear purpose leads to confusion or mission creep
- members do not feel safe
- members do not show up, or they quit coming to meetings
- some members do most of the work, and others do very little
- members shoot down ideas during meetings or sabotage ideas between meetings
- some members argue, avoid, distract, deny, deter, and or become defensive
- some members debate rather than dialogue
- members undermine the group by gossiping
- members have alliances, power motivations, and personal agendas that skew their participation
- members shut down due to fear of the power and reprisal of the leader or other members
- members are too like-minded, so the benefit of being a team is limited
- members keep information to themselves rather than share with the group
- teams operate more like staff meetings, where members are lectured at in sit-and-get settings, rather than collaboratively creating

- facilitators have already decided the outcome, and the group quickly becomes a sounding board or a rubber stamp committee
- teams do not need to exist at all because the decisions are already made
- the leader does not know how to lead a group to become an effective team
- members may not know how to dialogue, discuss, collaborate, and learn together

When groups go wrong, the adverse effects on the members can be significant. For the organization, the culture and climate can be negatively impacted by members' resentment of an undesirable experience.

The success of the team is dependent upon the effectiveness of the leader. Fortunately, most leaders can learn how to intentionally create and lead teams. On the other hand, some leaders are not motivated to learn or adopt new practices to improve their leadership, while others are not able or willing to lead a group into an effective team.

Rationale

Team learning researchers have identified a need for additional team learning case studies and field research from diverse industries (Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Raes et al., 2013). They want team learning case studies where teams are faced with real-world problems that reflect the realities of the team process and perspectives of the team (Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Raes et al., 2013). Edmondson, Dillon, and Roloff (2007) argue that without these case studies it is difficult to identify key variables that might serve future research and different theoretical relationships.

Unfortunately, at this point, there are limited studies in team learning theory literature regarding team member perspectives on the team leader's role to improve collaboration and the team learning process (Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017; Kozlowski et al., 2008; Raes et al., 2013). I

could not find any studies that focused explicitly on P-12 district administrator perspectives on the team leader's role to improve collaboration and the team learning process. A few studies are connecting transformational leadership approaches to team learning; however, there is limited research analyzing transformational leadership approaches in team learning from the point of view of the members. To help alleviate some of this gap, this case study will focus on learning from the perspectives of P-12 school district administrative team members to help future P-12 transformational leaders improve their team's collaboration and learning.

The primary goal of this case study is to assist team leaders in improving their leadership of the P-12 administrative teams with whom they work. Learning the perspectives of team members will aid district team leaders as they use transformational leadership approaches to improve team learning with their teams.

Theoretical-Conceptual Frameworks

This case study used Bass' transformational leadership theory (1985) within the context of Senge's (1990) team learning theoretical framework. The overlap of how to improve the leadership of teams engaging in team learning directly connected with Bass' transformational leadership theory and Senge's team learning.

The case study literature review and methods focus on improving the leader's ability to facilitate teams using transformational leadership approaches and team learning. The literature review also concentrates on how organizations and districts can increase the number and effectiveness of transformational team leaders, while decreasing the number of destructive leaders. For this case study, team leaders will be referred to as leaders, team members as members, Bass' transformational leadership as transformational leadership, and team collaboration and learning as team learning.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review focuses on transformational leaders within the context of team learning. The review begins with an overview of team learning and transformational leadership, including the benefits and challenges. The review then delves into the following:

- Shifting leadership from transactional to transformational
- Roles of leaders in shared leadership
- Novice, intermediate, and expert leadership skills
- Creating a diverse team with different perspectives, roles, and expertise
- Empowering teams with shared leadership and ownership to collaboratively create
- Fostering shared purpose, goals, and accountability
- Utilizing collaboration protocol structures without over-structuring or micromanaging the process
- Creating a safe space for team collaboration, learning, and cohesion
- Finding the balance between constructive conflict and cohesion
- Impacts of destructive leaders' attributes, approaches, and personalities
- Organizational support for transformational leadership
- Decreasing destructive leadership in the organization
- Need for new team learning case studies

In addition to team learning and transformational leadership, there is a brief review of culturally responsive family partnerships to help the reader understand the purpose and context that the PPA worked together to achieve.

Team Learning

Team learning is a process that focuses on how teams think together; collaborate; engage in dialogue and inquiry; discuss and make decisions; learn from one another; learn together; reflect; increase motivation and performance; develop as a team; develop a shared vision of change; commit to shared goals; leverage diverse perspectives, insights, knowledge, skills, and information from their members; and navigate the balance between conflict and cohesion as the team comes together to create systems solutions (Senge, 2006). Decuyper et al., (2010) pointed out that researchers and practitioners use a variety of labels to describe team learning; some include group-level learning, cooperative learning, adaptive team performance, adaptation, group level information processing, and collective induction. While researchers and practitioners use different labels, for this case study, it is helpful to have a basic concept of a team, Senge's definition of team learning, and the process of team learning. In the context of team learning, Raes et al., (2013) defines a team as "a collection of individuals who are interdependent in their tasks, who share responsibility for outcomes, [and] who see themselves and are seen by others as an intact social entity embedded in one or more social systems" (Raes et al., 2013 p. 241). Kozlowski & Ilgen (2006) have a similar definition of a team.

> A team can be defined as (a) two or more individuals who (b) socially interact (face-to-face or, increasingly, virtually); (c) possess one or more common goals; (d) are brought together to perform organizationally relevant tasks; (e) exhibit interdependencies with respect to workflow, goals, and outcomes; (f) have different roles and responsibilities; and (g) are together embedded in an encompassing organizational system, with boundaries and linkages to the broader system context and task environment.

Senge's definition of team learning. Senge (2006) views learning not as an acquisition of information, but rather as a holistic process that changes the person, their mindset, and how they view the world. Like an artist, the learner opens their mind, enhances their ability to create,

and acquires new skills and abilities. According to Senge (2006), when team members open their minds and learn together, they can exponentially increase the power of learning.

"Team learning is the process of aligning and developing the capacity of a team to create the results its members truly desire" (Senge, 2006, page 218). In his chapter on team learning, Senge explains how the team accomplishes these results. Within learning organizations, team learning has three critical dimensions:

- the team must harness the strengths and perspectives of all the members when collaborating and delve into complex system issues;
- the team must leverage their trust when creating innovative, coordinated action; and
- the team must leverage the members' strengths and position of being on other teams. Team members typically are part of other teams or departments. Senior administrative members must leverage the strengths of their other teams to support the goal.

Throughout the process, the team is continuously using the approaches of dialogue and discussion.

Senge's Balance Between Dialogue and Discussion. Senge (2006) explains that team learning is about mastering the free flow of idea expression through dialogue, then making decisions through discussion. In dialogue, the team uses multiple points of view when bouncing ideas off one another. Dialogue is like advanced brainstorming, where members build upon one another's understanding and ideas. For this to occur, members must respect one another as equal colleagues who have experiences and perspectives that can support the team. Individuals hold their assumptions and communicate those assumptions with the team. According to Senge (2006), this stream of ideas is free from judgment, fear, defensiveness, power dynamics of hierarchies, self-consensuses, credit-seeking, and ladder-climbing mentality. This exploration

surfaces people's experience and thought, while moving beyond individual views (Senge, 2006). The result brings the team to a place where no single individual could have arrived alone. The success of a team's dialogue often hinges on its leader.

According to Senge (2006), if the team is not highly skilled at dialogue, then a skilled leader-facilitator needs to help the team remain in dialogue. Without facilitators, teams typically fall back into silos, defensive positions, unhealthy conflict, and or previously-held ideas or positions. The leader ensures that the team has ownership of the process and the outcomes, helps the team stay on track by engaging first in dialogue (rather than discussion), and upholds the norms of the team to ensure the space is safe. "The facilitator always walks a careful line between being knowledgeable and helpful in the process at hand, yet not taking on the 'expert' or 'doctor' mantle that would shift attention away from the members of the team, and their own ideas and responsibility" (Senge, 2006, page 229). According to Senge (2006), the facilitator should spur thinking by asking questions that continues the dialogue or play the devil's advocate. As the team gains skill, the facilitator becomes more of a participant, pivoting into facilitation as needed to maintain safety and encourage dialogue. Once the team has engaged in sufficient dialogue, members share their ideas and explain their thinking through discussion.

Senge stipulates that "in team learning, discussion is the necessary counterpart of dialogue" (Senge, 2006, page 230). Members share and defend their different points of view on the change or issue. Unlike dialogue, where the team is exploring issues through a free flow of ideas, and new ideas are met with conjecture, discussion leads to final decisions. When productive, discussion uses the ideas generated from the team's dialogue, then establishes a conclusion and recommends next steps.

Moving between dialogue and discussion. According to Senge (2006), expert teams understand the difference between dialogue and discussion and when to use each approach, and they have established guidelines for how to shift between the two formats. They also have established a deep trust that allows the team to navigate between the two effectively. Team learning requires teams to engage in dialogue, discussion, and conflict in a constructive way, rather than smooth over any disequilibrium or allow defensiveness to derail the team. Senge (2006) explains that when teams engage in dialogue and discussion around system thinking and improving systems, teams tend to revert to debate and become entrenched in individual positions. The result is increased destructive conflict, defensiveness, and quick-fix, surface solutions. Unfortunately, team learning is poorly understood, and inexperienced teams are susceptible to debate, defensiveness, destructive conflict, or "groupthink" as members feel pressured to conform. Senge (2006) reminds us that team learning takes practice as members learn to avoid potential pitfalls. The investment is worth it because team learning is critical for organizations to become nimble.

Senge's Conflict and Detrimental Defensive Routines. Senge (2006) observes that great teams are not absent of conflict, but rather engage in constructive conflict around ideas. Having a variety of perspectives about how to accomplish a shared goal leads to the generation of diverse ideas. "The free flow of conflicting ideas is critical for creative thinking, for discovering new solutions no one individual would have come to on his own. Conflict becomes, in effect, part of the ongoing dialogue" (Senge, 2006, page 232). Senge (2006) explains that mediocre teams either hide their conflict, or the conflict polarizes the team when individuals dig into their positional trenches; both scenarios undermine team learning. This is often compounded when organizations have defensive routines.

Senge (2006) defines “defensive routines” as any action or inaction that people use to protect themselves from embarrassment, to prevent others from exposing vulnerabilities in their thinking or competence, to hold onto and protect their deep-seated assumptions, or to avoid unpleasant experiences or outcomes. Defensive routines vary by person; however, when a person is making personal excuses to themselves, justifying their behavior to themselves, shutting down dialogue or discussion, or avoiding a situation, these are all indicators of defensive routines. They are a conscious or unconscious attempt to protect, shut down, deflect, deny, divert, or avoid what the person does not want to do. Senge offers multiple examples of dodging conflict, avoiding change, undermining challenging new ideas, and ignoring the ‘elephant in the room’ that lives at the heart of the problem. Defensive routines can be hidden, even from the people using them. Those engaged in defensive routines tend to make excuses for using them. Unfortunately, defensive routines are very commonly embedded in organizational culture. “Teams are microcosms of the larger organization, so it is not surprising that the defensive patterns characteristic of the larger organization become embedded in the team” (Senge, 2006, page 234). Defensive routines are detrimental to team learning.

Defensive routines shut down dialogue, discussion, and learning, and prevent teams from addressing the most critical issues. They also strain and potentially destroy the relational fabric of the team. If defensive routines continue unchecked, “Defensive routines pull down team members. They drain energy and sap people’s spirit” (Senge, 2006, page 239). For the leader, defensive routines can be great signals. “Defensive routines can become a surprising ally toward building a learning team by providing a signal when learning is not occurring” (Senge, 2006, page 239). “Defensive routines may signal especially difficult and especially important issues. Often, the stronger the defensiveness, the more important the issue around which people are

defending or protecting their views. If these views can be brought out productively, they may provide windows into each other's thinking" (Senge, 2006, page 239). Senge instructs that teams must address defensiveness: team learning thrives when members feel safe to speak truth to power; there are no sacrilegious, unspoken topics; and teams must tell the truth about their organizational and team dynamics. The effectiveness of teams and organizations turns on how they recognize and handle defensiveness.

Senge's Team Learning Practice. Team learning takes time, practice, and a skilled facilitator to support the team. "It cannot be stressed too much that team learning is a team skill. A group of talented individual learners will not necessarily produce a learning team, any more than a group of talented athletes will produce a championship sports team. Learning teams learn how to learn together" (Senge, 2006, page 240). Team learning is more complicated than individual learning, and it requires deliberate and regular practice. Senge suggests practice for dialogue sessions to build the team's skill level.

> The basic conditioning for such a session are as follows:
> 1) all members of the "team" (those who need one another to act) must be present
> 2) explain the ground rules of dialogue
> 3) enforce those ground rules; if anyone finds himself unable to "suspend" his assumptions, the team reminds him that it is now "discussing," not "dialoguing"
> 4) encourage team members to raise the most difficult, subtle, and conflictual issues essential to the team's work (Senge, 2006, page 242).

Senge also offers ground rules and suggested wording:

> Suggested Ground Rules
> 1) **Suspension of assumptions:** Typically people take a position and hold to it. Others take up opposite positions and polarization results. In this session, we would like to examine some of our assumptions underlying our direction and strategy and not seek to defend them.
>
> 2) **Acting as colleagues:** We are asking everyone to leave his or her position at the door. There will be no particular hierarchy in this meeting, except for the facilitator, who

> will, hopefully, keep us on track.
>
> 3) **Spirit of inquiry:** We would like people to begin to explore the thinking behind their views, the deeper assumptions they may hold, and the evidence they have that leads them to these views. So it will be fair to begin to ask other questions such as 'What leads you to say or believe this?' or 'What makes you ask about this?' (Senge, 2006, page 244).

Senge (2006) emphasizes the importance of teams probing beyond the surface, while rejecting quick fixes and cause-and-effect linear solutions. Teams need to focus on how everything is connected in the organization. With a quick fix, either the issue reemerges, or the "solution" causes other long-term issues. Team members must build their skills at seeing issues as system issues, rather than discreet linear cause and effect problems. "If one member of a team sees a problem more systemically than others, that person's insights will get reliably discounted—if for no other reason than the intrinsic biases toward linear views in our everyday language" (Senge, 2006, page 251). Building upon one another's experiences and creating a shared language for addressing systems issues enhances the effectiveness of team learning. For this to occur, the team must understand and practice the elements of team learning and systems thinking.

Senge offers reflections from practice; these are included in his companion guide to *The Fifth Discipline* called *The Fifth Discipline: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares About Education (2012)*. The Fieldbook has a variety of strategies that facilitators can use to improve team learning, systems thinking, and the remaining three disciplines. While Senge concludes his chapter on team learning with strategies on how to practice each of these elements of team learning, many other researchers have been and are focusing on how to improve team learning.

Team learning as a theoretical framework. While team learning is not a new approach, Senge's, *The Fifth Discipline's* (2006) focus on learning organizations led to team learning's popularity and growth as a theoretical framework (Bass, 2000; Bell et al., 2012; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen, Van den Bossche, Hoven, Van der Klink, & Gijselaers; 2018). While Senge has helped team learning reemerge, this format was the foundation of learning for both the ancient Athenians and Native Americans (Senge, 2006). Senge's work on team learning built upon the ancient roots of team learning, Lewin's (1947) establishment of group dynamics, organizational development, and Argyris' (1978) establishment of organizational learning. Senge's team learning lives within the research of group dynamics, organizational development, and learning organizations. Team learning is founded on the perspective that teams can learn (Bass, 2000; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Senge, 2006). Decuyper et al., (2010) "argued that co-construction, constructive conflict, storage, retrieval, team activity, team reflexivity, and boundary crossing are the basic team learning processes." Team learning is not a product, but rather a multifaceted process whereby a team discovers, grows, and accomplishes goals together. This process is influenced by the contextual aspects of the team (Edmondson et al., 2007). Edmondson goes on to define team learning as "an ongoing process of reflection and action characterized by asking questions, seeking feedback, experimenting, reflecting on results, and discussing errors or unexpected outcomes of actions" (Edmondson, 1999, p. 353).

Benefits of team learning. Senge's (1990) work on learning organizations and team learning shifted the focus of researchers and organizations from the individual to the team (Bass, 2000; Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017). A large body of research has since built on and supported Senge's (1990) conclusion that the team is the most

important and influential aspect in organizations (Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017).

Team learning helps to build team leadership skills, creativity, leverages members' strengths, builds trust, improves the learning curve, improves current team performance, future success, increases conflict resolution abilities, promotes ownership, encourages healthy risk-taking, and improves how the members of the organization feel. Bell et al.'s (2012) Team Learning: A Theoretical Review focused on research that connected team learning, motivation, and performance. When teams have members with different areas of expertise who collaborate and learn together, the team increases the learning curve and overall performance of the team compared to individual learning (Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Senge, 2006). The motivation and performance of teams are more complicated than individual motivation. Team learning increases the team's dynamics and motivation when individuals come together and building upon one another's experience, knowledge and perspectives to learn and produce together in teams (Bass, 2000; Edmondson et al., 2007; Gilley, 2010; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017).

Groups engaged in team learning are more likely to be high-functioning and motivated to continue their efforts than teams not engaged in team learning (Bass, 2000; Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Gilley, 2010; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). The keys to team motivation and performance are to have a team and its leader (1) consistently supporting collaboration and (2) continually improving as a team (Gilley, 2010). Collaboration and improvement occurs when the leader sets up team structures and processes that ensure members engage with one another, share ideas and insights, and collaboratively build upon one another's knowledge and creativity (Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Gilley, 2010; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018;

Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). As the team learns the individual learns, and vice versa. This collective flow of ideas becomes organic in high-functioning teams; there are, however, challenges to becoming a high-performing team.

Challenges of team learning. A variety of organizational factors influences team learning: the organization's context and culture; approaches to formal and informal learning; the team's motivation and performance; team development; the leader's skills, beliefs, approaches, and personality; information sharing; a balance between conflict and cohesion; and time to engage (Bass, 2000; Bell et al., 2012; Clarke, 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Kozlowski et al, 2008; Senge, 2006). Each factor has a significant impact on team learning. As each factor changes, the interactive dynamics and effectiveness of the team also changes.

Cultural beliefs can also create challenges that impact team learning. Team learning is the collaborative effort of a team to accomplish a common goal through discourse, working through conflict and uniting as a group. The emergence of this collectivist approach in modern US individualistic culture has led to challenges for some teams. The clash between the culture of the individual and the culture of the collective can undermine the foundation of teams. As leaders work to bring teams together, it is critical that leaders are aware of their leadership approaches, the differences in cultural beliefs of individualistic versus collectivist approaches, the cultural norms of the members of the team, and the organizational factors that impact teams (Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

For a team to become high-functioning, the leader must be effective **(**Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). However, there are relatively few research studies connected with exactly how leaders impact team learning (Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017;

Kozlowski et al., 2008; Raes et al., 2013). Bass' transformational leadership theory fills some of this void.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership theory is an approach to leadership where the leader and a team identify a need or challenge; the leader inspires members to commit to a shared vision and goals; the leader has empathy for members and ensures members feel safe when collaborating; the team's confidence and trust grows; the leader challenges the members to have ownership and be innovative problem solvers; the team continuously improves through team learning; individual members learn and improve their leadership abilities through modeling, coaching, and mentoring from the leader; and the team has positive results made possible by the process (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). The team is more likely to be inspired, motivated, encouraged, and is committed because of the leader's transformational approach to the change process. The leader finds what drives the members and connects their passion to the team's goal(s) (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

Transformational leadership focuses on how the leader's personality traits, abilities, and approaches impact the team and the change process. Transformational leadership and transactional leadership are on opposite ends of the continuum. Transactional leadership focuses on the immediate, extrinsic self-interest of the members whereas transformational leadership focuses on the intrinsic motivation and connects the individual's self-interest to that of the greater good of the team, organization, or society (Bass, 1999; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Bass & Riggio (2006) built upon the earlier work of Burns' (1978) transformational leadership by adding the psychological aspects that impact transformational leadership. The transformational leadership approach inspires, empowers, focuses, intrinsically motivates, provides safety, helps

build the capacity of team members, and leverages the strengths of the team to collaborate and learn together (Bass, 1999).

In *Transformational Leadership, second edition* (2006), Bass and Riggio explain the four components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Idealized influence (II) is where leaders act in ethical and moral ways that allow them to be a role model for members. Members want to emulate the leader because they are trusted, admired, and respected. Inspirational motivation (IM) is where the leader inspires members with a meaningful purpose, providing an inspiring, optimistic vision that draws members in while creating a shared vision of the future. Individualized consideration (IC) is where leaders have a genuine concern for the members' needs and feelings. The leader helps the members self-actualize, and in turn the leader develops a high level of trust. Intellectual stimulation (IS) is where the leader stimulates, empowers and encourages members to challenge the status quo, innovate, reframe problems, question and challenge assumptions, and approach old situations in new, creative ways.

Bass & Riggio (2006) explain that transformational leaders create a sense of safety where members can trust and learn from one another. There is no criticism of member's mistakes, ideas, attempts, challenges, or failures. Members are encouraged to think outside the box and bring new ideas to approach systems issues, even if they are not in line with the leader's ideas or traditional approaches. The more perspectives considered when the team approaches a problem or issue, the better. Individual consideration (IC) occurs when the leader cares for the individual needs of the members and supports each member's growth through mentoring and coaching. The leader continuously coaches the members, establishing a supportive climate where members are encouraged to learn and grow. The leader knows the members of their team and connects with

each member, is a considerate and active listener, and delegates leadership opportunities to help members grow. The leader checks in and supports members, coaching each member as necessary to ensure success. In a nutshell; the leader cares and actively engages with team members.

Transformational leadership relies on the personality traits and the approach of the leader in the change process. Bass & Riggio (2006) analyzed transformational leadership through the lens of the big five personality traits framework, OCEAN: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Bass and Riggio (2006) focused on openness to experience as a visionary leader, conscientiousness, extraversion including affiliation and agency, agreeableness with charisma, and neuroticism. The first four personality traits have a positive impact on transformational leadership and the team, whereas neuroticism has a negative impact. Effective transformational leaders are energetic, charismatic, considerate, confident, positive, passionate, enthusiastic, motivational, and encouraging. They are excellent role models. They put the goal of the team or organization before their self-interests. They also mentor and build leadership abilities in the members of the team. They care about the members of their team, and they encourage the team to break the status quo and create. Effective leaders are also highly productive. Members want to work *with* transformational leaders, rather than working *for* transactional leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

Benefits of transformational leadership. When well-executed, the benefits of transformational leadership directly support team learning. While transactional leadership can be quick and efficient, transformational leadership improves both the performance and satisfaction of the members. Members of teams who work with transformational leaders are more likely to care about one another, learn from one another, inspire one another, identify as a team, and work together toward common goals (Bass, 1999; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Transformational

leadership approaches increase member loyalty, commitment, and fulfillment, while reducing member stress and improving the team's performance (Bass, 1999; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013;). Members are more satisfied and drawn to transformational leadership compared to transactional leadership approaches (Bass, 1999). Chrobot-Mason et al. (2013) claimed that:

> Transformational leadership behaviors may account for the difference between a diverse team whose interactions are characterized by miscommunication, distrust, and conflict from one whose interactions lead to the emergence of innovative and creative ideas and solutions that come from a diverse team with varied perspectives, backgrounds, areas of expertise, and the like (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

Koeslag-Kreunen et al. (2018) performed a meta-analysis of leadership that powers team learning and found that transformational leadership helps the team aspire to more substantial goals than their previous goals that served their self-interest. The transformational leader's charisma, focus on supporting members, focus on challenging the status quo, and communication of vision and purpose had a significant positive impact on the team's ability to collaborate and learn together. Koeslag-Kreunen et al. (2018) went on to summarize that the personal leadership styles and behaviors of transformational leaders directly support team learning.

Problems when transformational leadership is misused. While transformational leadership yields significant benefits, problems arise when the leader is immoral, unintentional, thoughtless, or unskilled as an effective transformational leader. A piece of caution: Not every leader has the moral qualities necessary to be a positive transformational leader. Bass & Riggio (2006) point to Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Osama Bin Laden as examples of pseudotransformational leaders. Bass & Riggio (2006) explain that transformational leaders must have a high level of morality and be authentic to all the components of transformational leadership, or they can use the elements for evil. They caution that leaders who *do* have the qualities necessary to be an effective transformational leader must be cautious not to abuse their

power. If they are self-serving and use the team to serve their own goals in the name of the common good, then they are not true transformational leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Another caution is that leaders can quickly shift from facilitating a collaborative team to micromanaging in a highly directive, top-down manner (Yukl, 1999). In these cases, leaders need to pause and shift their approach back to that of a facilitator (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders can skip digging deeper into the details, research, or reality of the problem. These ineffective transformational leaders are rightly accused of being too visionary, or too big picture, without analyzing the details needed to make necessary changes. Having a diverse team with some detail-oriented members can help alleviate this issue (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Some ineffective transformational leaders lack sufficient structure. Transformational leadership can also lead to burnout if the leader pushes the members too hard to continually give to the organization. To be effective, the leader must use all aspects of transformational leadership. A significant aspect is how the leader balances the needs of the organization with individual consideration (IC) where the leader cares for the individual needs of the members (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Shifting Leadership from Transactional to Transformational

While past leadership approaches focused on individual leadership development, more recent studies focus on developing transformational leaders with team leadership skills. Being an effective transformational leader, who changes systems and empowers members to become more effective leaders, requires a different approach and skill set than the transactional leaders of the past (Bass, 1999; Bass, 2000; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Transformational leadership skills include developing supportive leadership, developing the leaders' ability to use connections to improve collaboration, creating shared meaning making within the team, identifying barriers and

information to support the team within the culture of the organization, fostering positive tension within the culture of the organization and team, and building social capital within the team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Clarke, 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Mathieu, 2008; Sarin and McDermott, 2003). The old transactional leadership skills of the past that only focused on the material needs of the employee have neither grown leaders nor changed systems the way transformational leadership has been able to do (Bass, 2000). In short, effective team learning depends on adopting a transformational leadership approach.

Within the context of team learning and team development, the leader's approach, beliefs, and behavior have a significant impact on the success of the team, and how the members feel about themselves and their contribution (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Brooks-Harris, 2005; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Jansen et al., 2016; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). The position of the leader, how that leader leads, and the power dynamics of that leader have a direct impact on the willingness of members to be vulnerable in their questions, learning, and ideas; teams are more likely to succeed when they perceive low risk in questioning the direction of the organization or the leader (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Brooks-Harris, 2005; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Jansen et al., 2016; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Senge, 2006; Sarin et al., 2003). The leader is responsible for supporting the psychological safety of the team so the team can transition from the simple and safe surface solutions to complex and profound solutions that require questioning, constructive conflict, and diverse perspectives. This approach may challenge the organization's mental models and may be different from the leader's ideas, but in the end will create new strategies to solve issues that are rooted in traditional approaches and

mindsets (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Jansen et al., 2016; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Bass (2000) summarizes the research connected to the approach of the leader and its impact on team and organizational learning. In the research, Bass (2000) claims that one or more of the following five alternative leader approaches was identified to positively impact team development, collaboration, and learning:

- The strategic formulation approach, where leaders collaborate with members to envision a desired future, and support the team in creating a plan to make it a reality.
- The human assets approach, where the focus is to help all members of the team, including the leader, improve with quality professional development, assessment, and feedback. Members are empowered and rewarded for creating and improving. The members' commitment and integrity are essential.
- The expertise approach, where the team uses the expertise of the members and the focus of the team is specialized toward a common goal. The learning of the team is subsequently communicated throughout the organization, so all benefit.
- The box approach, where the leader sets the parameters, expectations, accountability, boundaries, variables that impact the team, and the order of organizational priorities. The team then begins the work of meeting the goals within the perimeters of the box.
- The change-agent approach, where the goal of the team is to pursue continuous change and improvement.

All these approaches can contribute to organizational learning; Bass (2000), however, warns that not all approaches are appropriate for the organizational culture or outcomes desired, and that failure of the team can occur if there is a mismatch. Bass (2000) explains that the most

critical, overarching leadership attribute for educational leaders is to be transformational leaders who inspire their members and focus on members' contributions, increasing each member's self-concept and self-worth. Bass continues that the effective transformational leader encourages members to identify as a member of the team with the leader's and team's self-concept and mission.

Roles of Leaders in Shared Leadership

There are three roles in team-centered leadership systems: internal leaders, external leaders, and executive coordinators. Many organizations use all three types of leaders depending on the team, the goal, and approach of the leadership (Zaccaro et al., 2008). Internal leaders are leaders as well as participants of the team, and they frequently interject. They engage in creating a diverse team with different skills and perspectives identifying the clear purpose and action steps of the team, ensuring members know the expectations, and coaching members on shared leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Internal leaders have the most input and influence into the direction and process of the team (Zaccaro et al., 2008).

External leaders are far more hands-off than internal leaders. External leaders have a formal role and responsibility for the team, though they are still responsible for setting the direction and parameters. They are responsible for supporting the team with teaching and self-management toward the goal. Since they mainly operate outside of the team, external leaders focus on supporting the team financially and removing barriers when the team runs into obstacles (Zaccaro et al., 2008).

The executive coordinator lives somewhere between internal and external leaders. Executive coordinators are widely used in middle and top leadership teams (Zaccaro et al.,

2008). Executive coordinators create a diverse team with members who have power and social capital to focus on the organization's strategic goals. Once the team is created, the team has ownership to collaborate, create, and problem solve. The role of the executive coordinator is to leverage the members' skills, resources, and leadership abilities, and to ensure that the team engages in behavioral integration (Zaccaro et al., 2008). Behavioral integration is the degree to which the group engages in productive collaboration. According to Zaccaro et al. (2008), productive collaboration is impacted by the quantity and quality of information sharing, the team's collaborative behavior, and how the team engages in joint decision making. Unfortunately, behavioral integration is difficult with members of middle to upper senior level leadership in organizations. Senior-level leaders, who typically identify as individual department leaders, struggle to function as members of a team, rather than sole decision makers (Zaccaro et al., 2008). Helping these senior-level leaders who usually operate in silos transition into productive team members requires a highly-skilled leader who can foster shared leadership through collaboration (Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Novice, Intermediate, and Expert Leadership Skills

According to Zaccaro et al. (2008), novice leaders typically focus on facilitating the group from more of a top-down, traditional approach. They are learning how to use surface structures, generic activities, and norms to prevent conflict, ensure respect, and encourage the open expression of ideas. At the novice level, leaders tend to generalize all leadership situations as they work on learning how to lead.

Zaccaro et al. (2008) share that at the intermediate level, leaders have more procedural knowledge, understanding, and skills they can use for specific problem areas. These leaders are more automatic in their approach, and can spend more time monitoring the team when creating

solutions for less familiar problems. These leaders do not use generic approaches, but instead are intentional with their processes when leading high-performing teams.

Zaccaro et al. (2008) explained that the expert level has a deep understanding of leadership, problems, and elements that impact the team. Expert leaders have a deep understanding of how systems, structures, and specific approaches affect the success of a team. The expert leader is intentional with every aspect of the team, beginning with creating the team. They thoughtfully incorporate the members' leadership, self-identity, and core values into the collaboration of the team. They are cognizant of the purpose and progress, and at the same time ensure that the space is social-emotionally safe for members to engage in dialogue and discussion. Expert leaders also transition members from their individual leadership identities into a collective identity where they identify as part of a team, rather than as a group of leaders. Expert leaders foster ownership, as well as shared and distributed leadership in members.

Creating a Diverse Team with Different Perspectives, Roles, and Expertise

Having a diverse team with different perspectives, roles, and expertise is critical to obtaining the benefits of team learning. When diverse groups engage in team learning, they build upon one another's perspectives, and they learn from other members' roles and skills. Diversity is key; if all the perspectives and skills of the members are similar, then the result will be limited (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017; Senge, 2006; Somech, 2006). The more varied the strengths and perspectives among the group, the stronger the effect on team learning; this assumes a strong commitment to the group and an effective, reflective leader to help support collaboration and learning (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017; Senge, 2006; Somech, 2006). Given the need for diversity, it is important to note that Bass

(1999) finds that transformational leaders are more likely to have cultural competency and the ability to lead diverse teams.

Leaders must keep the need for a diverse team in the forefront of their mind when they either create an entirely new team or find replacements for existing team members. The leader needs to seek out members with wide-ranging perspectives, knowledge, skills, abilities, roles, and experiences (Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). The leader also needs a deep understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of members, and how each can impact the team's goal. In selecting the members, the leader needs to consider how the team will work together and help one another move forward (Zaccaro et al., 2008). When members are replaced, the leader needs to determine how new members will complement the team structures, norms, expectations, and roles, while at the same time improve team collaboration (Zaccaro et al., 2008). Team learning and transformational leadership research focus on both the benefits reaped and the most fundamental challenges faced when working to connect members on a diverse team. The benefits of diverse teams far outweigh the challenges, and transformational leaders are the key to making those benefits a reality (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

As teams become more diverse, successful transformational leaders change how they lead teams. Traditionally, leaders lead people who looked like them, and had similar cultural beliefs, languages, and norms; this is no longer the case (Chrobot-Mason, Ruderman, and Nishii, 2013). In their meta-analysis research, "Leadership in a Diverse Workplace," Chrobot-Mason et al. (2013) focus on how transformational leaders have successfully transitioned from traditional approaches to modern leadership, leveraging the power of diversity. These reflective leaders started by analyzing themselves, and then their leadership, and finally how they and their

organization could leverage the perspectives and strengths of a diverse team (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

Begin with self-reflection. Before attempting to connect diverse team members, effective leaders engage in personal self-reflection about their own culture, identity, gender, approach to power, race, bias, blind spots, unearned systemic privileges and power, approach to equity, social justice, diversity, inclusion, and leadership approach (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). This reflection results in intentional shifts to positively impact the shared leadership of the team (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Claiming colorblindness, or blindness to others' social identity, is a mistake that traditional, dominate culture leaders have made. In doing so, the leader is oblivious to the systemic racism, prejudice, and societal hierarchies that impact people who are systematically marginalized (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Leaders from dominate cultures typically have a blind spot to their own social and cultural identity and the unearned systemic privileges that arise from that identity. They may credit their effort as the sole driver to success, rather than recognizing a social system that's set up to favor members of the dominant culture (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Leaders limit their ability to support teams when they believe and act as if society (and their organization) are gender neutral and culturally and racially unbiased when this is not the case. When this occurs, members who are systematically marginalized feel unsupported and may view this as the fault of the leader (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). In this vein, it is imperative for team leaders to analyze the impact of their leadership.

The next step for the reflective leader is to analyze personal leadership style and figure out the best way to lead a diverse team. This analysis can be difficult for some leaders because the traditional shortcut of setting goals and assigning teams with the same perspectives, values, priorities, and opinions is no longer appropriate. Diverse teams may not see the goal with the

same perspective, expertise, cultural framework, and motivation; it is the leader's responsibility to unite the team and leverage their perspectives to co-create and accomplish the goal(s) (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). To be successful requires a transformational leader with significant skills, attributes, and a different approach than in the past.

When leading diverse teams, the leader's inclusive approach, behaviors, and beliefs can make or break the team (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Somech, 2006). Successful leaders intentionally seek diverse members for the team, then create opportunities for their diverse perspectives to influence the decision-making process (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Somech, 2006). It is the leader's responsibility to ensure the team members have equal access to opportunities and air time, so their voices, ideas, and perspectives are heard (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). In addition, members feel respected when their leader (1) know them as individuals and (2) value their differences.

It is up to the team leader to figure out their leadership style and approach, and then intentionally leverage the different perspectives of a diverse team (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). The research addresses how diverse members work together to solve problems and create novel tasks, how leaders improve shared leadership and ownership when utilizing diverse teams, how these teams learn, why leaders' relationships matter, and how diverse teams maintain the psychological safety of members so they can admit inexperience or uncertainty about the topics discussed (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007).

Empowering Teams with Shared Leadership and Ownership to Collaboratively Create

While the research delves into multiple aspects of the team dynamics, the leader must reflect on the degree of ownership the team will have and the impact of that decision on the team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; O'Toole, 1996; Senge, 2006; Somech, 2006). Zaccaro et al. (2008)

explain the dynamic of leader ownership and team ownership as a spectrum stretching between leader-centric and. team-centric. Zaccaro et al. (2008) explain that researchers define leader-centric approaches as traditional, top-down, heroic, vertical, and hierarchical; team members are followers who work *for* the leader. “Followers are treated as mostly passive recipients of the leader’s influence, or their primary role is to grant legitimacy to the leader’s exercise of power and influence” (Zaccaro et al., 2008). These traditional top-down, sit-and-get meetings where members are present to reaffirm the leader’s ego, ideas, and approaches have resulted in a backlash where teams have begun collaborating without leaders, using approaches referred to as “team-centric” (Zaccaro et al., 2008). The team-centric approach is the opposite end of the spectrum, and it includes terms such as shared leadership, self-managed teams, and distributive leadership (Zaccaro et al., 2008). While each team-centric approach is slightly different, their common theme is leadership without a formal, top-down leader. Zaccaro et al. (2008) claim that the middle ground, where the leader functions within a team-centered leadership approach, is more effective and encourages shared leadership and ownership. This middle ground is where Bass & Riggio’s (2006) transformational leadership lives.

The research is clear that the transformational leader’s role is to know their team, encourage ownership, and provide coaching, support, encouragement, and structure to help the team engage in shared leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kreunen et al., 2018; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Establishing shared leadership takes varying amounts of time, depending on the leadership experience of the members. For administrative teams whose members have significant leadership experience and knowledge, members can reflect and engage in shared leadership more easily than those with less leadership experience. Assuming the team has members with substantial experience, the leader's next step is to bring the members together

and ensure their skills, perspectives and expertise are part of the collaboration process. Then, according to Bass & Riggio, (2006), the leader strategically coaches individual members to increase their leadership abilities.

Leaders need to understand that their role and approach to facilitation changes as the group develops into a team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Senge, 2006). When establishing shared leadership, the leader's initial approach is more hands-on as a mentor, then instructor and coach, and eventually as a facilitator once ownership shifts to the team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). The leader as mentor establishes norms, processes for collaboration, and team goal setting (Bell et al., 2012; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). The role of the leader then transitions to the instructor as they build member leadership and collaborative structures (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Finally, the leader's role shifts into coaching and facilitating approach where they work to ensure the team becomes highly-skilled with collaboration structures, shared mental models, and team efficacy (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). As the team's understanding and proficiency increase, the team assumes ownership of more complex goals and the leader is free to facilitate (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Day, Gronn, Salas, 2006; Edmondson et al., 2007; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

The leader's approach to team ownership in decision-making is critical for team learning (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006). The goal is for the leader to provide motivation, guidance, a safe place, structure, and information, whereas the team retains ownership of the learning, ideas, and solutions to achieve the stated goal (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Senge, 2006). Novice leaders tend to hold on more tightly, controlling the team and establishing procedures that heavily rely on the leader, making the team

dependent on its leader. Expert transformational leaders, with excellent social-emotional skills, create open-ended procedures and processes that help member-leaders improve in leadership, self-regulation skills, and collaboration skills until they can contribute independent of the leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Fostering Shared Purpose, Goals, and Accountability

Teams engaged in pushing for diverse ideas, while at the same time encouraging cohesion, must have a strong collective identity as a team (Argote, Levine, Knippenberg, & Mell, 2017; Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007). To help establish this collective identify, starting with establishing a team compact and a common goal is essential. Teams who have established expectations when focusing on shared goals benefit from a confluence of all members' strengths, knowledge and content, inviting diverse expertise, perspectives, and content (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Senge, 2006). Research shows that the absence of agreed-upon expectations, goals, expectations, and structures is a significant barrier to teams (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Sarin et al., 2003; Zaccaro et al., 2008). The clearer the agreed upon team compact, goals and expectations, the more effective the team learning. Sarin et al. (2003) explain why teams are more likely to succeed when the leader clearly defines members' goals and expectations: When the leader sets goals and expects members to collaborate and discuss, then the different mental models of the members come to light. The team then benefits from members feeling motivated by end goals and the ownership they have been given to collaboratively create utilizing members' differing perspectives. Additional benefits include higher motivation and innovation, improved decision-making, enhanced team learning, and improved transference and use of information among all

members (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Sarin et al., 2003; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Sarin et al. (2003) warn leaders that if they are not clear with the goals and team expectations, there is a significant potential for dysfunctional conflict and communication among team members.

When a skilled transformational leader invites a diverse team to learn and collaborate on common shared goal(s), the team is more likely to be unified and accountable, and the outcome is significantly improved (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). This approach strengthens the team's productivity, unites subgroups on the team, strengthens the team's identity, increases motivation and personal accountability, and enhances both individual and team learning (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

Since a team's progress impacts motivation and learning, goal setting is essential for diverse teams to maintain motivation. Bell et al. (2012) use the aspects of individual goal setting to analyze goal setting with teams. As teams move from goal setting to action, the focus on convergent ideas and motivation increases within the team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Establishing a team compact and goal setting increases the team's sense of collective team identity, accountability, and self-efficacy. Team identity and self-efficacy both enjoy a high correlation with positive team motivation and performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). All this to say that at the core of any successful team there must be an effective leader who supports that team, shared goals, and expectations (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Senge, 2006).

Utilizing Collaboration Protocol Structures without Over-Scaffolding or Micromanaging

The more intentional and prepared a leader is when empowering the team with intentional agendas, processes, and procedures, the more members share in leadership and ownership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Sarin et al. (2003) find similar results: The more leaders empower the team with ownership and decision-making, the more significant the positive impact on learning and collaboration. Leaders who use transformational approaches to empower shared participatory leadership encourage a free exchange of ideas, increased trust, and cross-department problem-solving. Their success comes from leveraging the strengths, ideas, perspectives, and knowledge of multiple diverse members rather than their own, or those of only the most vocal team members (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006).

The leader walks a fine line when establishing open-ended protocol structures to improve discourse, team learning, and reduce confusion and uncertainty (Allen & Blythe, 2004; McDonald, 2007). If the leader overly structures the process or micromanages the team, the outcome is detrimental. Teams can feel stifled, demotivated and demoralized. Trust is broken, information is no longer shared as freely, and the creative problem-solving and collaborative process can easily be destroyed (Allen & Blythe, 2004; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Brooks-Harris, 2005; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; McDonald, 2007; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Sarin et al. (2003) warn that micromanaging or over-scaffolding the collaborative process limits creativity, reduces ownership, hinders decision-making, demotivates the team, reduces trust, and makes the collaboration space feel unsafe. Leaders must maintain a subtle balance, with a protocol structure that ensures all members' ideas, voices, and perspectives are

included without over-scaffolding the process. The safer the members feel on the team, the less need for over-scaffolding.

Creating a Safe Space for Team Collaboration, Learning, and Cohesion

The effectiveness of the team's collaboration and learning is directly tied with the members' relationship with the leader, feeling of safety, mutual trust, and leader's emotional intelligence (Allen & Blythe, 2004; Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; McDonald, 2007; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Effective leaders of diverse teams build quality relationships with the members (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). To establish quality relationships requires the leader to use their emotional intelligence, be flexible, self-aware, humble, transparent, and vulnerable (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Honing leadership to be more relational is in direct alignment with transformational and team learning approaches.

When leaders are cognizant of the members' individual needs and value their skills, the result is an increase in mutual respect, trust among members, and collective team identity (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Senge, 2006). How well a transformational leader establishes positive relationships affects how the members view that leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). This connection is referred to as the Leader-Member Exchange, where the stronger the relationship between the leader and member, the higher members' satisfaction, commitment, and performance (Bass, 2000; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Sarin et al. (2003) refer to facilitative leaders who are viewed as supportive, friendly, approachable, consistent, and democratic. According to Sarin et al. (2003), these attributes make facilitative leaders more effective in establishing safe and trusting collaboration spaces for members. The leader's approach to building relationships with

members, creating a nurturing, psychologically safe collaboration space, has a significant impact on the effectiveness of diverse teams when analyzing and learning from their own errors (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson, 1999; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; 2018; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Safe spaces are needed for teams to engage in team learning. Building on their relationships with members, leaders must also create a safe space for diverse members use their voices heard during team learning. Without a safe and trusting collaborative space, teams cannot engage in discourse—giving and receiving feedback, sharing information, framing and reframing the issue, engaging in constructive conflict, negotiating, and learning from one another (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Decuyper et al., 2010; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Senge, 2006). Strong relationships and safe and trusting spaces encourage members to voice differing perspectives, alternative options, and dissenting opinions, and to challenge the issues being discussed without fear of reprisal or backlash (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006). When leaders establish trust and show appreciation for members' contributions and insights, the leaders' behavior promotes inclusion for diverse team members (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Senge, 2006). Without relationships based on respect, appreciation and trust, and a safe space, leaders and members do not feel included, let alone share and think freely, challenge one another's ideas, take risks, or openly discuss their own ideas (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Sarin et al., 2003; Senge, 2006). Bass (2000) explains that the entire future of the team is at risk if the leader does not inspire members as a transformational

leader—if the leader does not have positive relationships with the team—and does not establish safe and trusting spaces for team collaboration.

Importance of sharing information. The importance of sharing information from multiple perspectives, positions, and levels of expertise is critical to the success of team learning (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Senge, 2006). Bell et al. (2012) state that as a group shares knowledge and information, it becomes the collective property of the group. Patterson (2002) refers to shared information as the "pool of shared knowledge" that increases the effectiveness of the team. This improves the team's ability to engage in healthy dialogue and discussion with a collective understanding of the topic. The more shared insights, knowledge, information, experience, facts, and stories, the deeper and more effective the pool of shared knowledge.

Conversely, when a member of the group withholds information, and only common knowledge is shared, the group's understanding and ability to effectively achieve the goal(s) are negatively impacted. Lack of shared information results in a diminished pool of shared meaning and decreased effectiveness of the team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Patterson, 2002; Senge, 2006). Researchers categorize reasons for withholding information: length of discussion, relationship among members of the group, feelings of unsafety, culturally-ingrained individualist approaches among group members, the team, and the organization, social aspects such as status, expertise and leadership, information overload, and lack of process or structure established to share information (Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006;). To increase information sharing, the

leader's must ensure that the team has adequate time, trust with one another, and a collectivist team culture. Additionally, the leader must use structures or protocols for information sharing (focusing on the team's success over the individual success of any member), value diverse perspectives, and maintain a commitment to confidentiality with sensitive information (Allen & Blythe, 2004; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017; McDonald, 2007; Senge, 2006).

Confronting destructive conflict. While the leader is focused on increasing the trust and sharing among team members, they must also decrease destructive conflict. Leaders push for diverse ideas, while simultaneously encouraging cohesion, and they must create a team with mutual respect, norms, and a strong collective identity (Argote, Levine, Knippenberg, & Mell, 2017; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Senge, 2006).

Addressing destructive conflict is not a new concept for researchers. Tuckman's (1965) stages of small group development focus on destructive conflict. In Tuckman's (1965) model, the team progresses through four stages to become a high performing team: forming, storming, norming, and performing. While storming is an expected process when a group becomes a team, the duration, intensity, and feel of storming look different for each team. It is crucial that the leader understands that destructive conflict is a dangerous form of storming, and it must be addressed. Unfortunately, some teams never get out of the storming phase, and destructive conflict destroys the team (Tuckman,1965). If the leader and teams understand each phase and how to move through forming, storming, norming and then performing, then the team is more likely to be successful, because members understand and appreciate each phase (Tuckman,1965).

Chrobot-Mason et al. (2013) claim that conflict is a natural consequence when a diverse team collaborates. When the conflict is based on the social identity of the diverse members, however, the destructive conflict reveals bias, prejudice, and racism, and the leader must address this type of destructive conflict. Unfortunately, many leaders are reticent to address prejudice due to a lack of confidence in their abilities and skills to navigate social identity conflict (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

To resolve destructive social identity-based conflicts, leaders must be reflective and intentional. Chrobot-Mason et al. (2013) offer suggestions based on the research. First, the leader should analyze possible root causes of conflict between social identity groups, including cultural norms, values, history of conflict, and individualistic versus collectivistic collaboration approaches. Next, the leader needs to craft a message about social identity conflict to the group that is in line with their and the organization's core values. Step three is to establish realistic options for handling conflict, and then acknowledge with the team what is going to occur. Be open and transparent about conflict, norms, prejudice, blind spots, and the process the team will use to address conflict; this way they know what to expect and can learn the process. Step four: The leader and team must be consistent and address identity-based conflict every time they observe it occurring. Fifth, the leader and team members should monitor the effects of their intervention to determine whether it was successful. Finally, the team and leader must reflect and learn together from the process after the conflict is resolved to improve upon the process for the next time conflict occurs.

The success of a diverse team depends on where teams fall on the continuum between highly-fractured and highly-cohesive (Bell et al., 2012). Edmondson et al., (2007) finds that a cohesive collective identity among a diverse team stimulates difficult conversations from

multiple perspectives. These teams benefit from the diversity of the team, whereas teams without a collective identity—those who are more individualistic or fractured—do not engage in discussions from differing perspectives, so they fail to benefit from the diversity of the team (Bell et al., 2012; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Senge, 2006).

Chrobot-Mason et al. (2013) explain three overarching strategies that help leaders navigate conflict and bridge division to create highly-cohesive diverse teams. The first is to "manage boundaries" to ensure the team has the resources it needs, while at the same time protecting the members from external and internal threats that can overwhelm the team. The second strategy is to "forge common ground" among the team, specifically connecting individuals and ensuring that members see themselves as part of the team. The team is a neutral zone that does not require assimilation to the dominant culture, but rather a collective of individuals who can share their perspectives. The individuals are representing themselves, not their entire social identity group. The third strategy is "discovering new frontiers" that take advantage of the similarities and differences between members of the team. This strategy leverages the strengths and perspectives of each member. When members are encouraged to build upon one another's ideas to create, innovate, and solve problems differently, the team is more likely to report positive intergroup and work outcomes. "Discovering new frontiers" is why diverse teams are needed to achieve the full benefits of team learning. While social identity conflict is destructive, teams need to engage in constructive conflict, or they will not benefit from team learning.

Finding the Balance Between Constructive Conflict and Cohesion

There is a complicated relationship between constructive conflict and cohesion within team learning; both are necessary, and both require an effective transformational leader to strike

the right balance (Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018). Decuyper et al., (2010) calls “sharing, co-construction and constructive conflict the basic team learning processes, because they describe what happens when teams learn.” At the same time, members need cohesion in order to sustain constructive conflict without destroying the team (Bell et al., 2012; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Senge, 2006). A careful balance between cohesion and conflict prevents groupthink by allowing constructive conflict to push ideas beyond the initial acceptance level of the team (Bell et al., 2012; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Senge, 2006). To accomplish this balance, transformational leaders should leverage their relational approach and ensure that team members share information about themselves to connect on a personal level while sharing their perspectives (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012).

Effective leaders find a balance between team cohesion and constructive conflict. Decuyper et al. (2010) referred to this balance as co-construction and constructive conflict. Senge (2006) referred to the process as dialogue and discussion. In both co-construction and dialogue, the members push on one another’s thinking, challenging and building upon the initial idea until the team co-creates new knowledge, a shared mental model, and a shared vision. Constructive conflict and discussion are similar in that they are a process that uses and uncovers the diversity of perspectives on the team, bringing members’ diverse perspectives forward in open discourse and constructive conflict that deepen the initial surface discussion and ultimately lead to a temporary agreement, decision, and stronger outcome (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Decuyper et al., 2010; Senge, 2006).

Establishing a collective culture while maintaining the ongoing balance of co-construction (dialogue) and constructive conflict (discussion) is the role of the leader (Bell et al., 2012; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Senge, 2006). For the team to be successful in both co-construction and constructive conflict, the leader must establish a safe place where members engage in discourse and learning rather than retreat and defend their individual ideas and mental models. The goal is to have the team reach a new plain by learning from one another's perspectives (Decuyper et al., 2010; Senge, 2006). To successfully maintain the delicate balance between tension and harmony, learning organizations need skilled transformational leaders that are energetic, charismatic, considerate, confident, positive, passionate, enthusiastic, motivational, and encouraging. Incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders are detrimental to this balance, the team, and the organization (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kaiser & Craig, 2014).

Impacts of Incompetent, Insecure, and Destructive Leaders

While many researchers have focused on transformational leadership personalities, behaviors, and positive leadership attributes, others have focused on what makes leaders ineffective, even potentially dangerous. The degree of suffering and negative impacts among team members depends on the negative approach and the leader's personality. When organizations have incompetent, insecure, or destructive leaders; everyone suffers (Kaiser & Craig, 2014).

According to Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, (2007), most researchers are clear that when categorizing types of leadership as damaging, a leader's intent has nothing to do with the categorization. Instead, the focus is on results or outcomes. Therefore, destructive leadership is

an all-encompassing category that focuses on the results of incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership. Einarsen et al., (2007) go on to clarify:

> Furthermore, any isolated and therefore potentially accidental behaviour is already excluded in the definition through the focus on systematic and repeated behaviour. Destructive leadership behaviour may therefore include behaviours that were not intended to cause harm, but as a result of thoughtlessness, insensitivity, or lack of competence, undermines subordinates and/or the organisation.

The researchers refer to these leaders by different terms, and they explain the varying degrees of adverse impact. Hinkin & Schriesheim (2008) researched the harm caused by incompetent, insecure, passive/avoidant, negligent, or laissez-faire "nonleaders." As explained earlier, Bass & Riggio (2006) explain how inauthentic leaders, pseudotransformational leaders, and neuroticism are detrimental to the leadership of teams and team members. Some of these inhibiting behaviors include moodiness, defensiveness, anxiety, fear, anger, aggression, insecurity, hostility, disproportionate frustration, jealousy, excessive worry, envy, jealousy, depression, hopelessness, shyness, extreme self-consciousness, impulsivity, and loneliness. Of Bass & Riggio's (2006) neurotic leadership traits, some are more harmful to the team, organization, and members than others. Khoo & Burch, (2007) researched the negative impacts to what they refer to as the "dark side" of leadership personality. Within this "dark side" of leadership and neuroticism, the most damaging is destructive leadership, since it has the potential to destroy teams and organizations and ruin lives (Einarsen et al. 2007; Kaiser & Craig's, 2014).

Kaiser & Craig's (2014) "Destructive Leadership in and of Organizations" analyzes the impact of destructive leader behavior, personality traits, and top-down decision-making approaches; this research highlights selfishness, abuse of power, micromanagement, unethical leadership, narcissism, negligent or laissez-faire leadership, and situational pressures that lead to destruction. Einarsen et al. (2007) cite multiple studies and the terms associated with destructive

leaders, including abusive supervisors, health-endangering leaders, petty tyrants, bullies, derailed leaders, intolerable bosses, psychopaths, harassing leaders, and toxic leaders. Kaiser & Craig (2014) claim that problems with destructive leadership are rooted in a leader's selfish motivational orientation: their personal wants and goals, desire to achieve, and need for personal advancement. "Self-interest is a powerful human motive, perhaps the most powerful one, and is a chief reason for exploitative, manipulative, unethical, and negligent leader behavior" (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Kaiser and Craig (2014) further explain that destructive leaders respond to selfish motivation by exercising power, control, and social dominance over others.

The "dark side" personalities of destructive leaders are the opposite of those found in influential transformational leaders. Khoo & Burch (2007) researched which personality traits were most at odds with transformational leadership. They group and rank-order them from negative correlation to low positive correlation. To be clear, all personality disorders are the antithesis of transformational leadership personalities. Khoo & Burch's (2007) research overlapped the personality disorders from the DSM-IV with the dysfunctional leadership approaches found in the Hogan Developmental Survey (HDS). HDS is used to determine the "dark side" personality dimensions. (See Appendix: G for descriptions of each) Khoo & Burch (2007) find varying degrees of negative correlation between the different groupings of detrimental personality disorders and transformational leadership. Each personality disorder in each group is presented from lowest to highest correlation with transformational leadership. The group that "moved away from people" (-.83 correlation) was the least like transformational leaders. This group includes: avoidant/cautious, schizoid/reserved, paranoid/skeptical, borderline/excitable, passive-aggressive/leisurely. The next group "moved against people" (-.15 correlation). This group included: narcissistic/bold, antisocial/mischievous, histrionic/colorful,

schizotypal/imaginative. While the last group still has a negative correlation of (-.1), the “moving toward people” group is the closest to transformational leadership. This group includes: obsessive-compulsive/diligent and dependent/dutiful. Kaiser and Craig’s (2014) research describes what these “dark side” personalities can look like in the context of leadership:

- abusive supervision with sustained hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors;
- unethical leadership with moral lapses where the leader is devious, manipulative, lacking integrity, vindictive, neglecting commitments, or dishonest;
- utilizing personal charisma for selfish goals or evil intent;
- narcissistic behaviors such as arrogance, self-centeredness, sense of entitlement, grandiosity, self-absorption, and superiority;
- personality disorders such as narcissism, Machiavellianism or psychopathy, exhibiting borderline, avoidant, paranoid, schizoid, passive-aggressive, narcissistic, antisocial, histrionic, schizotypal, obsessive-compulsive, or dependent behaviors; or
- negligent or passive laissez-faire leadership approaches that abdicate their responsibility as leaders.

Kaiser and Craig (2014) explain that narcissism is a common attribute of powerful leaders; this can be both a strength and a weakness. While narcissism can provide the confidence, vision, and inspiration teams need, it can birth a power-hungry, self-centered approach when left unchecked. Kaiser and Craig (2014) exhaustively list detrimental characteristics of destructive leaders in a chart of "dark side" personality traits (see Appendix I).

In addition to personality, leaders' racism, prejudice, bias, and blind spots harm diverse teams. When leaders promote or ignore social and cultural hierarchies based on systemic, unearned privilege, members outside the dominant group are more likely to be marginalized and

impacted by status hierarchies, power struggles, conflict, and differential treatment (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Selecting team members who share the same dominant culture, beliefs, and norms or who look like the dominant leader, undermines the team and typically results in groupthink and ineffective results (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). While racism, prejudice, and bias are a form of destructive leadership, Kaiser and Craig (2014) found that laissez-faire leadership, where the leader avoids responsibility, is the most common form of destructive leadership.

Leaders who are passive, neglectful, and allow their indirect behaviors to negatively affect the members are also classified as destructive leaders. When the leader fails to protect members, or when the leader's lack of leadership negatively impacts members, the leader is engaged in destructive leadership (Einarsen et al., 2007; Kaiser & Craig, 2014; Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2008). Hinkin & Schriesheim (2008) focus on the passive and negligent type of destructive leadership field, which they referred to as different types of "non-leadership:"

- *Reward omission:* Managers do not respond to what a subordinate perceives to be his or her good performance.
- *Punishment omission:* Managers do not respond to what a subordinate perceives to be his or her poor performance.
- *Passive management by exception:* Managers intervene only after noncompliance has occurred or when mistakes have already happened.
- *Laissez-faire leadership:* Managers avoid making decisions, abdicate responsibility, and do not use their authority (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2008, page 1237).

Hinkin & Schriesheim (2008) found that while each of the incompetent, insecure, and destructive "nonleadership" approaches varied, the adverse effect was the same, which is why they are classified as destructive leadership. According to Einarsen et al., (2007)

> Consistent with the definition of destructive leadership introduced in this paper, laissez-faire leadership violates the legitimate interests of organisations, by for example "stealing time," while also possibly undermining the motivation, well-being and job satisfaction of subordinates (e.g., by failing to meet their legitimate expectations of guidance and support). Hence, laissez-faire should be considered a form of destructive leadership.

Members had significantly strong negative views of leaders who engaged in any of these inactive, nonresponsive, incompetent, and insecure approaches.

It is crucial for leaders to know that standards of acceptable versus unacceptable destructive leadership change over time. Einarsen et al. (2007) shared that

> Leadership behaviour may be considered destructive only if it violates the legitimate interests of the organisation as defined by a given society at a given point in time (Einarsen, Nielsen, Raknes, & Skogstad, 2005). This implies of course that what will be perceived as destructive behaviour may vary between different societies over time… Many kinds of leadership behaviours that are considered destructive today, may have been regarded as being in accordance with the legitimate interest of the organisation at another point in time.

While cultural norms of the past may have allowed destructive leadership, destructive leadership currently depends on the point of view of the organization or member.

Einarsen et al. (2007) created a model of destructive leaders that categorized their detrimental behaviors. Tyrannical Leadership Behavior supports the organization but exhibits destructive leadership toward members. Derailed Leadership Behavior is anti-organization *and* anti-member. Supportive-Disloyal Leadership Behavior is supportive of members, yet is anti-organization. Regardless of the behavior, the effect is destructive even though specific points-of-view may not see it as the case. For example, "Because tyrannical leaders may behave constructively in terms of organisational oriented behaviour while displaying anti-subordinate

behaviours; subordinates and superiors may evaluate the leader's behaviour quite differently. Subordinates may view the leader as a bully, while upper management views him/her favourably" (Einarsen et al., 2007). Both the members and organization are in agreement that derailed leadership behavior is harmful. There is not as much agreement for Supportive-Disloyal Leadership Behavior.

> The intention of the supportive–disloyal leader may not necessarily be to harm the organisation; rather he or she may be acting upon a different "vision" or strategy in support of other values and goals than that of the organisation, even believing that he or she acts with the organisation's best interest at heart. Leaders who lack strategic competence may still be able to nurture friendly relationships with subordinates; but even though they may be popular among some or all of their subordinates, these leaders would be considered destructive if their behaviour is not in the legitimate interest of the organisation (Einarsen et al., 2007).

Incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders undermine the organization, the benefits of team learning, and transformational leadership itself. These detrimental leadership approaches destroy opportunity for improved decision making, ownership, shared purpose toward a common goal(s), feelings of safety, willingness to take risk, trust, motivation, team member engagement, productivity, job satisfaction, collaboration, group cohesion, organizational commitment, continuity, and team member confidence in themselves and the organization (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). In addition to the negative impact of these detrimental leadership approaches, destructive leadership has the potential to do even more harm to the members' legal and physical wellbeing.

Destructive leaders are more likely to lead their team to engage in unethical or illegal behaviors, to belittle employees, or to neglect staff. They are also more likely to increase staff conflict, fear, distress, and confusion, and they commonly leave problems unaddressed (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Kaiser and Craig (2014) explain that when you have destructive leaders,

susceptible followers, and an organization that allows destructive leaders to lead, you have what they refer to as a “toxic triangle.”

Building a culture of trust as an organization takes time and effort; a destructive leader can rapidly undo both. If left unchecked, these destructive leaders can quickly destroy an organization’s culture, undermine organizational trust, and cause harm to staff. While some destructive leaders may be able to deliver desirable short-term, the negative long-term costs of their leadership approach typically far outweigh the initial benefits (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). The ends do not justify the means. Organizations must be proactive to address their culture, systems, and structures to prevent this from occurring (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Organizations must understand the signs and signals of incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership, the impacts, and contributing culture that fosters or creates these detrimental leadership practices. The organization must reflect and analyze whether its systems and culture are fostering these detrimental leaders (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). To reduce destructive leadership, organizations must implement frequent checks on leaders' approaches, eliminating any self-promoting processes that encourage destructive leadership. It is relevant to know that employees managed by destructive leaders may be reticent to report abuses due to fear, terror, and an implied threat from the destructive leader (Kaiser & Craig, 2014).

Organizations must address or remove incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders before harm is done, and then establish organizational culture and systems to prevent recurrence (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Enduring organizations change their culture and systems to support transformational leaders, intentionally weed out incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders, and at the same time hire, recruit, and grow positive, effective leaders.

Organizational Support of Transformational Leadership

An organization's cultures and systems either support or hinder transformational leaders' efforts (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Day et al., 2006). Organizations that take a hands-off or passive approach to address the systemic issues that hinder leaders have the same destructive effect as leaders who take this same laisse-faire approach (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). For organizations to become transformational, senior leadership must articulate and plan for cultural and system changes required to support leaders. Senior leadership must understand the organization's culture and the dynamic environmental conditions that impact leaders and diverse teams (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Clarke, 2012; Crouse, 2011; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017; Mathieu, 2008; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Similar to team leaders, senior leadership must engage in careful reflection before addressing systemic barriers for leaders of diverse teams. The approach of senior leadership is critical since they set the tone, direction, and culture for the entire organization (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Some potential issues include how the organization:

- addresses blind spots of leadership at all levels, as well as systemic racism
- encourages stability of the team and leadership
- focuses on improving the environment to encourage diversity
- acknowledges success and leadership accomplishments and awards promotions
- extinguishes inappropriate leadership approaches
- fosters a positive team climate
- encourages transformational leadership behaviors and approaches
- encourages the psychological safety of the team

- establishes the interpersonal climate of the team and the individualist versus collectivist culture of the organization
- and cultivates and encourages diverse teams to value their diverse perspectives (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007).

Top leadership seeking increase a transformational culture in their organization must ensure that diverse teams work in an environment that is hospitable and conducive to creativity, collaboration for problem-solving, risk-taking, and experimentation (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Systems and structures must be coordinated, articulated, and in alignment with the goals of increasing transformational leadership (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006). It follows that team leaders also need to ensure that their team's efforts are coordinated, articulated, and in alignment with the work of the district (Zaccaro et al., 2008). Part of establishing the culture of the organization is being intentional with hiring, and the subsequent types of learning that occur within the organization.

Hiring transformational leaders and avoiding incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders. The easiest way to reduce detrimental leaders is not hiring or promoting them into leadership roles in the first place. Kaiser & Craig (2014) point out, however, that this is easier said than done. When leaders are hired, if the hiring committee or chair values traditional leadership approaches, then they may gravitate toward these characteristics. If, however, there is a mindset shift about what leadership looks like, then the hiring approach changes as well. Controlling, transactional, top-down, destructive management attributes that organizations may have sought out when hiring in the past can be replaced with leaders who have new transformational team leadership qualities.

As organizations shift, so does what they look for in leadership. Learning organizations need transformational leaders who are collaborative, engaged in shared leadership, culturally responsive, learning-oriented, and system thinkers who can collaborate and work across organizational departments. They must be able to mentor, coach, and advocate. They should be selfless, ethical, positive role models who are authentic to themselves, democratic, inspirational, proactive. They are change agents with strong emotional intelligence, and they are model transformational leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). They are the exact opposite of destructive leaders. Positive transformational leaders in learning organizations want to lead not with mandates and problems to solve, but instead to address challenges and opportunities in collaborative teams (Bass, 2000).

As organizations are finding the transformational leaders they want, they are also discerning which applicants are destructive. Kaiser & Craig (2014) point out different ways that organizations are flushing out destructive leader applicants. One way for organizations to determine effective leader applicants is by using personality tests that uncover "dark side" personality traits. In addition to personality tests, human resources departments are explicitly looking for evidence of self-entitlement and inadequate self-regulation in the application and screening process. When applicants put their own self-interests before stakeholders,' focus on the I rather than the we, take undeserved personal credit, and behave as if above the rules, these are red flags for selfish, destructive leadership.

In addition to incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership, Kaiser & Craig (2014) also focus on how organizations are weeding out applicants who have inadequate self-regulation and social, emotional abilities. These destructive leadership traits are detrimental and they are watched for during visits to the organization, discussions with employees at all levels of the

organization, and even criminal background checks. One suggestion is to have individuals engage in a 360-degree leadership analysis, utilizing the results in the hiring process. Organizations must dig deeper, rather than ignore the signs, when any hint of self-destructive leadership traits arises (Kaiser & Craig (2014).

Developing transformational leaders. In addition, recruiting new leaders, learning organizations are growing their leaders from within. Successful organizations are developing their own transformational leaders (Bass, 1999; Bass, 2000; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Organizations succeeding in this work are developing key attributes sought in a transformational leader (Bass, 1999; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Bass (1999) explains that the challenge for the organization is not in training, but in the willingness and ability of the person to be trained as a transformational moral leader. Bass (1999) suggests that methods such as 360-degree leadership assessments are powerful tools that can help individuals view their leadership and the need to become more of a transformational leader. Leaders might use this data to establish plans, implement these plans for several months, video themselves leading, and seek additional coaching to improve their leadership approaches.

Districts need to intentionally develop transformational leaders who understand how to coach the members they work with. Ideally, the entire organization—starting with the superintendent and throughout each successive level—would receive and provide coaching and feedback. Bass (1999) suggests individual coaching for leaders. Leaders are taught through regular coaching, professional development, feedback, and assessment of how to effectively lead teams (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006). For this approach to be effective, every district leader must recognize the individual needs and learning of the professionals with whom they work. The leader needs to differentiate, engage in one-on-one coaching for the member's specific

developmental needs, assess the strengths and areas of needed growth, and offer feedback to encourage improvement (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006). If leaders engage in passive, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership, they need to be held accountable and proactively shift to transformational leadership approaches (Bass & Riggio, 2006)

To effectively grow leaders, the district culture must publicly support and honor intellectual stimulation, diversity of perspective, and ownership at all levels (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Bringing forward concerns and ideas on how to improve must be part of the district culture, communication systems, and team collaboration approach (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). The district should publicly honor, reward, and praise individuals who exhibit these team learning approaches and attributes (Bass, 2000).

***Workplace learning to develop transformational leadership*.** While learning how to lead diverse teams and adopting a transformational leadership approach may begin in a classroom, skills are further developed in the context of the organization, and are primarily learned on the job in both formal and informal learning. Traditionally, learning has been connected to formal, individually-structured learning settings; however, effective workplace learning also includes informal learning (Crouse et al., 2011; Kumpikaite, 1998). Sambrook (2005) distinguishes that "informal" means learning *in* work, whereas "formal" is learning *at* work. Learning on the job from colleagues, asking questions, working with a team and mentorship are considered informal learning. Clarke's (2005) work supports these differences, though Clarke opts to use the terms "planned" and "unplanned." Edmondson et al. (2007) build on this, referring to planned learning that takes place in team meetings and unplanned learning that takes place outside the team boundaries or after the meeting between members.

Whether planned or unplanned, formal and informal, learning within the context of the organization is essential to creating a shared culture and building the organization's success (Billett, 1995; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Crouse et al., 2011; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kumpikaite, 1998). Doyle and Young's (2007) mixed methods empirical research focuses on the importance of workplace learning from the perspectives of leaders. They find that intentionally building leadership skills within the context of the organization is critical, according to leaders of the organization (Crouse et al., 2011; Doyle & Young, 2007). Of the two types of learning, most learning comes from informal learning (Crouse et al., 2011; Doyle & Young, 2007). That said, researchers recommended that organizations intentionally increase formal and informal learning opportunities for all members of the organization (Crouse et al., 2011; Doyle & Young, 2007; Edmondson et al., 2007); leaving learning to chance is not an effective strategy (Clarke, 2012; Crouse et al., 2011; Doyle & Young, 2007; Jacobs & Parks, 2009; Kumpikaite, 1998; Senge, 1990). Effective learning organizations have improved workplace learning by creating systems and approaches that support both formal and informal learning. Some strategies include opportunities for leaders to learn from one another, as well as learn from both formal and informal coaching from mentors and role models (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Jacobs & Park, 2009). Chrobot-Mason et al. (2013) further highlight the benefits when diverse leaders have mentors from their own demographic group as well as mentors from the dominant group.

As in all instruction, measuring and monitoring the effectiveness of workplace learning strategies is critical. Learning organizations intentionally leverage the notion that *what gets measured gets done, and what gets rewarded gets repeated*. Districts that want transformational leaders who effectively lead diverse teams to learn and collaborate must be intentional with their

approach, systems, and opportunities for leaders to learn (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Jacobs & Park, 2009).

Decreasing Incompetent, Insecure, and Destructive Leadership in the Organization

Organizations can afford to be no less intentional when they discover and address incompetent, insecure, or destructive leadership within their organization. In addition to growing transformational leaders, organizations must also deter, address, and remove incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders. Ensuring that all levels of leadership are transparent and accountable reduces the conditions that help these detrimental leadership practices thrive (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). These types of leadership typically live in the shadows of an organization and thrive on lack of accountability or support from other destructive leader supervisors. Specifically, for destructive leadership, transparency reduces secrets, and deters opportunities for backdoor dealing and selfish and destructive leadership (Kaiser & Craig, 2014).

Knowing that destructive leaders evolve and that their practices are rarely questioned, Kaiser & Craig (2014) were clear that when discovered, destructive leaders must be held accountable. If not, then the success and culture of the entire organization are in jeopardy. Destructive leaders must not be promoted, because the higher the preferment, the more unchecked the power (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Kaiser & Craig (2014) suggest that whistleblowing strategies be used and taken seriously to combat destructive leadership; they recommend hotlines and anonymous electronic reporting systems. Kaiser & Craig (2014) also share that senior leadership and boards should create organizational cultures that honor whistleblowers, rather than punish or stigmatize them. They further state that written policies and procedures should be put into place to protect sincere whistleblowers who are uncovering destructive leadership practices.

Creating a culture that deters incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership practices is critical. The hope is that organization members will begin to stand up and address harmful leadership practices among their subordinates, peers, and supervisors. By consistently addressing, removing, and preventing incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders, the organization will establish a culture where detrimental leadership is no longer condoned (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). The organization's cultural reputation will encourage incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders to leave the organization, deter these type of detrimental leaders from outside the organization from applying, and prevent internal leaders from becoming these type of detrimental leaders (Kaiser & Craig, 2014).

Need for New Team Learning Case Studies

Both Day et al., (2006) and Edmondson et al., (2007) call on researchers to focus on groups that are using team learning to solve systems problems. These research teams believe that additional micro field research on the issues of team learning could contribute to better integration of organizational and team learning theory (Day et al., 2006; Edmondson et al., 2007). Edmondson et al. (2007) also propose the need for case studies that focus attention on intra-organizational networks of teams that collaborate to coordinate interdependent activities, and that focus on strategies and goals for which no prior blueprint exists (Edmondson et al., 2007).

Additionally, according to Zaccaro et al. (2008), there is a significant need for team learning research that primarily focuses on how leaders impact a team's effectiveness. Salas, Burke, and Stagl (2004, p. 342) state that "one area that has been relatively neglected in the team literature is the role of the team leader." According to Zaccaro et al. (2008), the primary focus in studies of the impact of team leadership on team learning should occur at the team level.

Edmondson et al. (2007) suggest the need for understanding how teams work together across boundaries or departments that have different knowledge, experience, routines, and culture. They claim that how this occurs in different contexts of organizational work teams remains under-studied. They recognize that organizations benefit from diverse groups utilizing team learning and reflecting on the process of the team; this learning also benefits the future work of groups that use the team learning approaches (Edmondson et al., 2007).

While the focus of this case study is on helping leaders improve their leadership of teams that collaborate and learn together, it is essential to understand the team learning context of the PPA's work. The PPA collaborated, using the Dual Capacity Framework Tool, to create strategies and a system to improve culturally responsive family partnerships. Since the context of the work impacted the members who were chosen to be on the PPA, and is reflected in the one-on-one interview comments as well as both focus groups, it is necessary to understand what the team was created to improve.

Culturally Responsive Family Partnerships

Districts and schools are continually looking for ways to improve student achievement. One successful strategy is to strengthen family partnerships (Epstein, 2005; Epstein, 2006; Epstein, 2010; Epstein, 2010; Epstein, 2017; Khalifa, 2015; Mapp, 2013; Sanders, 2012, Weiss, 2010). As schools improve family partnerships, and realize a corresponding rise in academic scores, other districts and schools take note and shift their priorities to improve family partnerships as part of their education reform efforts (Bolivar, 2012; Epstein, 2005; Mapp, 2013; Sanders, 2012; Sheldon, 2003; Weiss, 2010).

There is a large body of literature focused on individual strategies to conform family practices to the norms of the school to benefit the school (Bolivar, 2011). There are fewer studies

that focus on how schools changed their culture, beliefs, and capacity to benefit the families those schools serve (Bolivar, 2011). Schools and districts that address inequity, opportunity gaps and increased student achievement are shifting their perceptions and actions to include culturally responsive school-family partnership (Epstein, 2010; Gaitlin, 2012; Khalifa 2015; Mapp, 2013; Bolivar, 2011).

Unfortunately, many schools struggle with creating and maintaining positive relationships with families (Bolivar, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Henderson, 2011; Khalifa, 2012; Khalifa, 2015; Malone, 2013; Mapp, 2013; Vassallo, 2015). The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education identifies family engagement as a critical, comprehensive school reform strategy (Borman, Geoffrey, Hewes, Gina, Overman, Laura, & Brown, 2003; Epstein, 2005; Epstein and Sanders, 2006). That said, in 2008 the U.S. Department of Education found that family partnership was the weakest area of compliance by states (Mapp, 2013). Both teachers and principals state that family engagement is one of the most challenging aspects of their work (Bolivar, 2013; Mapp, 2013; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). While educators report wanting to work with families from diverse backgrounds and cultures to improve family partnership and share responsibility for student outcomes, they also indicate that they do not know how (Ainscow, 2012; Bolivar, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mapp, 2013).

Ineffective partnerships between schools and families from diverse backgrounds and cultures result in families facing personal, cultural, and structural barriers to support their children. These barriers negatively impact how families partner with their children’s teachers (Bolivar, 2011; Henderson, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Khalifa, 2015; Khalifa, 2012; Mapp, 2013; Malone, 2013). Unsurprisingly, the benefits of family partnerships do not come from increasing school-centered partnership approaches. To the contrary, approaches to family

partnerships that are not culturally responsive result in inequity in education and an increased opportunity gap (Epstein, 2010; Epstein, 2005; Gaitlin, 2012; Henderson, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Khalifa, 2012; Khalifa, 2015; Mapp, 2013;). Families are not always able to navigate the educational system to support their children (Bolivar, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Henderson, 2011; Khalifa, 2012; Khalifa, 2015; Mapp, 2013). Families in culturally unresponsive schools might not trust or feel welcomed in schools, particularly if they have had negative experiences with schools in the past (Bolivar, 2011; Henderson, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Khalifa, 2012; Khalifa, 2015; Mapp, 2013). In school districts where families are not supported, the families are left to navigate the system, fight racism, build the capacity of their own families, and try to change the school system on their own from the outside (Delgado-Gaitan, 2012; Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Schools that develop culturally responsive family partnerships have higher student achievement and student learning compared to schools that focus solely on improving student achievement (Bolivar, 2011; Epstein, 2005; Epstein, 2010; Epstein, 2016; Henderson, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mapp, 2013; Sanders, 2012; Sheldon, 2003; Weiss, 2009; Vassallo, 2015). These schools work to create welcoming and inviting environments that promote family engagement, and they develop family initiatives connected to their children's learning and development (Bolivar, 2011; Epstein, 2005; Epstein, 2010; Epstein, 2016; Henderson, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mapp, 2013; Sanders, 2012; Sheldon, 2003; Khalifa, 2012; Khalifa, 2015).

Culturally responsive schools build active family partnerships that honor the cultures, funds of knowledge, and assets of their families by engaging in a variety of ways and roles (Bolivar, 2011; Epstein, 2005; Epstein, 2010; Epstein, 2016; Henderson, 2011; Henderson &

Mapp, 2002; Khalifa, 2012; Khalifa, 2015; Mapp, 2013; Sanders, 2012; Sheldon, 2003). In these schools, families act as supporters of their children's own learning and development (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Henderson, 2011; Khalifa, 2012; Khalifa, 2015; Mapp, 2013). The family and the school partner as encouragers of the child's self-image and help the child build an achievement identity that focuses on self-determination (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Henderson, 2011; Lewallen, Hunt, Potts-Datema, Zaza, & Giles, 2015; Mapp, 2013).

Families in culturally responsive schools monitor their children's time, behavior, and activities at home and school, and they promote education (Henderson, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mapp, 2013). These families act as advocates for improving the learning of their children and the education of their community (Henderson, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mapp, 2013). Families in these schools are part of the decision-making teams that collaborate in educational decisions on school improvement and reform (Bolivar, 2011; Borman et al., 2003; Epstein, 2005; Epstein, 2010; Epstein, 2016; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Henderson, 2011; Khalifa, 2015; Mapp, 2013; Sanders, 2012; Sheldon, 2003;).

New teams of families and educators are forming to implement culturally responsive family partnership practices. These new teams benefit from transformational leadership and team learning approaches as they work to become culturally responsive schools. Some schools and districts adopt the Dual Capacity Framework as a guide to support their culturally responsive family partnership team.

Dual Capacity Framework. Mapp (2013) created the Dual Capacity Framework (DCF) to create more culturally responsive family partnerships. According to Mapp, the foundation of the DCF is based on the research of effective family engagement, home and school partnership practices, adult learning, motivational theory, and leadership development. Rather than offering a

list of to-do strategies, silver bullets or quick fixes, the DCF puts the ownership and creation of strategies in the hands of the team.

The purpose of Mapp's new DCF is to serve as a compass to ensure schools have family partnerships that are linked to student achievement, respect and honor the culture of the student and family, and focus on helping both school staff and families increase their capacity to partner with one another (Mapp, 2013). The DCF is not a list of family partnership activities or strategies, but instead is a scaffold to support the creation of engagement strategies, policies, and programs (Mapp, 2013). The DCF is a tool that teams can use to ensure that family partnerships are culturally responsive.

Teams like the Partnership Principal Advisory come together and use the DCF as a guide to create strategies in the context and culture of the school, the district, and the families they serve. Epstein, Galindo, & Sheldon (2011) find that, above all else, when district teams are engaged, the result is high-quality school programs and continual improvement of family partnerships. Van Voorhis & Sheldon (2004) find that the principal contributes one of the most significant impacts when developing and maintaining effective family partnerships. When district and school leadership, staff, and families work together for family partnerships, the impact is substantial.

Mapp (2013) identifies the positive outcomes for families and schools when the DCF is used as a guide. Schools and staff can honor and recognize families' funds of knowledge, connect family engagement to student learning, and achievement and create a welcoming and inviting school culture where all families' cultures are honored (Mapp, 2013). For families, the outcome benefits of the DCF include schools supporting families to both navigate the system and engage

in multiple roles as supporters, encouragers, monitors, advocates, decision makers, and collaborators (Mapp, 2013).

A district in the Puget Sound area created the PPA to establish a plan based on the DCF. Mapp's (2013) DCF served as the roadmap for the strategies and systems the PPA created to improve family partnerships.

The literature review grounded the case study, narrowed the focus of the research question, established the theoretical frameworks, and determined the interview questions and research methods. Understanding culturally responsive family partnerships and the DCF helps to put the PPA into context.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

This qualitative case study examines team members' insights and suggestions for team leaders on how to improve team collaboration and the learning process. This case study extends existing understanding about leading teams that are engaged in team learning.

Research Question

What are the insights and suggestions of a team of P-12 principals and district directors that could benefit team leaders who are creating teams to collaborate and learn together?

Research Study Design

Utilizing a case study design is a way to gain a deep insight into the perspectives, insights, and suggestions of the members (Martella, 2013). Other leaders could benefit from the members' insights. The data highlights the specific perspectives, insights, and suggestions of members to assist future leaders who are creating a team that will collaborate and learn together.

Qualitative research methods traditionally are used to understand the perspectives of individuals at a deeper level (Martella, 2013). Based on this tradition, the need for more team learning case studies, and the research question, the research method used a qualitative case study design. Individual interviews and a focus group of the PPA members were incorporated in the case study.

Martella (2013) states that setting the context in field-oriented studies is crucial to understanding the phenomenon of the study. The two organizational contexts include the district in the Puget Sound area and the Partnership Principal Advisory (PPA). The district is a large, diverse, successful urban school district. At the time of this research, the class of 2018 hit an all-time high 89% extended graduation rate, a 34% increase in eight years. An 81% majority of teachers in the district are white, whereas the 60% majority of students in the district are students

of color; 58% of the students in the district receive free or reduced lunch, 10% of students are transitional bilingual and 14.6% of students in the district receive support through an IEP (OSPI Report Card, 2017).

The PPA was created in the summer of 2017 to improve the district's family partnerships and to increase equity by helping families navigate their school system to support their child. The PPA committed to improving culturally responsive family partnerships by creating district systems, continually learning, challenging the status quo and traditions, focusing on the district vision and district strategic benchmarks, and focusing on team learning to enhance problem-solving capabilities.

The PPA focused on creating systems aligned with Senge's (1990) learning organization five disciplines: systems thinking, continual learning through personal mastery, challenging the status quo through mental models, focusing on the district's shared vision and strategic benchmarks and team learning. While the PPA work, interviews, and focus group results were in alignment with all five disciplines, this case study focused on how team leaders can improve their leadership of team learning with a district leadership team.

The team created a Partnership Toolkit to help families navigate the school system to support their children. The Partnership Toolkit was based on the district's Strategic Benchmarks and district improvement plan process. To ensure the strategies were based on equity and culturally responsive practices, all the strategies within the Partnership Toolkit were connected to the district benchmarks and were created and vetted using Mapp's Dual Capacity Framework (2013).

Participants

For the interviews, survey, and focus group, criterion sampling was used. Criterion sampling was chosen because the participants had specific knowledge and experience as members of the PPA. This process allowed the members to provide in-depth information and useful insights to improve the future process of teams learning. The participants of the PPA were intentionally selected to be on the team. To create the team, I interviewed district leaders who were connected to the work, and who knew the strengths of all the P-12 principals and directors. Based on the interviews, I individually selected and recruited each member. Initially, 17 members agreed to be on the team. When the team began meeting, ten members of the team participated regularly. The final team had five principals from elementary, middle and high schools as well as the five district-level department directors. The directors represented the following departments: Community Partnerships, Academic Equity, Data Analytics Research Team (DART), Teaching and Learning, and the Whole Child.

Procedures Used in the Design

Since the goal was to understand and examine the insights and suggestions of the members, interviews, a survey, and a focus group was used (Martella, 2013). Individual interviews, post-interview opportunity to edit and add to interview responses, a survey, and a focus group based on interview themes were the forms of data collection. All members of the PPA were interviewed and be part of a focus group. Unfortunately, not all ten members could attend the first focus group, so a second focus group was scheduled for the four members who could not attend. Both the interviews and focus groups were audio recorded to gain the insights and suggestions of members in the data collection process. Triangulation was used to increase the strength of the themes. Individuals shared in both the individual interview, survey, and a

focus group. This process provided individuals more confidentiality and the ability to share more in a one-on-one interview setting. Having the focus group allowed the team the opportunity to go deeper into the interview themes with insights and suggestions for the leaders, and build upon one another's responses in a team learning setting.

The interview questions were selected to delve deeper into the participants' experience, opinion, values, and feelings about the team learning process. Patton (2002) discussed six types of interview questions: experience/behavior, opinion/values, feeling, knowledge, sensory, background/demographic. Since the focus was on the participants' experience, opinion, values, and feelings, the following questions were used as interview questions.

- What did it look like when the team came together to begin the work? (Experience/Behavior Question)
- What challenges did the team face and how did the team overcome the challenges, if they were overcome? (Opinion/Values Question)
- What were the benefits of the team learning and working together to create the strategies and systems? (Opinion/Values Question)
- What did it feel like when the team started to figure out a plan and was learning together? (Feeling Question)
- What suggestions does the team have for future team leaders that are creating a team that will learn and work together? (Opinion/Values Question)

The focus group questions were created based on the themes that arose from the individual interviews. The overarching theme of interviews was that there are significant benefits of teams learning and collaborating, and to experience these benefits, the approach of the leader is critical. Five main themes arose on how to achieve the benefits of teams learning and

collaborating. The success of the team's collaboration and learning increases if the leader intentionally:

- Creates the team with members that have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths.
- Ensures team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to the goal.
- Creates safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contribution is valued.
- Uses protocols, frameworks or structures to support collaboration.
- Empowers the team members with ownership to collaboratively create, rather than act as a sounding board or rubber stamp committee for decisions that are already made by the team leader.

The focus groups allowed the members to delve deeper into the themes and offer suggestions to future leaders. Immediately before the focus groups, the members were given the themes and subthemes (see Appendix F). The members were asked to check any subthemes they disagreed with. Then the members to rank order the importance of the themes (1 = most important, 5 = least important) (See Appendix G). The goal was to review what the collective group's themes were and to reorient the members' minds to the themes prior to the focus group. The focus group questions included the following;

- What would you want future team leaders to know about the benefits of teams collaborating and learning together?
- Why do you think some team leaders are not doing the following:
- What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to do the following:

(a) Creating a team with members that have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths.

(b) Ensuring team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to the goal.

(c) Creating safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contribution is valued.

(d) Using protocols, frameworks or structures to support collaboration.

(e) Empowering the team members with ownership to collaboratively create, rather than act as a sounding board or rubber stamp committee for decisions that are already made by the team leader.

Since the research used interviews and a focus group, I used protocols from RAND Data Collection Methods Semi-Structured Interviews and Focus Groups Training Manual (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Using a semi-structured protocol based on the research interview and focus group questions, rather than the standardized open-ended interview, allowed the members to delve deeper into the discussion and provide more details about their insights, feelings, and opinions (Martella, 2013). Using a semi-structured interview protocol rather than an informal, conversational interview increased the likelihood that all members responded to the same topics and questions (Martella, 2013).

A strength of the design was the positionality of the researcher being a principal and team leader. While the positionality of the participant was a limitation to the research in some ways, the same positionality also gave me, as a researcher, a unique perspective that other researchers may not have when it comes to understanding the context of this case study. Being a principal in the district and building relationships with the members of the team allowed me to get to know

the participants, increasing the necessary trust for more in-depth conversations, interviews, and the focus group (Martella, 2013).

Protection of Human Subjects

While the school district knows the members of the PPA, the following safeguards were used to protect the confidentiality of the participants' responses. I used the RAND Data Collection Methods Semi-Structured Interviews and Focus Groups Training Manual protocols (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). I explained to the individual interviewees and the members of the focus group that the process would maintain strict confidentiality. I explained that if any names were used, I would remove the names and replace names and titles with pseudonyms when transcribing the interviews and focus group. Any information that would identify the comments of the interviewee or member of the focus group was not omitted from any quotations to protect the identity of the individual. When compiling the data, identifying information, such as names, was altered so interview and focus group datasets were also confidential in the case study results. I used and sent IRB approval and protocols to each interviewee and the members of the focus group. Members signed the IRB forms before interviewing and engaging in the focus group. I also explained that, while I would protect the written anonymity of the participants of the focus group, they would need to understand that total confidentiality was not possible in the group setting. The principals and district leaders willingly volunteered to participate in this group.

Methods of Data Analysis

The data from the recorded interviews and focus group was transcribed using online transcription software. The transcriptions were then uploaded into NVivo transcription software. Each transcription was uploaded into Quirkos qualitative data analysis software. Using transcribe.wreally.com, I slowed the speed of the recorded interview down and checked for

accuracy in the written transcription in Quirkos. Where there were words improperly transcribed, I edited the transcription until it was accurate. I then emailed a copy of the audio MP4, the written transcription, and the interview questions to each interviewee. I asked each interviewee to review the audio and written transcription. I also asked each interviewee to please email me anything else they would like to add or edit for any of the interview questions that would help to capture their thinking. Once I had the one-on-one interview data set accurate, I read Saldaña's Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers (2009).

Using Saldaña's Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers (2009), I determined which coding strategies I would use for each cycle of coding. While reading each transcript in Quirkos, a first cycle of coding was used. For the first cycle of coding, I used simultaneous coding, values coding, holistic coding, and narrative coding. (See Appendix C for example). I then created follow up draft focus group questions based on the themes from the one-on-one interviews. I then connected with my dissertation committee to review and give feedback on the theme's open response survey and focus group questions. I used both NVivo and Quirkos for the thematic coding for the focus group transcript. Then in the second cycle of coding, I used elaborative coding to determine any additional themes from the responses. One question in the survey asked the members to rank order the importance of the themes from 1-5. The results are found in Appendix A.

Again, using Saldaña's Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers (2009), I used the focusing strategies. These included the top quotes that would be included for each theme, the study trinity strategy to determine which themes have the most impact over the other themes, and codeweaving to determine how the themes are interconnected and fit together. Appendix B includes charts showing responses per theme.

Strengths and Limitations of the Design

There are strengths and limitations of this qualitative case study design. The more similar on the team is to a team of P-12 school district administrators and principals; the more confidence the leader will have that the findings will fit their similar team. Thus, the findings have a logical generalization to the other district administration teams (Martella, 2013).

As a case study, the strengths of the design are connected to the open-ended interview and creating follow-up up survey and focus group questions based on the themes of the one-on-one interviews. Delving deeper into the themes of the one-on-one interviews focused the insights and advice for future leaders. Using criterion sampling of the members provided focused insights regarding advice for future leaders from an administrative member point of view. The members have served or currently serve on other district teams or Principal Advisories with different team leaders. Many have worked in other districts with different leaders; this gives a broader range of experiences of working together on teams toward a common district goal. The members of the PPA had also been working together for a year, and they had a relationship with one another as well as the researcher-team leader. Having an existing relationship benefited the individual interviews, as well as for the focus group since the members had established trust while working together. The members had also already engaged in one-on-one interviews with the team leader and engaged in conversations as a team throughout the year.

While there were strengths in the design, there were practical, ethical and political issues that may pose limitations. The main limitation was my positionality as a researcher-team leader. Nonparticipant studies reduce reactivity (Martella, 2013). To reduce some of the observer bias in data collection, I did not include observation as a data collection tool. Instead of making inferences from observations, interviews, and two focus groups were used. Using audio

recordings for the interviews and focus group eliminated some bias impacting which notes I would have chosen to take and which notes to omit in the data collection process. My bias did impact the creation of themes from the data. There was ala so bias in coding the interviews and coding the focus group responses as far as what fits into each category. Another practical limitation of the role of researcher-team leader was the possibility of participants not sharing concerns regarding the team leader of the PPA with the researcher since the researcher is a team leader. Another political and ethical limitation was that participant may not want to share concerns in either the interview or focus group due to fear of possible political and or career consequences. I explained how I would address this in the previous protection of human subjects' section.

Chapter 4: Data

As stated in chapter 1, the purpose of this case study is to help leaders improve team learning. The following research question guided the data collection and case study: What are the insights and suggestions of a team of P-12 principals and district leaders that could benefit leaders who are creating a team that will collaborate and learn together?

One-on-one interviews were conducted with the five principals and five district directors. The overarching conclusion from interviewees was twofold: There are significant benefits to team learning, and the leader's approach is critical to the realization of these benefits. Principals identified five specific areas vital to the effectiveness of team leadership; the success of the team increases if the leader intentionally:

- creates the team with members who have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths
- ensures team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to the goal(s);
- creates safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contributions are valued;
- uses protocols, frameworks, and structures to support collaboration;
- empowers the team members with ownership to collaboratively create, rather than act as a sounding board or rubber stamp committee for decisions that are already made by the team leader.

The next step in data collection was to gather additional insights and suggestions on each of the five key areas. Two follow-up focus groups discussed these themes, with each group discussing why some team leaders might not intentionally establish these core practices. The two

focus groups concluded with suggestions to help future leaders effectively implement the five essential components.

Presentation of Results

The presentation of results begins with the benefits of teams collaborating and learning together that members shared in both the interviews and focus groups. The rest of the chapter focuses on the five interview themes where members shared how leaders can make these benefits a reality.

The chapter results are organized first by the interview themes, and then by why the members thought leaders might not intentionally establish each theme. Finally, each theme concludes with the focus group suggestions to future leaders about how to implement each theme.

Benefits of Teams Collaborating and Learning Together

Interview and Focus Group Results. The overarching conclusion from both the district directors' and principals' interviews reflects the significant benefits of teams collaborating and learning together. The benefits fell into two subthemes: (a) collaboration and learning together improve the decision-making process and outcome; (b) there are also benefits to learning, climate, and organizational culture.

The members shared how team learning shapes the decision-making process and outcome. All ten members agreed that when members have different perspectives, skills, resources, and understandings, it is more likely that those collaborating and learning together will see potential variables and new processes or solutions that otherwise may have been hidden (Director 1, Director 2, Director 3, Director 4, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3, Principal 4, Principal 5). When asked what the benefits are, Director 4 explained:

> Oh my gosh, rooted in like everything. So collective effort has massive outcomes, right? If my perspective is only from A to E and then we bring in a group that has multiple perspectives, we could get the whole alphabet soup at least brainstormed, which then allows us to narrow down the best ideas from that list. And even in the narrowing process, having people with different perspectives helps us see all the potential variables (Director 4).

In addition to multiple perspectives, teams that collaborate and learn together can capitalize on people's individual strengths, since one person's strength may be another person's weakness (Director 1, Director 2, Principal 2, Principal 3). Collaboration that capitalizes on members' strengths also helps the end product. One principal shared that for school districts, capitalizing on members' strengths when collaborating improves K-12 articulation and alignment of ideas, systems, and processes (Principal 5). Another way that members felt collaboration improves the decision-making process and outcome is by creating collective purpose and accountability to the team (Director 2, Director 3, Principal 1, Principal 3). Other members discussed how the process increases transparency (Director 2, Principal 2). According to two directors, collaboration and learning together result in improved quality and quantity (Director 2, Director 4). Another director shared that, as a result of team learning, people have increased confidence in the end product and decision due to extensive vetting by people with multiple strengths and perspectives (Director 3).

Members further shared how team learning improves the learning, climate, and organizational culture. A significant benefit was the ability to bounce ideas off one another and push one another's thinking (Director 3, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3). Learning from one another results in each member being more informed and therefore improving personal practice (Director 3, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 2). Another significant benefit that interviewees brought up was how they feel when collaborating and learning with a team; they shared that collaborating, creating, and learning together is engaging and fun. The process

creates energy when people are “in the zone” and sparking off one another (Director 3, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3). Principal 3 shared what it felt like when the PPA team was collaborating and learning together:

> It's that energy that comes; then you start sparking off each other and getting ideas and refining ideas. …And you start to get that collective energy of problem-solving that then really builds. It just kind of builds upon itself. It's kind of like a forest fire: It just kind of keeps spreading and spreading from one to the next. From one to the next and the heat just increases. You're collecting ideas off each other. Then you hit that peak, and everybody's kind of like, oh! Done. I think we've exhausted our topic. We're going way off now. But yeah, so it felt, you know, the energy increases when you're there, when you're in the zone… If you were just driving forward it, it would have been task completion and not creativity and not synthesizing things and listening to each other's perspectives. It would have just been all right, what's the task? Let's get it done. So, let's get out of here (Principal 3).

Interviewees felt that another benefit was that members feel valued, heard, and a part of the process. They have a voice when collaborating on decision making (Director 2, Director 4, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3). In addition to experiencing personal feelings of significance, multiple interviewees referred to the process of increasing buy-in and having a collective purpose (Director 1, Director 3, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3).

Creating the Team

To experience any of the benefits mentioned above, a team will first need to be formed to collaborate and learn together. The leader needs to be strategic when selecting the type of members to be on the team. Once the focus groups finished articulating the benefits of team learning, they shifted their attention to why leaders might not create such a team. Three general thoughts arose from this discussion:

- leaders might find it easier not to engage in team learning;
- leaders might be afraid to try team decision making, and
- leaders might harbor biases that stop them from working with teams.

The focus groups then offered suggestions on how to create a team. The recommendations echo earlier emphasis on being intentional and strategic when selecting members; specifically, seek members who will push back without destroying the culture of the team.

Interview Results. The overarching theme from both the district directors' and principals' interviews was that the success of the team increases if the leader intentionally selects engaged members who have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths, and who feel a sense of ownership. The subthemes fell into two groups: (a) the importance of being strategic and intentional when choosing members, and (b) the importance of the members' character traits.

Both the principals and directors emphasized the importance of member selection. Over half of the interviewees pointed to the importance of diversity among members' perspectives and roles **(**Director 1, Director 2, Director 4, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 5). The same interviewees also talked about selecting members based on their strengths **(**Director 1, Director 2, Director 4, Principal 2, Principal 5). Director 1, who has experience as a team leader and member, shared their insight regarding creating a team. Director 1's statement captured the ideas shared by the other interviewees:

> I think what I've learned is to try and be strategic about who you put on your team. So rather than just saying "Who wants to do this?" there's a lot more…challenges. So, if you can think of some of that ahead of time and say this person's strength, I'd love to have somebody who's like that. What are the different roles that you need? Then trying to match that to the skill set of different types of people and being more selective, so that you *do* have different perspectives coming to the table. You have people coming to the table with different strengths. I think who you put on the team is something that, if you can make that a consideration, I think that's important (Director 1).

In addition to this recommendation, Director 1 and four principals suggested the leader also select members who have ownership and a vested interest in the team's focus (Director 1, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 4, Principal 5). A few of the interviewees also mentioned that it

is crucial that the members know why they are on the team (Director 2, Principal 2, Principal 4). Director 2, whom I selected to be on our PPA team, explained their feelings of not knowing why they were intentionally selected to be on the team.

> At first, it seemed a little bit awkward for me as an individual, because I wasn't sure if I was actually the right person to be there. As a building principal, it would have made a whole lot of sense. But then, in my current role, I felt like just because of my title it kind of felt like I was being invited to the table. But as far as some of the partnership work that was going on, the director of partnerships would probably be more of the person to talk to around those kinds of things. But then, after the first couple of meetings, I started to get clear as to what potentially I could add value from my perspective to the process; that initially was not as clear. Then over time, or the first couple of meetings, it became clearer (Director 2).

Two members felt that the leader should intentionally select the team and then communicate to each member *and* to the entire group the reasons why people are on the team (Director 2; Principal 4).

In addition to the importance of diversity, roles, and perspectives of the members, both district directors and principals talked about the importance of the members' specific character traits. The three most common characteristics discussed were (a) level of engagement, **(b)**courage to question traditional approaches, and (c) collaborative spirit. In addition to these three, members highlighted commitment, creativity, listening, teachability, and selflessness. While most interviewees talked about necessary desirable qualities, Principal 5 talked about their frustration when they serve on committees with members who *lack* these qualities.

> I think if people don't come to listen, then you're sunk…I've been in many meetings where I'm like, okay, this would be a cool group, and then within 30 seconds, you're like toxic, toxic, toxic, toxic…I don't know if it's toxic, but it is toxic because you're like, okay, you're not even listening to people…Those people drive me crazy because it means they're not going to change. And that's what I get frustrated with when I sit on committees. And then there's like five people, and you're like, okay, so why are you here? Why did you sign up for this? Like why did you want to contribute? You know? And then sometimes I think people come and don't want to talk. That's the other thing that drives me crazy sometimes. I feel like shut up (me). You're talking too much. Right? So, I tried to find the balance is like listen, listen to their ideas or whatever. And then also

> don't over speak, but then I get frustrated when people don't talk. Right. And then I'm like, we can't just sit here and stare at each other, and you have an opinion…If you're going to come to a committee, please have an opinion. Please have something to contribute. And people just come in. They don't say anything. I don't understand why you're there because we want to hear your voice… It's like don't overshare but don't think and keep it to yourself. So, you have to find that balance of listening and talking. And what does that look like? So, everybody can have a fair shake in the bigger picture (Principal 5).

Focus Group Results.

Why do you think some team leaders fail to create a team with members who have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths? The principals and directors offered ideas as to why they thought some leaders were not creating a team with members more varied perspectives, experiences, and strengths. Three themes arose from the focus groups:

- it is initially easier to choose from familiar, predictable colleagues;
- they choose the path of least resistance rather than inviting conflicting points of view;
- they have inherent biases toward or against specific characteristics.

Both focus groups began the conversation with the notion that the leader might think it is easier to pick people they know, or who will be early adopters. Director 5 shared that "People kind of pull from who they know, what they know, where they're comfortable. People rarely choose folks that they think may challenge them or come at it from a different perspective" (Director 5). Principal 1 had a similar idea, but added the element of conflict. "I think it comes down to, for the most part, people shy away from conflict, so when you have all like-minded people at the table, it makes the process easy…People don't lean in to embrace different perspectives as much…they don't want the conflict." The members in both focus groups discussed the ease of facilitating a team of early adopters who will go along with the leader's ideas. While Principal 3 agreed that leaders might believe it is easier, they shared that there are problems as well. "I'm going to pick my early adopters because I know they're going to be on

with me...I think the piece that falls down with that is that then you never see the pitfalls" (Principal 3). Principal 1 pointed out that while this may make the process easier, the result is not as good. Others thought that leaders may be feeling pressed for time and therefore do not take the time to deliberately craft the team.

Both focus groups believe the leader's decision can be impacted by fear. They posited that leaders may fear conflict with members who are not like-minded, or are willing to push back and challenge ideas (Director 2; Director 5; Principal 1; Principal 2; Principal 5). They may avoid receiving open feedback or critiques of their ideas and approaches (Director 5; Principal 3; Principal 5). Both groups felt the root of this fear could be a lack of confidence and or courage around the facilitation of members who do not all agree (Director 2; Principal 2; Principal 5). Director 2 shared the insight that fear often stems from insufficient skill:

> I think it requires a team leader to be courageous enough to bring those voices and have strong enough facilitation skills if it goes sideways, they can reel it back in and get people back on board. I think a lot of times there's a certain sense of fear in the team leaders and therefore they don't then solicit the views of people who they feel are going to be potentially combative, which it doesn't have to be if you're facilitating it correctly. So just some lack of courageousness around the facilitation skills of the team leader can cause you to come out with a product that is not comprehensive (Director 2).

While both focus groups brought up bias, specifically racism, prejudice, and blind spots, focus group two spent much more time discussing this subtheme. Both groups shared that the leader may not want to embrace different perspectives (Director 5; Principal 1; Principal 5). Focus group speculated that leaders might not value or respect different perspectives and experiences (Director 5; Principal 5). Director 5 shared:

> So, I will say in my experience; sometimes people don't value your expertise. Sometimes there was a hierarchy in who the experts are…and so I think sometimes people don't create teams with differing perspectives and experiences because they don't value (people) that are not their circle. People kind of pull from who they know, what they know, and where they're comfortable. People rarely choose folks that they think may challenge them or come at it from a different perspective (Director 5).

They went on to suggest that leaders may have a blind spot whereby they select members who will likely conform to the leader's approach or ideas (Director 5; Principal 5).

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about creating a team with members with different perspectives, experiences, and strengths? Two themes arose from the focus groups as to what suggestions they would give future leaders when creating teams: (a) Be strategic and intentional when selecting members, and (b) seek members who will push back without destroying the culture of the team.

Both groups began by emphasizing the importance of carefully selecting members. Leaders need to thoughtfully identify what perspectives, experiences, and strengths they need, and which might be missing from the team (Director 5; Principal 2; Principal 3; Principal 4). Principal 2 compared this vetting process to building the staff at their school:

> I definitely know my strengths. I know my challenges; I know what I need to focus on; and I also know what my staff need to focus on and if I can bring somebody in who's going to challenge us and help us grow in a positive way, and not just [adhere] to what we're already doing, but really just take us to that next level (Principal 2).

Director 3 emphasized that it is important to "talk to people to get their perspective of who should be on the team." Then seek out members with different perspectives, experiences, and strengths (Director 4; Director 5; Principal 2; Principal 4). Once the leader identifies the members, they should continue to ask questions and learn about potential members (Director 4; Principal 2; Principal 4).

The conversation of the focus groups then shifted to seeking members who will constructively push back. The groups highlighted the need for contrary viewpoints in order to improve ideas (Principal 1; Principal 2; Principal 3; Principal 4; Principal 5). To find these members, two principals suggested having mini-conversations with potential members about the

ideas to gauge interest and willingness to push back (Principal 1; Principal 4). Principal 4 shared how they do this:

> …the only way I…know how to do it is I pound the pavement. I go door-to-door, finding the people that I know will fit into some of those roles that can help build. I kind of tell them about the dream and some ideas. Then from there, I start to… mold the team in a way of, you know, 'I want to pursue this, let's continue this. What do you think? What do *you* think?' And then oftentimes I get some people based on what my pavement shopping looked like. I get people with their strengths and talents [to] bring to the table their ideas to then start building it (Principal 4).

The conversation of focus group 1 then shifted to caution and advice. The team clarified that members should push back to make the sharpen ideas without undermining the cohesion of the team (Director 1; Principal 2; Principal 3; Principal 5). While both focus groups discussed the implications of including a naysayer, Focus group 1 spent more time fleshing out the topic. They advise leaders to be honest with themselves and consider whether they are willing to bring the naysayer onto the team to show where the pitfalls are (Director 4; Director 5; Principal 2; Principal 5). If the leader is inclined, then what type of naysayer would be best? A couple of principals shared that it is important to exclude a potential saboteur; rather, it is better to include one who can think critically about making improvements (Principal 3; Principal 5). Principal 3 shared, "You don't want the saboteur. You want somebody who says, 'Yeah, then here's the reasons why I'm not.' And not somebody who's like, 'This is just total garbage no matter what'" (Principal 3).

An Effective Team has a Shared Sense of Purpose and Accountability to the Goal(s)

Once a group is formed with members who have different outlooks, backgrounds, and assets, the group needs to come together and become a team. The goals of this initial work are a shared sense of purpose and accountability to the goal(s). There are significant benefits to

accepting ownership of the purpose and objectives; there are also significant risks if this does not occur. The leader vitally impacts how this process occurs, and whether it succeeds or fails.

Interview Results. The overarching theme from individual interviews with directors and principals was that the success of team learning increases if the leader intentionally ensures that teams members collectively embrace both purpose and accountability. These insights fell into two subthemes: (a) the benefits of having shared purpose and accountability, and (b) the risks of lacking shared purpose and accountability.

In some cases, the interviewees directly connected the importance of a common purpose and accountability to other themes. For example, two principals shared that having a shared sense of purpose increases trust (Principal 3, Principal 5). Other principals connected shared purpose and accountability with safer spaces for collaboration (Principal 1, Principal 3). Several other members shared that having group ownership of purpose and culpability increases ownership and the likelihood that members will be engaged toward the common goal (Director 3, Principal 1, Principal 3). Principal 3 described their experience on the PPA team when the team established a sense of shared purpose:

> I think that when we got to the point where we had an identified need that we all felt was important…we could hear lots of different perspectives on that, and aspects of that then started to trigger ideas. So, in that way, you know that steam that you get when you do all have a collective purpose, and it's clear to everybody. It starts just like popcorn in a kettle pop, pop, pop, pop, pop, pop, the one that heat comes, you know, it's gone, it's gone, it's gone. And so, that's really important in that way that you can keep up that kind of energy within there, and your facilitators are shaking the pot, so nothing burns (Principal 3).

In addition to connecting shared purpose with the other themes, the interviewees shared how shared purpose and accountability enhance team learning. Having a shared sense of purpose and accountability allows for goal-setting, partnership, creation and progress toward common goals (Director 3, Principal 1, Principal 3, Principal 5). Director 3 shared how it felt when the

PPA team had established a shared sense of purpose and were making progress toward common goals:

> It feels good to have some momentum and to have a plan. It feels good to learn with each other. I feel like you get more bought-in and more excited about coming to meetings when the team is all on the same page and ready to go…It makes me feel like I want to be part of it and come back for it, and that the outcome is going to be worth kind of the messiness at the beginning. I want to bring people back together to keep working once it's working really well, and I want to keep going (Director 3).

Two principals felt that having common objectives and shared responsibility also helps to align the efforts and the work of the team (Principal 3, Principal 4). It protects the team from getting sidetracked (Director 3, Principal 5). When things get hard, having shared purpose and accountability allow the leader and members to be a cheerleader toward those goal(s) (Principal 4). This cohesive culture can also result in an increased willingness to take risks among members and leadership (Principal 5).

While many of the interviewees pointed to the advantages of shared purpose and accountability, they also shared the downsides if they are *not* present. Without collective drive and responsibility, the team can languish in a state of confusion and chaos (Director 2, Principal 1, Principal 3). Some members shared that these confused members might lose sight of how the work will be beneficial (Director 3, Principal 1, Principal 3).

Three principals were adamant that purpose and accountability could be the life or death of the team itself. They shared that without these vital elements, the team can stall, and members can get frustrated and leave the team. Without purpose and accountability, the team could fail, or only one person could be left working as a team of one (Principal 1, Principal 3, Principal 5). Principal 5 shared that it is crucial to figure out the shared purpose in a timely manner; if it doesn't quickly become clear, then some people may want to leave the team. "… I don't mind

fumbling through stuff. It's only if you fumble through it for like forever and then you're like dude, I'm not coming anymore" (Principal 5).

Focus Group Results.

Why do you think some team leaders do not ensure that team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to the goal(s)? The principals and directors offered ideas as to why some leaders are less intentional about purpose and accountability. Two themes arose from the focus groups: (a) The leader's supervisor possibly set the purpose, or (b) the leader believes it is faster and easier to skip the process and just begin the work.

Both focus groups hypothesized that sometimes leaders might not have control of the purpose of the team they've been directed to lead. It was suggested that the leader might have received a predetermined directive. Some members suggested that the directive could have specifically dictated the process to be used, the problem to be addressed, and the expected outcome(s), which would make the establishment of team ownership difficult (Director 2, Director 5, Principal 3). Director 1 shared:

> Sometimes I think teams come together around a task, but they don't really understand what the problem is that they're trying to solve. And sometimes I think even the facilitator doesn't necessarily know, because if you've been given a task from above you, and it says you are going to do this, and this is what I want done, and you need to make it happen. Okay? (Director 1).

Both focus groups also discussed the alternative possibility that a leader might believe it is faster and easier to begin the work without cultivating a common sense of purpose or identified objectives. Members shared that it may not receive adequate attention because the team does not take the time to co-create the purpose or understand the problem (Director 1, Director 3, Principal 1, Principal 2). Principal 2 elaborated on the conversation and explained that the leader may think "…it's easier just to say this is what we're doing and why we're doing it

and just keep plowing ahead. It's easy to tell people rather than, you know, collaborate" (Principal 2).

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to ensure that team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to the goal(s)? The focus groups had many suggestions that fell into two main themes: (a) empowering the team to co-create shared purpose, and (b) accountability strategies.

Both focus groups began by emphasizing the importance of establishing a shared purpose; the leader must empower the team to collaborate to this end. Director 5 shared that before anything else can occur, the leader needs to know if they have the authority to invite the team to co-create a shared purpose. If the leader's supervisor has predetermined the purpose and or process, that makes it difficult to establish an original shared purpose. Assuming the leader does have the authority, the conversations began with ownership. If the leader wants the team to feel responsible for the work, then the leader needs to take the time needed to co-create purpose, determine the process, and agree upon the hoped-for product (Director 1; Director 3; Principal 2; Principal 3). Shared purpose also increases if the team has ownership, feels empowered, and trusts the leader (Director 1; Director 4; Director 5; Principal 2; Principal 5).

Both focus groups talked about how leaders can facilitate the creation of a shared purpose. To begin, the leader brings an initial idea, vision, or problem of practice to the team, and then encourages the team to push back on those until the team collectively forms a shared purpose (Director 5; Principal 4; Principal 5). Principal 4 shared an example of bringing an idea to the team, the resulting collaboration:

> I was taught by someone wiser than me that you always have a non-negotiable…but the vision is totally flexible, and you have to listen to what they want. So, I had a thought, what I thought restorative justice team would look like, and they're like, 'No. We need this, this and this.' At first, I wanted to be mad, and I was like, 'Wait, I'm not the one

> doing this. Why am I mad? Right?' They took it and ran with it. But my non-negotiables: I want restorative conversations taking place. Well, that's what's happening…Having that middle piece, but then the rest of it being moldable, open, flexible (Principal 4).

Both the leader and members need to be aware of and willing to be uncomfortable when the team is creating a shared purpose without rushing to solutions (Principal 1; Principal 5). Principal 1 refers to this stage as the "grown zone," when the team needs to examine the problem, analyze the data, intentionally reflect, determine the problem of practice and the desired outcome, and visualize the final product; altogether, this process results in the creation of common purpose (Principal 3; Principal 4). For this to occur, Principal 4 suggests that the leader engage members in first reflecting and then articulating the purpose. The leader listens, takes notes, and asks questions to support the team as they process together (Principal 4). Principal 5 also suggests connecting the purpose to district goals and key performance indicators (KPI) (Principal 5).

While both focus groups primarily concentrated on the initial creation of purpose, focus group 1 also talked about how to foster an ongoing shared sense of purpose. One suggestion to increase this sense is for leaders to use visuals and data for the team reflection (Principal 4). Others suggested that as a team makes progress, the leader can encourage the pursuit of the joint mission by pointing to progress being made (Director 1; Principal 3).

The focus groups pointed out that, in addition to ownership of the purpose, the team needs to have a measure of accountability. The two groups discussed the conditions and strategies that help a team create and maintain accountability. Shared accountability increases when a team has ownership, feels empowered, and trusts the leader (Director 1; Director 4; Director 5; Principal 2).

It is imperative that the leader is in the right frame of mind to lead the team (Director 4). Creating expectations of accountability typically occur as the team is forming. One director suggests that the leader offer ideas while encouraging members to push back, thus building upon each other's ideas on how to hold one another accountable (Director 5). The goal is to create and adhere to common agreements and norms (Director 1).

Once these norms are established, the team must hold one another accountable. Leaders can support this process by using visuals and data for the team to reflect on, thereby increasing a sense of personal accountability (Principal 4; Principal 5). Leaders must also set aside time for the team to reflect and discuss progress toward goals and corresponding next steps (Principal 4). The next steps might include both members and the leader agreeing to prepare for meetings; that way everyone comes to the table ready to contribute (Director 1). In the end, this relies on the leader and members having the courage to follow through on shared accountability, including confronting one another when necessary (Director 4; Principal 5).

Safe and Trusting Spaces where Contributions, Collaboration, and Learning are Valued and Honored

When a team containing members who have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths is formed, that team needs to have a shared space that is safe, where the members can trust one another. In this space, the members know their individual and collaborative contributions and learning are valued and honored. There are substantial benefits to having this type of collaborative space. There are also significant issues if the space is not safe. The leader has a considerable impact on how this space is established and maintained.

Interview Results. The overarching theme from both the director and principal interviews was that team learning increases when the leader intentionally creates a safe space for team collaboration. The suggestions fall into three overlapping subthemes that include

- safe and trusting spaces,
- the emotional intelligence of the leader and members,
- pathways to feeling valued and honored.

Every principal and director talked about the importance of establishing a non-threatening space and the impact that has on team learning. For a team to be a safe and trusting space, the members need to feel comfortable with the leader and other members (Director 3, Principal 1, Director 5, Principal 2). Feeling safe includes being able to be vulnerable without risk of exploitation, and being able to stumble with without fear of punishment. Members need to feel safe when collaborating, learning, idea creation, and honest admission when a member is either confused or mistaken (Director 3, Director 5, Principal 2, Principal 4, Principal 5). Director 3 shared that "…building relationships with the people on the team is important so that people feel comfortable and it is a safe place, especially when you're learning together. It is hard to be vulnerable and say I'm learning this, and so it needs to be a safe place" (Director 3). Director 4 shared the importance of having a safe space where members share; otherwise their perspectives are not part of the team. "You have people that will leave the meeting. Show up in your office later and give you a whole sermon of what they took away or learned or wanted to share and didn't" (Director 4). To encourage ongoing growth, the leader and members need to encourage one another and be patient with each other when learning or stumbling **(**Director 3, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 5). Two members brought up the importance of feeling safe

enough to challenge the school district's status quo, process, assumptions, and even the leader (Director 4, Principal 4).

Group members also shared that for a space to be safe and trusting, the leader and members need a high level of emotional intelligence (Director 1, Director 3, Principal 2). Some members discussed the importance of opportunities to build relationships with one another (Director 3, Principal 2, Principal 4). Two members shared that the leader and members should be self-aware, actively listening, and paying attention to those around them (Director 1, Principal 2).

Focus group members talked about the importance of feeling valued and honored by the leader and other members of the team. Members need to feel that their contribution is genuinely needed, valued and honored **(**Director 2, Director 4, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 4, Principal 5). For members to feel needed, valued, and honored mandates that the leader and members listen to one another and ensure that members feel heard (Director 4, Director 5, Principal 2, Principal 3, Principal 5). Principal 2 elaborated on the impact of feeling undervalued and unheard:

> So, my take is if you really, truly want to have a grassroots team, how are we going to do this and you set up your team, such as what you did, where people feel free to talk, and there's no right or wrong answer. You just learn. And you build from each other. I feel more valued. I feel my time is more valued in a meeting like that where I'm more apt to say, "Hey, yeah, I've got a meeting. I've got to jet." Unless there's an emergency or something's going on, I feel like I…wanted to [bond] with my colleagues. I get to know them on a professional and personal level. It's fun, but, you know what I mean. It's a warmer climate where I want to be. When I am in meetings where I have someone talking *at* me, and they are saying that this is what has to happen, I feel as though those responses are canned and they're almost directed, like we're supposed to come up with a specific response to what they want. And there is a right or wrong, and it's not a true collaboration. It's more of a dictated, directed boom. "This is where we're at. This is what needs to happen." And so, I tend to find myself not wanting to participate. No one talks, not one, because…I feel as if I regress back to being a kid in elementary school, right? Where I don't want to be perceived as stupid or not having the right answer or you know,

> and there are definitely people that I feel in this district that have that kind of sense when they're presenting, where they do look down upon us (principals) (Principal 2).

Members also talked about the importance of respecting one another's differences **(**Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 2). A few members shared that if they feel valued and honored in a safe and trusting collaboration space, then they want to be there and are glad to be part of the team. If it is not a protected space, then they would rather not be a part of the team (Director 2, Director 4, Principal 2).

Focus Group Results.

Why do you think some team leaders are not creating safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contribution is valued? The principals and directors offered ideas as to why they thought some leaders are not creating safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the members feel their contribution is valued. Three themes arose from the focus groups:

- The leader may believe that it is easier and faster to begin the work without establishing a safe space;
- the leader does not know how to create this space;
- the leader does not challenge the power dynamics on the team.

Both focus groups began with the notion that the leader may believe it is more expedient to bypass the creation of a protected space and just begin the work. They posited that the leader does not always take the time necessary to intentionally create safe and trusting spaces. They went on to say that time is always the enemy (Director 1; Director 3; Director 5; Principal 1). During the interview, Director 4 talked about time as an issue: "I think anytime you bring together a group; time is probably the biggest challenge. Unfortunately for administrators,

sometimes it's a crutch [and] it’s a reality, but we will say we don't have time before we've even looked at our calendar or been intentional” (Director 4). Director 3 went on to share that if lack of time is the perception, then the leader may also assume that the space is adequately safe and choose to move on (Director 3). Principal 4 pointed out that the problem is compounded when many new members join the district, and relationships have not yet been created; it takes time (and therefore inconvenience) to build relationships and trust.

Both focus groups shifted from ease and time to the possibility leaders do not always know how to create a safe and trusting space. Leaders may not know what protected collaborative environments look like, much less how to establish them, so they revert to using traditional meeting structures (Director 5; Principal 3; Principal 5). Director 5 pointed out that in school districts, we rarely talk about social-emotional learning for adults, and unfortunately, it is not how we currently engage in our work. Principal 4 further highlighted the difficulty of both leading the team process and managing the social-emotional aspect. The leader may not know how to find and maintain a balance between the two (Principal 4).

In focus group 1, the conversation shifted to the effect of the leader’s approach, specifically the consequences of fear, neglect, and failing to challenge power dynamics. Principals 1, 3, and Director 4 connected their conversation with other themes. Principal 1 shared that it is possible for the leader to populate the team with members who aren't willing to submit their ideas to critique, to challenge traditions and established approaches, or to shift their roles to support the team goal. Principal 3 added that the leader might create a hierarchy among members, protecting the leader from receiving critique. This, in turn, reduces members' perceived trust and safety. Director 4 shared that leaders may create teams with members who abuse their seniority, advance hidden agendas, leverage their power dynamics, and or have

dominant personalities. If the leader does not hold these members accountable, they will undermine the trust and safety of the team (Director 4; Principal 3).

How would you suggest future team leaders create safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contribution is valued? There are five prominent subthemes in the focus groups' advice for future leaders:

- be self-reflective, transparent and authentic;
- be intentional when creating and building the team;
- be deliberate when establishing and maintaining a safe space;
- encourage reflection, discourse, and challenging of the status quo; and
- hold members accountable to the safe space.

Principal 5 pointed to the critical line a leader walks when facilitating a team. "How do you facilitate when it starts to get uncomfortable, but it's productive—uncomfortably productive? It's different if it's uncomfortable and you're like, okay, now it's just getting unproductive" (Principal 5).

While both focus groups talked about the leader's authenticity, focus group 2 spent more time discussing the importance of the topic. For this subtheme, principals made the bulk of the recommendations. They believe that leaders need to first reflect on their own beliefs and how they have formerly created and hindered safe and trusting spaces (Principal 2; Principal 5). This reflective process is rooted in self-reflection: Leaders must know who they are, how they relate to people, and then lead in fidelity to themselves (Principal 2; Principal 4). It is crucial for the leader to be vulnerable with their team (Principal 2; Principal 5). Members also feel that the leader should be transparent with decision-making processes and other variables (Principal 3; Principal 5).

Both focus group discussions tied safe and trusting spaces back to creating the team. Since each member impacts the safe and trusting space, the leader needs to be intentional when gathering and building the team. Principal 3 suggests picking members who will help create a protected environment, whereas Director 4 focused on shaping the members into a cohesive team. A group is not necessarily a team; the leader needs to spend time and effort to build the team, allowing members to build relational trust (Director 4). Director 4 went on to share that leaders need to know the members of their team because what works to solidify one team may not necessarily work for another.

In addition to being intentional with creating the team, the leader must be deliberate when creating and maintaining a safe space for collaboration. Focus group 2 shared several ideas on how to accomplish this. They recommend using a checklist to guide the creation and maintenance of the team environment (Principal 4, Principal 5). This process could include establishing and following protocols that focus on emotional and professional safety (Director 5; Principal 2; Principal 4; Principal 5). Principal 4 shared the importance of approaching individual members face-to-face, so that body language informs the conversation (Principal 4). While facilitating, the leader should continually check the social-emotional pulse of the group, pausing when needed to check-in (Director 5; Principal 5). This approach helps find the balance between leading the process and managing social-emotional dynamics (Principal 4). Interviewees emphasized the importance of addressing and discussing cultural assumptions. Focus group 1 shared that teams need to accept that safe spaces cannot always be conflict-free zones, because this norm is not an accepted part of everyone's culture (Director 5; Principal 5).

Focus group 1 encouraged reflection, discourse, and challenging the status quo. The leader and members must be encouraged to openly counter established ideas, traditions, and the

current system (Principal 3). For that to occur, members and the leader need time to reflect and then bring deeper questions and higher-level thinking to the ongoing discussion (Director 4).

A significant part of challenging the status quo is the team's ability to engage in constructive conflict, leveraging the diverse perspectives of its members. To improve decision making, the team's discussions must push members beyond their comfort zones and into disequilibrium while maintaining cohesion among members (Director 2; Director 5; Principal 1; Principal 2; Principal 3; Principal 5). For this to occur, the leader and members need to create a safe space where the team can have constructive conflict and disequilibrium when discussing ideas, thus drawing out the various ideas of the team (Director 2; Director 5; Principal 1; Principal 5). Members from focus group 2 shared that it is important for the leader to clarify that safe spaces are not always free from conflict. They went on to share that this is not a norm for everyone's culture, but that equating safe with no conflict is a white norm (Director 5; Principal 5). A principal shared that it is important for the leader to frontload the experience and teach the members what constructive conflict looks like so the team recognizes when it occurs (Principal 1). Other members felt that the leader's confidence, trust in the team, members trust in the leader, and trusting one another increases the team's ability to have effective, constructive conflict and disequilibrium when collaborating (Director 5; Principal 5). The leader needs courage and strong facilitation skills when the team is engaging in constructive conflict to help the team exchange ideas without becoming combative (Director 2). If the team's discourse becomes antagonistic, then the leader needs to refocus the group on the solution (Director 5).

Focus group 1 said that while it is the responsibility of all members to have a safe space, the leader is ultimately responsible for holding members accountable. Creating accountability begins with creating and adhering to common agreements, norms, or an emotional intelligence

charter to support the environment (Director 1). When leading teams in the past, Principal 1 has found it helpful frontload the experience:

> Something I found really valuable is frontloading the experience, so when it comes to conflict that might take place, we know it's going to happen, and this is what it might sound like and what the experience will be. So, when you front load it and talk about it, and people know it's going to come, then you can call it out in the moment, and then it becomes more of a safe spot. Like ‘Oh we knew this was going to happen' (Principal 1).

Director 4 also shared that the leader needs to name and address seniority, hidden agendas, power dynamics, and dominant personalities to ensure the team is a safe place for collaboration and learning, holding the members accountable (Director 4).

Collaboration and Learning is Supported by Process Protocols, Frameworks, and or Structure

Once the team is formed, the focus group members recommend using protocols, frameworks, and or a structure to support collaboration and learning. Members shared the benefits of using these supports. They also shared the significant issues that can occur if the leader either fails to use them or over-structures the team. The leader has a significant impact on determining which conventions to use.

Interview Results. The overarching theme from all the district directors' and principals' interviews was that the success of team learning increases if the leader intentionally uses collaboration protocols, frameworks, and or structures. The responses fell into four categories:

- collaboration protocols that support facilitation;
- establishing ownership of these protocols;
- detrimental results from insufficient protocols;
- risks of over-structuring collaboration.

Members shared that leaders' facilitation is supported by judicious use of collaboration protocols. Procedures should be clearly delineated with the vision, mission, and end goal in mind (Principal 4). Protocols can help create a sense of purpose and direction for the team, as well as the leader's facilitation (Director 4). When a leader is planning the steps to achieve the overarching goal, that leader must have a timeline with steps for the process (Director 2). A goal-oriented agenda will keep each meeting moving forward (Principal 5). One member shared another benefit of using collaboration protocols for facilitation: The protocol can help hold members accountable and keep members focused toward the common goal (Principal 2). Another principal noted that the quality of facilitation is so vital, that less skilled leaders who need support should either seek out expert helpers or gather additional resources to inform and improve team facilitation (Principal 3).

Members shared that using effective, intentional collaboration protocol increase ownership among members. Individual investment is increased when protocols encourage discourse and ownership (Director 4). Another director shared that ownership can be increased by utilizing differentiated protocols based on members' choices or strengths (Director 1). Director 4 shared the feeling of the PPA when the team was leveraging the strengths and perspectives of members while utilizing the process.

> Even as we were fleshing out something specific, there was still room for additional ideas or thoughts that would contribute. So it wasn't, all right, we've picked this one for whatever reason, and now we're just going to flesh it out until it's finished and we're done. It was flesh it out, all avenues included. So if there were things we hadn't thought of, if there were elements that could have been added, if there were, I think about are you smarter than a fifth grader? Is a game with a lifeline, right? Can we call somebody? Who are we missing? Who's not at this table? Who do we need to shoot an email to? Or to ask now? We had opportunities to still keep ourselves brought enough so we didn't leave anyone out or forget something and be detailed in executing what would be a kind of a final conceptual idea or a kind of program design. So, I appreciated as we started getting

deeper into it; we didn't lose breadth in the process (Director 4).

One principal shared a word of caution for leaders: It's vital that the leader focus on the collaboration protocol process rather than dictating the content or product. The process should be tight, and this is the leader's responsibility, but the content should be team-created (Principal 3). Director 1 had a slightly different take:

> I think when you lead a team, you have to have strong facilitation skills, but you also have to be open outcome. So, coming in using protocols, making sure you've got some equity of voice in there, a balance between the new ideas coming to the table versus the work, being cognizant of your timeline, and how quickly you need to move through (Director 1).

Another principal shared that the protocol should be a skeleton, outlining the perspective and purpose. The team builds on the skeleton with ideas, strategies, and content (Principal 4). The protocol should encourage ownership, creativity, and discussion from multiple perspectives (Director 1, Principal 2). To be authentic and increase ownership, the protocol needs to let members be themselves (Principal 2).

Members also shared the detrimental effects when collaboration protocols are not used. While some people are more comfortable with messy, organic processes, no one wants to remain in chaos forever. There must be progress and traction for a team to feel effective and purposeful (Director 4, Principal 1, Principal 5). Without a guiding protocol, the result can be confusion, frustration, and attrition among members (Director 4, Principal 3, Principal 5).

Members caution leaders against over-structuring the process; the role of the leader is not to guide the team to a predetermined outcome (Director 1, Director 4, Principal 2, Principal 3, Principal 5). One director shared that sometimes leaders craft parameters that feel safer for themselves, but by doing so they inhibit the team's work of challenging and improving the system (Director 4). The same director went on to say:

> So, I've walked into some of these, and you know, [they say] 'Here's our OneNote, and we have everything laid out, and here's our structure and our format, and blah blah blah.' And it's almost like, you know, it's like a mad libs. Like fill in the blanks is all I've been asked to do, and all the meat has been taken care of. So, whether I choose the right verb or not, this is going to go forward. When I think of a team from a more raw, organic, authentic process, we have this end goal. Be it a championship, be it a final product, be it an answer to a question, be it a policy that needs to be retweaked and now we're given operational flexibility to get to the best possible answer. So, I think, for folks leading it, they need both that interpersonal people skills piece as well as the technical expertise…If you have folks leaving your process not feeling heard, valued, having an opportunity to be an impact decision maker, then you definitely created too many parameters (Director 4).

Focus Group Results.

Why do you think some team leaders are not using protocols, frameworks or structures to support collaboration? The principals and directors offered ideas as to why they thought some leaders do not support their team's collaboration with protocols, frameworks or structures. Two themes arose from the focus groups: (a) lack of experience or knowledge of how to use them, and (b) their use is negatively impacted by the leader's beliefs and or personality.

Both focus groups suggested that leaders may not use effective protocols due to lack of experience or knowledge. Some members believe it is possible that leaders may not even know how they intend to facilitate the team, which can disrupt strategic planning (Director 2; Principal 4; Principal 5). The leader may not have sufficient experience, or may not be comfortable facilitating team learning using guiding structures (Director 4; Principal 3). Some members pointed out that leaders may not have been taught how to lead and facilitate team learning (Director 1; Director 4; Principal 5). Other members believe that leaders sometimes languish because they haven't taken the time to familiarize themselves with possible frameworks and their use (Director 1; Director 3; Principal 1). Others speculate that the leader may not have experienced team learning before leading a team (Director 4; Principal 3). Alternatively, the

leader may only know how to use one strategy, or they rely on one overused strategy (Principal 3).

The focus groups unpacked the impact of the leader's beliefs and personality on team processes. Some members shared that the facilitation strategies can be impacted if the leaders do not examine their core values and purpose for the work (Director 2; Principal 4; Principal 5). Director 2 points out that leaders who come with predetermined outcomes often struggle to effectively facilitate. Another director suggests that the leader may prefer a specific type of learning; for example, if the leader gravitates toward constructivist approaches, that would impact the facilitation strategies (Director 1). Principal 4 acknowledges that some leaders just do not like adhering to protocols, frameworks, and structures (Principal 4).

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to use protocols, frameworks or structures to support collaboration? Four themes arose from the focus groups when asked what advice they would give future leaders:

- incorporate reflection time for deeper thinking;
- be intentional when using protocols, frameworks, or structure to ensure voices and perspectives are heard;
- seek out professional development, side-by-side coaching, and give one's best effort; and
- seek out members' feedback and ownership.

Both focus groups talked about using protocols, frameworks, and structures to incorporate reflection time for deeper thinking. It is crucial for the leader to align parameters to support the goal or purpose (Principal 2). For this to occur, structured processes need to push people's thinking beyond brainstorming and into a deeper level. Regardless of the framework, it must include time to stop and reflect and then reenter the discussion to exchange ideas and move

to higher-level thinking (Director 4; Director 5; Principal 5). Principal 5 suggests that an effective framework uses a significant question as a foundation in order to increase discourse and collaboration.

The focus groups shared the importance of being intentional when using protocols, frameworks, or structures to ensure that all voices and perspectives are heard. Focus group 2 highlights the importance of assessing all protocols with a lens toward equity and voice (Director 5; Principal 5); in order to achieve full discourse and new thinking, the leader must ensure that the protocol creates safety and space for all voices to be heard (Principal 4). Principal 4 shared how protocols help to give space and voice to members:

> I used to make fun of protocols because when we used to go to our coaching meetings, coaches were like, 'Here comes another protocol.' And now I'm like, 'Oh girl, we should find a protocol because it's safe.' So, team building is number one, which I think goes back to even *our* group. We should have more team building, but *that's* a form of a protocol or a framework. And then from there, it's a safe, low-risk entry point in for everybody. If there is a protocol, if you want to ensure everybody's voice is heard, you kind of have to do 'Here comes another protocol.' Until you have that safe space built, then you can go in and out of informal, formal framework, protocol…let's just get together and have coffee. But you always are at the risk of there's always a group that is going to feel like the outer circle, so you have to ensure that everybody's voice is heard (Principal 4).

The focus groups suggest that leaders engage in professional development and side-by-side coaching; they point out that sometimes all that's needed is a willingness to try. They acknowledge that all leaders including principals, assistant principals, and district leaders need intentional professional development for leaders. The goal of professional development would be to build a repertoire on how to use protocols, frameworks, and structures to increase collaboration and team learning (Director 1; Director 4; Principal 4). Principal 4 went further and suggested focused professional development on standards for collaboration (Principal 4). Focus group 1 suggests in-the-moment, side-by-side coaching to improve facilitation in a safe space to

learn, try, fail, try again, see what is working, see what is not, and build skill set capacity (Director 1; Director 4; Principal 1). Members feel that it is valuable for the leader to take a shot at it, blow it, and come back to try again. They went on to share that what may be preventing people from trying is the thought that things should be done right all the time, and that prevents us from taking risks as leaders (Director 4; Principal 2; Principal 4).

Once the leader begins to use structures, the focus group suggests that the team mine members for insights on what works drawn from their own experience. Director 1 proposes asking for quick feedback from the whole team on the protocols, framework, and process. Principal 3 advises the leader to ask members who have facilitated teams to give feedback after meetings, thereby increasing the leader's future efficacy. Principal 5 suggests differentiating the process based on choice to encourage ownership and engagement. Members can choose topics and possibly protocols, then incorporate those into the collaboration.

The Team has Ownership to Collaboratively Create, Not Act as a Sounding Board or Rubber Stamp Committee

Many members shared that the foundation of all the themes is empowering the team to create collaboratively. The members shared the significant benefits of ownership to the team's outcome, and how members feel while collaborating. There are also significant issues if ownership is not achieved. Members shared that this foundational theme can be the easiest to accomplish because it only relies on the leader's decision and approach. For better or worse, the leader disproportionately influences whether the team has license to collaboratively create.

Interview Results. The overarching theme from both the director and principal interviews was that successful team learning increases when the leader intentionally empowers the members with ownership to collaborate on original work, rather than act as a sounding board

or rubber-stamp committee for the leader's ideas. Every principal and director talked about the benefits of team empowerment to create *and* the problems that arise when members are prevented from fully contributing to team outcomes. The responses fell into two categories: the quality of the outcome, and how members feel about different degrees of ownership.

Eight members shared that teams who feel empowered to collaboratively create arrive at better outcomes, because the team can build upon the strengths, perspectives, experience, and roles of different members (Director 1, Director 2, Director 3, Director 4, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 3, Principal 5). Members feel that groups who function as mere sounding boards rarely shift the final product (Director 4, Principal 1, Principal 3). Although the process takes more time, the impact of team problem-solving is more substantial (Director 4). Members emphasize that significant learning occurs from one another's perspectives and experiences (Director 2, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3).

Members described the overall impact on individual members (and the team as a whole) when they are given ownership for the process and the result versus being relegated to the role audience. The collaborative process itself develops a sense of ownership among members (Director 1, Director 4, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 3, Principal 5). That ownership results in members feeling valued, respected, and trusted (Principal 2, Principal 3, Principal 5). The collaborative process involved when teams are empowered, builds relationships between members (Director 5). Some members shared that this process is enjoyable and results in engaged members (Director 1, Director 5, Principal 1, Principal 3). Other members talked about being energized as a team when collaboratively creating (Director 1, Principal 2, Principal 3). Director 1 shared:

> If you go overboard and you're completely controlling of the situation…then people feel like they're just there to give you what you want. It's not really authentic. That's not the

> kind of buy-in that you want to happen, and you don't get that synergy of having different people to contribute new ideas that may lead to a different outcome than what you originally thought it would look like and sound like, but often can be a lot better (Director 1).

Conversely, when members were not included in decision making, and had no opportunity to speak into the team result, they felt belittled and disrespected (Director 4, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3). Principal 3 approached the problem from the leader's point of view: "'I already know what I want to have done, and you're all here to help work on my project, to fulfill my need.' Forget it. That's not a team. That's minions" (Principal 3). A few members acknowledged that being used as sounding boards for predetermined outcomes shuts down members and idea generation (Director 4, Principal 2, Principal 3). Director 4 expressed the frustration of limiting ideas versus opening up the process:

> So, one of my frustrations with education from day one has been the frequency at which educators limit their options because they want to keep it simple, or don't have the capacity, or fear a wrong decision might be made. Rather, at every one of my offices, it's been about bringing everybody and filling up the whiteboard, getting as much possible on the table and then making the decision. So, they may not always be data-driven, but they'll at least be informed…So when I think about the benefits of having everybody in the room, especially the group in this case assembled, we could potentially end up with quality *and* quantity, which only benefits everyone (Director 4).

According to a few members, predetermined outcomes undermine trust (Director 4, Principal 2, Principal 3). Some members shared that marginalized members ultimately stop attending meetings or even quit the team (Director 4, Principal 1, Principal 2, Principal 3). One director challenged leaders to check their values and ask whether they are truly open to collaboration, or just want people to agree with them (Director 4). This director went on to share that many of the problems with teams occur when the leader tries to control the team and get the answers or solutions that they want (Director 4); the approach of the leader determines ownership and outcomes.

> I think…we appreciate the value that something like a task force or committee could bring to the table. I think we sometimes have the initial kind of brain fart to create one, in order to get voice and to get diversity in our thinking. I don't know if folks getting ready to lead it, are willing to put down their guard enough to allow all of those to come forward, and so they'll create protocols that sometimes are safer for them or safe for the participants, and not what's going to ultimately be best for kids or the system. So, when I think about folks coming into it, when I've seen it have a limited outcome, it's usually the creator or the leader or the person at the helm that put those pieces into play. The flip side, even for myself, where I'm very open for trying to create a process that might be messy to allow people to get their hands dirty and feel some sense of involvement. I can sometimes be too lax and sometimes the specificity to a protocol could help us be timely and productive. I'm okay with hearing it all: good, bad, or indifferent, getting it on the board…knowing that that sometimes slows down the process. So, depending on your own personal values as leaders, those could help or impede that process. So, checking yourself before you start any of this is crucial. Yeah. Am I really open, or am I open on paper and not in person? Right. And so, we'll see feedback, things that allow people to leave and do it electronically, or get submitted or not get read. If you're going to be open, you've got to know; buckle up and be ready for it (Director 4).

Focus Group.

Why do you think some team leaders are not empowering the team members with ownership to collaboratively create, and instead are created a sounding board or rubber stamp committee for decisions that are already made by the team leader? The principals and directors offered ideas as to why they thought some leaders are not empowering the members with responsibility for the outcome. Four themes arose from the focus groups:

- the leader may believe it is easier and faster to get the work done;
- ownership is impacted by the beliefs and experience of the leader;
- the leader's own fear impacts ownership;
- the leader has a predetermined process, outcome, or product in mind.

Focus group 1 began the conversation with the notion that the leader may not empower the team with creative ownership because the leader believes that skipping the process and submitting decisions for approval is an easier and faster way to get the work done. Several

members believe that a need or desire for efficiency lies at the heart of this decision (Director 1; Director 3; Principal 1). Principal 1 went further theorized:

> I think it goes back to not being comfortable with messy…I think sometimes that expectation that you should have the answers as a leader or facilitator, and just tell us what to do kind of thing, but just not being comfortable with messy, and that space, overall. So, it's easier just to check the box, get it done (Principal 1).

Focus group 2 continued this line and talked about how leaders' beliefs and experiences impact their decisions regarding ownership. It is entirely possible that the leader has no other experience outside of top-down decision making; alternatively, the leader might just be following the norms of the district (Director 5). Often, leaders assume the role of expert and require team outcomes to conform to the way they would do it (Director 5). The leader may believe that meetings *should* be top-down with the leader as the "sage on the stage" (Director 5; Principal 2).

Members in both focus groups recognize that the leader's fears impact their decisions when empowering teams with ownership to collaboratively create. Some leaders may think they should have all the answers, and that they should tell the team what they need to do and how to do it because they do not want to look weak (Director 5; Principal 1). It is also possible that the leader simply is not comfortable with things being messy (Director 5; Principal 1).

The directors in focus group 1 shared ideas about why the leader may have a predetermined process, outcome, or product in mind, and how that impacts the leader's decisions to about empowerment. A leader might go in with an idea of how they want things done or want the product to look like (Director 1; Director 3). Members speculated that the leader might be a perfectionist, and may feel that the work of the team is not quite the way the leader wants it (Director 1). Another suggestion is that the leaders might do so much preliminary legwork to get the team up and going, that they become married to an idea and unwilling to relinquish it when

leading the team (Director 2). Two directors in focus group 1 talked about the real need for sounding boards in the decision-making processes. They shared that it may not be part of the team's collaboration and learning, but it should happen in some other venue or by other stakeholders (Director 1; Director 2).

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to empower team members with ownership to collaboratively create, rather than act as a sounding board or rubber-stamp committee for the team leader's predetermined decisions? Three themes arose from the focus groups when advising future leaders:

- ownership to create is the foundation of the team's success;
- facilitate rather than micromanage the process and trust the team, letting go of predetermined outcomes;
- be self-reflective and strategic about imparting ownership.

Both focus groups identified ownership to create as crucial for the team's success. Members shared that this theme is the foundation for all other themes that support authentic team learning (Director 4; Director 5; Principal 1). Principal 1 shared why they ranked this theme as number one:

> I had it down as number one just because I'm looking at it from the perspective of authentic, collaborative creativity and team building. You know when we talked earlier about building the buy-in, and how it can build retention and all that, those kinds of things. When you see it from that perspective, I think it has to be an authentic space. So, I put it down as number one; it is kind of the grounding (Principal 1).

Others agree that ownership is critical for the success of the entire team. Without empowerment and ownership, the momentum of the team stops (Director 4; Principal 5).

Focus group 1 discussed the importance of facilitating the process, trusting the team, avoiding micromanagement, and letting go of predetermined outcomes. Director 4 shared that

entrusting ownership to create collaboratively requires the leader to have solid facilitation skills. Other members shared that rather than trying to control the outcome, the leader can facilitate the team's process of refining initial ideas (Director 4; Principal 4). Members from focus group 1 also shared that it is crucial for the leader to be upfront and transparent about the variables and conditions in the decision-making process (Director 1; Principal 1).

Both focus groups point to the importance of the leader being self-reflective and strategic about ownership. The groups had many suggestions on how to improve in this area. The leader needs to be humble, doing the hard work of connecting with those who are skilled leaders to discover what ownership to collaboratively create looks like (Director 5). Principal 3 suggests that the leader should have a coach to bounce their ideas off throughout the facilitation process. For example, if the team is at a certain point and the process is taking an unexpected turn, the coach can help the leader refocus or shift perspective as a facilitator (Principal 3). Knowing it will get messy, multiple directors and one principal advise leaders to be intentional and plan time to get messy, collaborate, learn and develop ownership (Director 1; Director 3; Director 5; Principal 1). Principal 4 proposes that the leader starts with a general big-picture vision, then turn it over to the team to improve the vision and or figure out how to get there. The leader's initial vision is the starting point, not the ending point (Principal 4). In the end, Director 4 shared that this theme of empowering the team to collaboratively create should be the easiest of all the themes because it is just about the beliefs of the leader, and not anyone else (Director 4).

> I think our own personalities and how we facilitate teams really impacted how we rated those themes. In particular, the last one that we just finished talking about, as far as how we as individuals see ourselves in the work that's happening, and therefore how willing we are to empower teams to collaborate and create. So, you know, we just have to. For me, it goes back to… assessing your own core values and being willing to identify what those are, and also give up some of your own power dynamics in order to make a successful team work. Then also having the courageousness to be able to facilitate a team effectively in order to get a true, authentic outcome. Because if you're not courageous

> enough, you're going to get a one-sided outcome based on what your needs as an individual are, and that's not necessarily the most effective (Director 1).

District Approaches and Systems to Increase the Number of Effective Team Leaders

Interview and Focus Group Results. Both the interviewees and the focus groups discussed the importance of intentionally aligning district systems and approaches to increase the number of effective leaders. Though they were never asked to do so, participants surfaced this area of concern. Their recommendations for districts fall into the following six themes:

- be intentional when hiring leaders;
- align professional development, leader PLCs, leader observations, and side-by-side coaching to help leaders improve;
- districts need to provide mentorship for leaders;
- leaders need 360-degree feedback including from the members to improve their practices;
- develop protocols for leader accountability, evaluation, and dismissal when necessary;
- integrate team collaboration into the district systems, goals, improvement plans, and approaches;
- break down silos by integrating district systems, goals, and improvement plans and increasing collaboration.

In order to increase the number of effective leaders in a district, members in focus group 2 discussed the importance of targeting this skill when hiring. Respondents recommend that hiring systems intentionally focus on the qualities, skills, beliefs, and attributes of successful leaders. One principal specified that districts first reflect on their current strengths and deficits, then deliberately hire leaders who can carry leadership forward across the district (Principal 3). This principal stipulated that it is critical to hire effective leaders with the skills, beliefs, growth mindset, and attributes the district needs in leaders (Principal 3).

Another principal talked about the importance of hiring leaders with diverse perspectives, strengths, skills, and abilities to lead a team (Principal 5). In addition to ensuring that effective leaders are hired, one principal recommends partnering novice leaders with those who are more skilled so they can learn from one another and build supportive relationships (Principal 2).

Members shared that districts need to align professional development, team leader PLCs, team leader observations, and side-by-side coaching to cultivate skilled leaders. Both focus groups discussed the need for every team leader (principals, assistant principals, district leadership) to have intentional professional development to build knowledge, understanding, and abilities that improve team learning (Director 1; Director 4; Principal 1; Principal 3; Principal 4). One principal shared that professional development opportunities should leverage the strengths of the team leaders in the room (Principal 5). This principal further shared that professional development cannot be "sit and get," rather team leaders need the opportunity to experience team learning with one another, such as a team leader PLC (Principal 5). Professional development could be structured, so that team leaders engage with the above-established themes when learning how to facilitate the team (Principal 2). The professional development could help solidify the team and help new and veteran team leaders get to know one another while growing their skills (Principal 2). The professional development and coaching opportunities should be differentiated by choice, and further focused on what each team leader needs in order to grow (Principal 5).

In addition to professional development courses, members also discussed observations, coaching, and feedback. The members discussed using observations where team leaders are observed while leading a team and are later given intentional feedback and coaching (Director 1; Director 3; Principal 1; Principal 3). Another option is providing in-the-moment, side-by-side

coaching to improve facilitation in a safe space where they can learn, try, fail, try again, determine what is and is not working, and build their capacity (Director 1; Director 4; Principal 1). Members feel that it is also crucial for team leaders to be authentic and reflective about their personality, experience and beliefs, and their impact on leadership. Differentiated coaching should build onto these personal assets (Principal 2; Principal 4). Members feel that the team leader just needs to go for it and try. They shared that it is better for the team leader to take a shot at new learning, spectacularly fail, and come back and try again than to miss the opportunity (Director 4; Principal 2; Principal 4). One director shared that some people think things should be done right all the time, and that unfortunately prevents us from taking risks as leaders (Director 4).

In addition to professional development, observations, and coaching, members shared the importance of team leaders seeking feedback to improve their practice. One principal feels that it is important that team leaders seek feedback from the members of their own team who are or have been team leaders. They suggest that the team leader ask these members to stay to give feedback after meetings (Principal 3). Members also shared the importance of asking for quick feedback about facilitation from the whole team (Director 1; Principal 3). One principal shared the idea of having a group of team leaders (like a team leader PLC) that the team leader could meet with regularly to generate and vet ideas for improvement (Principal 3).

In addition to hiring and growing leaders, one principal shared the importance of implementing district accountability systems, evaluations, and dismissal when necessary for team leaders who are unable or unwilling to improve. This principal shared that if the leaders are unable to lead or improve due to fear, bias, beliefs, and or ineffective approaches, then the evaluator needs to work with Human Resources regarding feedback and evaluation (Principal 5).

Principal 5 adds that evaluators can use low engagement as a red flag. For instance, a lack of engagement on the part of a team leader or member might signal that the team leader lacks a collaborative leadership mindset (Principal 5). This principal pointed out that if team leaders are ineffective, then the district needs to support them. If they do not improve, then they are unsuitable for the position (Principal 5).

In addition to utilizing human resources, members also surfaced the importance of integrating team collaboration into the district's systems, goals, improvement plans, and approaches (Principal 3; Principal 5). District leadership cannot assume that team learning will occur if it is not intentionally built into its systems and processes (Director 5; Principal 5). District systems, goals, and benchmarks need to use data to create a sense of urgency and require teams to align their work, collaborate, learn, and improve (Principal 5).

During the interviews, members shared that when departments function as individual organizations, they are not benefiting from team learning, and their results are not as effective (Principal 2; Principal 3). Members feel that districts need to break down silos by integrating district systems, goals, improvement plans, and increased collaboration between departments. Departments can be very territorial, wanting recognition for their own department rather than focusing on the district's wider mandate (Principal 2; Principal 3). The district needs to break apart departmental silos by braiding district goals, systems, approaches, and director evaluations (Principal 3).

One principal shared that the district needed to create goals and benchmarks that require collaboration between departments. This principal adds that the goal(s) and benchmark(s) should also include a partnership with schools, so the team has a variety of perspectives from different departments and school levels collaborating on solutions (Principal 3). Holding to the mindset

that *what gets measured gets done*, district leaders should be acknowledged for excellence resulting from team collaboration, rather than an individual department's efforts (Principal 3).

Another principal shared that if the district invites key leaders from each department to collaborate, then the district could dismantle silos. This principal shared that district silos are more likely to be broken up if each departmental leader is humble, collaborative, and engaged with other departments (Principal 2). The principal went on to add that the fewer intentionally planned opportunities for leaders of each department to collaborate and learn from one another, the higher and stronger the silos grow, and the harder it is to demolish them (Principal 2). The district needs regular, intentional collaboration between department leaders with common goals (Principal 2). Collaborating and learning together, the leaders of each silo can get to know one another better and build the trusting relationships needed to engage in shared leadership (Principal 2).

The members spoke of fostering team learning at the highest level of the district to tear down the silos. The district could create a team comprised of the leaders of each department. The team leader would either be the deputy superintendent or the superintendent. In the end, destroying the barriers to collaboration and learning across departments starts at the highest level by changing the structures, systems, and measures, and recalibrating the culture to value and use team learning.

Final Thoughts from a Few Members

As stated earlier, the purpose of this case study is to help team leaders improve team learning. Through data from one-on-one interviews, and extensive discussion of the themes of the interviews with the focus groups, members offered their insights and suggestions to benefit leaders who are creating a team that will collaborate and learn together. At the end of focus

group 2's discussion, director 5 shared the following, which summarizes their thinking about the discussion:

> I love this conversation because I think this is elevating, that this is the work. This is your job, this (they pointed at themes) is what we're supposed to do. People kind of put it to the side or periphery, this was part of the work. I think when you elevate it and talk about intentionality around this stuff, then you consider it as this is just part of the culture that we're building in this to what we do, instead of like an afterthought. People know when it's an afterthought. If it's the culture of what you do and how you do your work, and that you are promoting it or elevating it. There's something to be valued and a part of your skillset and something that we, again, continue to improve on and grow. And again, modeling that behavior, it becomes a norm. So, people that come into your building, this is how we get down, this is what we do. We pause, we take the time to have the conversations, and put in strategies to make this stuff (themes) happen (Director 5).

Director 4 captured the complexity of much of the case study in their interview.

> I think that we frequently underestimate that by just assigning three people or seven people or twelve people to a list with a specific task makes them a team and whether it be a sports background or a band orchestra or a choir group or a dance team or a pick your venue. When you really look at any group or team that has had success, whatever their activity, you really get the sense that they could work together through adversity for a common outcome and that is coached. Be it coached because you call it, facilitated it. Be it coached because you … set them up with the expectations with a protocol. All that allowed them to interact. It can be done a hundred different ways, but there is intentional workaround allowing them to form as a team, that everyone gets heard, that everyone contributes, that there's equal accountability as well, that you put some pressure back on the group to deliver a great product, that you give them a sense of purpose. Maybe they take some pride in their work. Um, you explain the why you are also detailed in the hows. When I think about the framework that we're using, like gave us kind of how we'll put this together. We knew the what and the topic. Um, we were clear and potential end goals without being limited. Um, so when I think about folks coming in with an opportunity to lead a team like that, I guess my kind of first push would be, are they really prepared to build a team or do they just have a task that they want to get done and get it over with? Because the difference, the outcome will be night and day. Yeah, no pressure" (Director 4).

In the focus group, Director 4 points out that the leader needs to focus on all of the themes if the team is to be successful. At the end of focus group 1's discussion, the final suggestion was to have me lead a new initiative, Collaboration 101. Chapter 5 will summarize

this case study, discuss significant findings from the data, discuss connections between the data and literature review, offer implications for practice, and outline the need for future study.

Chapter 5: Summary and Discussion

Relying on teams has become standard for school districts; sometimes they work well, but other times they languish. When a group becomes a team, collaborating and learning together, there are significant benefits. If a group fails to become a team, the best case that can be hoped for is a benign participant experience with mediocre group results. Worst-case scenario: the experience for the members is toxic, and the results are detrimental to the organization's climate and culture. The difference between success and failure hinges on leadership.

When a group becomes a high functioning team, principals and directors can experience the full power of an effective, diverse team. These teams have members with differing perspectives, roles, and mindsets. Members feel safe and are encouraged to push one another to collaboratively create solutions that no individual member could have created. These teams are solving complex systems issues that traditional approaches created, enabled, or were unable to solve. The systems may have outlasted their usefulness since they were created for a different time, place, or organization. The energy of the team's collaboration and learning changes how the members view the world through a new shared mental model. These teams:

- are engaging, inspiring, and motivational.
- use dialogue, discussion, and constructive conflict.
- increase the likelihood that everyone improves.
- analyze the entire system and learn to view the system differently because of the diverse team's discourse and learning.
- are necessary for districts that have become increasingly siloed in departments with members who are experts in *part* of the system, but who do not typically analyze how to improve the system as a whole.

- benefit both the organization and the members.

Teams succeed when they learn together by leveraging the strengths, perspectives, and leadership of diverse members. The success of a team increases if the leader intentionally uses transformational leadership and team learning approaches (Decuyper et al., 2010; Raes et al., 2013). Leaders must understand that the common elements and benefits of team learning are directly impacted by their leadership approaches, the perceptions of team members, and the culture of the organization. Districts leveraging teams are more likely to be successful when they implement systems that support teaming and transformational leaders.

While there are significant benefits when teams effectively collaborate and learn together, leading teams is not easy. Each team has its own culture that is impacted by a variety of factors. These factors include the roles and perspectives of the diverse members of the team, specific collaboration and learning opportunities, the culture of the district, the goal(s) of the team, and the leader's approach to facilitating the team (Bell et al., 2012; Clarke, 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; O'Toole, 1996; Yorks & Sauquet, 2003). Teams succeed when they are empowered to collaborate and learn together. Successful teams leverage the strengths, perspectives, and leadership of the members. Team learning increases when the leader intentionally recruits diverse members, creates safe spaces for collaboration, ensures the members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability, and empowers members to create (Raes et al., 2013). Unfortunately, this does not always happen.

This case study set out to improve the leadership of P-12 administrative teams by offering team leaders insights and suggestions from the team members' perspective. This chapter first summarizes chapter 1's problem of practice concerning why districts want to use teams to solve systems issues, and what can occur if these teams do not have effective leadership. This chapter

then restates the guiding research question that drove this case study. There is a summary of chapter 3's qualitative methodology which was used to gather the member's insights and suggestions for leaders. A major section of this chapter summarizes the five principal and five director members' insights and suggestions presented in chapter 4's data. The members' insights and suggestions reconfirmed chapter 2's literature review research. This chapter also discusses the implications of this case study for how leaders and school districts can begin to improve the leadership of P-12 administrative teams. Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations for future research to build upon this case study, specifically targeting how districts can systemically support transformational team leaders.

Statement of the Problem: We Need Teams, but Teams Often Fail

Traditional individualistic approaches to leadership and learning have failed to create the systems change needed to continually improve in a complex, globalized world (Clarke, 2012; Fisser & Browaeys, 2010; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017). Conventional approaches often fail because individuals working alone have limited opportunity to learn from other people with different perspectives, areas of expertise, and departmental positions. Teams working and learning together increase buy-in, ownership, learning from other people's perspectives and co-construction of new understanding and agreement (Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017). Organizations and school districts are increasing their use of this essential strategy, referred to as team learning (Bell, Kozlowski, and Blawath, 2012; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017).

While using a team of school district administrative leaders to solve problems has become commonplace, teams often fail to collaborate and learn together, fall short of their intended outcomes, and fail to unite as a team. Both practical and empirical research have demonstrated that team learning is not easily achieved in real-world teams (Decuyper, Dochy, &

Van Den Bossche, 2010; Raes et al., 2013; Senge, 2006). Teams seldom learn well together, and the factors are myriad: incompetent leadership, insecure leadership, destructive leadership, groupthink, destructive conflict among members, lack of diversity of members, unclear purpose, unsafe collaboration space, lack of ownership, micromanagement, lack of structure for collaboration, predetermined outcomes of the leader, interpersonal tension, lack of commitment to goals, lack of accountability or diffusion of responsibility, members not sharing information, failure to challenge one another's ideas, not thinking outside the box, not challenging the status quo, and not expressing their ideas or true feelings when decisions are being made (Senge, 2006). When members experience ineffective committees or groups, what group failure looks like can vary. Some examples may include:

- a few people can monopolize the discussion, while others do not talk
- the absence of a clear purpose leads to confusion or mission creep
- members do not feel safe
- members do not show up, or they quit coming to meetings
- some members do most of the work, and others do very little
- members shoot down ideas during meetings or sabotage ideas between meetings
- some members argue, avoid, distract, deny, deter, and or become defensive
- some members debate rather than dialogue
- members undermine the group by gossiping
- members have alliances, power motivations, and personal agendas that skew their participation
- members shut down due to fear of the power and reprisal of the leader or other members
- members are too like-minded, so the benefit of being a team is limited

- members keep information to themselves rather than share with the group
- teams operate more like staff meetings, where members are lectured at in sit-and-get settings, rather than collaboratively creating
- facilitators have already decided the outcome, and the group quickly becomes a sounding board or a rubber stamp committee
- teams do not need to exist at all because the decisions are already made
- the leader does not know how to lead a group to become an effective team
- members may not know how to dialogue, discuss, collaborate, and learn together

When groups go wrong, the adverse effects on the members can be significant. For the organization, the culture and climate can be negatively impacted by members' resentment of an undesirable experience.

The success of the team is highly dependent upon the effectiveness of the leader. Fortunately, most leaders can learn how to intentionally create and lead teams. Unfortunately, some leaders are not motivated to learn or adopt new practices to improve their leadership. Others are not able or willing to lead a group toward becoming a team that effectively collaborates and learns together.

Research Question

This chapter contains the summary of findings, discussion of implications for team leaders and districts, and potential future research based on the research question:

What are the insights and suggestions of a team of P-12 principals and district directors that could benefit team leaders who are creating teams to collaborate and learn together?

Review of the Methodology

This qualitative case study used research methods traditionally employed to understand the perspectives of individuals at a deeper level (Martella, 2013). One-on-one interviews were first conducted to establish the themes from the insights and suggestions of the directors and principals. Then, using the themes from the initial one-on-one interviews, two follow-up focus groups were convened with the same ten Partnership Principal Advisory (PPA) members—five principals and five district directors—who engaged in the initial interviews. Before each focus group, the members reviewed, and rank ordered the interview themes (see Appendix A). Then the focus group members indicated any of the interview themes and sub-themes they disagreed with (see Appendix B). The focus groups first discussed the benefits of teams collaborating and learning together. Then the focus groups responded to two questions for each interview theme to draw out their insights and suggestions:

- Why do you think some team leaders are not implementing the theme?
- What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to implement the theme?

Summary of the Findings

This case study set out to offer team leaders insights and suggestions to improve their leadership of teams from the members' points of view. The case study surfaced seventeen significant findings that can help leaders' efforts to improve their leadership. Each significant finding is directly connected with chapter 4's data and reconfirms the chapter 2 literature review research. To delve deeper into any specific finding, reread chapters 2 and 4.

The interviews and focus groups identified the benefits of teams collaborating and learning together, six ways leaders can help their team succeed and make these benefits a reality,

and eight ways leaders can cause their group to fail. The members went beyond the interview and focus group questions and suggested district systematic approaches to increase the number of effective team leaders in the district and to help the existing team leaders grow their knowledge, understanding, and skills. The members' insights, perspectives, and suggestions were reconfirmed by the research literature. For the members' insights that did not connect with the initial chapter 2 literature review, I researched more and discovered research the reconfirmed the members' insights. In those cases, I added to the chapter 2 literature review. The members also provided insights into new areas for future recommended study.

While the members brought diverse perspectives and roles, common themes surfaced in their interviews. The two focus groups garnered similar results. The environment, discourse, collaboration, and learning of each focus group was unique. The discourse of each member built upon one another's insights. The smaller size of the focus groups allowed more opportunity for each member to discuss, and doubled the size of the data set, with each group confirming the other focus group's insights and suggestions. There was significant overlap between each focus groups insights and suggestions (see chapter 4 or Appendix B).

Significant Findings.

<u>Why</u> Use Teams? The Benefits Outweigh the Costs

1. When teams successfully collaborate and learn together, there are significant benefits to both the organization and the individual members.

<u>How</u> the Leader Leads is Critical to the Team's Success or Failure

2. The transformational leader is critical to the team's success or failure.

<u>What</u> Transformational Leaders can do to Improve their Leadership of Teams. A team's collaboration and learning are more effective if the leader intentionally:

3. Creates a diverse team with different perspectives, roles, strengths, ownership, and expertise.
4. Empowers the team with shared leadership and ownership to collaboratively create.
5. Fosters shared purpose, goals, and accountability.
6. Uses collaboration protocol structures to increase dialogue and discussion, while not over-structuring or micromanaging the process.
7. Creates and maintains a safe space for collaboration, learning, and cohesion where members feel that their perspective and contributions are valued and honored.
8. Creates and maintains a safe and trusting space where constructive conflict, discourse, and disequilibrium occur without undermining the team.

<u>What</u> Incompetent, Insecure, and Destructive "Leaders" do that is Detrimental to a Group Becoming an Effective Team. If the group has a leader who is incompetent, insecure, or is destructive, then the best-case that can be hoped for is a benign participant experience with mediocre group results. Worst-case scenario: the experience for the members is toxic, and the results are damaging to the organization's climate and culture.

Incompetent:

9. Leaders who lack the ability, knowledge or transformational leadership skills in how to create and lead a team

10. Leaders who do not give the time or effort needed to intentionally implement significant findings 3-8
11. Leaders who have a predetermined process, outcome or product in mind
12. Leaders who use transactional leadership approaches

Insecure:

13. Leaders who lack confidence, are insecure, fear conflict, avoid conflict, or are defensive

Destructive Leadership:

14. Leaders who are passive, negligent, have a laissez-faire approach where they avoid making decisions, abdicate responsibility as a leader, and do not lead
15. Leaders who are racist, prejudiced, biased, or have blind spots
16. Leaders who have destructive leadership beliefs, approaches, or "dark side" leadership personality traits

<u>What</u> Districts Can do to Improve the Leadership of Teams

17. For districts to have effective team learning, they need to increase the quantity and quality of transformational leaders and decrease the number and influence of incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders. This goal can be accomplished by aligning systems to support team learning. The systems and support include hiring practices, developing, assessing, coaching, evaluating, and supporting transformational leaders; breaking down ineffective department silo approaches; and aligning systems to support the entire process.

The following is a summary of the significant findings on what leaders can do to improve their leadership (significant findings 1-8) and what can hinder their leadership for each approach (significant findings 9-16). Significant findings 9-16 are identified in the context of members shared why they thought some team leaders are not implementing the significant finding. There is a separate section that addressed incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership approaches of significant findings 9-16. Significant finding 17 stands alone.

Significant Finding 1: The benefits derived when teams collaborate and learn together outweigh the costs. Since leaders may have to change their practices to achieve the benefits of team learning, it is critical that they believe the benefits are worth the costs of change. Successful teaming improves the decision-making process, outcome, learning, climate, and organizational culture. The first significant finding is that teams that successfully collaborate and learn together realize significant benefits for both the organization and individual members. The practice is a win-win for both the organization and the individuals engaged in the process.

Team members benefit by learning together in a positive climate and organizational culture. They are more informed and better able to improve their practice. Members also are more likely to buy into the decision-making process, because they feel valued, listened to, and part of the process. The members shared how much fun it is to create when the team has positive energy, and members are sparking ideas off one another. Members feel engaged when they are creating in this type of zone. The organization's culture benefits because collaboration and learning together create transparency, collective purpose, accountability, and more satisfied, engaged, and motivated employees.

The organization also benefits from improved decision-making processes and a stronger outcome. When collaboration occurs across different departments and school levels, the K-12

articulation and alignment of ideas, systems, and processes are improved. Problem-solving improves when teams bounce ideas and push one another's thinking. Leveraging varied perspectives, understanding, skills, and resources help the team see potential variables and or solutions that otherwise may have remained hidden. The team capitalizes on people's strengths, and individual weaknesses are less likely to hinder the process and outcome; one person's weakness will most likely be another person's area of strength. This type of collaboration and learning—where people have increased confidence in the product and or decision due to increased vetting and sharing of perspectives—can yield improved quality and quantity.

The research literature supports the first significant finding. As shared in the chapter 2 literature review, team learning helps to build team leadership skills, creativity, blends members' strengths, builds trust, improves the learning curve, improves team current performance, future success, increases conflict resolution abilities, promotes ownership, encourages healthy risk-taking, and improves how the members of the organization feel about themselves, the team and organization.

Significant Finding 2: The transformational leader is critical to the team's success or failure. Leaders directly impact the success or failure of teams — their decisions, approaches, and beliefs influence team dynamics. The approach of an effective transformational leader compared to leaders that are incompetent, insecure, or destructive have significantly different impacts on the team culture, climate, results, and lives of the members. Transformational leaders' approach to leading team learning is by far the most effective. Transformational leaders inspire members with a shared vision, and encourage shared leadership and ownership. They are humble, selfless role models. They coach up members of their team and focus on the greater good. They care about their members and create safe spaces for collaboration and constructive

conflict. Transformational leadership focuses more on how leaders should lead, rather than on the tasks those leaders complete.

This second significant finding affirms that the leader is critical to the team's success or failure, which is born out in each of the following significant findings. The research literature also supports the second significant finding. As shared in chapter 2's literature review, the sources refer to the vital influence of well-executed transformational leadership approaches on team learning. Effective transformational leaders are energetic, charismatic, considerate, confident, positive, passionate, enthusiastic, motivational, and encouraging (Bass & Riggio, 2006). They are excellent role models and mentors for other team leaders. They put the goal(s) of the team or organization before their self-interests. They also mentor and build the leadership capacity in the members of the team. They care about the members of their team, and they encourage the team to break the status quo when creating. Unsurprisingly, these effective leaders are also highly productive. Members prefer working *with* transformational leaders to working *for* transactional, incompetent, insecure, or destructive leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The transformational leadership approach inspires, empowers, focuses, intrinsically motivates, provides safety, helps build the capacity of team members, and leverages the strengths of the team to collaborate and learn together (Bass, 1999). Members of teams who work with transformational leaders are more likely to care about one another, learn from one another, inspire one another, identify as a team, and work together toward common goals (Bass, 1999; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Transformational leadership also increases members' loyalty, commitment, and fulfillment, while reducing member stress and improving the team's performance (Bass, 1999; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013;). Members are more satisfied and drawn

to transformational leadership compared to transactional, incompetent, insecure, or destructive leadership approaches (Bass, 1999).

Significant Finding 3: Creates a diverse team with different perspectives, roles, strengths, ownership, and expertise. When selecting members, the leader must intentionally create a diverse team with different perspectives, roles, strengths, ownership, and expertise. The leader should seek out members who are engaged, collaborative, creative, and courageous enough to question traditional approaches. Members must be committed, concerned listeners who have a growth mindset; they also should selflessly put the goals of the team ahead of their own preferences. Members also suggested that leaders be strategic and intentional when selecting members, and seek members who will push back but not destroy the culture of the team. This second significant finding is foundational to the benefits of team learning. If the team is a likeminded homogenous engaged in groupthink, then there is no reason to have a team.

Members offered insights into how leaders can mess up the creation of the team and hinder the benefits of collaboration and learning before the work even begins. They had ideas as to why they think some leaders were not selecting members who have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths. They shared that leaders may believe it is easier to pick people whom they either agree with, already know, or who think like themselves. Another possibility was that leaders' fears, conflict-avoidance, insecurity, and lack of confidence when leading a diverse team could influence them to avoid selecting individuals who may not agree with them or who may have different perspectives. Members shared that if the leader is racist, prejudice, bias, and or has blind spots, then this may prevent them from recruiting members who are different from themselves. Each of these detrimental leadership approaches hinders the creation of a diverse team. Without a diverse team, the benefits of collaboration and learning will not come to fruition.

The research literature supports this third significant finding. As shared in the chapter 2 literature review, within learning organizations, groups engage in team learning by building upon each other's learning and complimenting one another's skills (Edmondson et al., 2007; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017). The more diverse the perspectives on an effective team, the stronger the effect of team learning; however, this assumes a commitment to the group, the members feel safe, and an effective leader to help support collaboration and learning (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017). Teams that include members with expertise in different areas, and that collaborate and learner together increase the learning curve and overall performance of the team compared to individual learning (Edmondson et al., 2007). Diversity is critical; if all the perspectives and skills of the members are similar, then the result will be limited (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2017). Selecting team members who share the same dominant culture, beliefs, and norms who look like the dominate leader undermines the team and typically results in groupthink and ineffective results (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

Before attempting to create and lead a diverse team, effective leaders should engage in personal self-reflection about their own culture, identity, gender, approach to power, race, bias, blind spots, unearned systemic privileges and power, approach to equity, social justice, diversity, inclusion, and leadership approach (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). This reflection results in intentional shifts to positively impact the shared leadership of the team (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). The benefits of having a diverse team with different perspectives, experiences, strengths only materialize if the members have a collective identity as a team, feel safe, have a shared sense of leadership and ownership toward a common purpose and accountability to the goal(s).

Significant Finding 4: Empowers the team with shared leadership and ownership to collaboratively create. A team's collaboration and learning are more effective if the leader intentionally empowers the team with shared leadership and ownership to collaboratively create. Many of the members and the research found that this fourth significant finding is foundational to team learning. The members shared significant benefits of shared leadership and ownership to the outcome and to how members feel. Conversely, there are significant consequences if empowerment does not occur. The members shared that this significant finding can be the easiest to accomplish because it only relies on the leader's decision and approach. The leader is the primary decision maker as to if the team has shared leadership, ownership, and is encouraged to create collaboratively. Three themes arose from the focus groups for insights and suggestions they would give future leaders regarding empowerment:

- Ownership to create is the foundation of the team's success.
- Facilitate the process, trust the team, do not micromanage, and let go of predetermined outcomes.
- Be self-reflective and strategic about ownership. If the leader does not foster shared leadership and ownership, the benefits of collaboration and learning are significantly hindered. Unfortunately for some leaders, this is their Achilles heel.

The principals and directors offered ideas as to why they thought some leaders do not empower the members with shared leadership and ownership to collaboratively create, and instead create an echo chamber for decisions that have more or less been made. Four themes arose from the focus groups:

- The leader may believe it is easier and faster to get the work done.
- Ownership is impacted by the beliefs and experience of the leader.

- The leader's fear impacts team ownership.
- The leader may have a predetermined process, outcome, or product in mind. If the leader does not foster shared leadership and ownership, the likelihood of the team failing or becoming a rubber stamp committee is significant. The team will not realize the benefits of team learning, and there is also an increased likelihood of resentment of members of the team toward the leader and organization.

The research literature supports the fourth significant finding. There seems to be an assumption among the research that teams engaged in team learning and collaboration must already be empowered with ownership. As shared in chapter 2's literature review, the leader must reflect on the degree of ownership the team will have and the impact of that decision on the team (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders need to understand that their role and approach to facilitation changes as the group develops into a team (Bass & Riggio, 2006). When establishing shared leadership, the leader's initial approach is more hands-on as a mentor, then instructor and coach, and eventually as a facilitator once ownership shifts to the team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

The leader's approach to team ownership in decision-making is critical for team learning (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Sarin et al., 2003). The goal is for the leader to provide motivation, guidance, a safe place, structure, and information, whereas the team retains ownership of the learning, ideas, and solutions to achieve the stated goal (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The research is clear that the transformational leader's role is to know their team, encourage ownership, and provide coaching, support, encouragement, and structure to help the team engage in shared leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kreunen et al., 2018; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Novice leaders tend to hold on more tightly,

controlling the team and establishing procedures that heavily rely on the leader, making the team dependent on its leader. Expert transformational leaders, with strong social-emotional skills, create open-ended procedures and processes that help member-leaders improve in leadership, self-regulation skills, and collaboration skills until they can contribute independent of the leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Significant Finding 5: Fosters shared purpose, goals, and accountability. The team's collaboration and learning are more effective if the leader fosters shared purpose, goals, and accountability. Once a diverse group is assembled, the group needs to become a team with a collective identity, shared sense of purpose, goals, and accountability to the goal(s). This fifth significant finding is foundational to a group becoming a team that successfully collaborates and learns together. The members shared the significant benefits of establishing a collective mission and working toward a common goal(s). They also shared significant risks if this does not occur. In chapter 4, the focus groups provided many suggestions on how the leader should ensure the team has a shared purpose and accountability. The suggestions fell into two main themes: (a) empowering the team to co-create shared purpose, and (b) specific accountability strategies. The leader impacts how this process occurs and whether it succeeds or fails.

Members offered ideas as to why they thought some leaders hinder teams by not ensuring there is a sense of purpose and accountability to the goal(s). Some of the members suggested that the leader's supervisor may have set the purpose, leaving the leader to follow the directives of the supervisor. Another possibility the members shared is that the leader might believe it is faster and easier to skip the process and just begin the work. Without the leader fostering shared purpose, goals, and accountability, the likelihood of the group failing to become a team is significant.

The research literature supports the fifth significant finding. As shared in chapter 2's literature review, the literature refers to the importance of the team having a shared sense of purpose, goals, and accountability. The text delves deeper into the importance of having a common purpose, a team compact, and setting goals when collaborating with a diverse team. Teams engaged in pushing for diverse ideas, while at the same time encouraging cohesion, must have a strong collective identity as a team (Argote, Levine, Knippenberg, & Mell, 2017; Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007). To help establish this collective identify, starting with establishing a team compact and a common goal is essential. Teams who have established expectations when focusing on shared goals benefit from a confluence of all members' strengths, knowledge and content, inviting diverse expertise, perspectives, and content (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012). Research shows that the absence of agreed-upon expectations, goals, expectations, and structures is a significant barrier to teams (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Sarin et al., 2003; Zaccaro et al., 2008). The clearer the agreed upon team compact, goals and expectations, the more effective the team learning. The team then benefits from members feeling motivated by end goals and the ownership they have been given to collaboratively create utilizing members' differing perspectives. Additional benefits include higher motivation and innovation, improved decision-making, enhanced team learning, and improved transference and use of information among all members (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Sarin et al., 2003; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

As teams move from goal setting to action, the focus on convergent ideas and motivation increases within the team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Zaccaro et

al., 2008). Establishing a team compact and goal setting increases the team's sense of collective team identity, accountability, and self-efficacy. Team identity and self-efficacy both enjoy a high correlation with positive team motivation and performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Significant Finding 6: Uses collaboration protocol structures to increase dialogue and discussion, while not over-structuring or micromanaging the process. Team learning is more effective if the leader finds the right balance, intentionally utilizing collaboration protocol structures without over-structuring or micromanaging the process. This sixth significant finding demonstrates that, when done well, collaboration protocols support facilitation and increase voice and ownership. When they are overly structured, the team feels micromanaged, and team learning shuts down. Four themes arose from the focus groups as to what suggestions they would give future leaders:

- Incorporate reflection time for deeper thinking.
- Be intentional when using protocols, frameworks, or structures to ensure that voices and perspectives are heard.
- Seek out professional development and side-by-side coaching while willingly trying.
- Seek out members' feedback to increase their sense of ownership.

Members also shared the significant issues that can occur if the leader either fails to use protocols or imposes overly strict parameters. The themes include (a) the negative results of a lack of collaboration protocols, and (b) the risk of over-structuring collaboration protocols. The leader has a significant impact on choosing which protocols, frameworks, or structures to use. Members offered insights as to why leaders may not use protocols, frameworks or structures to

support collaboration. Members shared that leaders may lack experience or knowledge of how to use collaboration protocols, or the leader may refuse to use them due to the leader's beliefs or personality. If leaders do not ensure that each member's voice is included and heard, or if they micromanage the process, then the benefits of having a diverse team engaging in team learning will be lost.

The research literature supports the sixth significant finding. As shared in chapter 2's literature review, the more a leader empowers the team with intentional processes and procedures, the more members share in leadership and ownership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Successful leaders intentionally seek diverse members for the team, then create opportunities for their diverse perspectives to influence the decision-making process (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). It is the leader's responsibility to ensure the team members have equal access to opportunities and air time, so their voices, ideas, and perspectives are heard (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

Leaders who use transformational approaches to empower shared participatory leadership encourage a free exchange of ideas, increased trust, and cross-department problem-solving. Their success comes from leveraging the strengths, ideas, perspectives, and knowledge of multiple diverse members rather than their own, or those of only the most vocal team members (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Sarin et al., 2003). Learning occurs when the leader sets up team structures and processes that require members to engage with one another, share ideas and insights, and collaboratively build upon one another's knowledge and creativity (Bell et al., 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Gilley, 2010). To increase information sharing, the leader also ensures that the team has adequate time, trust with one another, and an established collectivist team culture. The leader also implements structures for information

sharing when collaborating, emphasizes the team's success over the individual success of the members, and a maintains a commitment to confidentiality with sensitive information (Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017). Senge explained that the facilitators use of protocols was so important that he wrote a companion guide to *The Fifth Discipline*, called *Schools that Learn: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares About Education* (2012) which is primarily protocols and activities to improve the facilitation of each of the five disciplines. A few other resources for facilitating using protocols include: Allen & Blythe's (2004) book *The Facilitator's Book of Questions* and McDonald's (2013) *The Power of Protocols*. (See Appendix K for an example of a protocol).

However, if the leader overly structures the process or micromanages the team, the outcome is detrimental. Teams can feel stifled, demotivated and demoralized. Trust is broken, information is no longer shared as freely, and the creative problem-solving and collaborative process can easily be destroyed (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Brooks-Harris, 2005; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Sarin et al., 2003; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Significant Finding 7: Create and maintain safe and trusting spaces where members feel their perspectives, contributions, collaboration, and learning are valued and honored. A team's collaboration and learning are more effective if the leader intentionally creates and maintains a safe space for collaboration, learning, and cohesion where members feel that their perspective and contributions are valued and honored. Once a diverse team is formed, the team needs to have a shared safe space where the members can trust one another. This seventh significant finding is foundational to effective team learning. In chapter 4, the members shared the significant benefits of having this type of collaborative space. They also shared the

significant concerns they feel when the space is not safe. Five themes arose from the focus groups when detailing suggestions for future leaders.

- The leader needs to be reflective, transparent, and authentic when leading the team.
- Acknowledging the importance of members' attributes, the leader needs exercise care when creating and building the team.
- The leader also must intentionally create and maintain a safe space.
- It is essential that the leader encourages reflection, discourse, and challenging of the status quo.
- Finally, the leader needs to hold members accountable to the safe space. The leader has a significant impact on how the space is established and maintained.

The members offered ideas as to why they thought some leaders do not create or maintain safe and trusting spaces for collaboration. Three themes arose from the focus groups:

- The leader may believe it is easier and faster just to begin the work.
- The leader may not know how to create safe and trusting spaces.
- The leader might not have the courage or will to challenge the power dynamics and dysfunctions on the team.

Few things shut down team learning faster than if the leader's incompetence, insecurity, and or destructive leadership approaches result in members not feeling safe, trusted, or honored.

The research literature supports the seventh significant finding. As shared in chapter 2's literature review, the effectiveness of the team's collaboration and learning is directly tied with the members' relationship with the leader, feeling of safety, and mutual trust (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Sarin et al., 2003; Zaccaro et al., 2008). Effective leaders of diverse teams build quality relationships with the

members (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Building quality relationships requires the leader to be flexible, self-aware, humble, transparent, and vulnerable (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Honing leadership to be more relational is in direct alignment with transformational and team learning approaches.

When leaders are cognizant of the members' individual needs and value their skills, the result is an increase in mutual respect, trust among members, and collective team identity (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012). The leader's approach to building relationships with members, creating a nurturing, psychologically safe collaboration space, has a significant impact on the effectiveness of diverse teams when analyzing and learning from their own errors (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson, 1999; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; 2018; Sarin et al., 2003; Zaccaro et al., 2008).

Without a safe and trusting collaborative space, teams cannot engage in discourse—giving and receiving feedback, sharing information, framing and reframing the issue, engaging in constructive conflict, negotiating, and learning from one another (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Decuyper et al., 2010; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012). Strong relationships and safe and trusting spaces encourage members to voice differing perspectives, alternative options, and dissenting opinions, and to challenge the issues being discussed without fear of reprisal or backlash (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Sarin et al., 2003). When leaders establish trust and show appreciation for members' contributions and insights, the leaders' behavior promotes inclusion for diverse team members (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Without relationships based on respect, appreciation and trust, and a safe space, leaders and members do not feel included, let alone

share and think freely, challenge one another's ideas, take risks, or openly discuss their own ideas (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012; Sarin et al., 2003).

While the leader is focused on increasing the trust and sharing among team members, they must also decrease destructive conflict. Leaders push for diverse ideas, while simultaneously encouraging cohesion, and they must create a team with mutual respect and a strong collective identity (Argote, Levine, Knippenberg, & Mell, 2017; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bell et al., 2012; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012). Chrobot-Mason et al. (2013) claim that conflict is a natural consequence when a diverse team collaborates. When the conflict is based on the social identity of the diverse members, however, the destructive conflict reveals bias, prejudice, and racism, and the leader must address this conflict. Unfortunately, many leaders are reticent to address prejudice due to a lack of confidence in their abilities and skills to navigate social identity conflict (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

Significant Finding 8: Creates and maintains a safe and trusting space where constructive conflict, discourse, and disequilibrium occur without undermining the team. A team's collaboration and learning are more effective if the leader intentionally creates and maintains a safe and trusting space where constructive conflict, discourse, and disequilibrium occur without undermining the team. To receive the benefits of a team with diverse perspectives, the members cannot succumb to groupthink or surface solutions. Instead, the team must engage in productive struggle and a lively exchange of ideas when creating a new idea, approach, or shared mental model. When the team engages with this approach, it can leverage the diverse perspectives of its members. The team can improve decision making by engaging in discussions

that people out of their comfort zone into disequilibrium, while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the team. This eighth significant finding is imperative to achieve the benefits of team learning. For this to occur, the leader and members need to create a safe space where the team can disagree without causing damage to draw out the diverse ideas of the team.

It is crucial for the leader to be transparent regarding the purpose of constructive conflict and explain that safe spaces are not necessarily free from conflict; this is not a norm for everyone's culture. It is also beneficial for the leader to frontload the experience and teach what constructive conflict looks like so the team recognizes it when it occurs. Some members feel that the leader's personal confidence, the leader's trust in the team, the members' trust in the leader, and trust among group members increase the team's ability to have constructive conflict and disequilibrium when collaborating. The leader needs courage and strong facilitation skills when the team is engaging in constructive conflict to help the team avoid battle. If the team does become combative, then the leader needs to hold the team accountable and refocus the team toward being constructive to find solutions.

The research literature supports the eighth significant finding. As shared in chapter 2's literature review, there is a complicated relationship between constructive conflict and cohesion within team learning; both are necessary, and both require an effective transformational leader to strike the right balance (Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018). Decuyper et al., (2010) calls "sharing, co-construction and constructive conflict the basic team learning processes, because they describe what happens when teams learn." At the same time, members need cohesion in order to sustain constructive conflict without destroying the team (Bell et al., 2012; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012). A careful balance between cohesion and conflict prevents groupthink by allowing constructive conflict to push ideas beyond the initial

acceptance level of the team (Bell et al., 2012; Decuyper et al., 2010; Edmondson et al., 2007; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012). To accomplish this balance, transformational leaders should leverage their relational approach and ensure that team members share information about themselves to connect on a personal level while sharing their perspectives (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Lencioni & Kensuke, 2012). Effective leaders find a balance between team cohesion and constructive conflict.

The goal is to have the team reach a new plain by learning from one another's perspectives (Decuyper et al., 2010). To successfully maintain the delicate balance between tension and harmony, learning organizations need skilled transformational leaders with specific positive attributes; leaders with destructive attributes, approaches, and personalities are detrimental to teams and organizations (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). While significant findings 9-13 were shared in context by the members as to why they thought some team leaders do not implement each significant finding 3-8, it is critical to explicitly call out incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership and the need for the district to address these types of behaviors.

Significant Findings 9-16: Decreasing detrimental leadership (incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership) in the organization. When leaders exhibit incompetence, insecurity, or destructive leadership; team learning ends, the district and team culture and climate are negatively impacted, and the members' lives can be damaged. Incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders cannot be allowed to lead teams; whenever possible, districts must actively prevent them from entering or remaining in the organization. Rather than restate all the members' insights connected to the incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership listed in context

within each of significant findings 3-8 above, it is critical to note that members' insights and the research literature both support the significant findings 9-16.

As seen in significant findings 9-16, the members distinguish between the differences between incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership based on intent, whereas the researchers categorized destructive leadership based on the effects or outcomes of destructive leadership. While the members differentiated detrimental leadership based on perceived intent, all significant findings 9-16 are all detrimental to the team and therefore by the researchers' definition are classified as destructive leadership.

As shared in chapter 2's literature review, while many researchers have focused on transformational leadership personalities, behaviors, and positive leadership attributes, others have focused on what makes leaders ineffective, even potentially dangerous. The degree of suffering and negative impacts among team members depends on the negative approach and the leader's personality. When organizations have incompetent, insecure, or destructive leaders; everyone suffers (Kaiser & Craig, 2014).

According to Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, (2007), most researchers are clear that when categorizing types of leadership as damaging, a leader's intent has nothing to do with the categorization. Instead, the focus is on results or outcomes. Therefore, destructive leadership is an all-encompassing category that focuses on the results of incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership. Einarsen et al., (2007) go on to clarify:

> Furthermore, any isolated and therefore potentially accidental behaviour is already excluded in the definition through the focus on systematic and repeated behaviour. Destructive leadership behaviour may therefore include behaviours that were not intended to cause harm, but as a result of thoughtlessness, insensitivity, or lack of competence, undermines subordinates and or the organisation.

The researchers refer to these leaders by different terms, and they explain the varying degrees of adverse impact. Hinkin & Schriesheim (2008) researched the harm caused by incompetent, insecure, passive/avoidant, negligent, or laissez-faire "nonleaders." As explained earlier, Bass & Riggio (2006) explain how inauthentic leaders, pseudotransformational leaders, and neuroticism are detrimental to the leadership of teams and team members. Some of these inhibiting behaviors include moodiness, defensiveness, anxiety, fear, anger, aggression, insecurity, hostility, disproportionate frustration, jealousy, excessive worry, envy, jealousy, depression, hopelessness, shyness, extreme self-consciousness, impulsivity, and loneliness. Of Bass & Riggio's (2006) neurotic leadership traits, some are more harmful to the team, organization, and members than others. Khoo & Burch, (2007) researched the negative impacts to what they refer to as the "dark side" of leadership personality. Within this "dark side" of leadership and neuroticism, the most damaging is destructive leadership, since it has the potential to destroy teams and organizations and ruin lives (Einarsen et al. 2007; Kaiser & Craig's, 2014).

Kaiser & Craig's (2014) "Destructive Leadership in and of Organizations" analyzes the impact of destructive leader behavior, personality traits, and top-down decision-making approaches; this research highlights selfishness, abuse of power, micromanagement, unethical leadership, narcissism, negligent or laissez-faire leadership, and situational pressures that lead to destruction. Einarsen et al. (2007) cite multiple studies and the terms associated with destructive leaders, including abusive supervisors, health-endangering leaders, petty tyrants, bullies, derailed leaders, intolerable bosses, psychopaths, harassing leaders, and toxic leaders. Kaiser & Craig (2014) claim that problems with destructive leadership are rooted in a leader's selfish motivational orientation: their personal wants and goals, desire to achieve, and need for personal advancement. "Self-interest is a powerful human motive, perhaps the most powerful one, and is a

chief reason for exploitative, manipulative, unethical, and negligent leader behavior" (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Kaiser and Craig (2014) further explain that destructive leaders respond to selfish motivation by exercising power, control, and social dominance over others.

The "dark side" personalities of destructive leaders are the opposite of those found in influential transformational leaders. Khoo & Burch (2007) researched which personality traits were most at odds with transformational leadership. They group and rank-order them from negative correlation to low positive correlation. To be clear, all personality disorders are the antithesis of transformational leadership personalities. Khoo & Burch's (2007) research overlapped the personality disorders from the DSM-IV with the dysfunctional leadership approaches found in the Hogan Developmental Survey (HDS). HDS is used to determine the "dark side" personality dimensions. (See Appendix: G for descriptions of each) Khoo & Burch (2007) find varying degrees of negative correlation between the different groupings of detrimental personality disorders and transformational leadership. Each personality disorder in each group is presented from lowest to highest correlation with transformational leadership. The group that "moved away from people" (-.83 correlation) was the least like transformational leaders. This group includes: avoidant/cautious, schizoid/reserved, paranoid/skeptical, borderline/excitable, passive-aggressive/leisurely. The next group "moved against people" (-.15 correlation). This group included: narcissistic/bold, antisocial/mischievous, histrionic/colorful, schizotypal/imaginative. While the last group still has a negative correlation of (-.1), the "moving toward people" group is the closest to transformational leadership. This group includes: obsessive-compulsive/diligent and dependent/dutiful. Kaiser and Craig's (2014) research describes what these "dark side" personalities can look like in the context of leadership:

- abusive supervision with sustained hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors;

- unethical leadership with moral lapses where the leader is devious, manipulative, lacking integrity, vindictive, neglecting commitments, or dishonest;
- utilizing personal charisma for selfish goals or evil intent;
- narcissistic behaviors such as arrogance, self-centeredness, sense of entitlement, grandiosity, self-absorption, and superiority;
- personality disorders such as narcissism, Machiavellianism or psychopathy, exhibiting borderline, avoidant, paranoid, schizoid, passive-aggressive, narcissistic, antisocial, histrionic, schizotypal, obsessive-compulsive, or dependent behaviors; or
- negligent or passive laissez-faire leadership approaches that abdicate their responsibility as leaders.

Kaiser and Craig (2014) explain that narcissism is a common attribute of powerful leaders; this can be both a strength and a weakness. While narcissism can provide the confidence, vision, and inspiration teams need, it can birth a power-hungry, self-centered approach when left unchecked. Kaiser and Craig (2014) exhaustively list detrimental characteristics of destructive leaders in a chart of "dark side" personality traits (see Appendix H).

In addition to personality, leaders' racism, prejudice, bias, and blind spots harm diverse teams. When leaders promote or ignore social and cultural hierarchies based on systemic, unearned privilege, members outside the dominant group are more likely to be marginalized and impacted by status hierarchies, power struggles, conflict, and differential treatment (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Selecting team members who share the same dominant culture, beliefs, and norms or who look like the dominant leader, undermines the team and typically results in groupthink and ineffective results (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). While racism, prejudice, and bias are a form of destructive leadership, Kaiser and Craig (2014) found that laissez-faire

leadership, where the leader avoids responsibility, is the most common form of destructive leadership.

Leaders who are passive, neglectful, and allow their indirect behaviors to negatively affect the members are also classified as destructive leaders. When the leader fails to protect members, or when the leader's lack of leadership negatively impacts members, the leader is engaged in destructive leadership (Einarsen et al., 2007; Kaiser & Craig, 2014; Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2008). Hinkin & Schriesheim (2008) focus on the passive and negligent type of destructive leadership field, which they referred to as different types of "non-leadership:"

- *Reward omission:* Managers do not respond to what a subordinate perceives to be his or her good performance.
- *Punishment omission:* Managers do not respond to what a subordinate perceives to be his or her poor performance.
- *Passive management by exception:* Managers intervene only after noncompliance has occurred or when mistakes have already happened.
- *Laissez-faire leadership:* Managers avoid making decisions, abdicate responsibility, and do not use their authority (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2008, page 1237).

Hinkin & Schriesheim (2008) found that while each of the incompetent, insecure, and destructive "nonleadership" approaches varied, the adverse effect was the same, which is why they are classified as destructive leadership. According to Einarsen et al., (2007)

> Consistent with the definition of destructive leadership introduced in this paper, laissez-faire leadership violates the legitimate interests of organisations, by for example "stealing time," while also possibly undermining the motivation, well-being and job satisfaction of subordinates (e.g., by failing to meet their legitimate expectations of guidance and support). Hence, laissez-faire should be considered a form of destructive leadership.

Members had significantly strong negative views of leaders who engaged in any of these inactive, nonresponsive, incompetent, and insecure approaches.

It is crucial for leaders to know that standards of acceptable versus unacceptable destructive leadership change over time. Einarsen et al. (2007) shared that

> Leadership behaviour may be considered destructive only if it violates the legitimate interests of the organisation as defined by a given society at a given point in time (Einarsen, Nielsen, Raknes, & Skogstad, 2005). This implies of course that what will be perceived as destructive behaviour may vary between different societies over time… Many kinds of leadership behaviours that are considered destructive today, may have been regarded as being in accordance with the legitimate interest of the organisation at another point in time.

While cultural norms of the past may have allowed destructive leadership, of definition destructive leadership currently depends on the point of view of the organization or member.

Einarsen et al. (2007) created a model of destructive leaders that categorized their detrimental behaviors. Tyrannical Leadership Behavior supports the organization but exhibits destructive leadership toward members. Derailed Leadership Behavior is anti-organization *and* anti-member. Supportive-Disloyal Leadership Behavior is supportive of members, yet is anti-organization. Regardless of the behavior, the effect is destructive even though specific points-of-view may not see it as the case. For example, “Because tyrannical leaders may behave constructively in terms of organisational oriented behaviour while displaying anti-subordinate behaviours; subordinates and superiors may evaluate the leader's behaviour quite differently. Subordinates may view the leader as a bully, while upper management views him/her favourably" (Einarsen et al., 2007). Both the members and organization are in agreement that derailed leadership behavior is harmful. There is not as much agreement for supportive-Disloyal Leadership Behavior.

> The intention of the supportive–disloyal leader may not necessarily be to harm the organisation; rather he or she may be acting upon a different “vision” or strategy in

> support of other values and goals than that of the organisation, even believing that he or she acts with the organisation's best interest at heart. Leaders who lack strategic competence may still be able to nurture friendly relationships with subordinates; but even though they may be popular among some or all of their subordinates, these leaders would be considered destructive if their behaviour is not in the legitimate interest of the organisation (Einarsen et al., 2007).

Incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders undermine the organization, the benefits of team learning, and transformational leadership itself. These detrimental leadership approaches destroy opportunity for improved decision making, ownership, shared purpose toward a common goal(s), feelings of safety, willingness to take risk, trust, motivation, team member engagement, productivity, job satisfaction, collaboration, group cohesion, organizational commitment, continuity, and team member confidence in themselves and the organization (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). In addition to the negative impact of these detrimental leadership approaches, destructive leadership has the potential to do even more harm to the members' legal and physical wellbeing.

Destructive leaders are more likely to lead their team to engage in unethical or illegal behaviors, to belittle employees, or to neglect staff. They are also more likely to increase staff conflict, fear, distress, and confusion, and they commonly leave problems unaddressed (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Kaiser and Craig (2014) explain that when you have destructive leaders, susceptible followers, and an organization that allows destructive leaders to lead, you have what they refer to as a "toxic triangle."

Building a culture of trust as an organization takes time and effort; a destructive leader can rapidly undo both. If left unchecked, these destructive leaders can quickly destroy an organization's culture, undermine organizational trust, and cause harm to staff. While some destructive leaders may be able to deliver desirable short-term, the negative long-term costs of their leadership approach typically far outweigh the initial benefits (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). The

ends do not justify the means. Organizations must be proactive to address their culture, systems, and structures to prevent this from occurring (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Organizations must understand the signs and signals of incompetent, insecure, and destructive leadership, the impacts, and contributing culture that fosters or creates these detrimental leadership practices. The organization must reflect and analyze whether its systems and culture are fostering these detrimental leaders (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). To reduce destructive leadership, organizations must implement frequent checks on leaders' approaches, eliminating any self-promoting processes that encourage destructive leadership. It is crucial to know that employees managed by destructive leaders may be reticent to report abuses due to fear, terror, and an implied threat from the destructive leader (Kaiser & Craig, 2014).

Organizations must address or remove incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders before harm is done, and then establish organizational culture and systems to prevent recurrence (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Enduring organizations change their culture and systems to support transformational leaders, intentionally weed out incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders, and at the same time hire, recruit, and grow positive, effective leaders.

Significant Finding 17: District approaches and systems to increase the number of effective team leaders. For districts to have effective team learning, the district needs to increase the quantity and quality of leaders and align systems to support team learning. The systems and support include hiring, developing, assessing, coaching, evaluating, supporting leaders, breaking down barriers between siloed departments, and aligning systems to support the entire process. The seventeenth significant finding arose when members shared that the success of the team is directly connected to the beliefs, fears, confidence, blind-spots, personality, approach, knowledge, skills, and abilities of leaders. They then made suggestions that the district could

implement to help leaders improve. The members' ideas to improve school district systems and approaches are described in detail in chapter 4. While this significant finding was not part of the research methods interview or focus group questions, members shared, discussed, and surfaced the following six district subthemes:

- The district's systems need to be intentional when hiring team leaders.
- The district needs intentional and aligned professional development, team leader PLCs, team leader observations, and side-by-side coaching to help team leaders improve.
- The team leaders need to seek feedback to improve their practices.
- The district needs systems for team leader accountability, evaluation, and dismissal when necessary.
- The district needs to integrate team collaboration into its systems, goals, improvement plans, and approaches.
- The district needs to break down department silos by braiding district systems, goals, and improvement plans, thereby fostering increased collaboration between leaders within each silo.

For each of the subthemes, the members discussed using team learning at the highest level of the district to create and align braided systems. They also explored restructuring district systems with the purpose of systemically supporting the significant findings 1-8.

The research literature supports the seventeenth significant finding. As shared in chapter 2's literature review, an organization's cultures and systems either support or hinder transformational leaders' efforts (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Day et al., 2006). Organizations that take a hands-off or passive approach to address the systemic issues that hinder leaders have the same destructive effect as leaders who take this same laisse-faire approach (Chrobot-Mason et al.,

2013). The approach of senior leadership is critical, since they set the tone, direction, and culture for the entire organization (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Some potential opportunities include how the organization:

- addresses blind spots of leadership at all levels, as well as systemic racism.
- encourages stability of the team and leadership.
- focuses on improving the environment to encourage diversity.
- acknowledges success and leadership accomplishments and awards promotions.
- extinguishes inappropriate leadership approaches.
- fosters a positive team climate.
- encourages transformational leadership behaviors and approaches.
- encourages the psychological safety of the team.
- establishes the interpersonal climate of the team and the individualist versus collectivist culture of the organization.
- and cultivates and encourages diverse teams to value their diverse perspectives (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007).

Top leadership seeking increase a transformational culture in their organization must ensure that diverse teams work in an environment that is hospitable and conducive to creativity, dialogue, discussion, collaboration for problem-solving, risk-taking, and experimentation (Bass, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

Hiring transformational leaders and avoiding incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders. The easiest way to reduce the impact of detrimental leaders is not hiring or promoting them into leadership roles in the first place (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). When leaders are hired, if the hiring committee or chair values traditional leadership approaches, then they may gravitate

toward traditionally destructive leadership characteristics. If, however, there is a mindset shift about what leadership looks like, then the hiring approach changes as well. Learning organizations need transformational leaders who are collaborative, engaged in shared leadership, culturally responsive, learning-oriented, and system thinkers who can collaborate and work across organizational departments. They must be able to mentor, coach, and cheerlead. They should be selfless, ethical, positive role models who are authentic to themselves, democratic, inspirational, proactive. They are change agents with strong emotional intelligence, and they are model transformational leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). They are the exact opposite of incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders.

One suggestion is to have individuals engage in the Bass & Avolio's Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Using multiple versions of the multi-rater MLQ would give the hiring team far more information from different points-of-view. Some of the available batteries include MLQ 360-degree leadership analysis, MLQ self-reporting form, MLQ rater form, Team Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, and MLQ Actual vs. Ought. Hiring teams can also use Avolio, Gardner, and Walumbwa's Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) to connect leaders to transformational leadership approaches. While some of these questionnaires involve self-reporting, which can be quite subjective, hiring teams are finding these tools useful. If concerns are found, hiring managers and Human Resources departments must dig deeper, rather than ignore the signs, when any hint of incompetent, insecure, or destructive leadership traits arises (Kaiser & Craig, 2014).

Developing transformational leaders. In addition to recruiting new leaders, learning organizations are growing their leaders from within. Successful learning organizations are developing their own transformational leaders (Bass, 1999; Bass, 2000; Chrobot-Mason et al.,

2013; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Organizations succeeding in this work are developing key attributes sought in a transformational leader (Bass, 1999; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Kaiser & Craig, 2014). Bass (1999) explains that the challenge for the organization is not in training, but in the willingness and ability of the person to be trained as a transformational moral leader. Bass (1999) suggests that methods such as 360-degree leadership assessments are powerful tools that can help individuals view their leadership and the need to become more of a transformational leader. Leaders might use this data to establish personal growth plans, implement these plans for several months, video themselves leading, and seek additional coaching to improve their leadership approaches.

Districts need to intentionally develop transformational leaders who understand how to coach the members they supervise. Ideally, the entire organization—beginning with the superintendent and continuing throughout each successive level—would receive and provide coaching with feedback. Bass (1999) suggests individual coaching for leaders. Leaders are taught through regular coaching, professional development, feedback, and assessment of how to effectively lead teams (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006). If leaders engage in passive, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership, they need to be held accountable and proactively shift to transformational leadership approaches (Bass & Riggio, 2006)

To effectively grow leaders, the district culture must publicly support and honor intellectual stimulation, diversity of perspective, and ownership at all levels (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013). Bringing forward concerns and ideas on how to improve must be part of the district culture, communication systems, and team collaboration approach (Bass, 2000; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013).

As in all instruction, it is critical to have engaged learners who enjoy their learning and capably measure the effectiveness of their strategies. Learning organizations intentionally leverage the notion that *what gets measured gets done.* Adding *what is rewarding, engaging, and fun gets repeated* shifts the narrative and ownership to the team. Districts need transformational leaders who effectively lead diverse teams to be engaged learners who enjoy collaboration; these districts must be intentional with their approach, systems, and opportunities for leaders to learn (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2013; Edmondson et al., 2007; Jacobs & Park, 2009).

Discussion of the Results

This case study is not the beginning or the end of the discussion of how leaders can improve their practice; rather, this case study is a small piece of the complicated puzzle that both confirms and relies on existing transformational leadership and team learning research. While a single case study cannot provide all the answers for how leaders can improve their practice, this case study does offer what it claims to deliver, which are the insights and suggestions of ten P-12 administrative team members—five principals and five directors—that have implications for how leaders can improve their leadership of teams.

Implications for Practice. This case study is about learning: team learning, leaders learning, and organizational learning. Both the leaders and members are learners. Learners are at their best when they feel safe and are humble, engaged, motivated, and maintaining a learner mindset. For leaders to ensure the members benefit from team learning, the leader must be a learner that pauses, listens, reflects, learns, and continually improves their transformational leadership and team learning practices. The leader then must regroup and be intentional,

personally accountable to their team, reflective, implement the significant findings 3-8, and set the conditions for members to engage with the same type of learner mindset.

A crucial lesson learned from this case study is that leaders must reflect on how to improve their leadership. At some point every transformational leader missteps. Leaders benefit when they are humble, and seek feedback and advice from their members. Leaders can use the findings of this case study as a starting point to improve their team leadership. At the same time, leaders and districts should know that this study was never intended to have all the answers; instead, it begins the discussion with some ways to improve from the members' point-of-view. The implications of the case study will focus on both leaders and districts. The leader implications focus on pausing and being personally accountable, reflective, and having a learner mindset. The district implications center on hiring transformational leaders, creating supporting professional development, giving excellent leader feedback (including assessment and evaluation), and leveraging team learning across the system.

Leader Implication 1: Have personal accountability to the team. The success of the team is highly dependent upon the one thing leaders have the most control of: themselves. Leadership is not a thing the leader does, but rather an ongoing process of how the leader works with and interacts with the members on a continuing basis. Within the context of team learning and team development, the leader's approach, beliefs, and behavior have a significant impact on the success of the team (Brooks-Harris, 2005; Edmondson et al., 2007; Jansen et al., 2016). If the leader neglects, hinders, undermines any of the significant findings 3-8; or if the leader is incompetent, insecure, and or engages in destructive leadership; then the group will likely fail. If, however, leaders hold themselves accountable to being intentional, reflective, support significant findings 3-8, regularly use transformational leadership approaches, and they do not engage in

significant findings 9-16; then the group is more likely to flourish as a team that collaborates and learns together.

Since leaders may not have control over all the factors or district systems that impact the team, they must focus their efforts on what they need to do to improve their own leadership. To be personally accountable to the significant findings, the leader can set goals, ask for feedback and suggestions from the team, and or seek coaching around the significant findings. To delve deeper into any specific implication, insight, suggestion, and or area of needed improvement, reread chapters 2 and 4. Chapter 2's books and peer-reviewed leadership research studies are great resources to build more in-depth understanding.

While past leadership studies have concentrated on individual leadership development, more recent studies have focused on developing team leadership skills. These include developing supportive shared leadership, developing the leader's ability to use connections to improve collaboration, creating shared meaning within a team, identifying barriers and information to support the team within the culture of the organization, fostering positive tension within the culture of the organization and team, and building social capital within the team (Clarke, 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Mathieu, 2008). These themes from Clarke (2012), Edmondson et. al, (2007), and Mathieu (2008) echo the themes shared by the team members. When setting goals to help with personal accountability, leaders should delve deeper and focus the goals on improving their transformational leadership approaches and skills to implement the significant findings.

Knowing how the leader approaches every significant finding impacts the success of the team, they must be intentional and have the courage to accept this responsibility. The members shared why they believe leaders often do not implement the significant findings, and consistently cited fear as a root cause. Using the members' insights, the leader must have the courage to lean

into conflict and ensure that it is constructive. Leadership requires courage, reflection, ability to lead, self-confidence, humility, and a growth mindset. If any of these attributes are an area of needed growth, leaders can begin by setting personal goals. If leaders lack the courage to lead, the humility to be transformational, the will to hold themselves personally accountable, or the drive to improve their transformational leadership practices, then they should not lead teams.

Leader Implication 2: Be a reflective, transformational team leader. Leaders need to reflect on their beliefs, fears, personal confidence, blind-spots, areas of strength and needed growth, and personality; in this vein, they must be willing to slow down the process to fully engage in the difficult work of leading a team. To be successful, teams need:

- courageous leaders who will encourage healthy dialogue, discussion, and discourse so that constructive conflict can occur.
- leaders who are willing to go deep with the process and take the time needed to establish and foster a team.
- leaders who foster team learning rather than micromanage their members.
- leaders whose personal beliefs and approaches to transformational leadership support rather than hinder the team.
- leaders who are reflective of the impact of their beliefs on the team.
- leaders who continually reflect on their personal biases, blind-spots, and areas of growth.
- leaders who are self-confident with addressing their own fears.
- leaders who continually learn and grow their leadership.

If the leader is not able or willing to reflect and change any of their beliefs, attributes, fears, or approaches that hinder the team, then the leader should not lead teams.

Leader Implication 3: Approach team learning and transformational leadership with a learner mindset. In addition to examining personal beliefs and approaches, the leader must reflect on what they do not know, do not understand, or cannot do. The leader's incompetence, lack of experience, knowledge, abilities, or skills in how to lead teams are detrimental to teams. The direct implication for the leader is to seek opportunities to learn, gain experience, practice, improve their understanding and knowledge, seek feedback from side-by-side coaching, seek feedback from the team, use 360 transformational leadership feedback tools to reveal areas of needed growth, and continually hone their facilitation skills to support the team. Reading Senge's (2006) *The Fifth Discipline; Schools that Learn: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares About Education (2012);* and Bass & Riggio's *Transformational Leadership* (2006) are other great places to start learning how to lead teams. If the leader is not able or willing to continually improve their practice and learn how to be more effective, then they should not lead teams. Since incompetent leaders are detrimental to teams, if the leader's skills are not at the caliber needed to successfully lead, then they also should not lead teams.

District implications overview. It is up to the district to support and increase their number of effective leaders by hiring leaders from outside the district, as well as increasing the skills of current leaders within the district. Both the research literature and members said that team learning depends on the leader approaching leadership differently than in the past. Since the success of the team is directly connected to the beliefs, fears, confidence, blind-spots, personality, approach, knowledge, skills, and abilities of leaders, districts must intentionally hire, develop, assess, coach, evaluate, and support leaders to continually improve. Districts must also ensure that incompetent and insecure leaders have every opportunity to improve; if they do not

advance their skills and confidence, then they cannot be leaders. It is important to note that both the members and research indicate that there are destructive leaders who may not be willing or able to change. These destructive leaders cannot be allowed to lead, and their destructive leadership needs to be removed from school districts.

In addition to the approach of the leader, it is critical to remember that team learning is influenced by a variety of organizational factors, including the organization's context and culture, approaches to formal and informal learning, team development and the leader's approach, leadership development, information sharing, and a balance between conflict and cohesion (Bell et al., 2012; Clarke, 2012; Edmondson et al., 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2017;). Each factor has a significant impact on team learning and how leaders develop their leadership abilities. As each factor changes, the interactive dynamics and effectiveness of the team changes. Just as the interviews and focus groups suggested, intentional district approaches and systems can support the factors that impact teams, primarily how to help leaders improve.

Recommendations for improving practice focus on the district's support systems that can help leaders improve in ways that impact all the significant findings. These district implications are connected to the members' recommendations in chapter 4 and the research literature in chapter 2. The four implications include improving leader practices through

- focusing on and improving hiring practices,
- professional development and coaching,
- feedback, assessment of progress, accountability, and evaluation, and
- integrate and leverage team learning into the district goals, plans, and systems by setting up structures for diverse teams to collaborate and learn from one another.

District Implication 1: Be intentional when hiring transformational leaders and avoiding incompetent, insecure, and destructive leaders. The first district implication is that the district should be intentional with its recruiting and hiring practices when selecting district and principal administrators who will assume the role of leaders (and members). Human Resources departments should align their administrative internship process, recruiting, hiring, interview questions, reference check questions, and onboarding process with the qualities, attributes, and skills desired for leaders and members. Some of these vital qualities include: intentionality, self-reflection, humility, listener, strategic thinker, systems thinker, ability to manage time, engaged, the courage to question traditional approaches, a strong voice, a collaborative spirit, creative, committed, a growth mindset, continuous learner, and selflessness demonstrated by putting the goals of the team above individual ambition. The hiring practices should also determine *how* a leader leads including: individual vs. collective approach, transformational leadership approaches, what to be loose and tight on, willingness to let an initial idea go, empowering teams with ownership, ensuring all voices are included and honored, and encouraging constructive conflict when teams engage in collaboration and discourse. The reference check questions should also include the attributes, beliefs, and approaches that help and hinder teams. If the person doing the reference check discovers that the leader is incompetent, insecure, or has destructive leadership personalities or traits, then it is critical to dig deeper, so a detrimental leader is not accidentally hired.

District Implication 2: Be intentional when creating transformational team leader professional development. The second district implication is to align and improve professional development for leaders. The members shared ideas on how to improve the leaders' practices. These include focusing district professional development on how leaders can improve team

learning, having side-by-side coaching when leaders are leading teams, and connecting leaders with mentors who are effective team facilitators. Districts can establish leader PLCs and offer learning walks for leaders to observe each other, debrief their observations, and learn from one another. Leaders can better understand valuable team dynamics by using the elements of team learning with a team of effective leaders. Give the team the goal of figuring out how the district can help leaders to improve. As the team learns, the individual learns, and vice versa. This collective flow of ideas becomes organic in high-functioning teams. The district should use the best practices for professional development and adult learning to help leaders improve.

District Implication 3: Be intentional when aligning transformational leader feedback, assessment, accountability, and evaluation system. The third district implication is to help leaders sharpen their transformational leadership skills by aligning and improving supervisor feedback, external assessment of the leader's effectiveness, and evaluation. This implication could include a team meeting walk-through form with effective team leadership look-fors for feedback. In addition to feedback from supervisors, members feel that leaders should invite feedback from their own members. Similar to district professional development, the district should incorporate the best practices of feedback and observations and connect it to leading teams. For evaluation, the HR and Teaching and Learning departments can collaborate to create a crosswalk document with the Washington State TPEP evaluation rubric on how to engage teams with team learning. This document can focus on how leaders lead their teams for each evaluation criteria. Having this evaluation focus for leaders and members will reinforce the importance of professional development, side-by-side coaching, supervisor walkthrough feedback, observations, accountability, and evaluations. Another possibility for leadership development might be hiring external consultants to assess the district's team learning

effectiveness on a continuum of learning, with professional development recommendations and next steps.

District Implication 4: Be intentional when integrating and leveraging collaboration and team learning across the system. The fourth and final district implication is to integrate team learning with all the district goals, plans, and systems by setting up the structures that require teams to collaborate and learn from one another. Essentially, the district could start by working to break down department silos. When leaders' expertise and department level work is in isolation on part of the system, they are not able to improve the whole system. District leadership could begin to break down department silos by establishing benchmark goals requiring braided initiatives from multiple departments and school levels. Then align the department's goals, and establish teams connected to the braided initiatives. Connect team learning strategies into the district and school improvement plan strategies. Finally, focus leaders' and members' evaluations on the district braided initiatives' success rather than just their department's or school's success.

Although the members' insights are confirmed by prior research, it would be a mistake to assume that this case study's significant findings or implications are the only aspects that help leaders and district systems improve. There is undoubtedly a need for future research.

Recommendations for Future Research

This case study is neither the starting or ending point of the leader's journey to improve personal practice; it is merely focused on giving the leader the perspectives of members on how to sharpen team facilitation. Since this case study's focus is on how to help leaders improve their practice from the members' points of view, the research question is limited in its scope. The members' insights and suggestions influenced the implications; however, future research could

provide deeper meaning to their insights, recommendations, and implications. The need for future research is especially true for the district systems, insights, and suggestions that were *not* the primary focus of this case study. As a result, the following recommendations for future research might be beneficial to districts looking to increase the quantity and quality of leaders in their district.

The seventeenth significant finding surfaced in both the interviews and focus groups, even though it was unsolicited and not a focus of the research. Content has been added to the literature review to connect research literature to the additional significant finding and district implications. However, the focus of the district systems' support of the leader was not initially connected to the case study methods, nor was it the primary focus for this case study. If I had the opportunity to continue the research, I would build upon the case study significant finding 17. Therefore, my recommendation for future research is to gain the insights and suggestions from P-12 administration team members (principals and directors) that focus solely on the seventeenth significant findings' six system themes.

What are the insights and suggestions of a team of P-12 principals and district directors for how districts can improve their alignment, articulation, and coordination of to increase the effectiveness of transformational team leaders in the district?

- District systems need to be intentional when hiring transformational team leaders and to avoid incompetent, insecure, or destructive leaders.
- Districts need intentional and aligned professional development, team leader PLCs, team leader observations, and side-by-side coaching to help team leaders improve.
- Team leaders need feedback to improve their practices.

- Districts need systems for team leader accountability, evaluation, and dismissal of incompetent, insecure, or destructive leaders when necessary.
- Districts need to integrate team collaboration into district systems, goals, improvement plans, and approaches.
- Districts need to break down department silos by integrating district systems, goals, improvement plans, and increased collaboration between leaders within each department.

Afterword

This case study was born after I intentionally recruited a diverse group of proven, highly effective P-12 leaders. Our group's goal was to improve family partnerships. While I had high expectations for our results, I initially struggled to lead the group. When I read Senge's quote, it connected with my experience. "It cannot be stressed too much that team learning is a team skill. A group of talented individual learners will not necessarily produce a learning team, any more than a group of talented athletes will produce a championship sports team. Learning teams learn how to learn together" (Senge, 2006, page 240). I believed that this group could function like a dream team of highly effective administrators, but only if I could figure out how to lead it.

For our group of highly talented individual leaders to coalesce into a team, I needed to change my facilitation approach. Knowing I needed help before we could proceed, I visited each team member and asked questions to help me improve my facilitation. Had I not submitted myself to the members of the team, our team would have failed like so many others do. As I listened to members' insights and suggestions, I improved my leadership, and our diverse P-12 administrative team successfully focused on dialoguing and learning together as a team. Their initial insights and suggestions were so helpful in improving my leadership that I wanted to learn more from their perspectives.

As a result, I changed my dissertation topic from family partnerships to helping team leaders, like myself, improve our leadership to support team learning, thereby extending existing knowledge of how to lead teams. In the process, the members continued to help me—and one another—learn about leading teams. I hope that other leaders find these insights and suggestions as helpful for improving their leadership as I did. I cannot thank each member enough for sticking with me through a rocky start, for helping me learn, for their efforts to improve culturally responsive family partnerships, and for making this case study possible. Their words, insights, suggestions, and support have made me a better person and leader.

Appendix A:

Ranking of Themes

Rank order the following interview themes in order of importance from 1-5. (1 is most important. 5 is least important) Each member's ranking is listed below. The lower the number, the more the members saw it as more important.

Raw Data Rankings	**Average**	**Themes**
3, 3, 1, 2, 4, 5, 4, 1, 2, 2	2.7	Creating a team with members that have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths.
5, 4, 4, 1, 3, 1, 1, 3, 4, 1	2.7	Ensuring team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to goal.
1, 2, 5, 3, 1, 2, 2, 4, 3, 4	2.7	Creating safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contribution is valued.
4, 5, 3, 5, 5, 3, 3, 3, 5, 3	3.9	Using protocols, frameworks or structures to support collaboration.
2, 1, 2, 4, 2, 4, 5, 5, 1, 5	3.1	Empowering the team members with ownership to collaboratively create, rather than act as a sounding board or rubber stamp committee for decisions that are already made by the leader.

Appendix B:

Presentation of Results

Benefits of Teams Collaborating and Learning Together

Interview and Focus Group Results:

Sub-Theme: Improved the decision-making process and outcome	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Multiple understanding/skills/resources/ perspectives result in helping us see potential variables or solutions that may have been hidden.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (5/5)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (5/5)	10/10 agreed
Bouncing ideas off one another. Push one another's thinking	1, 2, 3 (3/5)	3, 5 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Strengths and Weaknesses (capitalize on people's strengths. One person's weakness can be another person's strength)	2, 3 (2/5)	1, 2 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Improves K-12 Articulation and Alignment of ideas/ systems/ process	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed
The result can be quality and quantity	1 (1/5)	2, 4 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Increased confidence in end product/decision due to increased vetting and perspectives working together.	(0/5)	3 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: Benefits to learning, climate, and organizational culture	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Learning from one another. More informed. Improve practice	1, 2 (2/5)	3, 5 (2/5)	10/10 agreed

Buy in	1, 2, 3 (3/5)	1, 3, 5 (3/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 clarified it is a byproduct
Feeling valued, heard, part of the process, and having a voice	1, 2, 3 (3/5)	2, 4, 5 (3/5)	10/10 agreed
Is engaging, fun to create, creates energy when people are sparking off one another when you are in the zone	1, 2, 3 (3/5)	3, 5 (2/5)	8/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed 1/10 clarified it is a byproduct
Creates collective purpose and accountability to team and goals	1, 3 (2/5)	2, 3 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Transparent	2 (1/5)	2 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 clarified if it is intentional

Creating the Team to Collaboratively Create

Interview Results:

Sub-Theme: **Be Strategic**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Be strategic/intentional on choosing members based on strengths	2, 5 (2/5)	1, 2 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Ensure members represent different roles, diversity, and perspectives	1, 2	1, 2, 4 (3/5)	10/10 agreed

	(2/5)		
Members with a vested interest in and ownership of the topic	2, 4, 5 (3/5)	1 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed 2/10 people wrote on the form: "you can gain ownership;" "can having people with no buy-in provide valuable perspective."
Members know why they are on the team	4 (1/5)	2 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: **Type of members**	**<u>Principal Respondents</u>**	**<u>Director Respondents</u>**	**<u>Agreed / Disagreed</u>**
Engaged	1, 2, 5 (3/5)	1, 2, 5 (3/5)	10/10 agreed
Courage to question traditional approaches. Have voice heard. Strong voices	2, 5 (2/5)	1, 5 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Collaborative	2, 5 (2/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Creative	1, 2, 5 (3/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Committed	1, 2, 5 (3/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Growth mindset/ learner	2, 5 (2/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Listener	2, 5	(0/5)	10/10 agreed

	(2/5)		
Selflessness. Put the goals of the team first before individual goals	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed

Focus Group Results:

While both focus groups discussed the theme, focus group 2 choose this theme as the first to discuss, whereas for focus group 1 it was the third theme discussed.

Why do you think some team leaders are not creating a team with members that have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths?

Theme: Easier	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Group Addressed**
Makes the process easier, even if the result is not as good	1 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus Group 1
Easy for the leader to pick people they know	3 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Both
Easy to pick early adopters that will go along with the Leader's ideas	3, 5 (2/5)	5 (1/5)	Both
The leader does not take the time to create a team intentionally	1, 3 (2/5)	1, 3 (2/5)	Focus Group 1

Theme: Fear, Conflict, and Lack of Confidence	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Group Addressed**
Fear of open feedback or critiques of Leader's ideas	3, 5 (2/5)	5 (1/5)	Both
Fear of conflict with members that are not like-minded or willing to push back and challenge ideas	1, 2, 5 (3/5)	2, 5 (2/5)	Both

Lack of confidence and courage around facilitation of the team that does not all agree	2 (2/5)	2, 5 (2/5)	Focus Group 2

Theme: **Racism, Prejudice, Bias, and or Blind Spot**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Group Addressed**
Do not lean in and embrace different perspectives	1, 5 (2/5)	5 (1/5)	Both
Do not value or respect differing perspectives and experiences	5 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus Group 2
Possible racism and prejudice of selecting members that are like you	5 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus Group 2

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about creating a team with members that have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths?

Theme: **Be strategic and intentional when selecting members**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Be strategic and figure out what perspectives, experiences, and strengths you need and which are missing on the team	2, 3, 4 (3/5)	5 (1/5)	Both
Seek out members with different perspectives, experiences, and strengths	2, 4 (2/5)	4, 5 (2/5)	Both
Take the time to talk to people to find out who should be on the team. Continue to ask questions and learn about potential members	2, 4 (2/5)	4 (1/5)	Both

Theme: **Seek members who will push back, but not destroy the culture of the team**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Seek out members who will push back but also work to improve ideas	1, 2, 3, 5 (4/5)	(0/5)	Both
Have mini conversations with potential members about the ideas to gauge interest and willingness to push back	1, 4 (2/5)	(0/5)	Both
Be intentional with members that create a team that will push back to make the idea better without destroying the culture of the team	2, 3, 5 (3/5)	1 (1/5)	Both
The leader should be honest with themselves and ask if they are willing to bring the naysayer onto the team to show where the pitfalls are	2, 5 (2/5)	4, 5 (2/5)	Both
For the naysayer, you do not want a saboteur; you want a person who is critical but willing to try to make it better	3, 5 (2/5)	(0/5)	Both

The Team has a Shared Sense of Purpose and Accountability to the Goal(s)

Interview Results:

Sub-Theme: **Benefits of having shared purpose and accountability**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Increases trust	3, 5 (2/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Allows safe space norms for collaboration	1, 3 (2/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Increases ownership and hard work	1, 3 (2/5)	3 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Allows for goal setting	1, 3, 5 (3/5)	3 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Helps to align the efforts and the work	3, 4 (2/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Keeps the group on track	5 (1/5)	3 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed
Allows the leader and members to be cheerleaders when things get hard	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed
Increases the team's willingness to take risks	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: **Risks of not having a shared purpose and accountability**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
The team can be in a state of confusion and chaos	1, 3 (2/5)	2 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 clarified
Members not understanding how the work will be beneficial	1, 3 (2/5)	3 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Members can get frustrated and decide to leave the group or the team failing	1, 3, 5 (3/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed

Focus Group Results:

While both focus groups discussed the theme, focus group 2 choose this theme as the third theme to discuss, whereas for focus group 1 it was the fourth theme discussed.

Why do you think some team leaders are not ensuring team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to goal?

Themes: **Leader's supervisor set the purpose**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader may have been given a predetermined directive from above. The process (how), product (what), the outcome, and what the problem may have been from above. This makes the process difficult.	3 (1/5)	2, 5 (2/5)	Both
Team and leader may not fully understand the problem they are trying to solve because it was given from above.	(0/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus Group 1 only

Themes: **The leader believes it is faster and easier to begin the work**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The team does not take the time to co-create purpose or understand the problem	1, 2 (2/5)	1, 3 (2/5)	Both
Easier to focus on what needs to be done, how the team is going to do it, and plow ahead.	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to ensure the team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to goal?

Theme: **Empower the team to co-create shared purpose**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**

Ensure leader has authority from their supervisor to have the team create a shared purpose. If the leader's supervisor has predetermined the purpose, that makes this process difficult.	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
If the leader needs the team to own it, then they need to take the time needed to co-create purpose, process, and product	2, 3 (2/5)	1, 3 (2/5)	Both
Need to focus on all of the themes if the team is to have a shared purpose	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
A shared purpose will increase if the team has ownership of shared purpose, feels empowered, and trusts the leader	2, 5 (2/5)	1, 4, 5 (3/5)	Both
Leader brings an initial idea, vision, or problem of practice to the team. Then encourages the team to push back on the ideas, initial vision and purpose until the team collectively create a shared purpose.	4, 5 (2/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Leader and team need to be comfortable with the messiness of structured chaos in the "grown zone" while creating shared purpose without rushing to solutions too quickly	1, 5 (2/5)	(0/5)	Both
Look at what the problem is, analyze the data, reflect, ask what is the problem of practice, what is the outcome we want to achieve, what is the final product, then create a common shared purpose.	3, 4 (2/5)	(0/5)	Both
Engage members to reflect and verbalize purpose. Then leader listens, take notes, and asks questions to support team as the establishes the shared purpose.	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Connect purpose to district goals and key performance indicators (KPI)	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
The leader uses visuals and data for the team to reflect on that increases a sense of purpose	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
The team needs to make progress and leader show team the progress being made	3 (1/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

Theme: **Accountability Strategies**	**<u>Principal Respondents</u>**	**<u>Director Respondents</u>**	**<u>Focus Groups Addressed</u>**
Shared accountability will increase if the team has ownership, feels empowered, and trusts the leader	2 (1/5)	1, 4, 5 (3/5)	Both
Need to focus on all of the themes if the team is to have a shared accountability	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader has to be in the right frame of mind and prepared to lead the team	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader should encourage members to push back on their ideas on how to hold one another accountable.	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Create and adhere to common agreements and norms	(0/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
Leader uses visuals and data for the team to reflect on to increase a sense of personal accountability	4, 5 (2/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Ensuring intentional time for team reflect and discuss progress on goals, progress, and next steps will increase accountability.	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Members and leader need an agreement to prepare for meetings, so meeting time is focused on discussion. Leader	(0/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

and members are coming to the table ready to go.			
Members and leader need to have the courage to follow through on shared accountability, including calling one another out	5 (1/5)	4 (1/5)	Both

Safe and trusting spaces where contributions, collaboration, and learning is valued and honored

Interview Results:

Sub-Theme: Feeling Safe	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Need to feel comfortable and safe with the leader and team. Climate is not rigid or stuffy.	1, 2 (2/5)	3, 5 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
The team needs to be able to feel vulnerable, fumble, and stumble with collaboration, new learning, creation, and admit when wrong, or they do not understand	2, 4, 5 (3/5)	3, 5 (2/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed
Need to feel safe enough to challenge the status quo, process, assumptions, and even leader	4 (1/5)	4 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 was unsure
Need patience with other members	1, 2, 5 (3/5)	3 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: Emotional Intelligence	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Leader and members need emotional intelligence	2 (1/5)	1, 3 (2/5)	9/10 agreed

			1/10 disagreed
Build relationships with one another	2, 4 (2/5)	3 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 was unsure
Being self-aware and aware of others	2 (1/5)	1 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Respect one another's differences	1, 2 (2/5)	5 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: **Feeling Valued and Honored**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Leader and team need to listen and be listened to	2, 3, 5 (3/5)	4, 5 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Feel contribution is truly needed, valued and honored	1, 2, 4, 5 (4/5)	2, 4, 5 (3/5)	10/10 agreed
Want to be there. Glad to be part of the team	2 (1/5)	2, 4 (2/5)	10/10 agreed

Focus Group Results:

While both focus groups discussed the theme, focus group 2 choose this theme as the fourth theme to discuss, whereas for focus group 1 it was the second theme discussed.

Why do you think some team leaders are not creating safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contribution is valued?

Theme: **Easier and Faster to Just Begin the Work**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**

The leader does not take the time to create safe and trusting spaces intentionally. Leaders rarely take the time necessary to make it successful. Time is always the enemy	1 (1/5)	1, 3, 5 (3/5)	Both
Leader assumes space is already safe and trusting and we need to move on	(0/5)	3 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
Easier and faster not to worry about it and get to work	1 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
There may be many new members, and it takes time to build relationships	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: **Does Not Know How**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader may not know what it looks like, or how to create a safe space, so they revert to using traditional meetings structures	3, 5 (2/5)	5 (1/5)	Both
In school districts, we rarely talk about social-emotional learning for adults.	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
It is challenging to lead both the process as well as the social-emotional environmental aspect. May not know how to find the balance between the two.	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: **Approach, Fear, Neglect, and or Does Not Challenge the Power Dynamics on the Team**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader created the team with members not willing to have their ideas critiqued, traditions or approaches	1 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only

challenged, or shift how their role can shift to support the issue.			
The leader might not want to hear real feedback or have members push back, so they create a hierarchy of the members, resulting in reduced trust and feeling of safety	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
Leader created a team with members who abuse their seniority, have hidden agendas, leverage their power dynamics, and or have dominant personalities that destroy the trust and safety of the team	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader does not hold members accountable when they abuse their seniority, have hidden agendas, leverage their power dynamics, and or have dominant personalities that destroy the trust and safety of the team	3 (1/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to create safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contribution is valued?

Theme: **Be reflective, transparent, and authentic**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader should reflect on their beliefs and actions about how they have created and hindered safe and trusting spaces	2, 5 (2/5)	(0/5)	Both
The leader should know who they are, how they relate to people and be authentic	2, 4 (2/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
The leader should be willing to be vulnerable publicly with their team	2, 5	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

	(2/5)		
Be transparent with the decision-making process and variables	3, 5 (2/5)	(0/5)	Both

Theme: **Be intentional when creating and building the team**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Pick members that will help create safe and trusting spaces	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
A group is not a team. The leader needs to spend the time needed to build a team. Spend time and effort to build the team and get to know one another to build trust among members	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
Know the members of their team and what works to create one team may not necessarily work for another team	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
Create subgroups on the team using personality tests, so leader and members know how to approach the person.	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: **Be intentional when creating and maintaining safe space**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Use a checklist for intentionally planning how you will create and maintain a safe space.	4, 5 (2/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Use protocols that focus on creating and maintaining a safe space.	2, 4, 5 (3/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Talk to people face to face if possible, so body language is part of the conversation.	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

While facilitating, continually check the social-emotional pulse of the group. Pause when needed and check in.	5 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Find the balance between leading process and social-emotional aspect.	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: Constructive Conflict, Disequilibrium and Leveraging Diverse Perspectives	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Improved decision making occurs when diverse teams engage in discussions that push boundaries and people out of their comfort zone into disequilibrium without destroying the team	1, 2, 3, 5 (4/5)	2, 5 (2/5)	Both
Leader and members need to create a safe space where the team can have constructive conflict and disequilibrium when discussing ideas to draw out the different and diverse ideas of the team.	1, 5 (2/5)	2, 5 (2/5)	Both
The leader should share with team that safe spaces do not always mean no conflict. This is not a norm for everyone's culture. Safe equaling no conflict is a white norm.	5 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Frontload the experience and teach team what constructive conflict looks like so the team knows when it is occurring.	1 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
Leader's confidence, trust in the team, members trust in the leader, and trusting one another, increases the ability to have effective constructive conflict and disequilibrium when collaborating	5 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
The leader needs courage and strong facilitation skills when the team is engaging in constructive conflict to help the team not become combative.	(0/5)	2 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

The leader needs to refocus group to the solution if things get combative.	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: **Encourage reflection, discourse, and the challenging status quo**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Leader and members have to encourage open discourse that challenges ideas, traditions, and the system	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
Members and leader need time to reflect and come back into the discussion with higher level thinking	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
Theme: **Hold team members accountable to the safe space**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Create and adhere to common agreements, norms, or emotional intelligence charter to support safe space.	(0/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
Front load the experience. Explain what that the conflict will happen, what it might sound like so when it does the leader, or members can call it out because we all knew it was going to happen.	1 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader needs to call out and address seniority, hidden agendas, power dynamics, and dominant personalities to ensure the team is a safe place for collaboration and learning. Then hold the members accountable.	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

Collaboration and learning is supported by process protocols, frameworks and or structure

Interview Results:

Sub-Theme: Collaboration Protocols Support Facilitation	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
The leader needs to facilitate process/structure, not content. The leader cannot do both.	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 questioned
Strong facilitation, but an open outcome	(0/5)	1 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed
Leaders should either seek out facilitators to help with process or search resources for process online.	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed
The structure can help hold members accountable	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Can be differentiated based on choice or strength	(0/5)	1 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Having a timeline with steps for the process	(0/5)	2 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Having an agenda with the goals of each meeting is important	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: Collaboration Protocols and Ownership	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Intentional frameworks or structure encourage discourse and ownership.	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
The framework should be the perspective, purpose, and why — the skeleton. The team builds the rest.	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed

Models can help with a sense of purpose and direction	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
The process should be tight; the content should be team created.	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
The structure should encourage ownership, creativity, discussion from multiple perspectives	2 (1/5)	1 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
The structure needs to let members be themselves	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: **Results of Lack of Collaboration Protocols**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Some people are not comfortable with messy organic processes	1, 5 (2/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
The process should be set up with the vision, mission, and end goal in mind	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Without a process, the result can be confusion, frustration, and members leaving the group	3, 5 (2/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: **Risk of Over Structuring Collaboration Protocols**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Framework / Structure should not lead to a predetermined outcome	2, 3, 5 (3/5)	1, 4 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Sometimes leaders create protocols that are safer for themselves, but these protocols do not get the results from the team that is necessary.	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
The structure should not look like mad libs. Do not over structure.	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10

			disagreed
If the structure results in people not feeling heard, valued, or part of decision making, then you over structured.	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Focus Group Results:

While both focus groups discussed the theme, focus group 2 choose this theme as the fifth theme to discuss, whereas for focus group 1 it was the first theme discussed.

Why do you think some team leaders are not using protocols, frameworks or structures to support collaboration?

Theme: Lack of experience or knowledge of how to use them	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader may not know how they intend to facilitate the team. This can impact the facilitation strategies.	4, 5 (2/5)	2 (1/5)	Both
May not have experience or comfort facilitating team learning using protocols, frameworks, or structures	3 (1/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
How to be a leader and facilitate team learning is not taught to leaders. They do not know how.	5 (1/5)	1, 4 (2/5)	Both
The leader does not take the time to learn or use protocols, frameworks, or structures.	1 (1/5)	1, 3 (2/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader may not have had an authentic team learning experience as a staff member or as a leader before leading the team	3 (1/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader may only know to use one strategy, or they use one strategy and overuse that one strategy	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only

Theme: **Use is impacted by beliefs or personality of leader**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader may not have self-assessed their core values and their purpose for the work. This can impact the facilitation strategies.	4, 5 (2/5)	2 (1/5)	Both
The leader may come with a preconceived notion of what they want the outcome to be and or predetermine the outcome. Both will result in ineffective facilitation.	(0/5)	2 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader may prefer a specific type of learning, for example, if the leader likes constructivist approaches and only uses that approach	(0/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader may not like protocols, frameworks, or structures for collaboration	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to use protocols, frameworks or structures to support collaboration?

Theme: **Incorporate Reflection Time for Deeper Thinking**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Protocols, frameworks or structures need to push people's thinking into a deeper level beyond brainstorming. Time to reflect and come back into the discussion to bounce ideas and get to higher level thinking	5 (1/5)	4, 5 (2/5)	Both

Ensure protocol is safe and includes everyone's voice	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
The framework should be in the form of a significant question to increase discourse and collaboration	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: **Be Intentional when Using Protocols, Frameworks, or Structure**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Align protocol/framework/structure to support the goal or purpose	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Ensure the protocol/framework/structure has elements of equity built in	5 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Encourage the members to choose topics and possibly protocols and incorporate those into a collaboration.	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

The team has ownership to collaboratively create, not act as a sounding board or rubber stamp committee

Interview Results:

Sub-Theme: **Better Outcomes**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Results in better outcomes with different members' perspectives and building upon one another strengths	1, 3, 5 (3/5)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (5/5)	10/10 agreed
The leader needs to check their values and ask are they open to collaboration or do they just want people to agree with them.	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Although the process takes more time, the impact is much greater	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Results in learning from one another's perspective and experience	1, 2, 3 (3/5)	2 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Sounding board process rarely changes the outcome.	1, 3 (2/5)	4 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed with clarification that it is needed.
Sounding boards or predetermined outcome results in members in not attending meetings or quitting the team	1, 2, 3 (3/5)	4 (1/5)	10/10 agreed

Sub-Theme: **How members feel**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Agreed / Disagreed**
Results in feeling ownership	1, 3, 5 (3/5)	1, 4, 5 (3/5)	10/10 agreed
Members feel valued, respected, and trusted	2, 3, 5 (3/5)	(0/5)	10/10 agreed
Helps to build relationships between members	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Creating is more enjoyable and results in engaged members	1, 3 (2/5)	1, 5 (2/5)	10/10 agreed
Results in an energized team	2, 3 (2/5)	1 (1/5)	10/10 agreed
Members feel respected when creating. Sounding board or rubber stamp committee approach feels belittling.	1, 2, 3 (3/5)	4 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed

Sounding board or predetermined outcome shuts members down.	2, 3 (2/5)	4 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 disagreed
Sounding board or predetermined outcome shuts down trust	2, 3 (2/5)	4 (1/5)	9/10 agreed 1/10 questioned is there a time sounding boards are ok if you are open to feedback.

Focus Group Results:

While both focus groups discussed the theme, focus group 2 choose this theme as the second theme to discuss, whereas for focus group 1 it was the fifth theme discussed.

Why do you think some team leaders are not empowering the team members with ownership to collaboratively create, and instead are created a sounding board or rubber stamp committee for decisions that are already made by the team leader?

Theme: **Easier and Faster to Just to Get the Work Done**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader does not take the time to empower members.	1 (1/5)	1, 3 (2/5)	Focus group 1 only

It is faster to check the box and get it done	1 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only

Theme: **Ownership is Impacted by Beliefs and Experience of the Leader**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader may not have seen how it can be done differently	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Leader follows the norms of the district.	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Leader believes that they are the expert and it should look the way they would do it.	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
The leader may believe meetings should be top-down and leader is the sage on the stage.	2 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: **The Leader's Fear Impacts Ownership**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Some leaders may think they should have all the answers and that they should tell the team what they need to do and how to do it. They do not want to look weak.	1 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Both
The leader may not be comfortable with things being messy	1 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Both

Theme: **Leader has a Predetermined Process, Outcome or Product**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Leader goes in with an idea of how they want it done or wants the product to look a certain way.	(0/5)	1, 3 (2/5)	Focus group 1 only

The leader may be a perfectionist and feels the work of the team is not quite the way the leader wants it.	(0/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
The leader may have done so much preliminary work or legwork to get the team up and going, that the leader may be married to an idea that they are unwilling to let go of when leading the team.	(0/5)	2 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to empower the team members with ownership to collaboratively create, rather than act as a sounding board or rubber stamp committee for decisions that are already made by the team leader?

Theme: **Ownership to Create is the Foundation of the Team's Success**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
This theme is the foundation for all the themes that support authentic team learning.	1 (1/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
It is critical for the success of the entire team. Without empowerment, the momentum of the team stops.	5 (1/5)	4 (1/5)	Both

Theme: **Facilitate Process, Trust the Team, Do not Micromanage, and Let Go of Predetermined Outcomes**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Requires the leader to have trust in the team and solid facilitation skills	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

Let go of trying to control the outcome and facilitate to make initial idea or vision better	4 (1/5)	4 (1/5)	Both
Need to be upfront and transparent as to what the variables and conditions are as well as the decision-making process	3 (1/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

Theme: **Be self-reflective and strategic about ownership**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The leader needs to be humble.	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
Go and find out what ownership to collaboratively create looks like, then connect with the role models that are doing this well.	(0/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
The leader should have a coach to bounce their ideas off of throughout the facilitation process. For example, if the team is at a certain point and the process is taking a turn that is not quite what leader had in mind, the coach can help leader refocus their thinking or perspective as a facilitator.	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
Be intentional and set up team time to get messy, collaborate, learn and have ownership.	1 (1/5)	1, 3, 5 (3/5)	Both
Have a general big picture vision. Turn it over to the team to improve and figure out how to get there. Leaders' initial vision is the starting point, not the ending point.	4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
It should be the easiest of all the themes because it is just about the beliefs of the leader, not anyone else.	(0/5)	4 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only

District approaches and systems to increase the number of effective team leaders

Theme: **District intentional hiring of leaders**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
District hiring needs to reflect on their strengths and areas of growth needed. Then be intentional when hiring leaders who will bring the team to the next level of where we need to go as a district.	3 (0/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
It is critical that the district hire effective leaders with the skills, beliefs, growth mindset, and attributes the district needs in leaders	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
Districts need to hire leaders with diverse perspectives, strengths, skills, and abilities to lead a team	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Ensure there are opportunities for new and veteran leaders get to know one another. Part of professional development and onboarding experience.	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: **District Professional Development, Leader PLCs, Observations, and Side-by-Side Coaching to help Leaders Improve**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
All leaders (principals, assistant principals, district leadership) need intentional professional development for leaders to build knowledge, understanding, and abilities that improve team learning.	1, 3, 4 (2/5)	1, 4 (1/5)	Both
Focus leader professional development on standards for collaboration.	3, 4 (2/5)	(0/5)	Both

Professional development opportunities should leverage the strengths of the leaders in the room.	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Professional development cannot be sit and get, leaders need the opportunity to experience team learning with one another like a leader PLC	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Professional development where leaders engage with the themes of teams collaborating and learning together also helps solidify the team and help new and veteran leaders get to know one another.	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Professional development and coaching opportunities should be differentiated to what each leader needs to grow.	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Leaders need observations of them leading a team with intentional feedback and coaching to help the leader improve.	1, 3 (2/5)	1, 3 (2/5)	Focus group 1 only
Leaders need in the moment side-by-side coaching to improve facilitation in a safe space to learn, try, fail, try again, what is working, what is not, and build skill set capacity.	1 (1/5)	1, 4 (2/5)	Focus group 1 only
Leaders should be authentic and reflective of their personality, experience, or beliefs. Differentiated coaching should build on these strengths of the leader.	2, 4 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
It is better for the leader to take a shot at new professional development learning, blow it, and come back and try again. People think things should be done right all the time and that prevents us from taking risks as leaders.	2, 4 (2/5)	4 (1/5)	Both

Theme: **Seek Out 360 Degree Feedback to Improve**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
Ask members of the team that have been facilitators to sit with you and give feedback on facilitation after meetings	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
Ask for quick feedback from the whole team on facilitation of the team	3 (1/5)	1 (1/5)	Focus group 1 only
Having a group of leaders (like a leader PLC) that the leader could meet with regularly and discuss suggestions and bounce ideas off to improve	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only

Theme: **District leader accountability, evaluation, and dismissal if necessary**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
If the leaders are not able to lead or improve due to fear, bias, beliefs, ineffective approaches, then the evaluator needs to evaluate them out of the district	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
Leaders not engaging in team learning with one another or their team can be a signal of the mindset or approach that the leader does not have a collaborative leadership mindset.	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
If the leaders are not effective, then the district needs to support them. If they do not improve, then they need to go.	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Theme: **Integrate team collaboration into district systems, goals, improvement plans, and approaches**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The district should integrate team collaboration into the district systems,	3, 5	(0/5)	Both

goals, improvement plans, and approaches	(1/5)		
District leadership cannot assume team learning occurs if it is not intentionally built into the system and processes of the district.	5 (1/5)	5 (1/5)	Focus group 2 only
District systems, goals, benchmarks, need to use data to create a sense of urgency and help for teams to align the work, collaborate, learn, and improve.	5 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

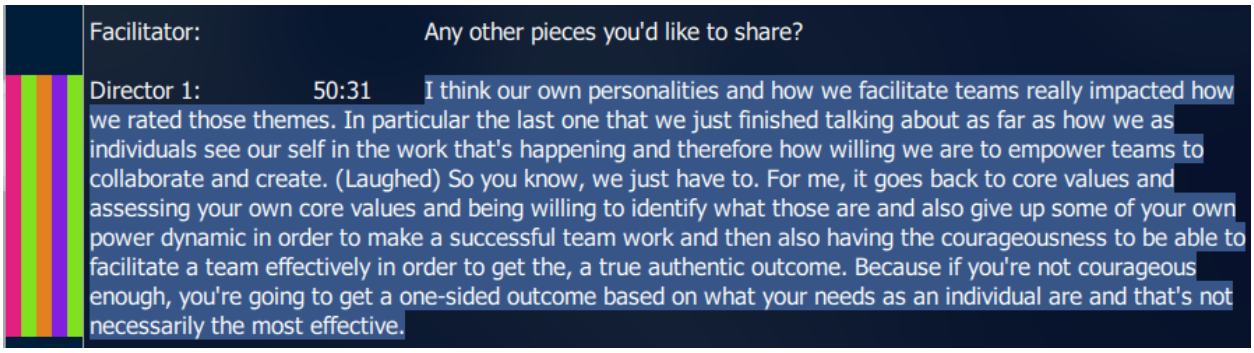
Theme: **District needs to break down silos by integrating district systems, goals, improvement plans, and approaches**	**Principal Respondents**	**Director Respondents**	**Focus Groups Addressed**
The district needs to break apart district silos by braiding district goals, systems, approaches, evaluation of directors connected to success the team on meeting the new braided collaborative goals.	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
District silos can be a significant barrier to team learning. Departments can be very territorial because of recognition for their own department, rather than focusing on the bigger picture goal of kids.	2, 3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
Benchmarks need to require collaboration between departments. Also, collaboration with schools so the end goal has members with perspectives from different departments and school level working on solutions.	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
District leaders need to be acknowledged for excellence that came from team collaboration, not individual departments efforts only.	3 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 1 only
District silos are more likely to be broken up if the leader at the heads of each silo are humble, collaborative, and engage with	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

other departments.			
The fewer intentionally planned opportunities for leaders of each department to collaborate and learn from one another, the higher and stronger the silos grow, and the harder it is to break the silos down. Need regular, intentional collaboration on common goals between the leaders of each silo so the silos will disappear.	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only
The leader of each silo needs to build trust with one another. Collaborating and working together can help the leaders get to know one another better, build relationships, and build the trust needed to collaborate and engage in shared leadership.	2 (1/5)	(0/5)	Focus group 2 only

Appendix C:

Typical Example of the Coding

(Simultaneous Coding, Values Coding, Holistic Coding, and Narrative Coding)



Appendix D:

Quirkos Coding Report by Sources Summary. Length and Number of Quotes per Participant

Individual Interviews

Sources Summary

Title	Author	Date and Time	Length	Quotes #
District 1	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:05:52 PM	13810	24
Pricnipal 5	Josh Zarling	Nov 11, 2018 6:38:46 PM	22387	37
District 2	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:06:04 PM	10905	26
Principal 4	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:09:16 PM	13388	27
District 3	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:06:47 PM	8299	15
District 4	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:07:26 PM	13590	27
Principal 3	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:08:55 PM	23530	61
Principal 2	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:08:41 PM	28379	53
District 5	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:07:42 PM	13692	24
Principal 1	Josh Zarling	Nov 4, 2018 5:08:09 PM	21264	19

Focus Group

Sources Summary

Title	Author	Date and Time	Length	Quotes #
Focus Group 1 (11/21/18)	Josh Zarling	Nov 21, 2018 10:55:47 PM	48112	182
Focus Group 2 12/3/18	Josh Zarling	Dec 4, 2018 11:05:02 PM	74500	102

Appendix E:

Quirkos Report of Number of Quotes per Theme

Individual Interviews

Quirks Summary

Quirkos

Quirk Title	Parent	Grandparent	Description	Author	Date	Total Codes
Creating the team				Josh Zarling	Oct 22, 2018 8:58:34 PM	29
Frameworks and structures to increase collaboration				Josh Zarling	Oct 16, 2018 11:23:02 PM	35
Use of technology for collaboration	Frameworks and structures to increase collaboration			Josh Zarling	Oct 16, 2018 11:07:22 PM	4
Differentiate for the team	Frameworks and structures to increase collaboration			Josh Zarling	Oct 16, 2018 11:07:41 PM	6
Collaborative Team with Ownership vs Rubber Stamp Committee				Josh Zarling	Oct 16, 2018 11:23:28 PM	67
Benefits of Team Learning and Collaboration				Josh Zarling	Oct 27, 2018 9:04:27 AM	38
Feeling Valued/ Having Purpose	Benefits of Team Learning and Collaboration			Josh Zarling	Oct 16, 2018 11:24:03 PM	45
Safe Place /Trust	Feeling Valued/ Having Purpose	Benefits of Team Learning and Collaboration		Josh Zarling	Oct 16, 2018 11:06:58 PM	45
Clear Purpose	Feeling Valued/ Having Purpose	Benefits of Team Learning and Collaboration		Josh Zarling	Oct 22, 2018 7:19:13 PM	26
Silos	Benefits of Team Learning and Collaboration			Josh Zarling	Oct 16, 2018 11:08:54 PM	18
TOTAL NUMBER OF CODES						**313**
TOTAL NUMBER OF QUIRKS						**10**

Focus Group

Quirks Summary

Quirkos

Quirk Title	Parent	Grandparent	Description	Author	Date	Total Codes
Benefits of Collaboration and Learning				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:32 AM	15
Ownership Why Not				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:20 AM	23
Ownership How				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:17 AM	41
Safe and Trusted Why Not				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:22 AM	19
Safe and Trusted How				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:25 AM	37
Creating Team Why Not				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:28 AM	14
Creating Team How				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 10:58:32 AM	27
Shared Purpose/Accountability Why Not				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:35 AM	12
Shared Purpose/ Accountability How				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:38 AM	37
Protocol, Framework, Process Why Not				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:05 AM	16
Protocol, Framework, Process How				Josh Zarling	Nov 22, 2018 11:00:08 AM	43
TOTAL NUMBER OF CODES						**284**
TOTAL NUMBER OF QUIRKS						**11**

Appendix F:

Interview Themes Shared with Focus Group.

Before the focus group, the members read over the interview themes from their interviews. They then made check marks for any sub-theme they disagreed with. The numbers next to each sub-theme represent the number of interviewees that talked about each sub-theme.

Interview Themes

Benefits of Teams Collaborating and Learning Together

- Multiple understanding/skills/resources/ perspectives result in helping us see potential variables or solutions that may have been hidden. (9)
- Learning from one another. More informed. Improve practice (4)
- Bouncing ideas off one another. Push one another's thinking (5)
- Strengths and Weaknesses (Capitalize on people's strengths. One person's weakness can be another person's strength.) (4)
- Buy in (5)
- Feeling valued, heard, part of the process, having a voice (5)
- Authentic participation in decision making
- Improves K-12 Articulation and Alignment of ideas/ systems/ process (1)
- Increased confidence in end product/ decision due to increased vetting and perspectives working together. (1)
- The result can be quality and quantity. (2)
- Creates collective purpose
- Is engaging, fun to create, creates energy when people are sparking off one another when you are in the zone (6)
- Transparent (2)

Creating the Team to Collaboratively Create

- Be strategic/intentional on choosing members based on strengths (4)
- Ensure members represent different roles, diversity, and perspectives (5)
- Members with ownership of the topic (4)
- Members know why they are on the team (2)

Characteristics of Members

- Engaged (6)
- Committed (3)
- Growth mindset/ learner (2)
- Collaborative (3)
- Creative (3)

- Listener (2)
- Courage to question traditional approaches. Have voice heard. Strong voices (4)
- Selflessness. Put the goals of the team first before individual goals: (1)

The Team has a Shared Sense of Purpose and Accountability to the Goal(s)

Benefits of having shared purpose and accountability:

- Increases trust (2).
- Allows safe space norms for collaboration (2).
- Increases ownership and hard working hard (3).
- Allows for goal setting (4).
- Helps to align the efforts and the work (2).
- Keeps the group on track (2).
- Allows the team leader and members to be cheerleaders when things get hard (1).
- Increases the team's willingness to take risks (1).

Risks of not having shared purpose and accountability:

- The team can be in a state of confusion and chaos (3).
- Members not understanding how the work will be beneficial (3).
- Members can get frustrated and decide to leave the group or the team failing (3)

Safe and trusting spaces where contributions, collaboration, and learning is valued and honored

Safe and Trusting Space

- Need to feel comfortable and safe with the team leader and team. Climate is not rigid or stuffy (4)
- Need to be able to feel vulnerable, fumble, and stumble with collaboration, new learning, creation, and admit when wrong or you don't understand (5)
- Need to feel safe enough to challenge the status quo, process, assumptions, and even team leader (2)
- Need patience with other team members (4)

Emotional Intelligence

- Team leader and members need emotional intelligence (3)
- Build relationships with one another (3)
- Being self-aware and aware of others (2)
- Respect one another's differences (3)

Feeling Valued and Honored

- Team leader and team need to listen and be listened to (5)
- Feel contribution is truly needed, valued and honored (7)
- Want to be there. Glad to be part of the team (3)

Collaboration and learning is supported by process protocols, frameworks and or structure

Collaboration Protocols Support Facilitation

- The team leader needs to facilitate process/structure, not content. The team leader cannot do both. (1)

- Strong facilitation, but be open outcome (1)
- Team leaders should either seek out facilitators to help with process or search resources for process online. (1)
- The structure can help hold members accountable (1)
- Can be differentiated based on choice or strength (1)
- Having a timeline with steps for the process (1)
- Having an agenda with the goals of each meeting is important (1)

Collaboration Protocols and Ownership

- Intentional frameworks or structure encourage discourse and ownership. (1)
- The framework should be the perspective, purpose, and why. The skeleton. The team builds the rest. (1)
- Models can help with sense of purpose and direction (1)
- The process should be tight; content should be team created. (1)
- The structure should encourage ownership, creativity, and discussion from multiple perspectives (2)
- The structure needs to let members be themselves (1)

Results of Lack of Collaboration Protocols

- Some people are not comfortable with messy organic processes (3)
- The process should be set up clearly with the vision, mission, and end goal in mind. (1)
- Without a process, the result can be confusion, frustration, and members leaving the group (3)

Risk of Over Structuring Collaboration Protocols

- Framework / Structure should not lead to a predetermined outcome (5)
- Sometimes team leaders create protocols that are safer for them, but do not get the results from the team that are necessary. (1)
- The structure should not look like mad libs. Do not over structure (1)
- If structure results in people not feeling heard, valued, or part of decision making, then you over structured (1)

The team has ownership to collaboratively create, not act as a sounding board or rubber stamp committee

Better Outcomes

- Results in better outcomes with different team members' perspectives and building upon one another strengths (8)
- The team leader needs to check their own values and ask are they really open to collaboration or do they just want people to agree with them. (1)
- The process takes more time, but the impact is much greater (1)
- Results in learning from one another's perspective and experience (5)
- Sounding board process rarely changes the outcome. (3)
- Sounding boards or predetermined outcome results in members in not attending meetings or quitting the team (4)

How team members feel:

- Results in feeling ownership (6)
- Team members feel valued, respected, and trusted (3)
- Helps to build relationships between team members (1)
- Creating is more enjoyable and results in engaged team members (4)
- Results in the team being energized (3)
- Team members feel respected when creating. Sounding board or rubber stamp committee approach feels belittling (4)
- Sounding board or predetermined outcome shuts members down. (3)
- Sounding board or predetermined outcome shuts down trust (3)

Appendix G:

Focus Group Question Sheet

What would you want future team leaders to know about the benefits of teams collaborating and learning together?

Why do you think some team leaders are not doing the following?

What suggestions would you give future team leaders about how to do the following?

Rank order the following interview themes in order of importance from 1-5

- _____ creating a team with members that have different perspectives, experiences, and strengths.
- _____ ensuring team members have a shared sense of purpose and accountability to goal.
- _____ creating safe and trusting spaces for collaboration where the team members feel their contribution is valued.
- _____ using protocols, frameworks or structures to support collaboration.
- _____ empowering the team members with ownership to collaboratively create, rather than act as a sounding board or rubber stamp committee for decisions that are already made by the team leader.

Appendix H:

Leadership Functions and Team Interaction Dynamics Chart (Zaccaro et al., 2008)

Team Leadership Functions and Team Interaction Dynamics

Team Leadership Functions	Team Interaction Dynamics
Direction setting • Environmental scanning • Sense making • Planning • Sense giving Managing team operations • Staffing the team • Calibrating member roles to task requirements • Facilitating the development of team communication structures, norms, roles, and performance expectations • Monitoring team actions and providing feedback • Aligning team actions with environmental contingencies • Procuring team resources • Communicating information about the team to external constituencies • Acting as a communication buffer between external constituencies and team members Developing team's leadership capacity • Developing member leader expertise • Coaching shared direction setting • Coaching team planning and role assignment • Coaching collective information processing	Team goal processes • Transition • Mission analysis • Goal specification • Strategy formulation • Action • Monitoring progress toward goals • Systems monitoring • Backup behaviors • Coordination • Interpersonal • Conflict management • Motivation and confidence building • Affect management Team emergent states • Cognitive • Shared mental models • Motivational • Cohesion • Trust • Collective efficacy • Affective Team development • Emergence of collective identity • Norm development • Member skill acquisition • Growth in self-management skills and leader expertise

Appendix I:

Destructive Leadership "Dark Side" Personality Traits (Kaiser and Craig, 2014)

Destructive Leadership in and of Organizations

Table 13.1. An Integrative Summary of Dark Side Personality Traits and Measurement Scales

		Measurement Scales		
Axis-II Dimension	**Analogous dark side tendencies among normal adults**	**Hogan & Hogan (2001)**	**Moscosco & Salgado (2004)**	**Schmit, Kilm, & Robie (2000)**
Borderline	Moody; intense but short-lived enthusiasm for people, projects, and things; hard to please.	Excitable	Ambivalent	
Avoidant	Reluctant to take risks for fear of being rejected or negatively evaluated.	Cautious	Shy	
Paranoid	Cynical, distrustful, and doubtful of others' true intentions.	Skeptical	Suspicious	Intimidating[1]

Schizoid	Aloof, and uncommunicative; lacking awareness and care for others' feelings.	Reserved	Lone	Intimidating[1]
Passive-Aggressive	Casual; ignoring people's requests and becoming irritated or excusive if they persist.	Leisurely	Pessimistic	Passive-Aggressive
Narcissism	Extraordinarily self-confident; grandiosity and entitlement; overestimation of capabilities.	Arrogant	Egocentric	Ego-Centered
Antisocial	Enjoy taking risks and testing limits; manipulative, deceitful, cunning, and exploitive.	Mischievous	Risky	Manipulation

Histrionic	Expressive, animated, and dramatic; wanting to be noticed and the center of attention.	Colorful	Cheerful	
Schizotypal	Acting and thinking in creative but sometimes odd or unusual ways.	Imaginative	Eccentric	
Obsessive-Compulsive	Meticulous, precise, and perfectionistic; inflexible about rules and procedures.	Diligent	Reliable	Micro-Managing
Dependent	Eager to please; dependent on the support and approval of others; reluctant to disagree with others, especially authority figures.	Dutiful	Submitted	

Appendix J:

The 'dark side' of leadership personality and transformational leadership: An exploratory study (Khoo, & Burch, 2008)

Table 1
Overlapping themes from HDS and DSM-IV, Axis 2 personality disorders

DSM-IV personality disorders	HDS themes
Borderline Inappropriate anger; unstable and intense relationships alternating between idealization and devaluation.	*Excitable* Moody and hard to please; intense but short-lived enthusiasm for people, projects, or things.
Paranoid Distrustful and suspicious of others; motives are interpreted as malevolent.	*Skeptical* Cynical, distrustful, and doubting others' true intentions.
Avoidant Social inhibition, feelings of inadequacy, and hypersensitivity to criticism or rejection.	*Cautious* Reluctant to take risks for fear of being rejected or negatively evaluated.
Schizoid Emotional coldness and detachment from social relationships; indifferent to praise and criticism.	*Reserved* Aloof, detached and uncommunicative; lacking interest in or awareness of the feelings of others.
Passive-aggressive[a] Passive resistance to adequate social and occupational performance; irritated when asked to do something he/she does not want to do.	*Leisurely* Independent; ignoring people's requests and becoming irritated or argumentative if they persist.
Narcissistic Arrogant and haughty behaviours or attitudes; grandiose sense of self-importance and entitlement.	*Bold* Unusually self-confident; feelings of grandiosity and entitlement; over-valuation of one's capabilities.
Antisocial Disregard for the truth; impulsivity and failure to plan ahead; failure to conform with social norms.	*Mischievous* Enjoying risk taking and testing the limits; needing excitement; manipulative, deceitful, cunning and exploitive.
Histrionic Excessive emotionality and attention seeking; self-dramatizing, theatrical, and exaggerated emotional expression.	*Colorful* Expressive, animated and dramatic; wanting to be noticed and needing to be the center of attention.
Schizotypal Odd beliefs or magical thinking; behaviour or speech that is odd, eccentric, or peculiar.	*Imaginative* Acting and thinking in creative and sometimes odd or unusual ways.
Obsessive-compulsive Preoccupations with orderliness, rules, perfectionism, and control; over-conscientious and inflexible.	*Diligent* Meticulous, precise and perfectionistic, inflexible about rules and procedures; critical of others' performance.
Dependent Difficulty making everyday decisions without excessive advice and reassurance; difficulty expressing disagreement out of fear of loss of support or approval.	*Dutiful* Eager to please and reliant on others for support and guidance; reluctant to take independent action or to go against popular opinion.

Appendix K:

Example of Protocol to Help Define the Problem Prior to Dialog or Discussion

Peeling the Onion from http://schoolreforminitiative.org/doc/peeling_onion.pdf	
Purpose:	To provide a structured way to develop an appreciation for the complexity of a dilemma in order to avoid the inclination to start out by "solving" the problem before it has been fully defined.
Details:	This takes approximately 40 minutes and is best done in a group of 10 to 12 members.
Facilitation Tips	Most of us are eager to solve dilemmas before we truly understand their depth. This protocol is designed to help us peel away the layers in order to address the deeper issues that lie underneath the surface. If the dilemma were easy to solve, it would not still be a concern to the presenter. The facilitator should keep to the steps and gently remind people when they are giving advice too early.
Steps:	1. The keeper of the dilemma describes the problem/dilemma and asks a question to help focus the group's responses. (5 minutes) 2. Clarifying questions from group members to the presenter — these must be purely informational (3 minutes) 3. A series of rounds begins in which each participant speaks to the same prompt. During the rounds the presenter remains silent and takes notes. Facilitator may choose to repeat a round if new responses seem to be emerging. Prompts (in order)

	• "What I heard [the presenters} say is …" • "One assumption that seems to be part of the dilemma is…," or, "One thing I assume to be true about this problem is …" • "A question this raises for me is…" (See Pocket Guide to Probing Questions) • "Further questions this raises for me are…" (If needed) • "What if…?" Or, "Have we thought about…?" Or, "I wonder…?" 4. Presenter reviews her/his notes and reflects aloud on what she/he is learning. (The group members are silent and take notes.) 5. If the presenter desires, then engage in this step: Now What? Together, the presenter and participants talk about the possibilities and options that have surfaced. 6. Debrief the process. How was this like peeling an onion? What about the process was useful? Frustrating? Interesting?
Protocols are most powerful and effective when used within an ongoing professional learning community and facilitated by a skilled facilitator. To learn more about professional learning communities and seminars for facilitation, please visit the School Reform Initiative website at www.schoolreforminitiative.org.	

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