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**STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES OF A CATHOLIC K-8 SCHOOL AS A
CARING COMMUNITY**

by

Marci-Anne Hanks

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of
San Diego State University and the University of San Diego
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Dissertation Committee:

Leif Fearn, Ed. D., San Diego State University
Edward F. DeRoche, Ph. D., University of San Diego
Nancy Farnan, Ph. D., San Diego State University

May 2007

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my

husband, son,

grandparents, parents,

sisters, brothers,

nieces, nephews,

cousins, aunts, uncles,

in-laws, and

all of my friends.

May they continue to grow in God's love.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Stakeholders' Perspectives of a Catholic K-8 School as a Caring
Community

by

Marci-Anne Hanks

Doctor of Education

San Diego State University-University of San Diego, 2007

Many educators and researchers have found that caring school communities positively affect students' behavior, academic achievement, and socioemotional development. Students' basic needs of feeling cared for must be met for them to realize their full potential.

The purpose of this study was to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of a Catholic K-8 school as a caring community. Stakeholders included parents, teachers, administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students. The following research questions were posed for this study: (1) What are the different stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community? (2) Are there significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups? If differences exist, what are they? (3) In what ways have stakeholders experienced, or not experienced, caring at this school? and (4) To what extent does the school seem to be a caring community?

A mixed methods approach was used. The study used a survey, interviews, and observations to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community. Lickona and Davidson's survey, *School as a Caring Community Profile-II (SCCP-II)*, was distributed to stakeholders. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data from surveys. Interviews were analyzed for caring and non-caring interactions and for stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community. Observations were conducted for the purposes of triangulation and validity.

Survey, interview, and observational data, along with the review of the literature, reveal that the following four attributes contribute to creating a caring school community: (1) providing personal and emotional support for all stakeholders, (2) having high parental involvement, (3) "trying to get it right," and (4) creating opportunities to care. The study has implications for other schools that wish to improve their climate by making their schools more caring.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Students spend many hours in school. When students feel cared for at school they are more likely to do well academically and less likely to get into trouble (Developmental Studies Center, n.d.). Research shows that caring school communities positively affect students' behavior, academic achievement, and socioemotional development (Battistich et al., 1994; Deiro, 2003; Schaps, 2003; Weissbourd, 2003).

Caring school communities try to meet children's basic needs. According to Schaps (2003), people need to feel safe emotionally and physically; to know that they are competent; to have positive, caring relationships; to feel like they belong; and to feel that they have some control over their environment. Based on these needs, Schaps found that four approaches are very useful in building community: *"Actively cultivate respectful, supportive relationships among students, teachers, and parents," "Emphasize common purposes and ideals," "Provide regular opportunities for service and cooperation," and "Provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for autonomy and influence"* (p. 32).

Research shows that caring school communities are beneficial in many ways. Tableman and Herron (2004) report,

In a review of studies on the impact of support in school, the Search Institute found that a caring school climate is associated with:

- Higher grades, engagement, attendance, expectations and aspirations, a sense of scholastic competence, fewer school suspensions, and on-time progression through grades (19 studies).
- Higher self-esteem and self-concept (5 studies).
- Less anxiety, depression and loneliness (3 studies).
- Less substance abuse (4 studies) (p. 5).

Since educators and researchers recognize that caring school communities provide many benefits, programs have been developed to help schools create and maintain caring climates, including: The Caring School Community Program (Developmental Studies Center) and Community of Caring (The University of Utah).

The school in this study, St. California's [pseudonym], uses the Caring School Community Program. "The Caring School Community™ (CSC) program is a nationally recognized, research-based K–6 program that builds classroom and schoolwide community. It focuses on strengthening students' connectedness to school" (Developmental Studies Center, n.d., p. 1). To accomplish this goal of building students' connectedness, CSC provides workshops to train educators how to use their four part program which includes: class meetings, a buddy program, homeside and schoolwide activities. Schaps (2003) explains the components:

- "Class meetings are useful for setting goals and norms, planning activities, and identifying and solving problems."
- "A buddies program pairs whole classes of older and younger students for academic and recreational activities."
- "'Homeside' activities are short conversation activities for students and parents or other caregivers to do at home once or twice a month."
- "Schoolwide community-building activities link students, parents, and teachers; help foster new school traditions; and promote helpfulness, inclusiveness, and responsibility" (pp. 32 -33).

Evaluations of the CSC program have been conducted. The Development Studies Center (n.d.) reports the results of a nationwide comparative study. For elementary schools that used the CSC program, students were said to have “Stronger academic motivation,” “Less use of alcohol and marijuana,” “Better conflict-resolution skills,” “Stronger commitment to democratic values,” and “More concern for others.” For middle schools, students were said to have “Higher grades in core academic classes,” “Higher achievement test scores,” “Less misconduct and delinquency,” “Higher educational aspirations,” and “A greater sense of community.”

Because caring school communities benefit students, educators need to make sure that they are doing everything they can to ensure that students feel valued and cared for. Since “Children are 25 percent of the population but 100 percent of the future,” what schools do today to shape students’ socioemotional development will greatly affect the future (Lickona, 2004, p. xxiii). Students’ futures may hold unknown challenges. These challenges will call for strong socioemotional skills and a greater understanding of the complexity of a diverse society. “*The next generation will be the stewards of our communities, nation, and planet in extraordinarily critical times*” (Josephson Institute of Ethics, 2004).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

St. California’s, a Catholic K-8 school, implemented the Caring School Community Program because they wished to improve the climate of the school as a caring community. Since research shows that people do better – academically, socially, and socioemotionally – in a caring environment (Battistich et al., 1994; Deiro, 2003; Developmental Studies Center, n.d.; Schaps, 2003; Weissbourd, 2003), it is important to know whether all stakeholders in

this school community feel cared for and care for their environment and community members. The purpose of this study was to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of St. California's as a caring community. Stakeholders in this study include parents, teachers, administrators, staff and sixth through eighth grade students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed for this study:

1. What are the different stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community?
2. Are there significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups? If differences exist, what are they?
3. In what ways have stakeholders experienced, or not experienced, caring at this school?
4. To what extent does the school seem to be a caring community?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The data from this study provides St. California's with information that will help them understand what they are doing well, so they can continue doing it, and areas where they can make improvements: "Data make the invisible visible, revealing strengths and weaknesses that are easily concealed" (Schmoker, 1999, p. 44). This study makes known stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community. The current study also has implications for other schools that are interested in improving their school climate by becoming more of a caring community; the study identifies attributes which contribute to creating a caring school community.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following definitions are used throughout this study:

Caring: “Caring is an umbrella concept that encompasses and connects a range of discrete subjects, such as empathy, altruism, prosocial behavior, and efficacy” (Chaskin & Rauner, 1995, p. 8).

Caring school community: A school community which nurtures stakeholders’ socioemotional and psychological development.

Caring School Community Program (CSC): “a nationally recognized, research-based K–6 program that builds classroom and schoolwide community” (Developmental Studies Center, n.d., p. 1).

Character education: “Character education is the deliberate effort to develop the virtues that enable us to lead fulfilling lives and build a better world” (Lickona, 2004, p. 228).

Climate: Climate “is made up of the physical and human elements of an organization” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001a, p. 14).

Formal curriculum: “The formal curriculum is the intended or explicit curriculum, that is, the stated objectives, content, and organization of instruction as approved by the state and local boards” (Murphy, 1998, p. 8).

Good character: “Good character is about *knowing* the good, *loving* the good, and *doing* the good” (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 5). Good character will mean knowing the differences between right and wrong, developing moral emotions and performing actions which are consistent with moral feelings and beliefs (Ryan & Bohlin).

Hidden curriculum: The hidden curriculum “has to do with the relationships among students, teachers, administrators, and staff particularly as they relate to authority, rules, and the quality of interpersonal relations” (Purpel and Ryan, 1976a, p. 49).

Informal curriculum: “The informal curriculum deals with the interactions among students and teachers, that is, how they should behave and act towards one another. It is found in discipline codes and citizenship programs” (Murphy, p. 8).

Moral education: “Moral education is direct and indirect intervention of the school which affects both moral behavior and the capacity to think about issues of right and wrong” (Purpel & Ryan, 1976b, p. 5).

School climate: “The overall school climate is a reflection of all the combined aspects of the hidden curriculum and its effects on all the people who enter the school” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001b, p. 73). School climate includes the formal, informal, and hidden curriculum.

School community: Students, parents, teachers, administrators, secretaries, the registrar, the business office manager, librarians, classroom aides, custodians and staff.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the study, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study, and definition of terms.

Chapter 2 provides a review of literature which contributed to the current state of knowledge on creating caring school communities and character development.

Chapter 3 restates the purpose of the study and research questions. The research design and methodology are discussed, including: instruments and procedures; selection of school site; description of school site; selection of participants; survey, interview, and observation procedures; and procedures for data analysis. Reliability and validity of the research study, researcher bias, and limitations of the study are discussed.

Chapter 4 discusses findings and results from the study. Research questions are answered using survey, interview and observational data.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the study and findings, recommendations for the school in this study to make improvements, recommendations for future research studies, and implications for schools that wish to create a more caring school community. Attributes that contribute to creating caring school communities are discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Students can benefit from positive school climates (DeRoche & Williams, 2001a; Leming, 1993). “Although there is no consistent agreement in the literature on the components of school climate or their importance, most writers emphasize caring as a core element” (Tableman & Herron, 2004, p. 2). Caring relationships between all stakeholders are an important part of creating a caring school community (Character Education Partnership, 2005). Many educators and researchers found that caring school communities positively affect students’ behavior, academic achievement, and socioemotional development (Battistich et al., 1994; Deiro, 2003; Schaps, 2003; Weissbourd, 2003).

This chapter will look at eleven areas of literature which contributed to the current state of knowledge on creating caring school communities and character development. These topics are: Early Education in America, Decline in Moral Education, Values Clarification, Kohlberg’s Moral Stages, Character Education, What Research Says About Character Education, Focus on Standardized Test Scores, Emotional Intelligence, School Climate, Classroom Climate, and Need for Positive Role Models. A summary is provided.

EARLY EDUCATION IN AMERICA

Early education in America was concerned with moral and civic education as well as education for knowledge (McClellan, 1999). Old World immigrants were very aware that

moral education was vital for society's well-being (McClellan). "Puritans, who first settled New England in 1620, saw in moral education a way to keep religious orthodoxy alive, promote social harmony, encourage hard work, and spread the Christian faith to the heathen" (p. 2). Moral education was also very important in public education in the 1800's (McClellan). The primers (or textbooks) of the day were filled with moral lessons for the students (McClellan). America's educational system began to undergo some major changes in the nineteenth century (McClellan).

Before the 1830s, parents sent their children to a hodgepodge of denominational, charity, and private schools. Between 1830 and 1860, however, Americans began to construct a vast new system of public schools that would quickly become the most important educational institutions of the nineteenth century. Public schools were either low-fee or no-fee schools designed specifically to be open to all white children on a roughly equal basis. By making education universal, Americans hoped to spread a common culture, to plant internal restraints in children of all backgrounds, and to provide a certain minimum level of equal opportunity in the society (p. 22).

This drive for a commonality in values led to the creation of the nonsectarian, public school. "The aim was not to forbid religion in the classroom but rather to teach a nonsectarian Christianity at public expense, leaving to other institutions the responsibility for instruction in the fine points of theological doctrine" (p. 31).

The construction of nonsectarian public schooling was driven and led mostly by Protestants (McClellan). McClellan points out some reasons why many Catholics were opposed to the public schools: "Many common textbooks of the day were virulently anti-Catholic, and many others contained subtle condemnations of both immigrants and Catholics" (p. 36). As the population's diversity increased, the schools were met with more and more resistance as moral views clashed.

It is evident that moral education was a very important component of early education in America; so much so that Protestants and Catholics were unable to come to an agreement on how it should be taught (McClellan). Catholics began to establish their own schools. Cronin (1999) informs, "Catholic schools have always been involved in developing character in their students" (p. 23). Such is not the case for public schools as they have faced many challenges in trying not to offend differing religious factions. Public schooling became more and more secularized. According to McClellan:

The early Protestant supporters of public schools were insistent on the connections between morality and religion, and they clearly saw the public school as a way to spread the general tenets of Protestant Christianity. Yet in order to prevent state aid to Catholic education, they were compelled to expand the religious neutrality of the public school. With every Catholic charge that public education was effectively Protestant religious education, public school leaders found it necessary to weaken the theological content of moral education (p. 45).

This weakening progressed further until even Protestants were no longer happy with the lack of moral teaching in the schools.

By the mid-twentieth century the public school had become so devoid of religious content that even many Protestant groups who had been its strongest defenders now turned against it, finding themselves in the end closer to the Catholic position on religion and morality than to the nonsectarianism that their forebears had done so much to create (McClellan, p. 45).

Thus began America's long tradition of removing religion from public education.

DECLINE IN MORAL EDUCATION

A further decline in moral education began over 60 years ago (McClellan). McClellan explains one of the major factors in this decline was a focus on the development of skills: "a growing need for high-level technical and scientific skills - associated especially with revolutions in electronics, physics, and medicine - led Americans to call upon schools for a greater emphasis on intellectual achievement and basic academic skills" (pp. 73-74). This

focus on skills left less emphasis on students' character development (McClellan). Even back in 1947, C. S. Lewis warned about the dangers of focusing too much on drive and ambition.

And all the time- such is the tragic-comedy of our situation – we continue to clamour for those very qualities we are rendering impossible. You can hardly open a periodical without coming across the statement that what our civilization needs is more 'drive', or dynamism, or self-sacrifice, or 'creativity'. In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ and demand the function. We make men without chests and expect of them virtue and enterprise (p. 26).

The organ that C.S. Lewis is referring to in the above passage is the heart and the function of the heart is to feel. Without a consideration of feelings, virtue or honor, the world would be a completely cold and calculated place.

VALUES CLARIFICATION

Many educators recognized the need for more than just an academic education for students. Values Clarification was a popular method which teachers used to help students clarify their own values. Rath, Harmin, and Simon (1976) believed that students must decide for themselves what their values are and that teachers must not impose their viewpoints upon their students - only ask them questions to help them clarify their own values. The authors believed: "if children – or adults, for that matter – are to develop values, they must develop them out of personal choices" (p. 83).

The authors developed a framework to determine if something could, or could not, be defined as a value. The authors stated that there are three processes involved in the formation of values: choosing, prizing, and acting. In order for something to be considered a value, *all* of the following seven criteria must be met:

Choosing: (1) freely

(2) from alternatives

(3) after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative

Prizing: (4) cherishing, being happy with the choice

(5) willing to affirm the choice publicly

Acting: (6) doing something with the choice

(7) repeatedly, in some pattern of life (p. 78).

The authors instructed teachers to use clarifying questions to respond to children to help them choose the values that suit them. “The basic strategy of this approach to value clarifying rests on a specific method of responding to things a student says or does” (p. 86). The authors explain this method “stimulates him to clarify his thinking and behavior and thus to clarify his values; it encourages him to think about them” (p. 86). The authors elaborate further:

The purpose of the clarifying response is to raise questions in the mind of the student, to prod him gently to examine his life, his actions, and his ideas, with the expectation that some will want to use this prodding as an opportunity to clarify their understandings, purposes, feelings, aspirations, attitudes, beliefs, and so on (p. 113).

The authors define an “effective clarifying response” as “a response that encourages someone to look at his life and his ideas and to think about them” (p. 87). The authors do provide some very useful clarifying questions, however children are not yet developed enough to decide on all values for themselves. Children need guidance in becoming fair, just, kind, and considerate individuals capable of getting along in society, and in thinking about the good of all, not just what suits their own desires. One needs only to observe preschool age children or kindergarteners for example. Oftentimes while playing a game a child of this age may make up new rules as the game is being played that are always in his/her favor. The child sees fairness mostly only from his/her own perspective. It’s not uncommon to hear “It’s not fair!” simply because the child is losing. Just because one is losing a game does not make it unfair

and the child must be taught this moral concept. Without guidance or direction, very young children would soon choose their morals based on their favor – all games are unfair unless I am winning. I am supposed to win. This is hardly the kind of society that should be created and formed!

Raths, Harmin, and Simon provide the following conditions for teachers to provide effective clarifying responses to students.

1. The clarifying response avoids moralizing, criticizing, giving values, or evaluating. The adult excludes all hints of “good” or “right” or “acceptable,” or their opposites, in such responses.
2. It puts the responsibility on the student to look at his behavior or his ideas and to think and decide for himself what it is *he* wants.
3. A clarifying response also entertains the possibility that the student will *not* look or decide or think. It is permissive and stimulating, but not insistent (p. 87).

Applying these three conditions to the example of the child stating a game is unfair simply because he/she is losing would not help the child’s moral development. The teacher would be unable to say that the game is fair, the student may choose not to look at his/her behavior and may choose that winning makes the game fair for him/her. Adults must provide proper guidance for children to learn socially acceptable behaviors. Children may believe that their behavior is perfectly right and acceptable if no one helps them see otherwise.

There were many critics of values clarification, and also many supporters.

Kirschenbaum (1976) informs:

Among other criticisms, values clarification has been called ‘hedonistic,’ ‘superficial,’ ‘relativistic,’ ‘value free,’ and devoid of any cogent theoretical or research base. Simultaneously, thousands of teachers, parents, counselors, and others report that this same approach has been of significant help to them in their work with students, children, and clients, or in their own personal lives (p. 116).

Many people believe values clarification can lead to “ethical relativism” (Kohlberg, 1976a; Lockwood, 1976; Stewart, 1976). Lockwood states:

In its simplest definition, ethical relativism holds that one person’s values are as good as another’s; everyone is entitled to his own opinion; and when it comes to morality, there is no way of showing one opinion is better than another (p. 166).

Lockwood succinctly explains the problem with the above thinking: “The fundamental objection to ethical relativism is that it can be used to justify virtually any activity in which an individual or a society chooses to engage” (p. 166). Many educators realized that students needed more than just values clarification; they needed guidance to understand right from wrong.

KOHLBERG’S MORAL STAGES

Kohlberg’s moral reasoning theory became popular among some educators to explain moral development. Kohlberg (1976b) believes that there are six moral stages that people can be categorized into. The “Preconventional level” consists of stages one and two; the “Conventional level” consists of stages three and four; and the “Postconventional, autonomous, or principled level” consists of stages five and six (pp. 215-216). The six stages are:

“Stage 1: *The punishment and obedience orientation.*”

“Stage 2: *The instrumental relativist orientation.*”

“Stage 3: *The interpersonal concordance or “good boy-nice girl” orientation.*”

“Stage 4: *The “law and order” orientation.*”

“Stage 5: *The social-contract, legalistic orientation.*”

“Stage 6: *The universal ethical principle orientation*” (pp. 215- 216).

Kohlberg believes that individuals can move up to the next higher stage if they are exposed to reasoning at that next higher level (1976a). According to Kohlberg, very few people reason at the two highest stages.

Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning and development is not without its critics either. Fraenkel (1976) has some reservations:

Even though Kohlberg states that the six stages he has identified hold for all nine of the cultures that he has examined, this is a rather small sample from which to infer the sweeping conclusion that the description of moral development for all people in all cultures has been found, or even to infer that the concept of justice, fundamental to the reasoning inherent in the higher stages (5 and 6), is endorsed by all cultures (p. 294).

Fraenkel also has the following reservation: "the fact that there really are *six* stages has by no means been established. Only three individuals have been identified as being at Stage 6 – Kohlberg himself, one of his graduate students, and Martin Luther King (Kohlberg 1971b)" (p. 298). In addition to Fraenkel's reservations, others had reservations because gender was not taken into account in Kohlberg's studies. Gilligan (1993) points out that the studies were done with only boys but girls' moral development stages are quite different. Gilligan asserts that women's voices have long been missing from the literature.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

During recent years, researchers provided new definitions of character and character education. Lickona (2004) writes: "Character is having 'the right stuff.' As parents and educators, we labor to teach kids this – that it's what's inside that counts" (p. 5). Berkowitz and Bier (2005a) state that "Character is the composite of those psychological characteristics that impact the child's capacity and tendency to be an effective moral agent, i.e. to be

socially and personally responsible, ethical, and self-managed” (p. 2). Battistich (n.d.)

provides a very thorough, and important, definition of character:

Character refers to a much broader constellation of attitudes, behaviors, motivations, and skills. It is more than simply avoiding involvement in socially undesirable behaviors. Character includes attitudes such as the desire to do one’s best and being concerned about the welfare of others; intellectual capacities such as critical thinking and moral reasoning; behaviors such as being honest and responsible, and standing up for moral principles in the face of injustice; interpersonal and emotional skills that enable us to interact effectively with others in a variety of circumstances; and the commitment to contribute to one’s community and society. Stated simply, character is the realization of one’s positive development as a person-intellectually, socially, emotionally, and ethically. To be a person of good character is to be the best person that one can be (p. 2).

Battistich’s definition encompasses the important components that affect character development including: attitudes, behaviors, and actions. Good character involves, not only believing in good moral principles, but also standing up for them when necessary (personal communication L. Fearn, June 1, 2006). Cronin (1999) writes: “Character is that lasting and distinctive part of the inner person that governs behavior through informed choices and good habits” (Cronin, p. 2). People of good character are more likely to lead happy, stable, and productive lives; to have a higher quality of relationships with others; and to serve humanity for the betterment of society (Lickona, 2004).

Character education can help students develop good character. The Character Education Manifesto states: “True character education is the hinge upon which academic excellence, personal achievement, and true citizenship depend” (Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character, 1996, p. 1). There are currently many curricular character education programs available to schools. DeRoche and Williams (2001b) provide excellent summaries, and also contact information, for the following character education programs: Character Plus,

Sweet Home School District's character education program, The Heartwood Program, School-Site Values Curriculum: PS31, Community of Caring, Child Development Project (now the Caring School Community Program), and Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP). CHARACTER COUNTS! from the Josephson Institute of Ethics is another popular program. CHARACTER COUNTS! has "Six Pillars of Character:" "Trustworthiness," "Respect," "Responsibility," "Fairness," "Caring" and "Citizenship."

The Character Education Partnership, founded in 1993, is one of the nation's major leaders in character education programs, and many key character education researchers serve on their Education Advisory Council, including: Marvin Berkowitz, Thomas Lickona, and Kevin Ryan. The Character Education Partnership (CEP) offers the following definition of character education:

Character education is a national movement creating schools that foster ethical, responsible, and caring young people by modeling and teaching good character through emphasis on universal values that we all share. It is the intentional, proactive effort by schools, districts, and states to instill in their students important core, ethical values such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for self and others. Character education is not a 'quick fix.' It provides long-term solutions that address moral, ethical, and academic issues that are of growing concern about our society and the safety of our schools (Character Education Partnership, 2005, ¶1).

Children need to be taught that values such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for self and others are very important; they also need to learn how to exhibit these values in their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Lickona (2004) states "Character education is the deliberate effort to develop the virtues that enable us to lead fulfilling lives and build a better world" (p. 228).

According to Lickona, “The goals of character education are three: persons of good character, schools of character, and a society of character” (p. 225). According to Battistich (n.d.)

The goals of character education are thus essentially the goals of raising good children: youth who understand, care about, and act upon the core ethical values (such as diligence, compassion, integrity, and fairness) that make for a productive, just, and democratic society. As they grow in character, young people grow in their capacity and commitment to do their best work, do the right thing, and lead lives of purpose. Effective character education involves creating the kinds of classroom and school environments that enable all students, without exception, to realize their potential to achieve these vital goals (p. 3).

Educators must do all that they can to educate our citizens, our future generation, to be of good character for not only their own well-being and happiness but also for their schools and society’s well-being. Society needs people of good character to help stop the moral decline.

DeRoche and Williams (1998) point out that there are many important aspects to character education which include the efforts of parents, schools, and communities. The authors provide a very comprehensive overview of what character education is. They state that character education

- is a concerted effort by the community and the schools (through its missions and goals) to educate children and youth about an agreed-on set of values;
- begins in a family setting;
- occurs when children and youth witness and imitate adults and peers modeling the consensus values;
- continues in the community (churches, youth groups, etc.) and in the schools;
- occurs when children and youth come to know the values through the school environment and its curriculum and co-curricular programs;
- occurs when children and youth have opportunities to study, clarify, reflect, reason, decide, and act on the values;

- is enhanced when children and youth are provided guided and supervised opportunities to engage in and practice the values;
- is verified or modified when participants assess the extent to which the programs and activities have met their mission, goals, and expectations; and
- is verified when students and adults demonstrate and model the values (pp. 24-25).

Character education is complex because human beings and their relationships are so complex. Although educators and researchers know more now about human's psychological development than they ever have, there is still much they don't know. Clay (2004) writes, "One of the myths of education is that you can adopt a method that will suit everyone. These kinds of adaptations will always be defeated by 'individual differences'" (p. 60). What works with one child may not work with another because, "Every child is a mystery" (J. Nilson, personal communication, January 12, 2005). Parents who have more than one child can attest to this phenomenon.

Character education programs come in many shapes and forms with different goals (DeRoche and Williams, 2001b). Some researchers may place "social-emotional learning, school-based prevention, and citizenship education" under the umbrella of character education, while others may define it "more narrowly" (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005a, p. 3). There are some common components that are present in most effective character education programs, but having one or more of these key components does not guarantee that a program will be successful. Each individual school site is unique, and how the character education program will be implemented will be unique, because people are different (DeRoche and Williams). "[I]t is the individual school site that holds the keys to successful character education initiatives" (DeRoche and Williams, p. 68). Therefore, the same

character education program, used in two different school sites, by different stakeholders, with different leaders, with different levels of commitments to the character education program, may result in different outcomes (DeRoche and Williams).

WHAT RESEARCH SAYS ABOUT CHARACTER EDUCATION

Much evidence is being accumulated to demonstrate the positive effects of teaching the young to be good people.

Research suggests that comprehensive, high quality character education ...is not only effective at promoting the development of good character, but is a promising approach to the prevention of a wide range of contemporary problems. These include aggressive and antisocial behaviors, drug use, precocious sexual activity, criminal activities, academic under-achievement, and school failure (Battistich, n.d., p. 1).

Character education programs have been found to positively affect students' behavior, attendance rates, and academic achievement (Huitt, 2004; Otten, 2000).

Lickona (1997) explains how a junior high school, where "Theft and fighting were common, and twelve to fifteen girls got pregnant each year" (p. 23), was turned around. The principal, staff and community implemented an intensive character education program. After focusing on character, Jefferson Junior High

experienced a marked decline in thefts and fighting. In the city of Washington, D.C., it has been recognized for having the highest student academic achievement, the greatest academic improvement, and the highest attendance rate. It has won two U.S. Department of Education awards and now has a waiting list of 400 to 500 students. Between 1993 and 1995, according to White, it had only two known student pregnancies (p. 24).

Jefferson Junior High's character education is an excellent example of a program that was able to make a difference which resulted in some very positive changes in the lives of its students.

Berkowitz and Bier (2005b) conducted an extensive review of the literature on the effectiveness of character education programs. The authors found:

Clearly there is ample evidence that character education frequently improves academic performance, reduces risk behaviors (e.g., drug use, violence, pre-marital sexual behavior), increases desirable behaviors (e.g., altruism), and improves social-emotional and pro-social competencies (e.g., socio-moral reasoning, problem-solving skills, emotional competency) (p. 6).

Murphy (1998) studied 350 character education programs of Blue Ribbon Award winning schools between the years of 1984 and 1994. Her research revealed that “the Blue Ribbon Schools promote character development” through: “Assemblies, PA announcements,” “Community service,” “Curriculum programs/units,” “Discipline plans,” “Integrated throughout,” “School awards, mottos,” and “Staff models” (p. 28). Murphy also found that one of the characteristics that Blue Ribbon Schools character education programs had in common was

A commitment to character education that is comprehensive, that is, all faculty, staff, administrators, and students are committed to good character. All teachers are involved in integrating character education into the various subjects they teach (math, science, social studies, literature, health, etc.) and all staff members (counselors, cafeteria and playground aides, secretaries, etc.) reinforce the living of these good character traits. In addition, the community makes a commitment to reinforcing good character through the media and in the neighborhood (pp. 199 – 200).

Community members, parents, teachers, staff and students are all key stakeholders in character education programs (DeRoche and Williams, 1998). Lickona states that school staff, students, and parents “are the three groups whose participation is crucial to the success of a school’s character education initiative” (2004, p. 220). Character education programs are most effective when they have the support of all the key stakeholders: school staff, students, and parents.

Partnerships with parents are important in making character education initiatives successful (DeRoche, 2004). “Studies have shown that when parents are involved in the school, children get better grades, have more positive attitudes toward school and work, have higher expectations, and may exhibit more positive behaviors” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001b, p. 113). Character education programs should provide parents with information that will help them with the character development of their children (DeRoche & Williams, 2001b).

FOCUS ON STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

For many public schools today there is such a high focus on students’ standardized test scores that paying attention to helping students develop character has often been overlooked. Nowadays, when reading about the state of public education, it is nearly impossible to pick up a newspaper or periodical and not read about the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), standardized testing, accountability, and low test scores.

Federal and state governments use funding as incentives to encourage schools to focus on standardized test scores. Standards and assessment are the key words circulating among education circles today. Shelton, Fu, and Smith (2004) report:

We have seen a rapid increase in high-stakes testing requirements in public schools since the late 1990s. To most politicians, high-stakes testing is viewed as the savior for schools and as a means to ensure accountability for teaching and learning. Educators, teachers, parents, and students have never felt more stressed from testing at every grade level. Test-driven curriculum dominates instruction and leaves little space for authenticity, creativity, or individuality of teachers and students (p. 120).

As a result of this test-driven curriculum, more and more teachers are spending increasing amounts of time teaching to high-stakes tests, rather than teaching students for the sake of learning or understanding (Hoffman, Paris, Salas, Patterson & Assaf, 2003). An

unbalanced amount of time is being spent on reading, writing, and mathematics – teaching to the tests.

Focusing solely on high-stakes test scores is counterproductive to education itself.

Education should not just be about intellectual growth in math, reading and science but about personal growth as well. Even before NCLB was implemented Sylwester (1994) informed:

Our profession pays lip service to the whole student, but school activities tend to focus on measurable rational qualities. We measure spelling accuracy, not emotional well-being. And when the budget gets tight, we cut curricular areas like the arts, expressive subjects that are difficult to measure (p. 60).

As a result of NCLB, many public schools have cut subjects like music and art. Recently there has been some talk about getting rid of recess to increase instructional hours.

Berkowitz, Schaeffer, and Bier (2001) believe:

The drill-and-test education that has resulted from the standards and testing movement can lead to an education climate that runs counter to an environment where good character can best be developed. Educators and children find themselves in schools where there is less time for autonomous learning, or the development of caring and nurturing relationships. In certain egregious instances, cherished values can be seriously undermined as certain children are discouraged from attending on test days, or test copies are shared in advance in order to artificially raise a school's test scores (p. 15).

As the authors point out it is possible for educators to make their test scores “look better.”

Many school administrators are left chasing after high, high-stakes test scores to “prove” that they are doing a good job of educating students and that they are meeting accountability targets.

Some educators and researchers may argue that if only a very low percentage of students are passing, or are doing well on high-stakes tests, the tests are unfair (Ananda & Rabinowitz, 2000; Kohn, 2001). Popham (2004) states standardized tests are inequitable because there are many “SES-linked items.” According to Hoffman, Paris, Salas, et. al,

(2003), some students may cheat on standardized tests. Some students may cheat on school tests. The Josephson Institute of Ethics (2006), in a nationwide survey of 36, 000 high school students, found that: “60% **cheated during a test at school** within the past 12 months- 35% did so two or more times” and “33% **copied an internet document** within the past 12 months-18% did so two or more times” (p. 3).

Sylwester (1994) recognized that schools need to give more attention to students’ socioemotional development. Students’ emotions, self-confidence and self-esteem levels can greatly affect their educational achievements (Marsh, 1990; Marsh & Yeung, 1997). Low self-esteem and confidence levels can actually result in lower academic achievement. For example, students who have not performed well on standardized tests in the past may not put much effort into trying to do well on future tests because they do not want to damage their self-esteem any further: “If they believe that the tests are good measures of ability, then they may only try halfheartedly so that they can claim their poor test scores reflect low effort rather than low ability” (Hoffman, Paris, Salas et. al, 2003, p. 626).

Additionally, paying attention to students’ socioemotional development is important because students’ emotions are tied to learning (Weissberg, Resnik, Payton, & O’Brien, 2003). Many researchers have found that emotions play a significant role in cognitive processes (Armstrong, 2003; Coles 1999; Sylwester, 1994). Reading and writing are connected to parts of the brain that process emotions (Armstrong, 2003). Caring school communities are concerned with students’ socioemotional development.

Education should be about the growth of the whole individual – both academically, and morally. Howard Gardner (2005), in an *Education Week* article, “Beyond the Herd Mentality: The Minds That We Truly Need in the Future,” writes that the government should

be more concerned with the character education of its citizens, because “In the process of pursuing a higher rank, educational leaders are ignoring deeper and more important purposes of education” (p. 44). Education should not just be about learning content knowledge for the purposes of good test performances. Education that ignores the hearts and feelings of students is no education at all. Society needs balanced individuals who are of good character.

DeRoche & Williams write, “There are two main purposes for educating children and youth - cognitive/academic development and character formation, which includes both personal values and civic competencies” (1998, p. 15). America’s educational system should be about preparing all students for their future lives and careers, not just for scoring well (or poorly) on high-stakes standardized tests. If a student scores wonderfully on high-stakes tests, yet is unable to function within the rules and regulations of society, what good comes from it?

With this focus on test scores as the driving force of the educational system, many college-bound youth are getting the message that doing well in school is all that matters and character does not. Competitive college entrance requirements leave many college-bound high school students obsessing over their GPA’s. (High schools now even have weighted GPA’s so students can score above 4.00.) For the most part, the United States’ educational system is building individual competitors, not team players (Kohn, 1991). But there is more to life than just test scores; not everything can be measured through tests (Burke, 2005). Picking a right answer on multiple-choice tests, does not necessarily lead to being successful in everyday life.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

In fact, research has shown quite the opposite - that making the right choices in social interactions can lead to success in life (Goleman, 1998). Goleman argues that it is emotional intelligence that helps people to become skilled at working well with others and that it is emotional intelligence that will make the difference between being successful or unsuccessful in the work environment. He writes, “Superb intellect and technical talents alone do not make people great team members” (p. 204). Goleman noted that teams that consisted of “people of high IQ often performed poorly at work, while those of moderate IQ did extremely well” (p. 16). Social interactions play an important role in making people’s lives feel worthwhile, fulfilling and successful. Many educators and researchers realize now how important it is to teach students social and emotional skills. Goleman states that being emotionally intelligent includes *self-awareness*, *self-regulation*, *motivation*, *empathy*, and *social skills*. Children need emotional intelligence, communication and social skills to lead a successful life. DeRoche and Williams (2001b) suggest that “emotional and empathy training” be a part of character education programs.

Many character education programs help students develop the skills they need to get along with others in society and help students develop good character. “The premise of the character education movement is that the disturbing behaviors that bombard us daily – violence, greed, corruption, incivility, drug abuse, sexual immorality, and a poor work ethic – have a common core: the absence of good character” (Lickona, 2004, pp. xxiii). This absence of good character indicates that educating students for character needs to be given a higher priority than it currently has been given (Berkowitz, Schaeffer, & Bier, 2001; Lickona, 1997).

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Schools play an important role in the moral development of students. Purpel and

Ryan (1976c) stated:

The school-age child is subjected to many, many influences. While difficult to measure, the child's moral attitudes are influenced by the economic system of which he is a part, the media to which he is exposed, the ethnic group to which he belongs, and his friendship network. It is against this background of complex human and institutional forces that we must look at the interventions of the school (p. 72).

Purpel and Ryan believe that teachers cannot escape being involved in the moral development of students because of the amount of time students spend in schools. The authors state:

The schools simply cannot avoid being involved in the moral life of the students. It is inconceivable for the schools to take the child for six or seven hours a day, for 180 days a year, from the time he is six to the time he is eighteen, and not affect the way he thinks about moral issues and the way he behaves. Nor can we divorce the intellectual realm from the moral realm. One can suppress discussion about moral issues and values, but one cannot suppress the development of values and the formation of morals. Moral education goes on all over the school building – in the classrooms, in the disciplinarian's office, in assemblies, in the gym....It permeates the very fabric of the teacher-student relationship. The school, then, cannot help but be a force for growth or retardation – for good or evil – in the moral life of the student. Moral education is an inevitable role of the schools. For the educator, it comes with the territory (p. 9).

As Purpel and Ryan pointed out, many aspects of schools may affect students' moral development, positively or negatively, whether explicitly intended or not. These different aspects of schools' climates affect students' moral development. According to Hoy and Miskel (1991), "The climate of a school is its 'personality'" (p. 413). Freiberg (1987) believes: "The climate of a school may be compared to the air we breathe - - we ignore it until it becomes noticeably offensive" (p. 119). Freiberg (1998) explains that many factors contribute to a school's overall climate:

The elements that make up school climate are complex, ranging from the quality of interactions in the teachers' lounge to the noise levels in hallways and cafeterias, from the physical structure of the building to the physical comfort levels (involving such factors as heating, cooling, and lighting) of the individuals and how safe they feel. Even the size of the school and the opportunities for students and teachers to interact in small groups both formally and informally add to or detract from the health of the learning environment. The support staff – cafeteria workers, bus drivers, custodians, and office staff - add to the multiple dimensions of climate (p. 22).

Because all schools are different and are made up of different people, all schools have their own unique environments or school climates (Norton, 1987).

A school's climate directly affects students' character development. Leming (1993) informs, "Character develops within a social web or environment. The nature of that environment, the messages it sends to individuals, and the behaviors it encourages and discourages are important factors to consider in character education" (p. 69).

Students' character development can flourish in positive school environments (Lickona, 1997). "Several studies have shown that schools that seem to have an impact on student character respect students, encourage student participation in the life of the school, expect students to behave responsibly, and give them the opportunity to do so" (Leming, 1993, p. 67). DeRoche and Williams (2001b) inform, "Whether you call it culture or climate, no character education program is going to be successful without a supporting and nurturing environment that is caring, civil, and challenging, both academically and behaviorally" (DeRoche & Williams, 2001a, p. 49).

A school with an unhealthy climate sends poor messages to its students and therefore is not conducive to the development of good character in students. Freiberg provides an excellent example of how an unhealthy school environment can negatively affect students'

behavior. Freiberg described his observations of a middle school's cafeteria where it was common for students to have five fights after breakfast.

What struck me immediately was the excruciatingly high noise levels. The machines in the cafeteria were all running, an aide was using the public address system to tell Billy or Sarah to "find a seat and sit down," and the cafeteria workers seemed to be playing the *1812 Overture* with the stainless steel pots and pans. Students were emptying their trays by banging them inside a metal trash can. Adults were shouting across the room, asking specific students to be quiet. The students talked over this din. Few adults acted as if they were glad the students were there. The tone of the aides and other cafeteria workers was less than positive. I observed no smiles, no "good mornings," no friendly faces. When I said "good morning" to an older child, he looked at me as if I had called him a bad name. After 30 minutes in the cafeteria, I was ready to fight (1998, p. 25).

Freiberg raises an important point - that the climate of the school can affect the way students feel and behave. Freiberg was negatively affected by the school's cafeteria environment; his feelings of hostility rose after only 30 minutes of being there. Students' behavior can sometimes be a reflection of that environment. "Often, student behavior is a healthy response to an unhealthy situation" (p. 25). Freiberg believed that the noise levels were unhealthy and that if the students had more "caring contact" with adults in the cafeteria students' behavior would improve. Sometimes schools expect students to deal with conditions that they themselves would want to avoid. Freiberg explains, "I asked the faculty, 'Would you want to have breakfast in your cafeteria?' They responded with laughter and a resounding no. 'Then why,' I asked, 'would you want your students to eat under these conditions?'" (p. 25). Students' brains are not fully developed yet, nor is their mental capacity to deal with their emotions fully developed yet either. But here is a case where students were being asked to cope with a very noisy, stressful environment which the faculty did not even want to deal with. Some students resorted to fighting.

This cafeteria story has a good ending. Freiberg recommended some changes to reduce the noise levels and to increase the amount of care adults showed for the students in the cafeteria. The result was “not surprisingly, within two weeks the daily fights had stopped” (p. 26). This example is a very good illustration of just how much a school can directly affect students’ behavior, positively or negatively, by the environment they set up and maintain for students.

Educators who wish to develop good character in students must carefully evaluate the school’s climate (DeRoche & Williams, 2001b). There are many instruments available to measure school climate. Some of the more popular instruments have been the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire for Secondary Schools (OCDQ-RM, Hoy, n.d.), Organizational Health Inventory (OHI-M, Hoy, n.d.), Organizational Climate Index (OCI, Hoy, n.d.), The Comprehensive Assessment of School Environments (CASE, The National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1986), Kettering Scale of School Climate (Fox et al., n.d.), and the School Assessment Survey (SAS, Wilson & Firestone, Research for Better Schools, 1985).

Principals play a critical role in establishing the climate of a school (DeRoche, 2004). The principals are in control of overseeing the day-to-day physical climate of the campus and are responsible for ensuring a clean, safe, healthy, and caring community for all stakeholders. The principals are responsible for supporting and counseling faculty in character education efforts (DeRoche, 2004). Principals’ “beliefs, opinions, values, and attitudes” influence their administrative “practice” (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003, p. 18). “Effective administrators are prepared to respond to the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context of schools” (Cunningham & Cordeiro, p. 6).

There are many ways for students to be involved in helping to create or maintain a positive school climate, including through student government, decision-making, and leading and planning character education efforts (Lickona, 2004): “When students are in visible leadership roles, and when all students have a voice and a stake in the character education effort, adults will be far more effective in promoting good character than they can ever be acting alone” (p. 247). Lickona provides an example which shows how students can take responsibility for reducing bullying:

Some schools have had success in promoting peer intervention by recruiting an anti-bullying team of students at each grade level. These teams then work with a teacher or counselor to brainstorm and carry out strategies for reducing peer cruelty. Team members subsequently step in on behalf of victims (pp. 179-180).

Becoming more involved can help students learn how to care for others. Gootman (2001) provides three ways teachers can help students to become more caring. She writes: “First, by being a caring role model; second, by developing students’ empathy; and, third, by providing opportunities for students to participate in caring activities” (p. 7).

CLASSROOM CLIMATE

Teachers play an important role in creating positive classroom climates. Students spend most of their time at school in classrooms; positive classroom climates can help students to develop good character traits. DeRoche and Williams (1998) inform:

Attention to creating a positive classroom climate is a priority over any other practice or process in character education. Creating a community of learners in a classroom is a desirable outcome and precursor of effective character education. The classroom climate, like the school climate, has a significant effect on student behavior, because students learn more from what their teachers do than from what their teachers say (p. 67).

Teachers are better able to help students develop positive character traits when they have caring relationships with them (Gootman, 2001).

Teachers need to create safe environments for students so that they can concentrate on learning (Gootman). Gootman provides the following example of what can happen to children when they feel unsafe when teachers do not control their anger:

Sudden outbursts can trigger jumpiness and anxiety in all children. For children who come from chaotic homes, our explosions can create that physioneurosis response, which can manifest itself as hyperactive, disruptive, unruly behavior. In addition, children who are unused to outbursts in their homes can become terrified. All children need calm, physically and psychologically safe environments if they are to behave properly and learn (p. 32).

During adolescence the brain “undergoes rapid transformation” (Hall & Brier, 2007, p. 25) and emotions can run high. “Providing welcoming and emotionally neutral environments can help adolescents leave their emotional whirlwind at the classroom door” (Hall & Brier, p. 26). Sylwester (1994) informs, “Emotionally stressful school environments are counterproductive because they can reduce students’ ability to learn” (p. 65).

Teachers need on-going professional development to learn how to create positive, caring classroom environments and to help students learn how to care for others. If teachers do not believe that they can help students develop good character then the chances that character development will be successful are diminished (Milson, 2003). Schools need to provide “High-quality staff development, capable of promoting teachers’ sense of efficacy as well as their sense of responsibility for both ethics and excellence” (Lickona & Davidson, 2005, p. 74).

NEED FOR POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

If society wants to have moral citizens, then adults need to teach and model that behavior for youth who are the future generation (Berkowitz, Schaeffer, & Bier, 2001).

Adults' behaviors can directly influence the way children behave. Santrock (2002) explains Bandura's observational learning theory.

For example, a young boy might observe his father's aggressive outbursts and hostile interchanges with people; when observed with his peers, the young boy's style of interaction is highly aggressive, showing the same characteristics as his father's behavior. A girl might adopt the dominant and sarcastic style of her teacher. When observed interacting with her younger brother, she says, "You are so slow. How can you do this work so slowly?" (p. 41).

Children learn from observing others and may imitate their behavior. Character education programs are most successful when administrators, teachers, staff, parents and students demonstrate the desired character traits (DeRoche & Williams, 2001b). Goleman (1998) explains that people learn from watching others: "In learning a new behavior, having access to someone who exemplifies the competence at its best is immensely helpful. We learn by watching others; if someone can demonstrate a competence, they create a living classroom for us" (p. 274).

Children spend a lot of time watching and observing their parents. Some researchers have found that parents' emotions are connected to their children's moral behavior. In their study of 97 girls and 119 boys and one of their parents, Spinrad et al. (1999) found that:

Parental emotion in stressful contexts with children was significantly related to children's sympathy and moral behaviour. Parents who were supportive and responded warmly to their children in stressful or novel contexts had children who focused on others' needs and emotions (p. 333).

Parents who were supportive or responded warmly to their children's emotions had a positive effect on their children's emotional development, but parents who respond negatively can have the opposite effect. The authors explain:

Children whose parents respond negatively to their expression of emotion tend to be relatively low in social skills (Eisenberg *et al.*, 1992a, 1996d) and are relatively unlikely to use constructive coping strategies (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1994), they may be less able than their peers to respond in an other-oriented manner (p. 333).

For those children who are fortunate enough to have positive role models at home, it is great that their parents' emotions can positively influence their moral behavior. But it is not so great for children who do not have positive role models at home and who are being negatively influenced. Schools must be there to educate the students morally, especially for those without positive role models (Okin & Reich, 1999). Schools can make a difference in students' moral development.

SUMMARY

Researchers and educators across the country have called for increased character education efforts (Character Education Partnership, 2005; DeRoche & Williams, 2001b). A caring school climate is necessary for character education to be effective (Berkowitz, Schaeffer, & Bier, 2001; Character Education Partnership, 2005; Schaps, Watson, & Lewis, 1996). In 1996, Schaps, Watson, and Lewis wrote:

We believe that the value of creating caring school communities has been overlooked in the national debate about school improvement, character education, and youth problems such as drug abuse and violence. If a sense of community reliably leads to positive outcomes for students, then the current direction of the nation's educational reform efforts – on standards, assessment, choice, and governance – may need to be broadened (p. 21).

Caring school communities positively affect students' behavior, academic achievement, and socioemotional development (Battistich et al., 1994; Deiro, 2003; Schaps, 2003; Weissbourd, 2003).

This chapter provided a review of the areas of literature which contributed to the current state of knowledge on creating caring school communities and character development. The next chapter explains the research design and methodology used for this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of a Catholic K-8 school as a caring community. Stakeholders in this study include parents, teachers, administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students. The following research questions were posed for this study: (1) What are the different stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community? (2) Are there significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups? If differences exist, what are they? (3) In what ways have stakeholders experienced, or not experienced, caring at this school? and (4) To what extent does the school seem to be a caring community?

A mixed methods approach was used to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community. This approach was chosen because, "A mixed methods design is useful to capture the best of both quantitative and qualitative approaches" (Creswell, 2003, p. 22). The study design was based in part on Englund's (1996) dissertation study, "Toward an Ethics Education Program: A Case Study of Creating the Thoughtful School." Englund studied a high school in San Diego, California at which she was a teacher. Englund reported: "A recent WASC Accreditation Report identified school climate as one of the major areas of improvement based on the emerging concerns and emphasis expressed in the self-study" (p. 3). One of the purposes of her study "was to identify parent, staff, and student attitudes

and concerns about ethics education” (p. 4). Englund collected data through the use of a survey, focus group interviews, and observations.

Likewise, for the current study, data was collected through the use of a survey, focus group interviews, and observations. Lickona and Davidson’s survey, *School as a Caring Community Profile-II (SCCP-II)*, was used to investigate stakeholders’ perceptions of school climate (Appendix A). The survey yielded large amounts of data for many stakeholders and was a good way of eliciting the broad perceptions of larger numbers of community members than if only qualitative methods were used (Creswell, 2003). Conducting focus group interviews, with open-ended questions, allowed stakeholders to elaborate about their perceptions yielding in-depth data (Creswell). Observations were also conducted because researchers must use caution when conducting perception studies. People can have very different perceptions of the same event (Giorgi, 1997).

INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Selection of School Site

The school site, St. California’s (pseudonym), was purposefully selected. “In **purposeful sampling**, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2002, p. 194). The central phenomenon being studied was a school as a caring community. St. California’s was purposely selected based on my observations and experiences at the school; my son was a student at this school. St. California’s uses the Caring School Community Program by the Developmental Studies Center. The researcher contacted the co-principals of St. California’s to gain permission to conduct this study (Appendix B). Choosing this site helped define the attributes that make a

school a caring community and may help other schools to improve their climate by making their schools more caring.

Description of School

St. California's is a Catholic, K-8 school. The school was founded over 40 years ago and is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and by the Western Catholic Education Association. The school is also a member of the National Catholic Educational Association. The school has two classes per grade. The school community is made up of approximately 294 families, 430 students, 18 regular classroom teachers, 2 P.E. teachers, 1 music teacher, 1 computer teacher, 1 Spanish teacher, 2 principals and 9 staff members. There are 123 sixth through eighth grade students. The school offers extended day care for students. Students may be dropped off as early as 7 a.m. and must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. School starts at 8 a.m. and ends at 2:35 p.m. Extracurricular programs such as soccer, volleyball, football, track, and basketball are offered for boys or girls. Outside vendors provide lunches and milk that students may purchase in advance.

Regular rates for tuition and registration are over \$5300 per child per school year. Students are given a discounted rate, approximately \$4000 per child per school year, if their families are active and contributing members of the adjoining parish and if parents give twenty volunteer service hours to the school. Students must purchase school uniforms. The curriculum includes: Religion, Mathematics, Language Arts, Reading, Social Studies/History, Science, Music, Computer, Physical Education and Spanish.

On Monday mornings, weekly assemblies begin the school week. Students gather to pray, say the Pledge of Allegiance, sing songs such as God Bless America and Yankee

Doodle, hear announcements, and build community. It is very common to hear character building activities at these assemblies. For example, at the very beginning of one assembly, the principal asked students to turn to the student standing next to them and say one nice thing about them. At another assembly, the principal began by asking the students to think of one thing that they are very good at and then asked them to tell the students standing next to them.

The school holds many fundraisers to raise money for the school including a Silent Auction/Dinner Dance, Golf Tournament, Fall Festival, and Jog-A-Thon. The school also has fundraisers and collections to help the needy.

Selection of Participants

All parents, teachers, administrators, staff members and sixth through eighth grade students were invited to participate in the study. Participation was voluntary.

Survey Procedures

A newsletter announcement introduced the study to St. California's school community and subsequent newsletter announcements were printed when surveys were distributed (Appendix C). Surveys, cover letters and consent forms were distributed to teachers, administrators, and staff members through their campus mailboxes and to parents via weekly home folders (Appendix D). Two weeks after the initial newsletter announcement, surveys, cover letters and consent forms were distributed to sixth through eighth grade students (and to their parents to obtain permission) via weekly home folders (Appendix E). Three weeks after the initial newsletter announcement, a follow-up reminder announcement appeared in the newsletter. Six weeks after the initial newsletter

announcement, surveys were redistributed to teachers, staff, administrators, and sixth through eighth grade students; these stakeholders were given a one-week deadline to return completed surveys. Table 1 shows survey distribution and response rate.

Table 1. Survey Distribution and Response Rate

Stakeholder Group	Number of Surveys Distributed	Number of Surveys Returned with Proper Consent Forms
Parents	588*	97 (16.50%) **
Students	123	28 (22.76%)
Staff	34	24 (70.59%)
Total	745*	149 (20%)

*Note: Estimated number of parents is 588 based on 294 families X 2 parents; the actual number of distributed surveys is probably less than this. **Parent response rates may be a little higher. Parent surveys were received from 89 families (30.27% of the families).

Survey Instrument

Lickona and Davidson's survey, *School as a Caring Community Profile-II (SCCP-II)*, was used to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of school climate (Appendix A). The survey measured stakeholders' perceptions related to the following five sub-scales: "Perceptions of Student Respect," "Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging," "Perceptions of Students' Shaping of Their Environment," "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff," and "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents" (Center for the 4th & 5th Rs, 2003). The survey "contains 42 items in a 5-point Likert format" (Center for the 4th & 5th Rs, p. 1). Students did not complete all 42 questions because the authors report: "validation analysis indicates stronger validity and reliability when students complete

the first 34 items only and adults complete all 42 items” (p. 1). “Reliability alphas in U.S. samples range from .73 to .86 for youth and from .73 to .88 for adults” (p. 1).

The SCCP-II has previously been used in studies of school climate including those conducted by the Hawthorn School District 73 and a dissertation done by Kokolis (2004) at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. For the first study: “As a part of its commitment to creating a caring community within its schools, Hawthorn School District 73, in October and November 2005, studied current perceptions of school climate by means of a survey of its staff, students and parents” (p. 1). Kokolis’ “study was a cross case study, a comparative analysis between two high schools in southwestern Pennsylvania” (p. iii); one high school used a character education program and one high school did not use a character education program.

Focus Group Interviews

For the current study, the researcher chose to use focus group interviews because, “Focus groups can be used to collect shared understanding from several individuals as well as to get views from specific people” (Creswell, 2002, p. 206). All stakeholders were invited to participate in the focus group interviews. Space was provided at the end of the surveys for stakeholders to provide their contact information if they wanted to participate in the focus group interviews. Twenty-five parents, four teachers and nine students provided contact information. The researcher placed the parents’ names in a paper bag to randomly select participants for the interviews. The researcher contacted parents whose names were selected and arranged two group interviews. Six parents agreed to participate in the first interview; five showed up. Seven parents agreed to participate in the second interview; six showed up.

The researcher contacted all four teachers; they all agreed to participate. On the day of the interview two teachers were unable to attend due to illness or another appointment that came up. The group interview took place with two teachers and two individual interviews were scheduled. The researcher contacted the parents of all nine students. Six students agreed to participate in the group interviews. Two group interviews were conducted, each with three students. Staff and administrators were invited to participate but did not volunteer for the study. The researcher intended to have four to six participants per interview but the logistics did not turn out that way. There were a total of 21 interview participants.

“Focus groups are advantageous when the interaction among interviewees will likely yield the best information and when interviewees are similar to and cooperative with each other” (Creswell, 2002, p. 206). For these reasons, separate interviews were conducted with different stakeholder groups. The purpose of the focus group interviews was to explore in-depth the stakeholders’ perceptions and experiences of the school as caring community. An advantage of using interviews is that “The interviewer can go anywhere the discussion takes him. This capacity for exploration allows new and potentially valuable information to appear that would otherwise not have been revealed” (Krause, 1996, p. 63). The interviews yielded valuable information that was not obtained through the survey.

Focus Group Interview Protocol

In focus group interviews, “The researcher asks a small number of general questions and elicits responses from all individuals in the group” (Creswell, 2002, p. 206). The focus group interview protocol was based on Lickona and Davidson’s SCCP-II survey, and was modeled in part after Kokolis’ (2004) school climate dissertation study using the same survey

instrument, and additionally on Rieman's (1986) study, "The Essential Structure of A Caring Interaction" (as cited in Creswell, 1998).

Rieman conducted phenomenological interviews to understand "From the perspective of the client, what is the essential structure of a caring nurse-client interaction?" (p. 272). Although the current study is neither a phenomenological study, nor a study of nurse-client interactions, Rieman's interview questions provide an excellent model for creating questions appropriate to learning more about the school as a caring community. Rieman's interview questions were as follows:

- Describe a personal interaction you have had with a registered nurse who you felt was caring.
- Try to describe how you felt in that interaction.
- Describe a personal interaction you have had with a registered nurse who you felt was noncaring.
- Try to describe how you felt during that interaction.
- Please do not stop until you feel that you have discussed your feelings as completely as possible (p. 279).

The *SCCP-II* survey asks stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community. Some of Kokolis' wording was used in the development of the current study's focus group interview protocol. Kokolis' focus group discussion guide included the following question which is pertinent to this current study, "Would you say that your school has a sense of being a caring school community? Could you describe some things that would be needed to have a caring school community?" (p. 162).

Based on the *SCCP-II* survey, Kokolis' and Rieman's studies, the following interview questions were created for the current study:

1. Please describe an interaction you have had with someone in this school community that demonstrated caring. Please describe how this interaction made you feel.
2. Please describe an interaction you have had with a member of this school community that did not demonstrate caring. Please describe how this interaction made you feel.
3. Do you see this school as a caring community? Please explain.
4. Is there anything else you'd like to add that you think is important to know about this school as a caring community?

This focus group interview protocol is in Appendix F. Participant consent, student assent, and parental permission forms can be found in Appendixes G and H.

Observations

This study was a perception study so observations were very important to understand first-hand what the school climate actually looked like in academic classes and during transition and lunch periods. “**Observation** is the process of gathering first-hand information by observing people and places at a research site” (Creswell, 2002, p. 199). Approximately thirty minute observations were conducted for three lunch periods and six academic classes of sixth through eighth grade students. Six observations of sixth through eighth grade transition periods ranged from five to fifteen minutes.

The researcher chose to conduct multiple observations of lunch and passing periods based on her dissertation committee and Creswell’s (2002) expert advice. Creswell informs: “*Conduct multiple observations over time to obtain the best understanding of the site and the individuals*” (p. 201). Conducting multiple observations added depth to the study.

The researcher was a non-participant observer for the formal observations conducted: “A **non-participant observer** is an observer who visits a site and records notes without

becoming involved in the activities of the participants” (Creswell, p. 200). As a parent at this school, the researcher was also a participant observer for informal observations.

Students may behave differently in the presence of authority figures. Gootman (2001) provides an excellent example which illustrates this point. Gootman explained that a student, when a teacher was watching, picked up a piece of trash and disposed of it, but that this same student’s behavior was quite different a few days later, when no teachers were watching. She stated: “He looked around and saw no one (he thought I was heavily engrossed in a book), so he stepped over the wrapper and proceeded on his way. If he wouldn’t be caught doing good, why bother?” (p. 53).

Finders (1997), in her study, *just girls. hidden literacies and life in junior high*, wore t-shirts and jeans when she was observing middle school students so as not to look like an authority figure, nor stand out to get better results. She explains: “I wanted students to view me as different from other adults who held authority in the school....I deliberately dressed to distinguish myself from school personnel, most often wearing jeans, a T-shirt, and tennis shoes” (p. 2). Likewise, for the current study, the researcher wore clothing to blend in with the middle school students’ uniforms or jeans on jeans days so as not to look like an authority figure.

Fieldnotes were recorded using an observation instrument (Appendix I). The researcher took descriptive and reflective notes. “**Reflective fieldnotes** record personal thoughts that researchers have that relate to their insights, hunches, or broad ideas or themes that emerge during the observation (e.g., what sense did you make of the site, people, and situation)” (Creswell, 2002, p. 203). Girvin (2001), in a dissertation study involving school climate, recorded field notes which “consisted of chronological scripting of events, diagrams

of physical settings, and quotations of comments and conversations when feasible” (p. 56). Likewise, this current study recorded fieldnotes for “chronological scripting of events, diagrams of physical settings, and quotations of comments and conversations when feasible” and also recorded activities, behaviors, and interactions observed (Creswell, 2002). The observation instrument was modified from Creswell’s (2002) example of an observational instrument (p. 202).

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of Survey Data

The researcher used descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the quantitative data from surveys. Creswell (2003) advises that “a descriptive analysis of data...should indicate the means, standard deviations, and range of scores” (p. 160). Patten (2004) explains that using descriptive statistics is advantageous because summarizing data makes it easier to understand. Frequency tables can be particularly useful in showing “the major trends” in a set of data (Patten, p. 97). Means, standard deviations, and frequency tables were calculated for survey data collected.

“For many quantitative researchers, the use of descriptive statistics is only the beginning of their data analysis” (Creswell, 2002, p. 235); thus inferential statistics were used to test for significant differences between various stakeholders’ survey responses. Researchers often use the *t* test and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test for significant differences. “A single *t* test can compare only two means, but a single ANOVA can compare a number of means, which is a great advantage” (Patten, p. 121). ANOVA’s were used to test for significant differences among all three stakeholders’ overall mean

scores for each survey sub-scale and for each individual survey question numbers 1 through 34. Since there were only two stakeholder groups (parents and staff) for survey questions thirty-five through forty-two, t tests were used to compare means on these questions. The alpha level for all the significance tests was .05. “A **significance level** (or **alpha level**) is a probability level that reflects the maximum risk you are willing to take that any observed differences are due to chance” (Creswell, 2002, p. 242).

Analysis of Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber. To “get a sense of the whole” (Creswell, 2002, p. 266), the researcher listened to each stakeholder group’s tapes while reading the transcriptions. Stakeholders’ responses were analyzed for caring and non-caring experiences and for stakeholders’ opinions of the school as a caring community.

Analysis of Observations

Observational fieldnotes were typed up by the researcher. Detailed descriptions of observations were written in narrative form to give readers a better understanding of participants at St. California’s. Observations were analyzed for caring and non-caring interactions.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Triangulation and member checking are used to ensure the reliability and validity of research studies (Creswell, 2002). Triangulation can be achieved by collecting data from different individuals and using different methods of data collection (Creswell). Triangulation was achieved in this study by obtaining data from different stakeholders (parents, teachers,

administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students) and by using different methods of data collection (survey, interview and observational data).

Member checking was conducted with parents and teachers to determine the study's accuracy. In member checking, "Participants are asked about many aspects of the study, such as whether the description is complete and realistic, if the themes are accurate to include, and if the interpretations are fair and representative of those that can be made (p. 280).

RESEARCHER BIAS

According to Janesick (2000), "The qualitative researcher is the research instrument" (p. 380). My prior knowledge influenced my analysis and interpretations of the data. Krause (1996) explains that when two people are looking at the same set of data, two different interpretations may result. Since "qualitative research is interpretative research," Creswell (2003) states that it is very important for qualitative researchers to "explicitly identify their biases, values, and personal interests about their research topic and process" (p. 184). I will provide some background information so readers may understand my biases, values, and personal interests in this study.

I taught in Catholic schools for six years: two years teaching fifth through eighth grade science and sixth grade language arts; and four years teaching freshman Algebra and ninth through twelfth grade science classes (Introduction to Physical Science, Biology: An Ecological Approach, and Chemistry). My son was a student at St. California's. As a parent at this school, I have personal or professional relationships with many of the parents, students, teachers, and staff. As a parent at the school, I was required to give twenty hours of

service each year. I have volunteered in many ways, including: helping at special event days, driving and supervising children for field trips, and volunteering in the classrooms for art.

To account for researcher bias, I have built in mechanisms to increase validity and reliability. I used triangulation and member checking with interview participants to ensure that my analysis accurately reflects their perceptions. For the observations, I have decreased the amount of bias by increasing the number of observations and narrowing the range of observations (Creswell, 2002).

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. *Population and Sample Size:* The study is limited to one school site, the small sample size, and low response rate.
2. *Survey Questions:* The survey seeks the perceptions of the stakeholders. Individual's perceptions are based on the truth as they experience it. Individuals bring their unique life experiences with them; individuals may have different perceptions of the same event (Giorgi, 1997).
3. *Interviews:* Creswell (2002) lists disadvantages of using interview data:

Some disadvantages are that interviews only provide information “filtered” through the views of the interviewers ... Also...interview data may be deceptive and provide the perspective the interviewee wants the researcher to hear. Another disadvantage is that the presence of the researcher may affect how the interviewee responds. Interviewee responses also may not be articulate, perceptive, or clear (p. 205).

Creswell also cautions that when audio-taping focus group interviews, “the transcriptionist may have difficulty discriminating among the voices of individuals in the group. Another problematic aspect of conducting focus group interviews is that

the researcher often has difficulty taking notes because so much is occurring” (p. 206).

4. *Observations*: For formal recorded observations the researcher was a non-participant observer. “[B]y not actively participating, the researcher is partially removed from actual experiences, and the observations made may not be as concrete as if the inquirer had participated in the activities” (Creswell, 2002, p. 200). The researcher, as a parent at the school, was also a participant observer for informal observations.

The next chapter presents findings and results for the research questions addressed in this study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Survey, interview, and observational data were collected and analyzed. This chapter presents findings and results to the following research questions: (1) What are the different stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community? (2) Are there significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups? If differences exist, what are they? (3) In what ways have stakeholders experienced, or not experienced, caring at this school? and (4) To what extent does the school seem to be a caring community?

ANSWER TO RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCHOOL AS A CARING COMMUNITY?

Lickona and Davidson's survey, *School as a Caring Community Profile-II (SCCP-II)*, was distributed to all stakeholders at St. California's. Students were given a shorter version because the authors report: "validation analysis indicates stronger validity and reliability when students complete the first 34 items only and adults complete all 42 items" (p. 1).

SPSS 14.0 was used to construct frequency tables and tables of means and standard deviations for stakeholders' responses to each of the five survey sub-scales: "Perceptions of Student Respect," "Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging," "Perceptions of Students' Shaping of Their Environment," "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff," and "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents" (Center for the 4th & 5th Rs).

“Perceptions of Student Respect”

Frequency tables show stakeholders’ responses to sub-scale IA of the survey questions: “Perceptions of Student Respect” (Appendix J). This scale contains nine questions. Lickona and Davidson recommend reverse scoring some questions on this scale (Center for the 4th & 5th Rs, 2003). **Questions 12, 15, 17 and 20 were reversed scored so that, for all questions, “A higher mean indicates a more positive school climate” (Hawthorn School District 73 SCCP, 2005, p. 2). (** Indicates reverse-scored questions have been rewritten in the discussion below in order to avoid confusion when discussing the data. The original questions can be found in Appendix A).

For the first question, 90.7% of parents answered that students treated classmates with respect “Frequently,” or “Almost Always.” Comparatively fewer staff (83.4%) and even fewer students (71.4%), selected these same categories. Some students (21.4%), staff (16.7%) and parents (6.2%) thought that students treated classmates with respect “As Often as Not.” Two students (7.2%) and some parents (3.1%) parents selected “Almost Never” or “Sometimes,” while staff did not select these categories.

Stakeholders’ responses to question four showed that 83.3% of parents, 75% of staff and only 53.6% of students, perceived that students respect the personal property of others “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” More students (32.1%) selected “Almost Never” or “Sometimes” than staff (8.3%) or parents (4.1%).

In question seven, 83.5% of parents, 70.8% of staff and 64.3% of students selected that students show respect for school property “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Some students (17.8%) selected “Sometimes” or “Almost Never” compared to only 4.2% of staff, and 2.1% of parents.

In question nine, an overwhelming majority of parents (94.9%) indicated that students behaved respectfully toward all school staff “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Fewer staff (87.5%) and even fewer students (75%), selected the above two categories. Students (7.2%) were the only group that selected “Almost Never” or “Sometimes” for this question.

Stakeholders’ responses to question **12 revealed that 95.9% of parents and 92.8% of students believed that students were respectful of their teachers “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Comparatively fewer staff (83.3%) selected the above two categories. Four out of the twenty-four staff members (16.7%), selected that students were respectful of their teachers “Almost Never” compared to three out of the ninety-seven parents (3.1%). No students selected the “Almost Never” category.

For question fifteen**, 95.8% of staff, 88.7% of parents and 82.2% of students, believed that students *do not* pick on other students “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” While an overwhelming majority of staff believed that students do not pick on each other, parents and students did not have an equally strong positive opinion. Some students (14.3%) and parents (7.2%) selected “As Often as Not” compared to 4.2% of staff.

For question seventeen**, 95.8% of staff and 89.7% of parents, believed that students *do not* show poor sportsmanship “Frequently” or “Almost Always,” while only 78.5% of students believe the same. More students (10.7%) than parents (4.1%), or staff (0%) believed that students *do not* show poor sportsmanship “Almost Never” or “Sometimes.”

For question twenty**, “Students are *not* disrespectful toward their schoolmates,” the majority of stakeholders, (95.8% of staff, 90.7% of parents, and 85.7% of students),

responded that students were *not* disrespectful toward their schoolmates “Frequently” or “Almost Always.”

In response to question 23, only 66.7% of parents, 62.5% of staff and 50% of students believed that students refrained from put-downs (negative, hurtful comments) “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Many students (35.7%) responded that students refrained from put-downs “Almost Never” or “Sometimes.” Staff (20.8%) and parents (16.7%) selected “Sometimes” but did not select “Almost Never.”

Table 2 shows stakeholders’ mean scores and standard deviations for sub-scale 1A, “Perceptions of Student Respect.” Parents had the greatest overall mean score (4.26) for this scale, followed by staff (4.04) and then students (3.89). Parents perceived student respect to be higher than the other two stakeholder groups.

“Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging”

Frequency tables show stakeholders’ responses to sub-scale IB of the survey questions: “Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging” (Appendix K). This scale contains the following nine questions: 2, 3, 5, 10, 13, 16, 18, 21, 24. **Question 2 was reversed scored so that, for all questions, “A higher mean indicates a more positive school climate” (Hawthorn School District 73 SCCP, 2005, p. 2). (**The original question can be found in Appendix A).

For **question 2, “Students *do not* exclude those who are different (e.g. belong to a different race, religion, or culture),” 91.7% of staff, 86.6% of parents and 78.6% of students selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” 7.1% of students and 6.2% of parents selected

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations for Sub-Scale IA, “Perceptions of Student Respect”

Question	Parents		Students		Staff	
	Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	(S.D.)
1. Students treat classmates with respect.	4.21	(.691)	3.82	(.945)	4.00	(.590)
4. Students respect the personal property of others.	4.19	(.850)	3.29	(1.301)	3.88	(.850)
7. Students show respect for school property (such as desks, walls, bathrooms, buildings, and grounds).	4.21	(.763)	3.64	(1.193)	3.75	(.676)
9. Students behave respectfully toward all school staff (including secretaries, custodians, aides, and bus drivers).	4.55	(.595)	4.11	(1.066)	4.29	(.690)
**12. Students are disrespectful toward their teachers.	4.66	(.815)	4.46	(.744)	4.00	(1.445)
**15. Students pick on other students.	4.12	(.754)	4.21	(.833)	4.21	(.509)
**17. Students show poor sportsmanship.	4.33	(.774)	3.86	(.970)	4.33	(.565)
**20. Students are disrespectful toward their schoolmates.	4.42	(.762)	4.39	(.832)	4.33	(.565)
23. Students refrain from put-downs (negative, hurtful comments).	3.67	(.948)	3.25	(1.175)	3.54	(.977)
Overall Sub-scale IA	4.26	(.460)	3.89	(.591)	4.04	(.398)

“As Often as Not.” Some students (14.2%), staff (8.3%), and parents (7.2%) selected “Almost Never” or “Sometimes.”

For question three, 95.8% of staff believed that students try to comfort peers who have experienced sadness “Frequently” or “Almost Always” compared to 83.5% of parents and only 67.9% of students. Several students (21.4%) and parents (9.3%) selected “As Often as Not.” Some students (10.7%) and parents (7.2%) selected “Almost Never” or “Sometimes” while only one staff member (4.2%) selected the former category.

For question 5, “Students help each other, even if they are not friends,” 87.5% of staff and 70.9% of parents selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” while comparatively only 46.4% of students selected these same categories. A higher percentage of students (32.1%) selected “Almost Never” or “Sometimes” than parents (7.3%) or staff (0%).

The majority of staff (95.8%) and parents (92.8%) believed that students work well together (question 10) “Frequently” or “Almost Always” compared to only 71.4% of students. Parents and staff did not select “Almost Never” or “Sometimes” for this question while a few students (10.7%) selected “Sometimes.”

For question 13, 87.5% of staff, 81.4% of parents and 78.5% of students believed “Students help new students feel accepted” “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Some students (10.7%) selected “Sometimes” compared to 4.2% of staff and 2.1% of parents. Only one parent (1%) selected “Almost Never” in response to this question.

For question 16, a higher percentage of staff members (87.5%) thought that “Students are willing to forgive each other” “Frequently” or “Almost Always” than parents (77.3%) or students (75%). Parents, students and staff did not select “Almost Never” for this question and only a few students (7.1%) and parents (4.1%) selected “Sometimes.”

For question 18, a much higher percentage of staff (87.5%) thought that “Students are patient with each other” “Frequently” or “Almost Always” than parents (61.9%) or students (53.6%). Parents (38.2%) and students (46.4%) selected “Sometimes” or “As Often as Not” more than staff members (12.5%). None of the stakeholders selected “Almost Never” in response to this question.

Parents had a more positive opinion when it came to question 21, than students or staff. 88.4% of parents selected that “Students listen to each other in class discussions” “Frequently” or “Almost Always” compared to 78.6% of students and 73.9% of staff. A higher percentage of staff members (26.1%) selected “Sometimes” or “As Often as Not” than students (21.4%) or parents (11.6%). None of the stakeholders chose “Almost Never” in response to this question.

For question 24, staff members and parents had a much more positive perception of students sharing what they have with others than students. 91.6% of staff members and 89.6% of parents selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” compared to only 64.3% of students. Many students (35.8%) thought that students shared what they had with others “As Often as Not,” “Sometimes” or “Almost Never.”

Table 3 shows stakeholders’ mean scores and standard deviations for sub-scale IB, “Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging.” Staff had the greatest overall mean score (4.20) for this scale, followed by parents (4.12), and then students (3.89).

“Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment”

Frequency tables show stakeholders’ responses to sub-scale IC of the survey questions: “Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment” (Appendix L). This

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations for Sub-Scale IB, “Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging”

Question	Parents		Students		Staff	
	Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	(S.D.)
**2. Students exclude those who are						
different (e.g. belong to a different race, religion, or culture).	4.41	(.933)	4.25	(1.295)	4.46	(.884)
3. Students try to comfort peers who have experienced sadness.	4.22	(.927)	3.86	(.970)	4.46	(.884)
5. Students help each other, even if they are not friends.	3.81	(.850)	3.21	(1.197)	4.04	(.550)
10. Students work well together.	4.33	(.608)	4.07	(1.052)	4.33	(.565)
13. Students help new students feel accepted.	4.08	(.799)	4.25	(1.041)	4.25	(.794)
16. Students are willing to forgive each other.	4.06	(.827)	4.04	(.922)	4.21	(.658)
18. Students are patient with each other.	3.65	(.817)	3.61	(.916)	4.00	(.659)
21. Students listen to each other in class discussions.	4.28	(.724)	4.07	(.979)	3.74	(.752)
24. Students share what they have with others.	4.25	(.722)	3.68	(1.124)	4.29	(.859)
Overall Sub-scale IB	4.12	(0.490)	3.89	(0.610)	4.20	(0.479)

scale contains the following seven questions: 6, 8, 11, 14, 19, 22, and 25. There were no reversed scored questions for this sub-scale.

In response to question 6, “When students do something hurtful, they try to make up for it (for example, they apologize or they do something nice)” three-quarters of staff members selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” while only 65.6% of parents and 57.1% of students selected these categories. A higher percentage of students (17.8%) and parents (11.5%) selected “Sometimes” or “Almost Never” than staff (4.2%).

The majority of parents (87.6%) believed that “Students try to get other students to follow school rules” “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Fewer staff (66.7%) and even fewer students (46.5%) selected those categories. Some students (28.5%), staff (12.5%) and parents (5.1%) selected “Sometimes” or “Almost Never” in response to this question.

For question 11, many parents (84.5%) and staff (79.2%) thought that “Students help to improve the school” “Frequently” or “Almost Always” compared to only 53.6% of students. Many students (21.4%) selected “Sometimes” or “Almost Never” compared to only 4.2% of staff and 3.1% of parents.

For question 14, many parents (77.3%) and staff members (75%) believed that “Students try to have a positive influence on the behavior of other students” “Frequently” or “Almost Always” while fewer students (53.6%) believed this to be the case. Several students (21.4%) and parents (8.2%) selected “Sometimes” or “Almost Never” compared to 4.2% of staff.

For question 19, similar percentages of staff (79.1%), parents (75%) and students (75%) believed that “Students resolve conflicts without fighting, insults, or threats”

“Frequently” or “Almost Always.” A few students (10.7%), parents (4.1%) and a staff member (4.2%) selected “Sometimes” or “Almost Never” in response to this question.

Only 52.1% of staff, 50% of students and 48.4% of parents selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” for question 22, “When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.” Several students (25%), parents (24.2%) and staff (21.7%) selected “Sometimes” or “Almost Never” for this question.

For question 25, “Students are involved in helping to solve school problems” only 66.7% of staff, 57.9% of parents and 46.5% of students chose “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Several students (21.4%) and parents (21.1%) chose “Sometimes” or “Almost Never” compared to 12.5% of staff.

Table 4 shows stakeholders’ mean scores and standard deviations for sub-scale IC, “Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment.” Parents had the greatest overall mean score (3.80) for this scale, followed closely by staff (3.79) and then students (3.41).

“Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff”

Frequency tables show stakeholders’ responses to sub-scale IIA of the survey questions: “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff” (Appendix M). This scale contains the following ten questions: 26, 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40. **Question 32 was reversed scored so that, for all questions, “A higher mean indicates a more positive school climate” (Hawthorn School District 73 SCCP, 2005, p. 2). (**The original question can be found in Appendix A).

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviations for Sub-Scale IC, “Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment”

Question	Parents		Students		Staff	
	Mean	(S. D.)	Mean	(S. D.)	Mean	(S. D.)
6. When students do something hurtful, they try to make up for it (for example, they apologize or they do something nice).	3.75	(.984)	3.39	(1.031)	3.96	(.806)
8. Students try to get other students to follow school rules.	4.03	(.742)	3.29	(1.213)	3.67	(.868)
11. Students help to improve the school.	4.07	(.753)	3.36	(1.193)	4.04	(.806)
14. Students try to have a positive influence on the behavior of other students.	3.87	(.799)	3.39	(1.133)	3.79	(.658)
19. Students resolve conflicts without fighting, insults, or threats.	4.04	(.882)	3.82	(1.090)	3.96	(.751)
22. When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.	3.31	(.979)	3.29	(1.213)	3.43	(.992)
25. Students are involved in helping to solve school problems.	3.56	(1.118)	3.36	(1.162)	3.67	(.868)
Overall Sub-scale IC	3.80	(0.637)	3.41	(0.852)	3.79	(0.590)

A higher percentage of staff (87.5%) and parents (72.1%) selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” for question 26, “Students can talk to their teachers about problems that are bothering them,” than students (46.5%). Only 4.2% of staff thought that students could talk to their teachers about their problems “Sometimes” while 25% of students and 11.4% of parents thought students could talk to their teachers about their problems “Sometimes” or “Almost Never.”

For question 29, all staff (100%) believed that “Teachers go out of their way to help students who need extra help” “Frequently” or “Almost Always” compared to 88.6% of parents and only 67.9% of students. Some students (17.9%) and parents (7.2%) selected that teachers go out of their way to help “Sometimes” or “Almost Never.”

The majority of staff (95.8%), parents (94.8%) and students (82.2%) selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” in response to question 31, “In this school you can count on adults to try to make sure that students are safe.” Only 1 student (3.6%) and 1 parent (1%) selected the categories “Almost Never” or “Sometimes.”

For question 32, all parents (100%) believed that teachers were fair in their treatment of students “Frequently” or “Almost Always” compared to 91.7% of staff and only 78.5% of students. Some students (10.7%) and staff (8.4%) of staff believed that teachers were fair in their treatment of students “Sometimes” or “Almost Never.” Parents did not select these categories.

For question 34, the majority of parents (94.8%) and students (89.3%) believed that “Parents show respect for teachers” “Frequently” or “Almost Always” compared to only 73.9% of staff. Many staff members (26.1%) selected “As Often as Not” compared to 10.7%

of students and 4.1% of parents. Only 1 parent (1.0%) selected “Sometimes.” No stakeholders selected “Almost Never” in response to this question.

For question 35, “In their interactions with students, teachers act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach,” all staff (100%) and an overwhelming majority of parents (95.8%) selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Less than a handful of parents (4.1%) selected “Almost Never,” “Sometimes” or “As Often as Not” in response to this question.

In response to question 36, “In their interactions with students, *all school staff* (the principals, other administrators, counselors, coaches, aides, custodians, and others) act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach,” all staff (100%) and 92.7% of parents selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Some parents (7.3%) chose “Almost Never,” “Sometimes” or “As Often as Not” in response to this question.

All staff (100%) and 96.9% of parents selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” for question 38, “Faculty and staff treat each other with respect (are caring, supportive, etc.).” A few parents (3.1%) selected “As Often as Not.” Neither parents nor staff selected “Almost Never” or “Sometimes.”

A majority of staff (87.5%) and parents (86.9%) believed that “Faculty and staff are involved in helping to make school decisions” “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Only 2.2% of parents selected “Sometimes.” Neither parents nor staff selected “Almost Never.”

Almost all parents (99%) and 95.8% of staff selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” in response to question 40, “This school shows appreciation for the efforts of faculty and staff.” Neither parents nor staff selected “Almost Never” or “Sometimes.”

Table 5 shows stakeholders' mean scores and standard deviations for sub-scale IIA, "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff." Staff had the greatest overall mean score (4.56) for this scale followed closely by parents (4.52) and then students (4.14).

"Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents"

Frequency tables show stakeholders' responses to sub-scale IIB of the survey questions: "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents" (Appendix N). This scale contains the following seven questions: 27, 28, 30, 33, 37, 41 and 42. **Question 28 was reversed scored so that, for all questions, "A higher mean indicates a more positive school climate" (Hawthorn School District 73 SCCP, 2005, p. 2). (**The original question can be found in Appendix A).

All staff and students and 94.9% of parents chose "Frequently" or "Almost Always" in response to question 27, "Parents show that they care about their child's education and school behavior." A few parents (4.1%) selected "As Often as Not" while one parent (1.0%) selected "Sometimes."

For question **28, 93.8% of parents, 87.5% of staff and 85.8% of students believed that students were respectful towards their parents in the school environment "Frequently" or "Almost Always." Two stakeholders from each group selected "Almost Never" or "Sometimes."

The majority of parents (95.8%), staff (95.8%) and students (82.2%) believed "Teachers treat parents with respect" "Frequently" or "Almost Always." A higher percentage of students (10.7%) selected "Almost Never" or "Sometimes" for this question than parents (1.0%) or staff (0%).

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations for Sub-Scale IIA, “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff”

Question	Parents		Students		Staff	
	Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	(S.D.)
26. Students can talk to their teachers about problems that are bothering them.	3.87	(.996)	3.43	(1.289)	4.21	(.779)
29. Teachers go out of their way to help students who need extra help.	4.22	(.869)	4.04	(1.201)	4.63	(.495)
31. In this school you can count on adults to try to make sure that students are safe.	4.77	(.568)	4.54	(.999)	4.71	(.550)
**32. Teachers are unfair in their treatment of students.	4.87	(.342)	4.04	(1.261)	4.67	(1.007)
34. Parents show respect for teachers.	4.62	(.620)	4.64	(.678)	4.04	(.767)
35. In their interactions with students, teachers act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach.	4.60	(.688)	NA	(NA)	4.79	(.415)
36. In their interactions with students, <i>all school staff</i> (the principals, other administrators, counselors, coaches, aides, custodians, and others) act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach.	4.49	(.768)	NA	(NA)	4.79	(.415)
38. Faculty and staff treat each other with respect (are caring, supportive, etc.).	4.69	(.529)	NA	(NA)	4.83	(.381)
39. Faculty and staff are involved in helping to make school decisions.	4.39	(.770)	NA	(NA)	4.33	(.702)
40. This school shows appreciation for the efforts of faculty and staff.	4.73	(.470)	NA	(NA)	4.54	(.588)
Overall Sub-scale IIA	4.52	(0.423)	4.14	(0.854)	4.56	(0.282)

For question 33, a higher percentage of students (89.3%) and parents (86.5%) believed that “In this school parents treat other parents with respect” “Frequently” or “Almost Always” than staff (79.2%). Several staff members (20.8%) selected “As Often as Not” compared to 6.3% of parents and 3.6% of students. 7.3% of parents selected “Sometimes” and 7.1% of students selected “Almost Never” while staff did not select these categories.

The majority of parents (89.5%) and staff (86.9%) selected “Frequently” or “Almost Always” in response to question 37, “In their interactions with children, parents display the character qualities the school is trying to teach.” Some staff members (13%) and parents (10.5%) selected “Sometimes” or “As Often as Not.” Neither parents nor staff selected “Almost Never” in response to this question.

For question 41, all staff (100%) and 94.8% of parents believe that “This school treats parents with respect” “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” A much higher percentage of staff (91.7%) selected “Almost Always” than parents (only 60.4%). Some parents (5.1%) selected “Almost Never,” “Sometimes” or “As Often as Not” while staff did not select these categories.

For question 42, all staff (100%) and 95.9% of parents believed that “Parents are actively involved in this school” “Frequently” or “Almost Always.” Some parents (4.1%) selected “Sometimes” or “As Often as Not” while staff did not select these categories.

Table 6 shows stakeholders’ mean scores and standard deviations for sub-scale IIB, “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents.” Parents had the greatest overall mean score (4.56) for this scale followed closely by students (4.53) and staff (4.47).

Table 6. Means and Standard Deviations for Sub-Scale IIB, “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents”

Question	Parents		Students		Staff	
	Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	(S.D.)
27. Parents show that they care about their child’s education and school behavior.	4.69	(.601)	4.93	(.262)	4.54	(.509)
**28. Students are disrespectful toward their parents in the school environment.	4.68	(.700)	4.46	(.922)	4.13	(.992)
30. Teachers treat parents with respect.	4.68	(.638)	4.32	(1.219)	4.79	(.509)
33. In this school parents treat other parents with respect.	4.34	(.892)	4.39	(1.100)	4.04	(.690)
37. In their interactions with children, parents display the character qualities the school is trying to teach.	4.32	(.718)	NA	(NA)	4.13	(.757)
41. This school treats parents with respect.	4.52	(.711)	NA	(NA)	4.92	(.282)
42. Parents are actively involved in this school.	4.74	(.567)	NA	(NA)	4.75	(.442)
Overall Sub-scale IIB	4.56	(0.412)	4.53	(0.546)	4.47	(0.336)

**ANSWER TO RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: ARE THERE
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS BETWEEN
THE VARIOUS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS? IF DIFFERENCES
EXIST, WHAT ARE THEY?**

SPSS 14.0 was used to run a one-way analysis of variance to test for significant differences between stakeholders' overall mean scores for each of the five survey sub-scales (Appendix O). A one-way analysis of variance was run to test for significant differences between stakeholders' mean scores for individual survey questions one through thirty-four (Appendix P). Tukey's HSD post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to determine where the significant differences were (Appendixes O & P). Students were given a shorter version of the survey, answering only the first thirty-four questions. Questions thirty-four through forty-two were answered only by parents and staff; t-tests were conducted to test for significant differences between parents and staff's mean scores for these questions (Appendix Q).

“Perceptions of Student Respect”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Student Respect,” parents (4.26) had a significantly higher overall mean score than students (3.89). A one-way analysis of variance for the individual questions indicated that there were significant differences in perceptions among the various stakeholder groups for questions 1, 4, 7, 9, 12 and 17. Tukey's HSD post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to determine where the significant differences were (Appendix P).

For all of these questions except number 12, the significant differences in means were between parents and students. For question one, “Students treat classmates with respect,” parents had a significantly higher mean score (4.21) than students (3.82). For question 4,

“Students respect the personal property of others,” parents had a significantly higher mean score (4.19) compared to students (3.29). For question seven, “Students show respect for school property,” parents had a significantly higher mean score (4.21) than students (3.64). For question nine, “Students behave respectfully toward all school staff,” parents’ mean score was 4.55 which was significantly higher than students’ mean score of 4.11. For question seventeen, “Students *do not* show poor sportsmanship,” the parents’ mean score (4.33) was significantly higher than students’ mean score (3.86).

For question **twelve, “Students are *not* disrespectful toward their teachers,” the significant difference in means was between parents (4.66) and staff (4.00). Staff had a significantly lower perception of students acting respectfully toward their teachers.

“Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging,” no significant differences were found between stakeholders’ overall mean scores. A one-way analysis of variance indicated that there were significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups for questions 5, 21 and 24. Tukey’s HSD post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to determine where the significant differences were (Appendix P).

For question 5, “Students help each other, even if they are not friends,” both staff and parents had a significantly higher mean score (4.04 and 3.81 respectively) than students (3.21). For question 21, “Students listen to each other in class discussions,” parents had a significantly higher mean score (4.28) than staff (3.74). For question 24, staff and parents had a significantly higher perception of students sharing what they have with others than students. The mean scores were 4.29, 4.25 and 3.68 respectively.

“Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment,” parents (3.80) had a significantly higher overall mean score than students (3.41). A one-way analysis of variance indicated that there were significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups for questions 8, 11, and 14. Tukey’s HSD post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to determine where the significant differences were (Appendix P).

For question 8, “Students try to get other students to follow school rules,” parents had a significantly higher mean score (4.03) compared to students (3.29). For question 11, “Students help to improve the school,” both parents and staff had a significantly higher mean score than students. The mean scores were 4.07, 4.04 and 3.36 respectively. For question 14, “Students try to have a positive influence on the behavior of other students,” parents had a significantly higher mean score (3.87) than students (3.39).

“Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff,” parents (4.52) and staff (4.56) both had significantly higher overall mean scores than students (4.14). A one-way analysis of variance indicated that there were significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups for questions 26, **32 and 34. Tukey’s HSD post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to determine where the significant differences were (Appendix P). T-tests were conducted to test for significant differences in means between parents and staff for questions 35, 36, 38, 39 and 40. There was a significant difference between means for question 36 (Appendix Q).

For question 26, “Students can talk to their teachers about problems that are bothering them,” staff had a significantly higher mean score (4.21) than students (3.43). When it came to question **32 regarding teachers being fair in their treatment of students, both parents and staff had significantly higher mean scores compared to students. The mean scores were 4.87, 4.67 and 4.04 respectively. For question 34, “Parents show respect for teachers,” students and parents had significantly higher mean scores compared to staff. The mean score for students was 4.64, for parents 4.62 and for staff 4.04. For question 36, “In their interactions with students, *all school staff* (the principals, other administrators, counselors, coaches, aides, custodians, and others) act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach,” staff (4.79) had a significantly higher mean than parents (4.49).

“Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents,” no significant differences were found between stakeholders’ overall mean scores. A one-way analysis of variance indicated that there were significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups for questions 27 and **28. Tukey’s HSD post hoc multiple comparison tests were run to determine where the significant differences were (Appendix P). For questions that only parents and staff were given, t-tests were conducted to test for significant differences in means. There was a significant difference in means for question 41 (Appendix Q).

Students had a significantly higher mean score (4.93) than staff (4.54) for question 27, “Parents show that they care about their child’s education and school behavior.” For question **28, regarding students being respectful of their parents in the school environment,

parents had a significantly higher mean score (4.68) than staff (4.13). For question 41, “This school treats parents with respect,” staff had a significantly higher mean score (4.92) compared to parents (4.52).

ANSWER TO RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: IN WHAT WAYS HAVE STAKEHOLDERS EXPERIENCED, OR NOT EXPERIENCED, CARING AT THIS SCHOOL?

Parent Interviews

Parents talked about caring and non-caring experiences at this school. This section describes the parents’ caring experiences. Caring experiences resulted from high parental involvement and support, the Student Community Outreach Program, the Buddy Program, open communication between parents and teachers, and shared Christian values.

PARENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF CARING EXPERIENCES

Parental involvement at this school was very high which directly contributes to creating a caring school environment. One parent compared her experience at a nearby public school to her experience here at St. California’s. “And there was a difference. And what I noticed most with the difference was the parental involvement, you know. It didn’t seem to me that the parents were as involved as they are here” (Roselyn).

Many parents talked about the personal, emotional and financial support school members received from other stakeholders at the school. One participant shared her experience of being emotionally supported when, on a weekday, she mentioned to another parent that it was the anniversary of her mother’s death and she was going to church. Even though the supportive parent was very stressed and busy, she dropped what she was doing so

she could sit next to the grieving parent at mass. Another participant, who had lost her father two years earlier, told of a caring interaction she had with her son's kindergarten teacher last year. The parent told the teacher how much the loss affected her and her son as they were very close to him. The teacher, having lost her own father, shared very openly how it affected her. The parent stated:

[H]ere was a teacher that was so willing to understand that that would have really impacted him because she was still so free with how her loss was still affecting her. So very open and very safe. Created such a safe environment (Rebecca).

The whole community came together to offer emotional and financial support for a school staff member whose son had a terrible accident and became paralyzed. A parent stated, "[T]here were huge fundraisers that were put on from the parents, administration. Everybody just steps up" (Roselyn).

In addition to emotional or financial support, stakeholders at this school frequently provided meals for families who were going through difficult times, or just had surgeries or given birth. Two parent participants, each in separate interviews, spoke of the extraordinary support they received when they were going through difficult times from other parents who took turns cooking meals for them. One parent, about five years ago, was pregnant and nursing a child when she found out her husband needed to have part of his colon removed because it was cancerous. She stated:

And there are so many women here that just stepped up to the plate, "We're bringing you meals this day, this day, this day." And let me tell you, my eyes were swirling in my head and I just felt so supported by the women and the families (Roselyn).

For one family this year, in addition to providing meals, the school also held a community-wide prayer service for their toddler who had an aggressive brain cancer (Appendix R).

Parents discussed the Student Community Outreach Program and how the program helps students to be caring individuals. Fifth and sixth grade students are required to do five volunteer service hours for the community and seventh and eighth grade students are required to do ten volunteer service hours. The parents talked about how touched they were by the children's contributions. For example, one parent mentioned a student who with the help of her parent coordinated a school-wide sock drive. The student placed very large cardboard boxes outside of each classroom door to collect socks for the needy.

Parents described caring interactions that they have seen which resulted from the school's Buddy Program. The Buddy Program pairs older students with younger students. Buddies meet during school hours on a monthly basis to do special activities and projects together. One parent commented on an interaction that resulted from the buddy program:

[S]ome of that student's previous buddies ran up to that student and gave them a big hug even though it wasn't the buddy from the year....I really felt touched that this student had made an impact on these little ones, that they remembered the kindness of this buddy and everything and came up and embraced. It just was wonderful" (Leah).

The Buddy Program gives younger students connections with older students who care for them when they see them on the campus.

Many parents truly believed that the teachers have the children's best interests at heart. Teachers show care by having open communication with parents and making themselves available. For example, one parent commented that her son was struggling a few years ago. She said, "And one of his teachers gave me the home phone number, let's call, let's talk about this. I'm here for him. I'm here for you. And I felt, I felt really supported" (Roselyn).

Another parent spoke of an interaction she had had the year prior when she was nervous about letting her daughter go on a field trip and the teacher went out of her way to make herself available for her.

And her teacher in kindergarten was amazing. And I was really nervous about letting her go on her first field trip. And she goes, "Here's my cell phone. You know, call me. You know, you can call me any time and talk to her and make sure she's safe." And I did. I called. I just needed to know she got where she needed to go and she was okay. But just those little gestures that just really put you at peace, or going the extra mile. And it's, that happened to be her teacher but I've experienced that from so many people here at the school (Molly).

This level of communication between parents and teachers plays a key part in making this caring community what it is. Parents feel safe to communicate their concerns regarding their children to teachers. Teachers show a level of care and understanding and truly want to help the parents and students work through their struggles.

The school invites guest speakers to PTG meetings to help inform parents about their children's academic or social needs. One parent spoke of a talk she attended at the school about three or four years ago. She liked being given information about the changes her teenager was going through. She also liked that the teachers were at the talk learning as well.

[T]hey talked about describing your children. When they're younger they're puppies and then as they get older they're more like cats. You can't pet them and that kind of a thing. But what I liked is that [St. California] cares enough to give parents information about how their kids are changing and, you know, psychologically, physically, those kinds of things. And keeping connection (Roselyn).

Two parents in one of the group interviews had attended both St. California's and a nearby public school's open houses when deciding where to send their children for kindergarten. The parents stated that there was a stark difference between the level of care and concern that St. California's showed for their children compared to the nearby public school.

And when the two kindergarten teachers got up for over an hour talking about everything our children, all the things our children were capable of, and why they needed full-day and just, they lit up like bulbs about what your children were going to get and how excited they were to get them.

And we went to [the other public school's] open house which I think was fifty minutes. Two and a half minutes were spent with introductions to the kindergarten teachers and the other time was spent on all your paperwork (Shannon).

In contrast to the public school's open house, parents liked the open communication from the teachers at St. California's. This communication made the parents feel that there was a high level of understanding and care for their children by St. California's teachers. One parent said that at the public school, "There was no caring about how that flower was going to grow. It was all about legally we need this, this and this from you" (Shannon).

Some parents believed that a special bond and attachment forms between stakeholders at this school because of shared underlying values of the Christian faith. Many parents believed that this bond and attachment contributes to the caring school community environment because parents teach and model appropriate caring Christian values to their children. One parent commented:

And so that bonds us all as adults because there is a common ground in how we want to really work at, at living in God's love and a spiritual presentation of who we are in terms of our character....And I think that -- that's a powerful attachment that keeps growing through every year (Rebecca).

Parents talked about how they liked that students learn Christian values from the school because it teaches them to care about really important matters and less about material things. One parent explained:

[M]y daughter, the other day, said to me [while] she was doing her Religion, ... "What are some of the other things we can do to make it a more special Christmas? You know, so it's not about the presents, Mom." And I like the star child. I like those things that do make you feel like you can, hopefully, get our kids to remember these things (Darcy).

“The star child” that this parent referred to is when the church puts a Christmas tree in the back of the church and hangs paper stars with names of the less fortunate on it. Parishioners and each class choose a star and buy and wrap presents so the needy will receive gifts for Christmas.

Parents at the school teach their children how to be compassionate for others. For example, one parent explained that her daughter had a problem with another student. She told her daughter that she really needed to work past it and pray for that student because her life circumstances were not that easy. Parents teach their children to care for others by trying to help them understand that others may have had different life experiences and come from different perspectives.

Parent interviews revealed that parents believed teachers care about the children. One parent explained how her daughter was talking to her about “the popular girls.”

[M]y daughter, who’s in second grade, had started mentioning how certain girls are popular. And she wasn’t saying it like, like she felt bad. I think she admires those girls. But I was just talking to her teacher and just made a comment about what my daughter had noticed, and, and that teacher was, like, “Oh. Well, I’m going to have to talk to those kids about that because I really don’t want them ... forming cliques” (Jessica).

The teachers at this school help to create a caring environment because they teach the children to accept and play with all the children. The parent commented that the teacher “wanted to stop it right then.” Teachers teach children Christian values of loving and accepting others.

Parents spoke of the caring interactions they had seen between students. Parents have seen students at this school take care of each other if they are hurt or crying.

[T]hat’s ultimately where the caring is. These kids embrace each other. They don’t bully each other. They step in and take care of one another. If somebody’s

hurting they'll come around. And I mean, I've seen them actually put arms around each other. They think about each other, they'll report out, somebody had a bad day. Well, what did you do? Well, I went over and – There, there is a, just a constant weave of how they ultimately are taking care of one another, not who's more powerful than the other, not who - I mean, I know that naturally can start to happen, but, but the basic theme is how they care about each other (Rebecca).

Another parent continued this conversation by replying, “And, and how they know that the umbrella of God is always there and through prayer they will be -, just pray to the Lord about everything and ...that is their bond” (Darcy).

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF NON-CARING EXPERIENCES

Parents were asked to describe interactions that they have had with other stakeholders at this school that did not demonstrate caring. This section describes the parents' perceptions of interactions that they viewed as non-caring.

In both of the focus group interviews, parents discussed “the kindergarten crisis.” This crisis centered around a kindergarten student at the school who was being raised by two female life-partners. There was a huge division among the parents at the school. Some parents believed that the child should not have been allowed to attend the school because the parents were of the same-sex which goes against the religion of the Catholic faith. Other parents felt that these parents were being non-caring and not thinking of the well-being of the child. A parent explained:

And so I was hearing all the discussion that was going on. And it sounds like there were a number of people who did not want to, did not want them here at this school. And that, that to me, struck me as not being caring at all and being terribly judgmental. I was really sorry to hear that there were people who, just because it was going to be difficult for them to explain it to their child, couldn't look - maybe even ask the school for ways to talk to the child about it and then move forward and embrace the child (Jessica).

A parent in the second group interview was visibly upset and in tears because it appeared for a while that the family was going to have to leave and parents were treating them in a non-caring way. She explained that the family was allowed to stay at the school because they got legal support from another parent at the school who did not even know them.

Parents also spoke of non-caring interactions in the parking lot. One parent said, “The parking lot situation when you first come to the school is a nightmare. And there is no Christian behavior going on in that parking lot. And it’s ugly and it’s just not good. It’s just not” (Shannon). Another parent, who lives close to the school, said that her neighbors have been treated in a non-caring way by St. California’s parents.

[O]ur neighbors go to the public school and they start at the same time. She cannot get out of her driveway. She’s been cursed at, flipped off by [St. California’s] parents in a rush to get their kids to school....I think it’s bringing out the worst in us and not the best. And unfortunately, it’s reflecting out to the community (Molly).

Parents spoke of non-caring interactions that they’ve had with other stakeholders. One parent explained her experience:

I’m in charge of a program at school....I asked for some assistance from somebody in a position that I thought would be able to provide some assistance. And this person just really was not only not receptive to it but was very loud and vocal and had, was in my face. And had a scene out on the field.

And it was just a really hurtful experience and it really made me question my dedication and why I was doing what I was doing to help the school. And I had to really move past it in order to be able to come here and spend the hours here that I do doing the program that I do (Molly).

The parent further explained that it really affected her deeply and that someone had brought the incident up to the principals. The principals called her in to talk to her. The principals gave her their full support. The principals stated that they expect everyone at the school,

including parents, to treat each other as Christians. This expectation helps to create a caring community environment.

Two parents in one of the group interviews described non-caring interactions that had taken place two or three years earlier between some students which led to two boy twins withdrawing from the school because they were being bullied. One parent stated that her daughter said something to her about one of the boys. The parent questioned her daughter,

“[D]o you think maybe he is just trying to get your attention?” Cause I said “You know, you could say that So-and-So, another boy, would do that, and you wouldn’t think a thing. But you’re being really tough on him.” I said “You need to try to be nice to him....You really ...need to be kinder” (Darcy).

The parents withdrew their twins from the school because of the bullying. Parents explained that the teachers and principals talked to the students after the twins had left. The principals informed the students that their behavior caused the twins to leave the school. The parents stated that they were glad the principals addressed the students on their inappropriate behaviors. The parents hoped that even though it was not a good situation that the students learned to be more caring from it because they saw the effects that they had on the twins.

Teacher Interviews

Teachers described many caring experiences at this school which included receiving emotional support and receiving caring notes from parents. These experiences are described below.

TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF CARING EXPERIENCES

One teacher spoke of how touched she was when stakeholders offered emotional support for Mary, the toddler with brain cancer. The teacher commented:

[W]e all had a Mass for [Mary], where, just by a few people saying that you know what? We need to step up our prayers. And before you know it we have a beautiful mass and great words spoken by our principal and parents showing up (Mrs. Randall).

One teacher was really touched by the emotional support she and her son received from stakeholders. The teacher explained through tears:

In the past year, many teachers and students and staff members have come up to me, demonstrating their caring for my son, who is an army personnel serving in Iraq. And many have come up to me [pause-crying]-. Many have come up to me telling me how wonderful it is that my son is serving in the army over there and supporting him with their prayers and letters and especially the groups that have collected donations for his troops and his men in the form of videos, books and letters of support (Mrs. Phillips).

She said her son “appreciated all their caring and their time that they put into that.” She explained that everybody- parents, students, teachers and priests – was involved. She stated: “I’ve always felt support from this school and parents and- and the students as well.”

Another teacher spoke of the support she received from teachers and staff when she cared for her elderly double-amputee father who lived with her for six years. She explained:

And some teachers went over and visited my father on a regular basis just so he would have someone extra to talk to besides just me all the time. And that was, I think, above and beyond what was called for. I mean, really, to go out of their way to come to my home and talk to my dad and just tell him stories and keep him in good spirits” (Mrs. Paige).

This teacher said, “So I really felt cared-for in a special way with the sensitivity everyone had toward my dad.”

Teachers explained how the students take care of each other. Mrs. Phillips said, “I think it’s important to add that all of the students really know and support each other.” She explained that students welcome and are accepting of new students, of students who are different from them and of students with special needs.

In a different interview, Mrs. Shirley [a teacher] explained that she was having a “really bad day” and was “extremely frustrated.” She described a caring interaction she had with another teacher. The teacher noticed she seemed upset and gave her a hug. Mrs. Shirley started to cry and the teacher comforted her:

She just sat there and hugged me and it was like mother/daughter, you know, in action. Just held me and patted my back and just gave me a lot of really encouraging words. And it was probably the most caring experience I’ve had here, was that moment that I had with her. So it made me feel a lot better and you know, kind of let me leave it here when I went home and just made me feel better when I came back the next day.

Mrs. Shirley said she also experienced caring interactions from a “really big group” of parents who always ask her if she needs any help and if there’s anything they can do for her and tell her how much they appreciate what she’s doing. Mrs. Paige felt cared-for due to the notes parents send her. She said regarding the notes, “They’re very warm. And- and those are the best presents I can get, really, is a loving, caring note from a parent.”

TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF NON-CARING EXPERIENCES

Teachers were asked to describe non-caring interactions that they have had with other stakeholders at this school. This section describes the teachers’ perceptions of interactions that they viewed as non-caring.

Teachers described non-caring experiences that they had with parents. When asked to describe an interaction that did not demonstrate caring, one teacher said, “I hate to say it, but never the kids, never anybody who I work with here. It’s the parents” (Mrs. Shirley). She described a couple of these interactions. The teacher was letting her students in her room at 8:00 a.m. when the bell rang. An angry parent was very upset because his child was caught

plagiarizing and she gave him a grade of zero. She said that he “stood in front of my room and cussed me out in front of my kids and told me what a terrible teacher I was in front of my entire class.” She said she fought back her tears. The other incident was when, “A parent told me that I deserved an “F” for being a teacher and for being a human being and an individual. That came in an email” (Mrs. Shirley).

Student Interviews

Students felt cared-for when stakeholders offered help if they were hurt or comforted them if they were sad or upset and when a teacher offered a make-up test. One student couldn't think of a caring experience. Students did not feel cared-for when they perceived they got in trouble for no reason and that teachers picked on certain people. Students also said they saw non-caring interactions when a teacher screamed at them, when a student threw a ball at another student and when students formed cliques excluding others and gossiping about them.

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CARING EXPERIENCES

Students described caring interactions they experienced when they got hurt. One girl explained that if she fell or tripped, most of the teachers and students would ask if she was okay and if she needed help. She said that students and teachers were very helpful to those who needed help:

If they- if you break your leg or something, I've noticed that people help carry your books. Like, they aren't- like some public schools. I can see that they – they just wouldn't care. They – they could- they would just walk by. You've got a broken leg, big deal. But when my friend – she broke her ankle, she - everyone always helped her carry her books, help her get up and out of chairs – teachers

did. And they allowed her to be late to class knowing that she had a disability (Brooke).

Another student also spoke of his experience when he became injured. The conversation was as follows:

- Jimmy: “When I’ve been hurt people come to help me. Help me up. And they’ll take me to the office if I’m really hurt. And they’re just a big help.”
- Researcher: “Okay. And when you said you’ve been hurt and you need to go to the office, can you explain what happened?”
- Jimmy: “I hurt my shoulder really bad and it turns out I broke it.”
- Researcher: “Oooh. Was that during lunch or recess?”
- Jimmy: “Yeah, during lunch.”
- Researcher: “How did it get broken? Wow.”
- Jimmy: “I tripped.”
- Researcher: “You tripped?”
- Jimmy: “Yeah.”
- Researcher: “Were you playing a game?”
- Jimmy: “No, I was just walking.”
- Researcher: “Just walking. Wow. So did they know it was broken, in the front office right away, or-”
- Jimmy: “No, I went – I went home and it still hurt for a couple days so I went to get X-rays and it was broken.”

The student felt cared-for because others helped him to the front office to see if he was okay.

Another student said that students care for others who are sad or crying or feel bad. Vickie said that students will ask, “What’s wrong? And they’ll – they care.” One student explained that he felt cared about when a teacher offered a make-up test for the entire class because they didn’t do well on it at all. He said, “[T]hat just kind of felt good that we got forgiveness” (Darren). Another student couldn’t think of a caring experience. She replied, “I don’t really know anything good about the school” (Josie).

STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF NON-CARING EXPERIENCES

Students were asked to describe interactions that they have had with other stakeholders at this school that did not demonstrate caring. This section describes students’ perceptions of interactions that they viewed as non-caring.

One student felt that teachers pick on students they do not like which is not caring. She commented, “Some teachers just like to pick on people and some teachers – they use profanity” (Josie). She explained a situation where she truly believed that a student had not done anything wrong but got in trouble.

One of my teachers, she- well, I wouldn’t really say favorites because she, like, picks on people. So this one person, he didn’t do anything, but she made him go to the principal’s office ‘cause she just doesn’t like him. And that’s not right (Josie).

The researcher tried to get more clarity on the situation and asked if the above incident took place during class and what they were doing. The student replied, “We were just – I don’t know. Sitting there, listening to her. Well, I wouldn’t say listening, but-” (Josie).

This same student believed that teachers were uncaring when they took out their anger on them. Josie explained, “And when they get mad they- like, do take it out on us.”

Another student in the group interview was concerned and questioned, “Violence? Did you see violence?” Josie said, “No” to the relief of the concerned student. The conversation continued as follows:

Researcher: “In what ways can they take it out on you?”

Josie: “Well, they start screaming at us.”

Researcher: “And how does that make you feel?”

Josie: “Kind of scared [unclear] ‘cause it looks like she’s gonna blow up. And it’s not good.”

Another student described a non-caring interaction where a student threw a ball at another student. He explained, “Well, there’s this one time where a person got really mad at another person and that person threw the ball at the person’s face and hurt the person” (George). The researcher asked clarifying questions to understand if George thought it had been done on purpose or accidentally and how hard the student threw the ball, and to what extent the person was hurt and what happened after the ball was thrown. George explained that “the person wasn’t that hurt. It was just the act to throw the ball at the person’s face” and the person just said, “Ow” and nothing else happened.

A student felt that some students who did well on a test did not act very caring towards people who got a bad grade on a test. Some students complained that they felt left out and did not feel cared-for when other students at the school formed cliques. One student explained that she noticed “once or twice” that it was cliquish but “then the next day it’ll be fine and then everyone will be friends again” (Brooke). Vickie felt it was uncaring when students gossiped in cliques and excluded people.

Interview Participants' Views of the School as a Caring Community

Interview participants were asked the following question, "Do you see this school as a caring community? Please explain." All eleven parents and all four teachers who were interviewed thought that the school was a caring community compared to only three out of the six students who were interviewed.

One student, when previously asked to describe a caring interaction, replied, "I don't really know anything good about the school," but later when asked if she saw the school as a caring community she replied:

In some ways, 'cause like [George and Darren] said, nothing bad ever happens at private schools because ... everybody is scared, like, they're going to get suspended or something... So nobody ever does anything. But then I don't think the teachers demonstrate caring that much to some people (Josie).

Josie believed that "Some teachers just like to pick on people and some teachers – they use profanity."

Another student when asked if she saw the school as a caring community replied, "I think it depends on the situation. Like, in some situations, they're – they're kind and like, they understand people. And in others, it just – it's not – they're not very kind. So it – I think it depends" (Vickie). Another student saw the school as both caring and not caring. She complained that some students cheat on their homework and she didn't think that was caring, but she said that people are respectful and nice. She said: "And so then you have the support of your friends and so that's the thing that's really caring" (Brooke).

Students view supporting interactions from their friends as caring. One student commented, "There is [are] a lot of nice people in my class and it's good to be around them" (George). Another student liked the school because he feels supported and he likes the

homework. “[T]here are a lot of big supporters to people – students, teachers. And the things I enjoy about this school is the homework, believe it or not” (Darren). He explained, “I enjoy the homework. I enjoy the class work. I enjoy being with my friends.” Some students see the school as caring because students share their lunches with each other, comfort each other when they are not feeling well and report to teachers if someone is upset.

One student said that stakeholders care for students who have injured themselves. A boy who broke his shoulder during lunchtime viewed his experience as caring because people helped him to the front office. Another student said when her friend broke her leg they were always helping her carry her books and getting in and out of chairs. However, during one lunchtime observation, I noticed that no one was helping a boy on crutches. He sat alone on a bench while everyone else played and then struggled by himself to carry his lunch bag across the playground.

Teachers talked about the extraordinary support at this school. One teacher when talking about the mass for Mary said, “And it was sad but it was- it was like, man, that’s a support system that I could- I could stay around for a long time” (Mrs. Randall). Mrs. Paige commented on how well students support each other. She noticed that students look out and care for other students. She commented, “They’re very aware of someone that’s sick in the classroom. They always pray for each other. So I think that starting in the lower grades they’re learning to pray and care for each other.” Mrs. Phillips explained her view of the school as a caring community.

Oh, I absolutely see this school as a caring community. I- I see it in the faces of the children even when I greet them at the door. And- and their concern when they come up to me about “Oh, such and such- somebody’s feeling bad today, so can you, you know, give them an extra hug,” or “Someone is needing extra attention because, you know, their dog is sick,” or “their grandma passed away.”

Or whatever concern, they always are able to – to bring it to me and we'll always try to comfort the person or make special adaptations or cards or whatever to make them feel better.

Mrs. Phillips cares for her students and calls them her kids

because I feel like all of the kids whom I teach are a part of me and I consider them just as much as I consider my own daughter or my own son. And- and they know just as much about my family as I know about them.

Mrs. Phillips said she felt like all of her students were her own and she considered them as her own daughters and sons. It's interesting that Mrs. Shirley, in a separate interview, described an interaction where she felt Mrs. Phillips comforted her like in a mother/daughter relationship. Obviously, Mrs. Phillips' warm consideration of others extends not just to her students.

Parents' behavior can sometimes strain teacher-student relationships. Mrs. Shirley explained regarding the incidences with the parents last year:

[T]hey're parents of students I still have this year. So needless to say, those two students are not in my [homeroom] class but I still have to interact with them which has been a challenge. You know, knowing that those kinds of things are said about me at home and how that has pretty much demoralized me and my relationship with their kids.

Mrs. Shirley attributed these types of situations to the changes that adolescences go through.

I think the parents are frustrated with their kids because they're changing so much. And they don't understand what the kids are going through. And so for the first time, the kids maybe aren't succeeding academically or you know, they're not as open with them at home or they're just going through changes....So they don't know how to handle it so they come to me or I become the outlet of their frustration.

Mrs. Shirley said that the non-caring interactions she has had at this school always came from the parents.

One teacher explained that the school is not set up to be able to care for all kinds of students. She commented, “I believe that this school is not necessarily for everyone and not everyone sees it that way” (Mrs. Randall). She explained further:

And some kids need more resources than we can provide. And it- it shows in some of the behaviors. It shows in the classroom that you know what? If they had a gifted class in the public school they would shine. If they had a resource class in the public school they would shine even brighter, so-. Yet parents love the school, keep them here and we encourage that and that’s great. But if- if we- step up just a little bit more, just say you know, he’s outgrown this school or she’s outgrown this school.

Mrs. Phillips attributed the leadership of the principals as a key role in creating a caring community.

A teacher at the school said that the school wasn’t always as caring as it is now.

I think the school has improved. Many years ago, maybe twenty, fifteen years ago, I don’t think things were quite as warm and welcoming as they are now. I mean, there were incidents in the past that – with bullying and various things- that it certainly was not as caring a community as it is now. But I think one good thing about our school is that we really try to strive and to improve (Mrs. Paige).

Mrs. Paige explained that it took time and work to become a caring school community. It took “addressing things like bullying and not accepting different nationalities or different handicaps....I would say, in the last four or five years, that I- I mean, it’s a startling difference really.” Mrs. Shirley, in a different interview, said, “I think it’s a community that strives to be as caring as possible.”

A parent also made this same observation in a different group interview. This parent had been a long-time member of the school board and believed that the school is a caring community because it is “a place that tries to get it right.” He explained:

But at the core of our feeling about the school is the -- is the sense that when there is something that needs to be dealt with, there is a willingness to take it on, and there is a willingness to consider all points of view, and there’s a willingness to do something decisive to get -- get it turned around. And I attribute it to the -- to the

tone that the principals apply. But I know them both very well, 'cause we've been around a time, and they feel enormous pressure from within the faculty to be that way.

And I -- that's another comfort to us. The school board is well tuned in to what's going on on the campus, the parent/teacher group is very tuned in to what's going on.... But it -- you just have the feeling that it's a -- it's a place that tries to get it right. You don't always have that impression in other experiences (Tony).

Many parents talked about the excellent leadership of the principals. One parent was very impressed with how the principals address the students at masses. "And just the messages that she gives to the kids, in terms of this is what you should try and be....she keeps repeating it, sort of different message...[Y]ou hear it three times and it's going to start sinking in" (Tracy).

Students from this school are noticeable in the community. Some parents spoke of some of the deciding factors in their decisions to send their children to this school.

And every kid that I met that had come out of St. California's, that had taught my child to swim, was the most respectful, look-you-in-the-eye teenager you could ever hope to meet. Whereas everyone who -- I shouldn't say everyone; I mean, it's, like, blanket statements -- that had come out of the public school system was, like [she made a visual gesture]-. They just would not look at [you]-- (Shannon).

Another parent in a different group interview also commented on how students who had come from this school seemed different to her than other students. She had grown up in the same city this school is in but attended public elementary and middle school. She stated that when she got to high school she could tell who St. California students were, "It was everybody in the honors class.... those were the good kids....the well-rounded kids" (Natasha).

Parents said they liked the strong foundation that this school is building in their children. One parent explained how happy she was when her daughter turned to her and said, "God's taking care of us today, Mom." The parent was happy that her daughter "knows that

God can embrace her and be part of her life. And that is just tremendous. But it just takes time: the study habits, the religion” (Leah). One parent said she was happy to send her children to St. California’s, “Because they’re going to have a foundation of how they’re supposed to treat people” (Shannon).

Observational Data

Detailed descriptions of observations can be found in Appendix S. Observations were analyzed for stakeholders’ experiences of caring and non-caring interactions.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

According to Wentzel (as cited in Lickona and Davidson, 2005), middle school students feel cared-for by a teacher when:

- Teacher tries to make classes interesting.
- Teacher talks and listens to students.
- Teacher is honest, fair, and trusting.
- Teacher shows concern for students as individuals by asking whether they need help.
- Teacher makes sure students understand what is being taught.
- Teacher asks students if something is wrong (p. 62).

Most of the teachers observed tried to make classes interesting for their students. Teachers planned wonderful activities and games to help students learn the material. Most of the teachers came to class well-prepared and talked and listened to their students. The majority of the teachers made sure students were on-task. Half of the observed teachers walked around the room asking individual students if they needed help, or had any problems they couldn’t figure out. All of the observed teachers were concerned that students understood the material,

frequently asking if everyone understood the concepts being explained. All teachers made sure that students' questions were answered.

Middle school students do not feel cared-for by a teacher when:

- Teacher is boring or off-task.
- Teacher continues teaching when students aren't paying attention.
- Teacher ignores, interrupts, embarrasses, insults, or yells at students.
- Teacher shows little interest in students by forgetting students' names and not doing anything when they did something wrong.
- Teacher doesn't try to explain something when students don't understand (Wentzel as cited in Lickona and Davidson, 2005, p. 62).

One teacher observed did not have a very engaging lesson plan. For the entire observation period, the teacher asked students questions, one after another. The teacher continued in this question-and-answer style even though many students did not appear to be engaged. This same teacher also embarrassed students and spoke loudly at them in front of the class.

Students were also allowed to speak loudly back at the teacher.

In another classroom, the teacher did not always stop teaching when students were misbehaving. She sometimes ignored the behavior. These students could have experienced more care if the teacher had made them more accountable for their behavior. A different teacher was asking a few students to complete a special task for her. This teacher repeatedly ignored a girl who kept asking to be a volunteer.

LUNCH OBSERVATIONS

Staff showed concern for students' well-being. At the beginning of the school year, students were given 15 minutes to eat lunch followed by 15 minutes of play period. Staff noticed that many students were not eating their lunches but were rushing off to play instead.

Staff decided to reverse the order of the lunch periods, play first then eat, because they cared about students' health and well-being.

Many students and parents complained that students were very hungry by lunch time and shouldn't have to wait until after they played to eat. Staff, along with Student Council, showed care for students' needs and wants by deciding to let the students vote on the order of lunch. The majority of students voted to eat first so staff resumed the original lunch schedule of eating first. Staff showed additional care for the students by lengthening the lunch period by five minutes to give students more time.

A teacher showed care for students by going out of her way on her lunch period to talk to students to help them learn about milliliters outside of classroom time. This same teacher showed care for a parent who was dropping off her son's work right before lunch was over. This teacher invited the parent who did not have an appointment into her classroom to talk to her.

A boy with crutches did not seem to experience care during lunch. He sat alone for the entire play period, then struggled alone to carry his lunch bag to the tables. At the end of the lunch period he even left his lunch bag on the table because it seemed he did not want to make the effort to double back for it after using the restroom [or less likely, he forgot about it.] This boy could have experienced more care if his teacher assigned him a buddy to help. Perhaps his teacher did try to assign him a buddy and he refused the help because he wanted to be independent. It is hard to know without having been in his classroom during the period immediately preceding lunch. Still, it seemed that someone could have spared some time to sit next to him and keep him company during the play period.

A girl played basketball by herself for approximately 12 minutes during lunch. She did not seem to experience care either. Without knowing her personally it is hard to know if she wanted to play with others, was very independent and preferred playing alone, or had a quarrel or was just in a bad mood that day. On the other two observation days I did not see her playing alone.

A boy who was tackled to the ground with typical boys' rough housing did and did not seem to experience care. One girl walked right past him without even acknowledging him, while three other boys came over to see if he was okay. Supervising parents did not appear to notice that he was tackled and laying on the ground. Sometimes supervising parents did not show care for the students because two or three parents could be seen talking to one another instead of supervising the students.

PASSING PERIODS OBSERVATIONS

A student who dropped a book in a doorway during a passing period and couldn't get to it because boys kept stepping over the book was not experiencing helpful care. In fact, when he reached down to grab the book, no one stopped entering the room, they just stepped around his hand. A girl did not seem to have a caring interaction when she tried to engage in a conversation with a teacher. The teacher just said, "Hi," and walked away from her. The girl yelled to the teacher, "Don't keep walking away from me! Fine! Gees! I guess she didn't want to talk to me."

ANSWER TO RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE SCHOOL SEEM TO BE A CARING COMMUNITY?

Survey, interview and observation data reveal that the school, overall, does seem to be a caring community. All schools have their struggles, and there have been some non-caring interactions. In general, it seems that teachers and parents seem to have a higher opinion overall for the school as a caring community compared to students.

Survey data show that overall, stakeholders' opinions of the school as a caring community are positive. On the survey's Likert scale of one to five, a three means "As Often as Not." "Instances in which a mean value falls below 3.00 should be areas of concern" (Hawthorn School District 73 SCCP, 2005, p. 9). All mean scores were over 3.00. Many mean scores were 4.00 or higher. A score of four represents "Frequently" and is therefore a good score. Table 7 shows' stakeholders' overall mean scores for each of the survey sub-scales. Figure 1 represents this information graphically.

Parents and staff's mean scores were, for the most part, closely aligned while students' perceptions were lower for almost all sub-scales. The lowest overall mean score for a sub-scale was 3.41 and the highest overall mean score for a sub-scale was 4.56.

Overall mean scores for survey sub-scale IA, "Perceptions of Student Respect," ranged from 3.89 (students) to 4.26 (parents). Overall mean scores for survey sub-scale IB, "Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging," ranged from 3.89 (students) to 4.20 (staff). Overall mean scores for survey sub-scale IC, "Perceptions of Students' Shaping of Their Environment," were lower than the other sub-scales. Overall mean scores ranged from 3.41 (students) to 3.80 (parents). Mean scores for survey sub-scale IIA, "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff," were very good ranging from 4.14 (students) to

Table 7. Overall Mean Scores for Survey Sub-Scales

Sub-scale	Sub-scale description	Parents	Students	Staff
IA	Perceptions of student respect	4.26	3.89	4.04
IB	Perceptions of student friendship and belonging	4.12	3.89	4.20
IC	Perceptions of students' shaping of their environment	3.80	3.41	3.79
IIA	Perceptions of support and care by and for faculty/staff	4.52	4.14	4.56
IIB	Perceptions of support and care by and for parents	4.56	4.53	4.47

Figure 1. Stakeholders' overall mean scores for survey sub-scales.

4.56 (staff). Overall mean scores for survey sub-scale IIB, “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents,” were also very good ranging from 4.47 (staff) to 4.56 (parents).

There are many aspects of the school that make it a caring environment. The Buddy Program creates wonderful opportunities for students to form special caring connections with students in different grades. Fifth through eighth grade students are encouraged to care for others through the Student Community Outreach Program. Many stakeholders at this school have a common belief system based on Christian values of loving and caring for others which definitely makes the school a more caring environment. Teachers, staff, parents, and students frequently pray for stakeholders who are hurt or sad or going through difficult times.

Teachers, staff, and parents offer extraordinary support to each other through personal, emotional or financial support. Parents, teachers, staff, and students were all involved in creating care packages to send to Mrs. Phillips’ son in Iraq. Stakeholders also prepare a monthly care package to send to Mary, the toddler who had brain surgery, and her family who moved out of state to be closer to a specialized hospital. Students are involved in making cards and notes for Mary as well. Parents give teachers warm, caring notes. Parents take turns providing snacks and beverages for teachers every day in the faculty lounge. Parents do not do the minimum in providing these treats – they spare no expense. Parents have even made special homemade dinners for teachers on occasions.

Students support other students at this school by comforting others who are sick, hurt or not feeling well. Students also look out for others by telling their teachers if something is wrong with someone. Younger grades have class meetings to address any problems that students are having difficulty dealing with.

I am always struck by the principals' communication of Christian values to the students. The principals create a caring environment every time they speak at weekly assemblies or school masses. Their words encourage the students to behave as Christians to each other and to take care of each other.

Parents feel that the teachers care about their children and the families. Teachers seem to be very available to help parents with their concerns. Two parents in the focus group interviews said that a teacher had given them their home phone or cell phone number. This level of availability really tells parents that the teachers care. The teachers, staff and parents seem to be truly concerned about the well-being of the students. Many parents are highly involved in the school and contribute much more than the required 20 volunteer hours.

Many parents complained of non-caring interactions that they have had with other parents. For example, the parking lot is a big problem for the school. Many stakeholders worry about the children's safety. There have been countless numbers of announcements in the weekly newsletters asking parents to be careful, to drive slowly, and not to talk on cell phones. It has become such a problem that the principals said that if people break these rules, they will be asked to leave the school for the safety of the children.

There were non-caring interactions between students at the school a few years ago which led to twin boys leaving. Some students complained that cliques sometimes formed on the playground and they felt excluded and that there was gossip going on. Teachers described some non-caring interactions they have had with parents. A parent should never cuss a teacher out in front of her class.

The classroom environments I observed seemed to be mostly positive. The teachers did show care for the students. The majority of teachers were very approachable. Many walked around the classroom asking students if they needed help.

There was one classroom observed where a teacher was talking in a loud voice at the students. In connection with this observation, a student's response during an interview was disturbing. She mentioned that one teacher would "start screaming at us." Right before lunch one day, I was waiting outside her classroom door to meet students for a group interview. I heard this teacher yell at two boys to shut the door on their way out. The teacher turned and walked away huffily.

A student felt that some teachers picked on students just because they don't like them. Sometimes students need teachers to be more explicit about exactly what was done wrong and why. Students do not always make these connections for themselves. One student viewed students cheating as non-caring.

Most students seemed to care for others. For the most part, students seemed to work well together in groups and play well together on the playground. There were some interactions, like a boy struggling alone on crutches, which did not seem very caring and also when a boy dropped his book in the middle of a doorway and nobody stopped to help they just stepped over or around his hand.

Chapter five presents a summary of the study and findings, recommendations for improvement, recommendations for future studies and implications of the study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of a Catholic K-8 school as a caring community. Stakeholders included parents, teachers, administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students. The school was purposely selected based on my experiences at the school during the school year 2005-2006. The following research questions were posed for this study: (1) What are the different stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community? (2) Are there significant differences in perceptions between the various stakeholder groups? If differences exist, what are they? (3) In what ways have stakeholders experienced, or not experienced, caring at this school? and (4) To what extent does the school seem to be a caring community?

The design for the study was modeled after Englund (1996) and Kokolis' (2004) studies. A mixed methods approach was used to derive the benefits from both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The study used a survey, interviews, and observations to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of the school as a caring community. Lickona and Davidson's survey, *School as a Caring Community Profile-II (SCCP-II)*, was distributed to all stakeholders to elicit the broad perceptions of the school as a caring community. The survey measured stakeholders' perceptions related to the following five sub-scales:

“Perceptions of Student Respect,” “Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging,” “Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment,” “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff,” and “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents” (Center for the 4th & 5th Rs, 2003). One hundred and forty nine surveys were returned with proper consent forms (97 parents, 28 students and 24 staff).

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data from surveys. A one-way analysis of variance was used to test for significant differences between stakeholders’ overall mean scores. A one-way analysis of variance was used to test for significant differences (.05 alpha level) between stakeholders’ mean scores for individual survey questions one through thirty-four. Tukey’s HSD post hoc multiple comparison tests were used to determine where the significant differences were. Survey questions thirty-four through forty-two were answered only by parents and staff. T-tests (.05 alpha level) were conducted to test for significant differences on these questions.

Interviews were conducted with open-ended questions to yield rich, in-depth qualitative data. Five focus group interviews and two individual interviews were conducted (two parent group interviews, two student group interviews, one teacher group interview and two individual teacher interviews.) Two teachers were interviewed individually because they missed the group interview due to illness or an unexpected appointment. There were 21 interview participants in all: 11 parents, 6 students and 4 teachers. Interviews were analyzed for caring and non-caring interactions and stakeholders’ perceptions of the school as a caring community.

Observations of six classrooms, six transition periods and three lunch periods were conducted for the purposes of triangulation and validity. Descriptive and reflective

observational field-notes were recorded and analyzed. The study defines the attributes that make a school a caring community and has implications for other schools that wish to improve their climate by making their schools more caring.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

On the survey's Likert scale 1=Almost Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=As Often as Not, 4=Frequently, and 5=Almost Always; stakeholders' mean scores were all on the positive side of the survey scale, ranging from 3.21 to 4.93. Hawthorn School District 73 believes that, "Instances in which a mean value falls below 3.00 should be areas of concern" (2005, p. 9). No means fell below 3.21; many mean scores were 4.00 (Frequently) or higher.

"Perceptions of Student Respect"

For the survey sub-scale, "Perceptions of Student Respect," parents had a significantly higher overall mean score than students. Parents' overall mean score for this sub-scale was 4.26, staff's was 4.04 and students' 3.89. Stakeholders' overall "perceptions of student respect" were very good.

For five of the nine questions in this sub-scale, parents had a significantly higher mean score than students. These questions asked for stakeholders' perceptions regarding students treating classmates with respect, students respecting personal or school property, students respecting staff, and students showing good sportsmanship. For one of the nine questions on this sub-scale, regarding students acting respectfully toward their teachers, parents had a significantly higher mean score than staff. No significant differences were found for the remaining three questions on this sub-scale regarding students not picking on other students, students not being disrespectful towards their schoolmates and students

refraining from negative put-downs. Stakeholders had positive opinions of students not picking on other students and not being disrespectful toward their schoolmates.

The mean scores for sub-scale IA were the lowest for stakeholders' perception of students not making negative or hurtful comments. These mean scores ranged from 3.25 (students) to 3.67 (parents).

Interview data revealed that parents, teachers and some students thought that the students, overall, were respectful. Observational data showed that students, overall, were respectful toward others. Students were seen completing their assigned duties to take care of school property (e.g. sweeping, cleaning and watering plants).

“Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging,” no significant differences were found between stakeholders' overall mean scores. Staff's overall mean score for this sub-scale was 4.20 while parents' was 4.12 and students' was 3.89. Stakeholders, overall, had positive opinions regarding “student friendship and belonging.”

For two of the nine questions in sub-scale IB, parents and staff had significantly higher perceptions than students regarding students helping each other even if they are not friends and regarding students sharing what they have with others. For one question about students listening to each other in class discussions, parents had significantly higher perceptions than staff. There were no significant differences between stakeholders regarding students accepting new students, including those who are different, comforting other students who are sad, working well together, forgiving others and being patient with each other.

One of these questions received the lowest mean score on the survey. Students' mean score of 3.21, for students helping each other even if they are not friends, is close to a score of 3 (As Often as Not).

All stakeholders in the interviews said that students were very good at comforting other students who were sad or hurt. Students reported that others made sure they were okay and took them to the front office if they needed help. Stakeholders said that students will report to teachers if someone is sad or hurt and that the students are very good at looking out for each other.

Observations showed that most students seemed to get along well together on the playground. Classroom observations showed that students worked well together in groups. Students said that they share what they have with each other. Some instances where students were sharing with others were observed.

“Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Students’ Shaping of Their Environment,” parents had a significantly higher overall mean score than students. Parents’ overall mean score was 3.80 while staff’s was 3.79 and students 3.41. This sub-scale, overall, received the lowest mean scores.

For two of the seven questions in this sub-scale, parents had significantly higher perceptions than students when it came to students trying to get other students to follow school rules and to students trying to have a positive influence on the behavior of other students. For one question in this sub-scale regarding students helping to improve the school, both parents and staff had significantly higher perceptions than students. For four of the

seven questions in this sub-scale there were no significant differences between stakeholders' perceptions of students trying to make up for doing something hurtful, of students resolving conflicts without fighting, insults or threats, of students trying to stop other students from being picked on, or of students being involved to help solve school problems.

The lowest mean scores for this sub-scale were for students (3.29) regarding students trying to get others to follow school rules and for students (3.29) and parents (3.31) regarding students trying to stop other students from being picked on. These mean scores are closer to 3 (As Often as Not).

Interview data did not reveal much about sub-scale IC. Observations showed that the school includes stakeholders in decision making processes. The school tried switching the order of lunch and play periods whereby some students and parents became upset. Student council conducted a vote to determine the majority's preference which resulted in returning the schedule to its original state.

“Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff,” parents (4.52) and staff (4.56) both had significantly higher overall mean scores than students (4.14). The overall mean scores for this sub-scale were all above 4 (Frequently) which is very good.

There were significant differences in perceptions for four of the questions in this sub-scale. Staff had a significantly higher mean score than students when it came to perceptions of students being able to talk to their teachers about problems that are bothering them. Parents and staff had significantly higher mean scores than students when it came to

perceptions of teachers being fair in their treatment of students. Students and parents had significantly higher mean scores than staff when it came to perceptions of parents showing respect for teachers. For perceptions of school staff demonstrating desired character qualities, staff had significantly higher mean scores than parents.

There were no significant differences for six of the ten questions in this sub-scale regarding teachers going out of their way to help students, being able to count on adults to ensure student safety, teachers modeling character traits, teachers and staff treating each other with respect and being involved in school decisions, and showing appreciation for faculty and staff.

Some mean scores for parents and teachers are close to a perfect score of 5 (Almost Always). The lowest mean score for this sub-scale is 3.43 (students) for a question regarding students being able to talk to their teachers about problems that are bothering them.

Interview data coincide with survey data providing evidence that the school does very well in supporting and caring for students and faculty and staff. Teachers talked about the kinds of support they have received. For example, one teacher received a care package for her son in Iraq and another teacher explained how teachers visited her double-amputee father. A parent talked about fundraisers for a staff member's paralyzed son.

Parents talked of how approachable and understanding teachers are when they address them with concerns or worries about their children. A teacher said that she considers her students as if they were her own sons and daughters. Teachers talked about some disrespectful incidences with parents. For example, one teacher was cussed out in front of her class and one parent told her she deserved an F as a teacher and a human being. One student

felt that some teachers were unfair in their treatment of students just because they don't like them. This same student felt scared because she said a teacher was "screaming" at her.

Observations showed that parents show appreciation for the efforts of faculty and staff. Observations showed that most teachers treated students fairly most of the time. Most teachers were respectful, gentle and patient towards students. All teachers observed were very concerned about their students' learning and checked for students' understanding. Observations showed that parents show respect for teachers. Parents are always present on this campus and they greet and talk to teachers and staff when they see them. During observations teachers were seen walking, talking, and laughing together.

“Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents”

For the survey sub-scale, “Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents,” no significant differences were found between stakeholders' overall mean scores. The overall mean scores fall approximately halfway in between 4 (Frequently) and 5 (Almost Always). Parents' overall mean score was 4.56, students' was 4.53 and staff's was 4.47. The overall mean scores for sub-scale IIB were all very good.

There were significant differences in stakeholders' perceptions for three of the seven questions in this sub-scale. Students had a significantly higher mean score than staff regarding perceptions of parents showing that they care about their child's education and school behavior. Parents had a significantly higher mean score than staff regarding students being respectful of their parents. Staff had a significantly higher mean score than parents regarding perceptions about the school treating parents with respect. There were no significant differences for four of the seven questions in this sub-scale regarding perceptions

of teachers treating parents with respect, parents treating parents with respect, parents modeling character traits and parents being actively involved in the school.

Some mean scores were close to a perfect score of 5 (Almost Always). The lowest mean score for this sub-scale was 4.04 (staff) regarding parents treating other parents with respect. This score means that staff believes parents “Frequently” treat each other with respect.

Parent and teacher interview data provide evidence for survey findings regarding support and care by and for parents. Parents and teachers spoke about high parental involvement at the school. Parents and teachers commented on how supported they have felt by the parents. For example, parents talked about receiving meals when they were going through difficult times and giving a prayer-service for a toddler with brain cancer. Parents and teachers spoke of some disrespectful interactions they experienced with other parents. Observational data also showed that there is a high level of support and care by and for parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

This section offers recommendations for improvements to St. California’s. These recommendations include: (1) helping students to further develop emotional sensitivity, (2) encouraging students to intervene more often if someone is being picked on, (3) providing administrative counseling for a teacher, and (4) improving the parking lot.

1. St. California’s might want to investigate to what extent students make negative, hurtful comments to other students. Stakeholders’ mean scores on this question ranged from 3.25 (students) to 3.67 (parents). If needed, St. California’s could look

into “emotional and empathy training” for students. DeRoche and Williams (2001b) recommend that “emotional and empathy training” be a part of character education programs. Goleman (1998) states that being emotionally intelligent includes *self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills*.

2. St. California’s might want to investigate to what extent students help other students who are picked on. Stakeholders’ mean scores for this question ranged from 3.29 (students) to 3.43 (staff). Lickona (2004) writes: “Our challenge as educators is to create a school culture in which most students hold the belief that they should do something to try to stop any cruelty they observe” (pp. 179-180). Lickona reported that some schools have been successful in reducing peer cruelty by having students take responsibility for intervening.
3. One student, in an interview, said she felt scared because a teacher was “screaming” at them. There was one classroom observed where a teacher was talking in a loud voice at the students. The teacher may benefit from administrative counseling. It is important for all teachers to create safe environments for students so that they can concentrate on learning (Gootman, 2001).
4. The parking lot is stressful for parents to maneuver in and out of because its capacity and design are insufficient to meet the needs of the school’s growing population. Some parents may interact negatively with others because they are not handling the stress of the parking lot well. St. California’s could improve the climate of the school by redesigning the parking lot and traffic flow.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH STUDIES

Principals' "beliefs, opinions, values, and attitudes" influence their administrative "practice" (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003, p. 18). This study did not look into St. California principals' administrative practices nor the role that a co-principal model plays in creating a caring community. Future studies might include interviews and observations to investigate these areas.

A good test for the effectiveness of character education programs is whether or not the desired behaviors transfer to non-school settings (personal communication E. F. DeRoche, September 19, 2006). Future studies should observe St. California's students in non-school settings to see if the school's character education transfers when the school community is not watching.

Another good test for the effectiveness of character education programs is whether or not the desired behaviors transfer to the next level of schooling (personal communication E. F. DeRoche, March 14, 2007). Future studies might investigate whether there are any recognizable differences in behaviors between high school students who come from St. California's compared to students who come from schools that did not use the Caring School Community Program.

This study was conducted at one Catholic K-8 school with a small sample size. The study's design could be used to investigate stakeholders' perspectives of public and private schools in different geographical locations to give a broader view.

IMPLICATIONS

Attributes of a Caring School Community

The results of this study and the review of the literature reveal the attributes that seem to contribute to creating a caring school community environment. These attributes are: providing personal and emotional support for all stakeholders; having high parental involvement; “trying to get it right;” and creating opportunities to care.

PROVIDING PERSONAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Caring relationships between all stakeholders are an important part of creating a caring school community (Character Education Partnership, 2005). “Supportive relationships are the heart of community” (Schaps, 2003, p. 32). Interview and observational data revealed that St. California’s stakeholders show care by providing personal and emotional support for others. For example, St. California’s:

- stakeholders pray for others
- stakeholders provide meals or care packages in times of difficulty
- stakeholders are physically present for others
- stakeholders are available for stakeholders to talk about their problems or concerns
- stakeholders show concern for others and help others
- students inform teachers if other students are hurt and need help or are having a bad day

HAVING HIGH PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

“Studies have shown that when parents are involved in the school, children get better grades, have more positive attitudes toward school and work, have higher expectations, and

may exhibit more positive behaviors” (DeRoche & Williams, 2001b, p. 113). Partnerships with parents are important in making character education initiatives successful (DeRoche, 2004). St. California’s had high parental involvement:

- parents are welcomed and encouraged to be on campus
- there is a high physical presence of parent volunteers on campus at all times
- parents are actively involved in coordinating school events and fundraisers
- parents are involved in decision making processes

“TRYING TO GET IT RIGHT”

Principals play a critical role in establishing the climate of the school (DeRoche, 2004). “Effective administrators are prepared to respond to the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context of schools” (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003, p. 6). St. California’s co-principals contribute to the caring community in the following way:

- The principals address problems that arise and strive to make improvements (e.g. “the kindergarten crisis”).
- The principals set the tone for a caring community by the speeches they give to the community at masses and weekly assemblies.
- The principals have high expectations for *all* stakeholders to treat each other as Christians living out values of love, care and concern.
- The principals make these expectations known to all stakeholders.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO CARE

Educators can help students learn how to care “by providing opportunities for students to participate in caring activities” (Gootman, 2001, p. 7). St. California’s creates many opportunities for students to care for others. These opportunities include the following:

- The Buddy Program creates opportunities for students to form special, caring connections on campus.
- The Student Community Outreach Program creates opportunities for students to serve the community.
- Food, clothing and blanket drives create opportunities for all stakeholders to give to the needy.

CONCLUSIONS

Moral education was an important part of early education in America (McClellan, 1999). Over the years public schools in America lost this focus of developing children's morality and instead focused on developing students' skills and knowledge (McClellan). Attempts to return moral development to the public schools were made with values clarification, but educators soon realized that students need more than just values clarification; they need guidance to understand right from wrong. Kohlberg's six stages of moral development were another attempt to return moral development to the public schools, but some thought the stages cumbersome. Others thought the small sample size could not be generalized to all the people in the world (Fraenkel, 1976). Others thought that the stages only took into account the male part of the population (Gilligan, 1993).

For many of our public schools today there is such a high focus on students' standardized test scores that paying attention to school climate has often been overlooked. "Community building should become – at a minimum – a strong complement to the prevailing focus on academic achievement" (Schaps, 2003, p. 33). The answer to having a decent society does not rely on high-stakes test scores. True education helps students to realize their full potential which includes helping them develop into emotionally skilled, competent, decent human beings. As society seems to be falling deeper into moral decline,

researchers and educators across the country have called for increased character education efforts (Character Education Partnership, 2005; DeRoche & Williams, 2001b).

A caring school climate is necessary for character education to be effective (Berkowitz, Schaeffer, & Bier, 2001; Character Education Partnership, 2005; Schaps, Watson, & Lewis, 1996). Caring school communities positively affect students' behavior, academic achievement, and socioemotional development (Battistich et al., 1994; Deiro, 2003; Schaps, 2003; Weissbourd, 2003). Students' basic needs of feeling cared for must be met for them to realize their full potential.

One teacher interviewee commented that a few years ago, St. California's was not as caring as it is now. She mentioned, as did other parent interviewees, that the school had some problems with discrimination and bullying. The administration and staff of St. California's wanted to create more of a caring school community so they implemented the Caring School Community Program (CSC). CSC trained St. California's educators how to use their four part program of class meetings, the buddy program, schoolwide and homeside activities. St. California's is one example of a school that was successful in creating a caring climate by implementing the Caring School Community Program.

Schaps (2003) stated that having supportive relationships among stakeholders, having common purposes and ideals, providing opportunities for students to do service, to work together, and to have some decision making are important in building community. This study supports Schaps' findings in that all of these elements were found to contribute to St. California's caring school climate. Stakeholders at St. California's provide personal and emotional support for each other and shared Christian values contribute to creating the school's caring climate. The school, with the help of parents, provides many opportunities for

students to do service and to work together. Stakeholders provide their children with fun activities – some at the classroom level, and some schoolwide – that they can participate in together. There are many ways for stakeholders to bond together at this school. Students have some say in the shaping of their environment as they voted and had the order of their lunch and play periods restored.

The results of this study showed that St. California's study participants, overall, have positive views of the school as a caring community. The following four attributes contribute to St. California's as a caring community: providing personal and emotional support for all stakeholders; having high parental involvement; "trying to get it right;" and creating opportunities to care. Adults at St. California's teach students appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and how to respect other people's feelings.

Students need these important social skills to be successful in their lives. Additionally, these skills are needed for the future leadership of society. Students and society will benefit if more schools implement character education programs that emphasize creating a caring school community as St. California's did.

Schools that wish to improve their climate can use this study's design to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of their schools as caring communities. The research will provide the schools with information on areas where they can make improvements. If needed, schools may want to consider using a character education program such as CSC to help them create a more caring climate. Then in the second year of implementation, this study's design should be repeated to determine if improvements are attained and if stakeholders' positive perceptions increase.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY

SCHOOL AS A CARING COMMUNITY PROFILE-II
A Survey of Students, Staff, and Parents

Please indicate whether you are new or returning to [St. California's] this year

I am new to [St. California's] this year

I am returning to [St. California's] this year

Please circle one: (1) Student – Please write the number of the grade you are in: _____

(2) Teacher (3) Parent (4) Administrator or Staff

Directions: For each question, please circle the appropriate number that describes how frequently you observe the following behaviors in your school.

Almost never = 1 Sometimes = 2 As often as not = 3 Frequently = 4 Almost always = 5

1. Students treat classmates with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Students exclude those who are different
(e.g. belong to a different race, religion, or culture).	1	2	3	4	5
3. Students try to comfort peers who have experienced sadness.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Students respect the personal property of others.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Students help each other, even if they are not friends.	1	2	3	4	5
6. When students do something hurtful, they try to make up
for it (for example, they apologize or they do something nice).	1	2	3	4	5
7. Students show respect for school property (such as desks,
walls, bathrooms, buildings, and grounds).	1	2	3	4	5
8. Students try to get other students to follow school rules.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Students behave respectfully toward all school staff
(including secretaries, custodians, aides, and bus drivers).	1	2	3	4	5
10. Students work well together.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Students help to improve the school.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Students are disrespectful toward their teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Students help new students feel accepted.	1	2	3	4	5

Almost never = 1 Sometimes = 2 As often as not = 3 Frequently = 4 Almost always = 5

14. Students try to have a positive influence on the behavior of other students.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Students pick on other students.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Students are willing to forgive each other.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Students show poor sportsmanship.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Students are patient with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Students resolve conflicts without fighting, insults, or threats.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Students are disrespectful toward their schoolmates.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Students listen to each other in class discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
22. When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Students refrain from put-downs (negative, hurtful comments).	1	2	3	4	5
24. Students share what they have with others.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Students are involved in helping to solve school problems.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Students can talk to their teachers about problems that are bothering them.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Parents show that they care about their child's education and school behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Students are disrespectful toward their parents in the school environment.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Teachers go out of their way to help students who need extra help.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Teachers treat parents with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
31. In this school you can count on adults to try to make sure that students are safe.	1	2	3	4	5

Almost never = 1 Sometimes = 2 As often as not = 3 Frequently = 4 Almost always = 5

32. Teachers are unfair in their treatment of students.	1	2	3	4	5
33. In this school parents treat other parents with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Parents show respect for teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
35. In their interactions with students, teachers act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach.	1	2	3	4	5
36. In their interactions with students, <i>all school staff</i> (the principals, other administrators, counselors, coaches, aides, custodians, and others) act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach.	1	2	3	4	5
37. In their interactions with children, parents display the character qualities the school is trying to teach.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Faculty and staff treat each other with respect (are caring, supportive, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
39. Faculty and staff are involved in helping to make school decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
40. This school shows appreciation for the efforts of faculty and staff.	1	2	3	4	5
41. This school treats parents with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
42. Parents are actively involved in this school.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you!

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO PRINCIPALS SEEKING

PERMISSION TO STUDY SCHOOL SITE

[Principals' names omitted]
 [St. California Catholic School]
 [Southern California]

Dear [Principals]:

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks. I am a doctoral candidate at San Diego State University, and The University of San Diego. For my dissertation, I will be investigating stakeholders' perceptions of a Catholic K-8 school as a caring community.

My son is a first grade student at [St. California's]. I am writing to you to request permission to conduct my study at your school. The study would consist of a survey instrument, focus group interviews, and observations. I would like to distribute surveys to parents, teachers, administrators, students, and staff members, and conduct focus group interviews with parents, teachers, students, and staff members. I have enclosed the survey, focus group interview, and observation instruments for your review. The surveys should take between five and ten minutes to complete. Focus group interviews may last from 20 minutes to an hour long.

Your participation would be anonymous, and your school will not be able to be identified in any way. Thank you for considering this study. If you grant permission for the study, I will be happy to share the results with you. Many schools may benefit from your participation. Please contact me at (760) 433-1178 (home), or (760) 583-2234 (cell), if you have any questions regarding this study.

Sincerely,

Marci-Anne Hanks
 [address omitted]

Yes, I approve of this study and give my permission for Marci-Anne Hanks to conduct this study at my school site.

Name _____ Signature _____

Witness Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX C

NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Newsletter Announcement: Survey of [St. California's] as a Caring School Community

Marci-Anne Hanks, (1st grade mom), is a doctoral candidate at San Diego State University, and The University of San Diego. For her dissertation, she will be studying parents, teachers, administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community. Surveys will be sent home in the newsletters in early November, and will take between five to ten minutes to complete.

All responses will remain confidential. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study. Your perceptions are important to us and will provide us with valuable feedback! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Marci at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net.

Second Newsletter Announcement: Survey of [St. California's] as a Caring School Community

Parent surveys for the [St. California's] as a Caring School Community study are being distributed in this newsletter. All responses will remain confidential. Your perceptions are important to us and will provide us with valuable feedback! Surveys should only take between five to ten minutes to complete. Parents, we ask that you fill out these surveys without collaborating with your child. Student surveys that ask for their opinions will be sent home with next week's newsletter. You may return the surveys and the consent forms in the provided, sealed envelope to the front office or directly to Marci Hanks (1B mom). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Marci at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net.

Third Newsletter Announcement: Survey of [St. California's] as a Caring School Community

Student surveys for the [St. California's] as a Caring School Community study are being distributed in this newsletter to sixth through eighth grade students. All responses will remain confidential. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study. Students' perceptions are important to us and will provide us with valuable feedback! Surveys should only take between five to ten minutes to complete. Parents, we ask that your children fill out these surveys without your collaboration. Students must return a signed parental permission form and assent form in order to participate in the study. You may return the surveys and permission and assent forms to the front office in the provided, sealed envelope or directly to Marci Hanks (1B mom). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Marci at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net.

Fourth Newsletter Announcement: Survey of [St. California's] as a Caring School Community

SURVEYS:

There is still time to return surveys for the [St. California's] as a Caring School Community study. All responses will remain confidential. Surveys may be returned through the weekly

home folders, or directly to the front office, or directly to Marci Hanks. If you need another copy of the survey, there are some extra copies in the front office. Your perceptions are important to us! Please contact Marci Hanks at (760) 433-1178, or mhanks@aznet.net if you have any questions.

Thank you everyone who has returned a survey! You have helped to make this study very meaningful!

PARENT GROUP INTERVIEW:

I received so many responses from parents who are interested in participating in December's group interview. To be fair, I'll draw names randomly from a hat to select five participants. During the last week of November, I'll contact parents whose names were selected to arrange an interview time convenient to all participants. THANK YOU!

APPENDIX D

SURVEY COVER LETTER AND CONSENT FORM

FOR PARENTS AND STAFF

Survey Cover Letter

Dear [St. California's] parents, teachers, & staff:

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks. I am a student in SDSU/USD's joint doctoral program in Education. For my dissertation, I am studying [St. California's] as a caring community. My son is in first grade at [St. California's]. I chose [St. California's] for my study based on my observations and experiences of the school as a warm and caring community.

My study will define the attributes that make a school a caring community, and may help other schools to improve their climate by making their schools more caring. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study.

I am interested in your opinions of [St. California's] as a caring community. Please consider filling out the enclosed surveys. The surveys should only take between five and ten minutes to complete. I have also enclosed a consent form which describes the study in more detail. Surveys returned without consent forms cannot be used.

The school and participants will not be identifiable in the study, and all responses will remain confidential.

Thank you!

Marci-Anne Hanks

Survey Consent Form

Dear parents, teachers, and staff,

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks, (1st grade mom). I am a doctoral student at SDSU and USD. I will be studying our school community members' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study.

Your participation

We are asking all parents, teachers, administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students to take part in this research study. We are trying to learn more about the qualities that make schools caring communities.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to complete the enclosed survey. The survey should take between five and ten minutes to complete. Questions ask about perceptions of: student respect, student friendship and belonging, students' shaping of their environment, support and care by and for faculty and staff, and support and care by and for parents. Please fill out the entire survey. Parents: We would like your opinions on the surveys without your child's consultation. Student surveys that ask for their opinions will be sent home in next week's folders.

Returned Surveys & Confidentiality

If you choose to participate, please fill out the entire survey, sign the consent form, and seal these items in the envelope provided. Surveys returned without consent forms cannot be used. You may return sealed envelopes through the weekly home folders, or directly to the front office. You may also return sealed envelopes directly to Marci Hanks before or after school.

I will be the only one who will open sealed envelopes. I will separate consent forms from surveys so that names are not kept with the surveys. Each survey and consent form will be given a code. I will be the only one who has access to these codes. The master code list, surveys, and consent forms will all be kept in separate files in a locked filing cabinet in my home office to ensure your confidentiality. I will be the only person who has access to the raw survey data. The master code list, surveys, and consent forms will all be destroyed after three years. All of your responses will remain confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Benefits

Your participation in the study can help us to know how you feel about [St. California's] as a caring community.

Risks or Discomforts

Because of the personal nature of the questions asked, you may reflect on unpleasant memories while responding to a survey. If you begin to feel uncomfortable, you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

There are no costs to you for participating in the study, and there are no penalties if you choose not to participate. You will not be paid to participate in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decisions of whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with [St. California's], San Diego State University, or the University of San Diego. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time you want.

Contact Information

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Marci-Anne Hanks at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net. If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at San Diego State University (telephone: 619-594-6622; email: irb@mail.sdsu.edu), or the Office of the Vice President and Provost at University of San Diego (telephone: 619-260-4553; mail: Office of the Vice President and Provost, University of San Diego, 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110).

Please indicate whether you would like to participate in this study. If you choose to participate, please seal this permission form and the survey in the envelope provided and return to Marci Hanks. Thank you!

Consent to Participate: The San Diego State University Institutional Review Board has approved this consent form, as signified by the Board's stamp. The consent form must be reviewed annually and expires on the date indicated on the stamp.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to be in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this consent form. You have been told that by signing this consent form you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

I will also be conducting group interviews in December and January. The interviews will take place on [St. California's] campus or in the Parish Hall at a time which is convenient to all interviewees. The interviews will probably be between 45 minutes to an hour.

If you would like to participate in the group interview, please include your contact information below:

APPENDIX E

SURVEY COVER LETTER AND PERMISSION FORM FOR PARENTS OF SIXTH THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS AND STUDENT ASSENT FORM

Survey Cover Letter For Parents of Sixth Through Eighth Grade Students

Dear parents of sixth through eighth grade students:

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks. I am a student in SDSU/USD's joint doctoral program in Education. For my dissertation, I am studying [St. California's] as a caring community. My son is in first grade at [St. California's]. I chose [St. California's] for my study based on my observations and experiences of the school as a warm and caring community.

My study will define the attributes that make a school a caring community, and may help other schools to improve their climate by making their schools more caring. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study.

I am interested in students' opinions of [St. California's] as a caring community. Please consider allowing your child to fill out the enclosed survey. The survey should only take between five and ten minutes to complete. If you allow your child to participate, please sign the parental permission form, and have your child sign the assent form. Surveys returned without these forms cannot be used.

The school and participants will not be identifiable in the study, and all responses will remain confidential.

Thank you!

Marci-Anne Hanks

Parental Permission Form For Parents

Dear parents of sixth through eighth grade students,

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks, (1st grade mom). I am a doctoral student at SDSU and USD. I will be studying our school community members' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study.

Your participation

We are asking all parents, teachers, administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students to take part in this research study. We are trying to learn more about the qualities that make schools caring communities.

If you give your child permission to participate in this study, your child will be asked to complete the enclosed survey. The survey should take between five and ten minutes to complete. Questions ask about perceptions of: student respect, student friendship and belonging, students' shaping of their environment, support and care by and for faculty and staff, and support and care by and for parents. Parents: We would like your child's opinions on the surveys without your consultation.

Returned Surveys & Confidentiality

If you allow your child to participate, please sign the parental permission form, and have your child sign the assent form and fill out the entire survey. Please seal these items in the envelope provided. Surveys returned without a parental permission form and a child's assent form cannot be used. You may return sealed envelopes through the weekly home folders, or directly to the front office. You may also return sealed envelopes directly to Marci Hanks before or after school.

I will be the only one who will open sealed envelopes. I will separate parental permission & child assent forms from surveys so that names are not kept with the surveys. Each survey and parental permission & child assent form will be given a code. I will be the only one who has access to these codes. The master code list, surveys, and parental permission & child assent forms will all be kept in separate files in a locked filing cabinet in my home office to ensure your & your child's confidentiality. I will be the only person who has access to the raw survey data. The master code list, surveys, parental permission & child assent forms will all be destroyed after three years. All of your & your child's responses will remain confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Benefits

Your child's participation in the study can help us to know students' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community.

Risks or Discomforts

Because of the personal nature of the questions asked, your child may reflect on unpleasant memories while responding to a survey. If your child begins to feel uncomfortable, you or your child may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

There are no costs to you or your child for participating in the study, and there are no penalties if you or your child chooses not to participate. You will not be paid to participate in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decisions of whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with [St. California's] School, San Diego State University, or the University of San Diego. The choice to participate or not to participate will not affect your child's grades. Teachers, staff, & principals won't ever see the answers provided on the surveys. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time you want.

Contact Information

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Marci-Anne Hanks at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net. If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at San Diego State University (telephone: 619-594-6622; email: irb@mail.sdsu.edu), or the Office of the Vice President and Provost at University of San Diego (telephone: 619-260-4553; mail: Office of the Vice President and Provost, University of San Diego, 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110).

Please indicate whether you agree to allow your child to participate in this study. If you choose to allow your child to participate, please seal this permission form, the child's assent form, and the survey in the envelope provided and return to Marci Hanks. Thank you!

Consent to Participate: The San Diego State University Institutional Review Board has approved this consent form, as signified by the Board's stamp. The consent form must be reviewed annually and expires on the date indicated on the stamp.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to allow your child to be in the study and have been told that you or your child can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this consent form. You have been told that by signing this consent form you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Parent/Guardian of Participant

Date

Name of Child (print)

Signature of Investigator

Date

I will also be conducting group interviews with students in December and January. The interviews will take place during lunch on [St. California's], and will take between 20 to 30 minutes. Your child will not miss any class time.

If you give your child permission to participate in the group interview, and your child would like to participate, please include your contact information below:

Student Survey Assent Form

Dear sixth through eighth grade students,

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks, (1st grade mom). I am a doctoral student at SDSU and USD. I will be studying our school community members' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study.

We are trying to learn more about the qualities that make schools caring communities.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to complete the enclosed survey. The survey should take between five and ten minutes to complete. Questions ask about perceptions of: student respect, student friendship and belonging, students' shaping of their environment, support and care by and for faculty and staff, and support and care by and for parents.

Your participation in the study can help us to know how you feel about [St. California's] as a caring community.

All of your responses will remain confidential to the extent allowed by law. This means that no one will know what answers you give on the survey. Your name will never be linked to the information you put on the survey.

Participation is voluntary. There are no penalties if you choose not to participate. The choice to participate or not to participate will not affect your grades. Teachers, staff, & principals won't ever see the answers provided on the surveys. If you decide to participate, you can also change your mind and stop any time you want.

If you'd like to participate in the study, please talk to your parents first. If your parents say that you can be in the study, you can still decide not to participate.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net.

Please mark one of the choices below to tell us what you want to do:

_____ No, I do not want to be in this project.

_____ Yes, I want to be in this project.

Write your name here

Date

Project Representative

Date

APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Welcome and thank you for participating in today's focus group. I appreciate your being here and sharing your opinions for this study. There is only one definition that needs explanation, and that is what I mean when I say the phrase, "someone in this school community." School community members include students, parents, teachers, administrators, secretaries, the registrar, the business office manager, librarians, classroom aides, and custodians.

Do you have any questions for me? (Answer questions if they arise.) I think we're ready to begin, and again thank you for giving your time. I would love to hear from each one of you on every question.

1. Please describe an interaction you have had with someone in this school community that demonstrated caring. Please describe how this interaction made you feel.
2. Please describe an interaction you have had with a member of this school community that did not demonstrate caring. Please describe how this interaction made you feel.
3. Do you see this school as a caring community? Please explain.
4. Is there anything else you'd like to add that you think is important to know about this school as a caring community?

APPENDIX G

PARENT AND STAFF FOCUS GROUP

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Dear parents, teachers, and staff,

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks, (1st grade mom). I am a doctoral student at SDSU and USD. I will be studying our school community members' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study.

Your participation

We are asking all parents, teachers, administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students to take part in this research study. We are trying to learn more about the qualities that make schools caring communities.

If you agree to participate you will be asked to participate in a group interview with up to four other individuals. Questions ask participants about their perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community, and ask participants to describe caring and noncaring interactions that they've had with other school community members. The interviews will take place on [St. California's] campus or in the Parish Hall at a time which is convenient to all interviewees. The interviews will probably be between 45 minutes to an hour. If you choose to participate, please sign this consent form and indicate when you would be available for interviews, and seal in the envelope provided. Sealed envelopes may be returned through the weekly home folders, or directly to the front office. You may also return sealed envelopes directly to Marci Hanks before or after school.

Confidentiality

Interviews will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes only. Tape recordings may be sent to a professional transcribing service and then returned to me. Interviewees may request to review the recorded audiotape of their interview and edit any sections that he/she wishes. I will store all data in a locked filing cabinet in my home office. All audio-recordings of interviews will be destroyed after three years. All of your responses will remain confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Benefits

Your participation in the study can help us to know how you feel about [St. California's] as a caring community.

Risks or Discomforts

Because of the personal nature of the questions asked, you may reflect on unpleasant memories while responding to an interview. If you begin to feel uncomfortable, you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

There are no costs to you for participating in the study, and there are no penalties if you choose not to participate. You will not be paid to participate in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decisions of whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with [St. California's] School, San Diego State University, or the University of

San Diego. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time you want.

Contact Information

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Marci-Anne Hanks at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net. If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at San Diego State University (telephone: 619-594-6622; email: irb@mail.sdsu.edu), or the Office of the Vice President and Provost at University of San Diego (telephone: 619-260-4553; mail: Office of the Vice President and Provost, University of San Diego, 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110).

Please indicate whether you would like to participate in this study. If you choose to participate, please seal this consent form in the envelope provided and return to Marci Hanks. Thank you!

Consent to Participate: The San Diego State University Institutional Review Board has approved this consent form, as signified by the Board's stamp. The consent form must be reviewed annually and expires on the date indicated on the stamp.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to be in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this consent form. You have been told that by signing this consent form you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

Please indicate the best days/times when you would be available to participate in the group interview:

APPENDIX H

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP PARENTAL

PERMISSION FORM AND STUDENT ASSENT

FORM

Student Focus Group Parental Permission Form

Dear parents of sixth through eighth grade students,

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks, (1st grade mom). I am a doctoral student at SDSU and USD. I will be studying our school community members' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study.

Your participation

We are asking all parents, teachers, administrators, staff members, and sixth through eighth grade students to take part in this research study. We are trying to learn more about the qualities that make schools caring communities.

If you give your child permission to participate in this study, your child will be asked to participate in a group interview with up to four other students. Questions ask students about their perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community, and ask students to describe caring and noncaring interactions that they've had with other school community members. The interviews will take place during lunch on [St. California's] campus. The interviews will take between 20 to 30 minutes. Students will not miss any class time. If you choose to allow your child to participate, please sign this permission form, and have your child sign the assent form and seal these items in the envelope provided. Sealed envelopes may be returned through the weekly home folders, or directly to the front office. You may also return sealed envelopes directly to Marci Hanks before or after school.

Confidentiality

Interviews will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes only. Tape recordings may be sent to a professional transcribing service and then returned to me. Interviewees may request to review the recorded audiotape of their interview and edit any sections that he/she wishes. I will store all data in a locked filing cabinet in my home office. All audio-recordings of interviews will be destroyed after three years. All of your child's responses will remain confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Benefits

Your child's participation in the study can help us to know students' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community.

Risks or Discomforts

Because of the personal nature of the questions asked, your child may reflect on unpleasant memories while responding to the interview questions. Your child may also feel uncomfortable speaking in a group. If your child begins to feel uncomfortable, your child may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

There are no costs to you or your child for participating in the study, and there are no penalties if you or your child chooses not to participate. You will not be paid to participate in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decisions of whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with [St. California's] School, San Diego State University, or the University of San Diego. The choice to participate or not to participate will not affect your child's grades. Teachers, staff, & principals won't ever see or hear the interview data. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time you want.

Contact Information

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Marci-Anne Hanks at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net. If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at San Diego State University (telephone: 619-594-6622; email: irb@mail.sdsu.edu), or the Office of the Vice President and Provost at University of San Diego (telephone: 619-260-4553; mail: Office of the Vice President and Provost, University of San Diego, 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110).

Please indicate whether you would like to participate in this study. If you choose to participate, please seal this permission form and your child's assent form in the envelope provided and return to Marci Hanks. Thank you!

Consent to Participate: The San Diego State University Institutional Review Board has approved this consent form, as signified by the Board's stamp. The consent form must be reviewed annually and expires on the date indicated on the stamp.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to be in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this consent form. You have been told that by signing this consent form you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Parent/Guardian of Participant

Date

Name of Child (print)

Signature of Investigator

Date

Student Focus Group Student Assent Form

Dear sixth through eighth grade students,

My name is Marci-Anne Hanks, (1st grade mom). I am a doctoral student at SDSU and USD. I will be studying our school community members' perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community. The principals of [St. California's] have endorsed this study.

We are trying to learn more about the qualities that make schools caring communities.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to participate in a group interview with up to four other students. The group interview will be audiotaped. Questions ask about perceptions of [St. California's] as a caring community, and ask participants to describe caring and noncaring interactions that they've had with other school community members. The interviews will take place during lunch on [St. California's] campus. The interviews will take between 20 to 30 minutes. You will not miss any class time.

Your participation in the study can help us to know how you feel about [St. California's] as a caring community.

All of your responses will remain confidential to the extent allowed by law. This means that no one outside of the group interview participants will know what answers you give to interview questions. Your name will never be linked to the information you give to the interview questions.

Participation is voluntary. There are no penalties if you choose not to participate. The choice to participate or not to participate will not affect your grades. Teachers, staff, & principals won't ever see or hear the interview data. If you decide to participate, you can also change your mind and stop any time you want.

If you'd like to participate in the study, please talk to your parents first. If your parents say that you can be in the study, you can still decide not to participate.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (760) 433- 1178, or mhanks@aznet.net.

Please mark one of the choices below to tell us what you want to do:

_____ No, I do not want to be in this project.

_____ Yes, I want to be in this project.

Write your name here

Date

Project Representative

Date

APPENDIX I

OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT

Observation Instrument

Setting:		
Date:		
Start Time:		
End Time:		
Length of Observation:		
<u>Time activity or event occurred</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Reflective Notes</u>

APPENDIX J

FREQUENCY TABLE FOR SURVEY SUB-SCALE IA, “PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT RESPECT”

Table 8. Frequency Table for Survey Sub-Scale IA

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 1. Students treat classmates with respect.							
Parents	N	0	3	6	56	32	97
	%	.0%	3.1%	6.2%	57.7%	33.0%	100.0%
Students	N	1	1	6	14	6	28
	%	3.6%	3.6%	21.4%	50.0%	21.4%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	4	16	4	24
	%	.0%	.0%	16.7%	66.7%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	N	1	4	16	86	42	149
	%	.7%	2.7%	10.7%	57.7%	28.2%	100.0%
Question 4. Students respect the personal property of others.							
Parents	N	1	3	12	41	39	96
	%	1.0%	3.1%	12.5%	42.7%	40.6%	100.0%
Students	N	3	6	4	10	5	28
	%	10.7%	21.4%	14.3%	35.7%	17.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	2	4	13	5	24
	%	.0%	8.3%	16.7%	54.2%	20.8%	100.0%
Total	N	4	11	20	64	49	148
	%	2.7%	7.4%	13.5%	43.2%	33.1%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 8 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	as Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 7. Students show respect for school property (such as desks, walls, bathrooms, buildings, and grounds).							
Parents	N	0	2	14	43	38	97
	%	.0%	2.1%	14.4%	44.3%	39.2%	100.0%
Students	N	2	3	5	11	7	28
	%	7.1%	10.7%	17.9%	39.3%	25.0%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	1	6	15	2	24
	%	.0%	4.2%	25.0%	62.5%	8.3%	100.0%
Total	N	2	6	25	69	47	149
	%	1.3%	4.0%	16.8%	46.3%	31.5%	100.0%
Question 9. Students behave respectfully toward all school staff (including secretaries, custodians, aides, and bus drivers).							
Parents	N	0	0	5	34	58	97
	%	.0%	.0%	5.2%	35.1%	59.8%	100.0%
Students	N	1	1	5	8	13	28
	%	3.6%	3.6%	17.9%	28.6%	46.4%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	3	11	10	24
	%	.0%	.0%	12.5%	45.8%	41.7%	100.0%
Total	N	1	1	13	53	81	149
	%	.7%	.7%	8.7%	35.6%	54.4%	100.0%
Table continues							

Table continues

Table 8 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
**Question 12. Students are disrespectful toward their teachers.							
Parents	N	3	1	0	18	75	97
	%	3.1%	1.0%	.0%	18.6%	77.3%	100.0%
Students	N	0	1	1	10	16	28
	%	.0%	3.6%	3.6%	35.7%	57.1%	100.0%
Staff	N	4	0	0	8	12	24
	%	16.7%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	50.0%	100.0%
Total	N	7	2	1	36	103	149
	%	4.7%	1.3%	.7%	24.2%	69.1%	100.0%
** Question 15. Students pick on other students.							
Parents	N	1	3	7	58	28	97
	%	1.0%	3.1%	7.2%	59.8%	28.9%	100.0%
Students	N	0	1	4	11	12	28
	%	.0%	3.6%	14.3%	39.3%	42.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	1	17	6	24
	%	.0%	.0%	4.2%	70.8%	25.0%	100.0%
Total	N	1	4	12	86	46	149
	%	.7%	2.7%	8.1%	57.7%	30.9%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 8 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
** Question 17. Students show poor sportsmanship.							
Parents	N	0	4	6	41	46	97
	%	.0%	4.1%	6.2%	42.3%	47.4%	100.0%
Students	N	1	2	3	16	6	28
	%	3.6%	7.1%	10.7%	57.1%	21.4%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	1	14	9	24
	%	.0%	.0%	4.2%	58.3%	37.5%	100.0%
Total	N	1	6	10	71	61	149
	%	.7%	4.0%	6.7%	47.7%	40.9%	100.0%
**Question 20. Students are disrespectful toward their schoolmates.							
Parents	N	1	1	7	35	53	97
	%	1.0%	1.0%	7.2%	36.1%	54.6%	100.0%
Students	N	0	1	3	8	16	28
	%	.0%	3.6%	10.7%	28.6%	57.1%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	1	14	9	24
	%	.0%	.0%	4.2%	58.3%	37.5%	100.0%
Total	N	1	2	11	57	78	149
	%	.7%	1.3%	7.4%	38.3%	52.3%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 8 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 23. Students refrain from put-downs (negative, hurtful comments).							
Parents	N	0	16	16	48	16	96
	%	.0%	16.7%	16.7%	50.0%	16.7%	100.0%
Students	N	1	9	4	10	4	28
	%	3.6%	32.1%	14.3%	35.7%	14.3%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	5	4	12	3	24
	%	.0%	20.8%	16.7%	50.0%	12.5%	100.0%
Total	N	1	30	24	70	23	148
	%	.7%	20.3%	16.2%	47.3%	15.5%	100.0%

APPENDIX K

FREQUENCY TABLE FOR SURVEY SUB-SCALE

IB, “PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT FRIENDSHIP

AND BELONGING”

Table 9. Frequency Table for Survey Sub-Scale IB

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
**Question 2. Students exclude those who are different (e.g. belong to a different race, religion, or culture).							
Parents	N	1	6	6	23	61	97
	%	1.0%	6.2%	6.2%	23.7%	62.9%	100.0%
Students	N	2	2	2	3	19	28
	%	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%	10.7%	67.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	2	0	7	15	24
	%	.0%	8.3%	.0%	29.2%	62.5%	100.0%
Total	N	3	10	8	33	95	149
	%	2.0%	6.7%	5.4%	22.1%	63.8%	100.0%
Question 3. Students try to comfort peers who have experienced sadness.							
Parents	N	1	6	9	36	45	97
	%	1.0%	6.2%	9.3%	37.1%	46.4%	100.0%
Students	N	0	3	6	11	8	28
	%	.0%	10.7%	21.4%	39.3%	28.6%	100.0%
Staff	N	1	0	0	9	14	24
	%	4.2%	.0%	.0%	37.5%	58.3%	100.0%
Total	N	2	9	15	56	67	149
	%	1.3%	6.0%	10.1%	37.6%	45.0%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 9 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 5. Students help each other, even if they are not friends.							
Parents	N	1	6	21	50	18	96
	%	1.0%	6.3%	21.9%	52.1%	18.8%	100.0%
Students	N	2	7	6	9	4	28
	%	7.1%	25.0%	21.4%	32.1%	14.3%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	3	17	4	24
	%	.0%	.0%	12.5%	70.8%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	N	3	13	30	76	26	148
	%	2.0%	8.8%	20.3%	51.4%	17.6%	100.0%
Question 10. Students work well together.							
Parents	N	0	0	7	51	39	97
	%	.0%	.0%	7.2%	52.6%	40.2%	100.0%
Students	N	0	3	5	7	13	28
	%	.0%	10.7%	17.9%	25.0%	46.4%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	1	14	9	24
	%	.0%	.0%	4.2%	58.3%	37.5%	100.0%
Total	N	0	3	13	72	61	149
	%	.0%	2.0%	8.7%	48.3%	40.9%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 9 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 13. Students help new students feel accepted.							
Parents	N	1	2	15	49	30	97
	%	1.0%	2.1%	15.5%	50.5%	30.9%	100.0%
Students	N	0	3	3	6	16	28
	%	.0%	10.7%	10.7%	21.4%	57.1%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	1	2	11	10	24
	%	.0%	4.2%	8.3%	45.8%	41.7%	100.0%
Total	N	1	6	20	66	56	149
	%	.7%	4.0%	13.4%	44.3%	37.6%	100.0%
Question 16. Students are willing to forgive each other.							
Parents	N	0	4	18	43	32	97
	%	.0%	4.1%	18.6%	44.3%	33.0%	100.0%
Students	N	0	2	5	11	10	28
	%	.0%	7.1%	17.9%	39.3%	35.7%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	3	13	8	24
	%	.0%	.0%	12.5%	54.2%	33.3%	100.0%
Total	N	0	6	26	67	50	149
	%	.0%	4.0%	17.4%	45.0%	33.6%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 9 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 18. Students are patient with each other.							
Parents	N	0	9	28	48	12	97
	%	.0%	9.3%	28.9%	49.5%	12.4%	100.0%
Students	N	0	3	10	10	5	28
	%	.0%	10.7%	35.7%	35.7%	17.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	1	2	17	4	24
	%	.0%	4.2%	8.3%	70.8%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	N	0	13	40	75	21	149
	%	.0%	8.7%	26.8%	50.3%	14.1%	100.0%
Question 21. Students listen to each other in class discussions.							
Parents	N	0	2	9	44	40	95
	%	.0%	2.1%	9.5%	46.3%	42.1%	100.0%
Students	N	0	3	3	11	11	28
	%	.0%	10.7%	10.7%	39.3%	39.3%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	2	4	15	2	23
	%	.0%	8.7%	17.4%	65.2%	8.7%	100.0%
Total	N	0	7	16	70	53	146
	%	.0%	4.8%	11.0%	47.9%	36.3%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 9 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 24. Students share what they have with others.							
Parents	N	0	3	7	50	37	97
	%	.0%	3.1%	7.2%	51.5%	38.1%	100.0%
Students	N	1	4	5	11	7	28
	%	3.6%	14.3%	17.9%	39.3%	25.0%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	2	0	11	11	24
	%	.0%	8.3%	.0%	45.8%	45.8%	100.0%
Total	N	1	9	12	72	55	149
	%	.7%	6.0%	8.1%	48.3%	36.9%	100.0%

APPENDIX L

FREQUENCY TABLE FOR SURVEY SUB-SCALE IC, “PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS’ SHAPING OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT”

Table 10. Frequency Table for Survey Sub-Scale IC

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 6. When students do something hurtful, they try to make up for it (for example, they apologize or they do something nice).							
Parents	N	2	9	22	41	22	96
	%	2.1%	9.4%	22.9%	42.7%	22.9%	100.0%
Students	N	2	3	7	14	2	28
	%	7.1%	10.7%	25.0%	50.0%	7.1%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	1	5	12	6	24
	%	.0%	4.2%	20.8%	50.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Total	N	4	13	34	67	30	148
	%	2.7%	8.8%	23.0%	45.3%	20.3%	100.0%
Question 8. Students try to get other students to follow school rules.							
Parents	N	1	4	7	64	21	97
	%	1.0%	4.1%	7.2%	66.0%	21.6%	100.0%
Students	N	2	6	7	8	5	28
	%	7.1%	21.4%	25.0%	28.6%	17.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	3	5	13	3	24
	%	.0%	12.5%	20.8%	54.2%	12.5%	100.0%
Total	N	3	13	19	85	29	149
	%	2.0%	8.7%	12.8%	57.0%	19.5%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 10 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 11. Students help to improve the school.							
Parents	N	1	2	12	56	26	97
	%	1.0%	2.1%	12.4%	57.7%	26.8%	100.0%
Students	N	3	3	7	11	4	28
	%	10.7%	10.7%	25.0%	39.3%	14.3%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	1	4	12	7	24
	%	.0%	4.2%	16.7%	50.0%	29.2%	100.0%
Total	N	4	6	23	79	37	149
	%	2.7%	4.0%	15.4%	53.0%	24.8%	100.0%
Question 14. Students try to have a positive influence on the behavior of other students.							
Parents	N	0	8	14	58	17	97
	%	.0%	8.2%	14.4%	59.8%	17.5%	100.0%
Students	N	2	4	7	11	4	28
	%	7.1%	14.3%	25.0%	39.3%	14.3%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	1	5	16	2	24
	%	.0%	4.2%	20.8%	66.7%	8.3%	100.0%
Total	N	2	13	26	85	23	149
	%	1.3%	8.7%	17.4%	57.0%	15.4%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 10 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 19. Students resolve conflicts without fighting, insults, or threats.							
Parents	N	1	3	20	39	33	96
	%	1.0%	3.1%	20.8%	40.6%	34.4%	100.0%
Students	N	2	1	4	14	7	28
	%	7.1%	3.6%	14.3%	50.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	1	4	14	5	24
	%	.0%	4.2%	16.7%	58.3%	20.8%	100.0%
Total	N	3	5	28	67	45	148
	%	2.0%	3.4%	18.9%	45.3%	30.4%	100.0%
Question 22. When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.							
Parents	N	2	21	26	38	8	95
	%	2.1%	22.1%	27.4%	40.0%	8.4%	100.0%
Students	N	3	4	7	10	4	28
	%	10.7%	14.3%	25.0%	35.7%	14.3%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	5	6	9	3	23
	%	.0%	21.7%	26.1%	39.1%	13.0%	100.0%
Total	N	5	30	39	57	15	146
	%	3.4%	20.5%	26.7%	39.0%	10.3%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 10 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 25. Students are involved in helping to solve school problems.							
Parents	N	3	17	20	34	21	95
	%	3.2%	17.9%	21.1%	35.8%	22.1%	100.0%
Students	N	2	4	9	8	5	28
	%	7.1%	14.3%	32.1%	28.6%	17.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	3	5	13	3	24
	%	.0%	12.5%	20.8%	54.2%	12.5%	100.0%
Total	N	5	24	34	55	29	147
	%	3.4%	16.3%	23.1%	37.4%	19.7%	100.0%

APPENDIX M

FREQUENCY TABLE FOR SURVEY SUB-SCALE IIA, “PERCEPTIONS OF SUPPORT AND CARE BY AND FOR FACULTY/STAFF”

Table 11. Frequency Table for Survey Sub-Scale IIA

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 26. Students can talk to their teachers about problems that are bothering them.							
Parents	N	2	9	16	43	27	97
	%	2.1%	9.3%	16.5%	44.3%	27.8%	100.0%
Students	N	2	5	8	5	8	28
	%	7.1%	17.9%	28.6%	17.9%	28.6%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	1	2	12	9	24
	%	.0%	4.2%	8.3%	50.0%	37.5%	100.0%
Total	N	4	15	26	60	44	149
	%	2.7%	10.1%	17.4%	40.3%	29.5%	100.0%
Question 29. Teachers go out of their way to help students who need extra help.							
Parents	N	1	6	4	46	40	97
	%	1.0%	6.2%	4.1%	47.4%	41.2%	100.0%
Students	N	0	5	4	4	15	28
	%	.0%	17.9%	14.3%	14.3%	53.6%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	0	9	15	24
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%
Total	N	1	11	8	59	70	149
	%	.7%	7.4%	5.4%	39.6%	47.0%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 11 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 31. In this school you can count on adults to try to make sure that students are safe.							
Parents	N	0	1	4	11	81	97
	%	.0%	1.0%	4.1%	11.3%	83.5%	100.0%
Students	N	1	0	4	1	22	28
	%	3.6%	.0%	14.3%	3.6%	78.6%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	1	5	18	24
	%	.0%	.0%	4.2%	20.8%	75.0%	100.0%
Total	N	1	1	9	17	121	149
	%	.7%	.7%	6.0%	11.4%	81.2%	100.0%
**Question 32. Teachers are unfair in their treatment of students.							
Parents	N	0	0	0	13	84	97
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	13.4%	86.6%	100.0%
Students	N	3	0	3	9	13	28
	%	10.7%	.0%	10.7%	32.1%	46.4%	100.0%
Staff	N	1	1	0	1	21	24
	%	4.2%	4.2%	.0%	4.2%	87.5%	100.0%
Total	N	4	1	3	23	118	149
	%	2.7%	.7%	2.0%	15.4%	79.2%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 11 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 34. Parents show respect for teachers.							
Parents	N	0	1	4	26	66	97
	%	.0%	1.0%	4.1%	26.8%	68.0%	100.0%
Students	N	0	0	3	4	21	28
	%	.0%	.0%	10.7%	14.3%	75.0%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	6	10	7	23
	%	.0%	.0%	26.1%	43.5%	30.4%	100.0%
Total	N	0	1	13	40	94	148
	%	.0%	.7%	8.8%	27.0%	63.5%	100.0%
Question 35. In their interactions with students, teachers act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach.							
Parents	N	1	1	2	27	65	96
	%	1.0%	1.0%	2.1%	28.1%	67.7%	100.0%
Students		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Staff	N	0	0	0	5	19	24
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	20.8%	79.2%	100.0%
Total	N	1	1	2	32	84	120
	%	.8%	.8%	1.7%	26.7%	70.0%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 11 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	as Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 36. In their interactions with students, <i>all school staff</i> (the principals, other administrators, counselors, coaches, aides, custodians, and others) act in ways that demonstrate the character qualities the school is trying to teach.							
Parents	N	1	2	4	31	58	96
	%	1.0%	2.1%	4.2%	32.3%	60.4%	100.0%
Students		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Staff	N	0	0	0	5	19	24
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	20.8%	79.2%	100.0%
Total	N	1	2	4	36	77	120
	%	.8%	1.7%	3.3%	30.0%	64.2%	100.0%
Question 38. Faculty and staff treat each other with respect (are caring, supportive, etc.).							
Parents	N	0	0	3	24	69	96
	%	.0%	.0%	3.1%	25.0%	71.9%	100.0%
Students		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Staff	N	0	0	0	4	20	24
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
Total	N	0	0	3	28	89	120
	%	.0%	.0%	2.5%	23.3%	74.2%	100.0%
Table continues							

Table continues

Table 11 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 39. Faculty and staff are involved in helping to make school decisions							
Parents	N	0	2	10	30	50	92
	%	.0%	2.2%	10.9%	32.6%	54.3%	100.0%
Students		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Staff	N	0	0	3	10	11	24
	%	.0%	.0%	12.5%	41.7%	45.8%	100.0%
Total	N	0	2	13	40	61	116
	%	.0%	1.7%	11.2%	34.5%	52.6%	100.0%
Question 40. This school shows appreciation for the efforts of faculty and staff.							
Parents	N	0	0	1	24	71	96
	%	.0%	.0%	1.0%	25.0%	74.0%	100.0%
Students		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Staff	N	0	0	1	9	14	24
	%	.0%	.0%	4.2%	37.5%	58.3%	100.0%
Total	N	0	0	2	33	85	120
	%	.0%	.0%	1.7%	27.5%	70.8%	100.0%

APPENDIX N

FREQUENCY TABLE FOR SURVEY SUB-SCALE

IIB, “PERCEPTIONS OF SUPPORT AND CARE BY

AND FOR PARENTS”

Table 12. Frequency Table for Survey Sub-Scale IIB

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 27. Parents show that they care about their child’s education and school behavior.							
Parents	N	0	1	4	19	73	97
	%	.0%	1.0%	4.1%	19.6%	75.3%	100.0%
Students	N	0	0	0	2	26	28
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	7.1%	92.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	0	11	13	24
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	45.8%	54.2%	100.0%
Total	N	0	1	4	32	112	149
	%	.0%	.7%	2.7%	21.5%	75.2%	100.0%
**Question 28. Students are disrespectful toward their parents in the school environment.							
Parents	N	1	1	4	16	75	97
	%	1.0%	1.0%	4.1%	16.5%	77.3%	100.0%
Students	N	0	2	2	5	19	28
	%	.0%	7.1%	7.1%	17.9%	67.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	1	1	1	12	9	24
	%	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	50.0%	37.5%	100.0%
Total	N	2	4	7	33	103	149
	%	1.3%	2.7%	4.7%	22.1%	69.1%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 12 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 30. Teachers treat parents with respect.							
Parents	N	1	0	3	21	72	97
	%	1.0%	.0%	3.1%	21.6%	74.2%	100.0%
Students	N	2	1	2	4	19	28
	%	7.1%	3.6%	7.1%	14.3%	67.9%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	1	3	20	24
	%	.0%	.0%	4.2%	12.5%	83.3%	100.0%
Total	N	3	1	6	28	111	149
	%	2.0%	.7%	4.0%	18.8%	74.5%	100.0%
Question 33. In this school parents treat other parents with respect.							
Parents	N	0	7	6	30	53	96
	%	.0%	7.3%	6.3%	31.3%	55.2%	100.0%
Students	N	2	0	1	7	18	28
	%	7.1%	.0%	3.6%	25.0%	64.3%	100.0%
Staff	N	0	0	5	13	6	24
	%	.0%	.0%	20.8%	54.2%	25.0%	100.0%
Total	N	2	7	12	50	77	148
	%	1.4%	4.7%	8.1%	33.8%	52.0%	100.0%

Table continues

Table 12 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 37. In their interactions with children, parents display the character qualities the school is trying to teach.							
Parents	N	0	2	8	43	42	95
	%	.0%	2.1%	8.4%	45.3%	44.2%	100.0%
Students		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Staff	N	0	1	2	13	7	23
	%	.0%	4.3%	8.7%	56.5%	30.4%	100.0%
Total	N	0	3	10	56	49	118
	%	.0%	2.5%	8.5%	47.5%	41.5%	100.0%
Question 41. This school treats parents with respect.							
Parents	N	1	1	3	33	58	96
	%	1.0%	1.0%	3.1%	34.4%	60.4%	100.0%
Students		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Staff	N	0	0	0	2	22	24
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	8.3%	91.7%	100.0%
Total	N	1	1	3	35	80	120
	%	.8%	.8%	2.5%	29.2%	66.7%	100.0%
Table continues							

Table 12 (Continued)

		Almost		As Often as		Almost	
Stakeholder		Never	Sometimes	Not	Frequently	Always	Total
Question 42. Parents are actively involved in this school.							
Parents	N	0	1	3	16	76	96
	%	.0%	1.0%	3.1%	16.7%	79.2%	100.0%
Students		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Staff	N	0	0	0	6	18	24
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Total	N	0	1	3	22	94	120
	%	.0%	.8%	2.5%	18.3%	78.3%	100.0%

APPENDIX O

ANOVAS AND TUKEY HSD POST HOC TESTS

FOR OVERALL SUB-SCALES

Sub-scale IA: "Perceptions of Student Respect"

Table 13. ANOVA, Overall Sub-Scale IA

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3.348 ^a	2	1.674	7.326	.001	.091
Intercept	1694.813	1	1694.813	7416.630	.000	.981
Stakeholder group	3.348	2	1.674	7.326	.001	.091
Error	33.363	146	.229			
Total	2609.993	149				
Corrected Total	36.712	148				

a. R Squared = .091 (Adjusted R Squared = .079)

Table 14. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test, Overall Sub-Scale IA

(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 Parents	2 Students	.3682*	.10255	.001	.1253	.6110
	3 Staff	.2240	.10898	.103	-.0341	.4820
2 Students	1 Parents	-.3682*	.10255	.001	-.6110	-.1253
	3 Staff	-.1442	.13298	.525	-.4590	.1707
3 Staff	1 Parents	-.2240	.10898	.103	-.4820	.0341
	2 Students	.1442	.13298	.525	-.1707	.4590

Based on observed means.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Sub-scale IB: "Perceptions of Student Friendship and Belonging"

Table 15. ANOVA, Overall Sub-Scale IB

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1.495 ^a	2	.748	2.841	.062	.037
Intercept	1702.425	1	1702.425	6467.987	.000	.978
Stakeholder group	1.495	2	.748	2.841	.062	.037
Error	38.428	146	.263			
Total	2534.738	149				
Corrected Total	39.924	148				

a. R Squared = .037 (Adjusted R Squared = .024)

Table 16. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test, Overall Sub-Scale IB

(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 Parents	2 Students	.2288	.11006	.098	-.0318	.4895
	3 Staff	-.0820	.11696	.763	-.3590	.1950
2 Students	1 Parents	-.2288	.11006	.098	-.4895	.0318
	3 Staff	-.3108	.14271	.078	-.6488	.0271
3 Staff	1 Parents	.0820	.11696	.763	-.1950	.3590
	2 Students	.3108	.14271	.078	-.0271	.6488

Based on observed means.

Sub-scale IC: "Perceptions of Students' Shaping of Their Environment"

Table 17. ANOVA, Overall Sub-Scale IC

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3.421 ^a	2	1.710	3.751	.026	.049
Intercept	1380.722	1	1380.722	3027.736	.000	.954
Stakeholder group	3.421	2	1.710	3.751	.026	.049
Error	66.580	146	.456			
Total	2140.725	149				
Corrected Total	70.000	148				

a. R Squared = .049 (Adjusted R Squared = .036)

Table 18. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test, Overall Sub-Scale IC

(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 Parents	2 Students	.3912*	.14487	.021	.0482	.7342
	3 Staff	.0188	.15396	.992	-.3458	.3833
2 Students	1 Parents	-.3912*	.14487	.021	-.7342	-.0482
	3 Staff	-.3724	.18785	.120	-.8173	.0724
3 Staff	1 Parents	-.0188	.15396	.992	-.3833	.3458
	2 Students	.3724	.18785	.120	-.0724	.8173

Based on observed means.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Sub-scale IIA: "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Faculty/Staff"

Table 19. ANOVA, Overall Sub-Scale IIA

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3.543 ^a	2	1.771	6.682	.002	.084
Intercept	1991.231	1	1991.231	7511.240	.000	.981
Stakeholder group	3.543	2	1.771	6.682	.002	.084
Error	38.705	146	.265			
Total	2999.895	149				
Corrected Total	42.248	148				

a. R Squared = .084 (Adjusted R Squared = .071)

Table 20. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test, Overall Sub-Scale IIA

(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 Parents	2 Students	.3871*	.11046	.002	.1255	.6486
	3 Staff	-.0328	.11738	.958	-.3107	.2452
2 Students	1 Parents	-.3871*	.11046	.002	-.6486	-.1255
	3 Staff	-.4198*	.14323	.011	-.7590	-.0807
3 Staff	1 Parents	.0328	.11738	.958	-.2452	.3107
	2 Students	-.4198*	.14323	.011	.0807	.7590

Based on observed means.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Sub-scale IIB: "Perceptions of Support and Care by and for Parents"

Table 21. ANOVA, Overall Sub-Scale IIB

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	.162 ^a	2	.081	.440	.645	.006
Intercept	2097.747	1	2097.747	11370.206	.000	.987
Stakeholder group	.162	2	.081	.440	.645	.006
Error	26.936	146	.184			
Total	3100.471	149				
Corrected Total	27.099	148				

a. R Squared = .006 (Adjusted R Squared = -.008)

Table 22. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test, Overall Sub-Scale IIB

(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 Parents	2 Students	.0361	.09215	.919	-.1821	.2543
	3 Staff	.0897	.09792	.631	-.1422	.3215
2 Students	1 Parents	-.0361	.09215	.919	-.2543	.1821
	3 Staff	.0536	.11948	.895	-.2293	.3365
3 Staff	1 Parents	-.0897	.09792	.631	-.3215	.1422
	2 Students	-.0536	.11948	.895	-.3365	.2293

Based on observed means.

APPENDIX P

ANOVAS AND TUKEY HSD POST HOC TESTS

FOR QUESTIONS 1-34

Table 23. ANOVA, Individual Questions 1-34

		Sum of				
		Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Question 1	Between Groups	3.507	2	1.753	3.282	.040
	Within Groups	77.983	146	.534		
	Total	81.490	148			
Question 2	Between Groups	.709	2	.355	.353	.703
	Within Groups	146.713	146	1.005		
	Total	147.423	148			
Question 3	Between Groups	4.898	2	2.449	2.841	.062
	Within Groups	125.841	146	.862		
	Total	130.738	148			
Question 4	Between Groups	17.867	2	8.933	9.891	.000
	Within Groups	130.964	145	.903		
	Total	148.831	147			
Question 5	Between Groups	10.425	2	5.213	6.613	.002
	Within Groups	114.298	145	.788		
	Total	124.723	147			
Question 6	Between Groups	4.444	2	2.222	2.375	.097
	Within Groups	135.637	145	.935		
	Total	140.081	147			
Question 7	Between Groups	9.088	2	4.544	6.330	.002
	Within Groups	104.805	146	.718		
	Total	113.893	148			
Question 8	Between Groups	12.851	2	6.425	8.532	.000
	Within Groups	109.955	146	.753		
	Total	122.805	148			

Table continues

Table 23 (Continued)

		Sum of				
		Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Question 9	Between Groups	4.684	2	2.342	4.519	.012
	Within Groups	75.678	146	.518		
	Total	80.362	148			
Question 10	Between Groups	1.527	2	.764	1.535	.219
	Within Groups	72.634	146	.497		
	Total	74.161	148			
Question 11	Between Groups	11.447	2	5.724	7.746	.001
	Within Groups	107.882	146	.739		
	Total	119.329	148			
Question 12	Between Groups	8.471	2	4.235	4.879	.009
	Within Groups	126.737	146	.868		
	Total	135.208	148			
Question 13	Between Groups	.950	2	.475	.660	.518
	Within Groups	105.090	146	.720		
	Total	106.040	148			
Question 14	Between Groups	4.884	2	2.442	3.367	.037
	Within Groups	105.895	146	.725		
	Total	110.779	148			
Question 15	Between Groups	.262	2	.131	.241	.786
	Within Groups	79.188	146	.542		
	Total	79.450	148			
Question 16	Between Groups	.482	2	.241	.357	.700
	Within Groups	98.551	146	.675		
	Total	99.034	148			

Table continues

Table 23 (Continued)

		Sum of				
		Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Question 17	Between Groups	5.097	2	2.548	4.125	.018
	Within Groups	90.205	146	.618		
	Total	95.302	148			
Question 18	Between Groups	2.648	2	1.324	1.998	.139
	Within Groups	96.761	146	.663		
	Total	99.409	148			
Question 19	Between Groups	1.074	2	.537	.655	.521
	Within Groups	118.899	145	.820		
	Total	119.973	147			
Question 20	Between Groups	.157	2	.078	.140	.869
	Within Groups	81.682	146	.559		
	Total	81.839	148			
Question 21	Between Groups	5.758	2	2.879	4.699	.011
	Within Groups	87.618	143	.613		
	Total	93.377	145			
Question 22	Between Groups	.356	2	.178	.168	.846
	Within Groups	151.514	143	1.060		
	Total	151.870	145			
Question 23	Between Groups	3.783	2	1.891	1.897	.154
	Within Groups	144.542	145	.997		
	Total	148.324	147			
Question 24	Between Groups	7.624	2	3.812	5.504	.005
	Within Groups	101.127	146	.693		
	Total	108.752	148			

Table continues

Table 23 (Continued)

		Sum of				
		Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Question 25	Between Groups	1.351	2	.675	.568	.568
	Within Groups	171.193	144	1.189		
	Total	172.544	146			
Question 26	Between Groups	8.061	2	4.031	3.819	.024
	Within Groups	154.073	146	1.055		
	Total	162.134	148			
Question 27	Between Groups	2.053	2	1.027	3.524	.032
	Within Groups	42.537	146	.291		
	Total	44.591	148			
Question 28	Between Groups	6.190	2	3.095	4.876	.009
	Within Groups	92.682	146	.635		
	Total	98.872	148			
Question 29	Between Groups	4.769	2	2.385	2.975	.054
	Within Groups	117.043	146	.802		
	Total	121.812	148			
Question 30	Between Groups	3.540	2	1.770	3.034	.051
	Within Groups	85.158	146	.583		
	Total	88.698	148			
Question 31	Between Groups	1.228	2	.614	1.381	.255
	Within Groups	64.933	146	.445		
	Total	66.161	148			
Question 32	Between Groups	14.982	2	7.491	14.102	.000
	Within Groups	77.555	146	.531		
	Total	92.537	148			

Table continues

Table 23 (Continued)

		Sum of				
		Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Question 33	Between Groups	2.024	2	1.012	1.230	.295
	Within Groups	119.293	145	.823		
	Total	121.318	147			
Question 34	Between Groups	6.559	2	3.280	7.637	.001
	Within Groups	62.272	145	.429		
	Total	68.831	147			

Table 24. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Tests, Individual Questions 1-34

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 1	Parents	Students	.385(*)	.157	.040	.01	.76
		Staff	.206	.167	.433	-.19	.60
	Students	Parents	-.385(*)	.157	.040	-.76	-.01
		Staff	-.179	.203	.655	-.66	.30
	Staff	Parents	-.206	.167	.433	-.60	.19
		Students	.179	.203	.655	-.30	.66
Question 2	Parents	Students	.162	.215	.731	-.35	.67
		Staff	-.046	.229	.978	-.59	.50
	Students	Parents	-.162	.215	.731	-.67	.35
		Staff	-.208	.279	.736	-.87	.45
	Staff	Parents	.046	.229	.978	-.50	.59
		Students	.208	.279	.736	-.45	.87
Question 3	Parents	Students	.359	.199	.172	-.11	.83
		Staff	-.242	.212	.490	-.74	.26
	Students	Parents	-.359	.199	.172	-.83	.11
		Staff	-.601	.258	.055	-1.21	.01
	Staff	Parents	.242	.212	.490	-.26	.74
		Students	.601	.258	.055	-.01	1.21
Question 4	Parents	Students	.902(*)	.204	.000	.42	1.39
		Staff	.313	.217	.323	-.20	.83
	Students	Parents	-.902(*)	.204	.000	-1.39	-.42
		Staff	-.589	.264	.070	-1.22	.04
	Staff	Parents	-.313	.217	.323	-.83	.20
		Students	.589	.264	.070	-.04	1.22

Table continues

Table 24 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 5	Parents	Students	.598(*)	.191	.006	.15	1.05
		Staff	-.229	.203	.497	-.71	.25
	Students	Parents	-.598(*)	.191	.006	-1.05	-.15
		Staff	-.827(*)	.247	.003	-1.41	-.24
	Staff	Parents	.229	.203	.497	-.25	.71
		Students	.827(*)	.247	.003	.24	1.41
Question 6	Parents	Students	.357	.208	.201	-.13	.85
		Staff	-.208	.221	.613	-.73	.31
	Students	Parents	-.357	.208	.201	-.85	.13
		Staff	-.565	.269	.093	-1.20	.07
	Staff	Parents	.208	.221	.613	-.31	.73
		Students	.565	.269	.093	-.07	1.20
Question 7	Parents	Students	.563(*)	.182	.007	.13	.99
		Staff	.456	.193	.051	.00	.91
	Students	Parents	-.563(*)	.182	.007	-.99	-.13
		Staff Staff	-.107	.236	.892	-.67	.45
	Staff	Parents	-.456	.193	.051	-.91	.00
		Students	.107	.236	.892	-.45	.67
Question 8	Parents	Students	.745(*)	.186	.000	.30	1.19
		Staff	.364	.198	.160	-.10	.83
	Students	Parents	-.745(*)	.186	.000	-1.19	-.30
		Staff	-.381	.241	.258	-.95	.19
	Staff	Parents	-.364	.198	.160	-.83	.10
		Students	.381	.241	.258	-.19	.95

Table continues

Table 24 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 9	Parents	Students	.439(*)	.154	.014	.07	.80
		Staff	.255	.164	.270	-.13	.64
	Students	Parents	-.439(*)	.154	.014	-.80	-.07
		Staff	-.185	.200	.628	-.66	.29
	Staff	Parents	-.255	.164	.270	-.64	.13
		Students	.185	.200	.628	-.29	.66
Question 10	Parents	Students	.258	.151	.206	-.10	.62
		Staff	-.003	.161	1.000	-.38	.38
	Students	Parents	-.258	.151	.206	-.62	.10
		Staff	-.262	.196	.378	-.73	.20
	Staff	Parents	.003	.161	1.000	-.38	.38
		Students	.262	.196	.378	-.20	.73
Question 11	Parents	Students	.715(*)	.184	.000	.28	1.15
		Staff	.030	.196	.987	-.43	.49
	Students	Parents	-.715(*)	.184	.000	-1.15	-.28
		Staff	-.685(*)	.239	.013	-1.25	-.12
	Staff	Parents	-.030	.196	.987	-.49	.43
		Students	.685(*)	.239	.013	.12	1.25
Question 12	Parents	Students	.196	.200	.592	-.28	.67
		Staff	.660(*)	.212	.006	.16	1.16
	Students	Parents	-.196	.200	.592	-.67	.28
		Staff	.464	.259	.176	-.15	1.08
	Staff	Parents	-.660(*)	.212	.006	-1.16	-.16
		Students	-.464	.259	.176	-1.08	.15

Table continues

Table 24 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 13	Parents	Students	-.168	.182	.628	-.60	.26
		Staff	-.168	.193	.662	-.63	.29
	Students	Parents	.168	.182	.628	-.26	.60
		Staff	.000	.236	1.000	-.56	.56
	Staff	Parents	.168	.193	.662	-.29	.63
		Students	.000	.236	1.000	-.56	.56
Question 14	Parents	Students	.473(*)	.183	.028	.04	.91
		Staff	.074	.194	.922	-.39	.53
	Students	Parents	-.473(*)	.183	.028	-.91	-.04
		Staff	-.399	.237	.215	-.96	.16
	Staff	Parents	-.074	.194	.922	-.53	.39
		Students	.399	.237	.215	-.16	.96
Question 15	Parents	Students	-.091	.158	.835	-.46	.28
		Staff	-.085	.168	.870	-.48	.31
	Students	Parents	.091	.158	.835	-.28	.46
		Staff	.006	.205	1.000	-.48	.49
	Staff	Parents	.085	.168	.870	-.31	.48
		Students	-.006	.205	1.000	-.49	.48
Question 16	Parents	Students	.026	.176	.988	-.39	.44
		Staff	-.146	.187	.715	-.59	.30
	Students	Parents	-.026	.176	.988	-.44	.39
		Staff	-.173	.229	.731	-.71	.37
	Staff	Parents	.146	.187	.715	-.30	.59
		Students	.173	.229	.731	-.37	.71

Table continues

Table 24 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 17	Parents	Students	.473(*)	.169	.016	.07	.87
		Staff	-.003	.179	1.000	-.43	.42
	Students	Parents	-.473(*)	.169	.016	-.87	-.07
		Staff	-.476	.219	.078	-.99	.04
	Staff	Parents	.003	.179	1.000	-.42	.43
		Students	.476	.219	.078	-.04	.99
Question 18	Parents	Students	.042	.175	.968	-.37	.46
		Staff	-.351	.186	.146	-.79	.09
	Students	Parents	-.042	.175	.968	-.46	.37
		Staff	-.393	.226	.196	-.93	.14
	Staff	Parents	.351	.186	.146	-.09	.79
		Students	.393	.226	.196	-.14	.93
Question 19	Parents	Students	.220	.194	.496	-.24	.68
		Staff	.083	.207	.914	-.41	.57
	Students	Parents	-.220	.194	.496	-.68	.24
		Staff	-.137	.252	.850	-.73	.46
	Staff	Parents	-.083	.207	.914	-.57	.41
		Students	.137	.252	.850	-.46	.73
Question 20	Parents	Students	.030	.160	.981	-.35	.41
		Staff	.089	.171	.860	-.31	.49
	Students	Parents	-.030	.160	.981	-.41	.35
		Staff	.060	.208	.956	-.43	.55
	Staff	Parents	-.089	.171	.860	-.49	.31
		Students	-.060	.208	.956	-.55	.43

Table continues

Table 24 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 21	Parents	Students	.213	.168	.418	-.19	.61
		Staff	.545(*)	.182	.009	.11	.98
	Students	Parents	-.213	.168	.418	-.61	.19
		Staff	.332	.220	.290	-.19	.85
	Staff	Parents	-.545(*)	.182	.009	-.98	-.11
		Students	-.332	.220	.290	-.85	.19
Question 22	Parents	Students	.020	.221	.996	-.50	.54
		Staff	-.130	.239	.851	-.70	.44
	Students	Parents	-.020	.221	.996	-.54	.50
		Staff	-.149	.290	.864	-.84	.54
	Staff	Parents	.130	.239	.851	-.44	.70
		Students	.149	.290	.864	-.54	.84
Question 23	Parents	Students	.417	.214	.130	-.09	.92
		Staff	.125	.228	.847	-.41	.66
	Students	Parents	-.417	.214	.130	-.92	.09
		Staff	-.292	.278	.547	-.95	.37
	Staff	Parents	-.125	.228	.847	-.66	.41
		Students	.292	.278	.547	-.37	.95
Question 24	Parents	Students	.569(*)	.179	.005	.15	.99
		Staff	-.044	.190	.970	-.49	.41
	Students	Parents	-.569(*)	.179	.005	-.99	-.15
		Staff	-.613(*)	.232	.024	-1.16	-.06
	Staff	Parents	.044	.190	.970	-.41	.49
		Students	.613(*)	.232	.024	.06	1.16

Table continues

Table 24 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 25	Parents	Students	.201	.234	.669	-.35	.76
		Staff	-.109	.249	.900	-.70	.48
	Students	Parents	-.201	.234	.669	-.76	.35
		Staff	-.310	.303	.565	-1.03	.41
	Staff	Parents	.109	.249	.900	-.48	.70
		Students	.310	.303	.565	-.41	1.03
Question 26	Parents	Students	.437	.220	.120	-.08	.96
		Staff	-.342	.234	.312	-.90	.21
	Students	Parents	-.437	.220	.120	-.96	.08
		Staff	-.780(*)	.286	.019	-1.46	-.10
	Staff	Parents	.342	.234	.312	-.21	.90
		Students	.780(*)	.286	.019	.10	1.46
Question 27	Parents	Students	-.238	.116	.103	-.51	.04
		Staff	.149	.123	.448	-.14	.44
	Students	Parents	.238	.116	.103	-.04	.51
		Staff	.387(*)	.150	.029	.03	.74
	Staff	Parents	-.149	.123	.448	-.44	.14
		Students	-.387(*)	.150	.029	-.74	-.03
Question 28	Parents	Students	.216	.171	.418	-.19	.62
		Staff	.555(*)	.182	.007	.13	.99
	Students	Parents	-.216	.171	.418	-.62	.19
		Staff	.339	.222	.280	-.19	.86
	Staff	Parents	-.555(*)	.182	.007	-.99	-.13
		Students	-.339	.222	.280	-.86	.19

Table continues

Table 24 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 29	Parents	Students	.181	.192	.615	-.27	.64
		Staff	-.409	.204	.116	-.89	.07
	Students	Parents	-.181	.192	.615	-.64	.27
		Staff	-.589	.249	.050	-1.18	.00
	Staff	Parents	.409	.204	.116	-.07	.89
		Students	.589	.249	.050	.00	1.18
Question 30	Parents	Students	.359	.164	.076	-.03	.75
		Staff	-.111	.174	.799	-.52	.30
	Students	Parents	-.359	.164	.076	-.75	.03
		Staff	-.470	.212	.072	-.97	.03
	Staff	Parents	.111	.174	.799	-.30	.52
		Students	.470	.212	.072	-.03	.97
Question 31	Parents	Students	.237	.143	.224	-.10	.58
		Staff	.065	.152	.905	-.30	.42
	Students	Parents	-.237	.143	.224	-.58	.10
		Staff	-.173	.186	.622	-.61	.27
	Staff	Parents	-.065	.152	.905	-.42	.30
		Students	.173	.186	.622	-.27	.61
Question 32	Parents	Students	.830(*)	.156	.000	.46	1.20
		Staff	.199	.166	.455	-.19	.59
	Students	Parents	-.830(*)	.156	.000	-1.20	-.46
		Staff	-.631(*)	.203	.006	-1.11	-.15
	Staff	Parents	-.199	.166	.455	-.59	.19
		Students	.631(*)	.203	.006	.15	1.11

Table continues

Table 24 (Continued)

Dependent Variable	(I) Stakeholder Group	(J) Stakeholder Group	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Question 33	Parents	Students	-.049	.195	.966	-.51	.41
		Staff	.302	.207	.314	-.19	.79
	Students	Parents	.049	.195	.966	-.41	.51
		Staff	.351	.252	.348	-.25	.95
	Staff	Parents	-.302	.207	.314	-.79	.19
		Students	-.351	.252	.348	-.95	.25
Question 34	Parents	Students	-.024	.141	.984	-.36	.31
		Staff	.575(*)	.152	.001	.22	.93
	Students	Parents	.024	.141	.984	-.31	.36
		Staff	.599(*)	.184	.004	.16	1.04
	Staff	Parents	-.575(*)	.152	.001	-.93	-.22
		Students	-.599(*)	.184	.004	-1.04	-.16

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

APPENDIX Q

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND T-TESTS FOR

PARENTS AND STAFF

Table 25. Descriptive Statistics for Parents and Staff, Questions 35-42

	Stakeholder Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Question 35	Parents	96	4.60	.688	.070
	Staff	24	4.79	.415	.085
Question 36	Parents	96	4.49	.768	.078
	Staff	24	4.79	.415	.085
Question 37	Parents	95	4.32	.718	.074
	Staff	23	4.13	.757	.158
Question 38	Parents	96	4.69	.529	.054
	Staff	24	4.83	.381	.078
Question 39	Parents	92	4.39	.770	.080
	Staff	24	4.33	.702	.143
Question 40	Parents	96	4.73	.470	.048
	Staff	24	4.54	.588	.120
Question 41	Parents	96	4.52	.711	.073
	Staff	24	4.92	.282	.058
Question 42	Parents	96	4.74	.567	.058
	Staff	24	4.75	.442	.090

Table 26. T-Tests Between Parents and Staff, Questions 35-42

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Question 35	Equal variances assumed	5.143	.025	-1.276	118	.204	-.188	.147	-.478	.103
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.705	58.768	.094	-.188	.110	-.408	.033
Question 36	Equal variances assumed	8.957	.003	-1.857	118	.066	-.302	.163	-.624	.020
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.618	67.298	.011	-.302	.115	-.532	-.072
Question 37	Equal variances assumed	.618	.434	1.099	116	.274	.185	.169	-.149	.519
	Equal variances not assumed			1.064	32.282	.295	.185	.174	-.169	.540
Question 38	Equal variances assumed	7.624	.007	-1.268	118	.207	-.146	.115	-.374	.082
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.541	47.904	.130	-.146	.095	-.336	.044
Question 39	Equal variances assumed	.346	.558	.334	114	.739	.058	.173	-.286	.401
	Equal variances not assumed			.353	38.728	.726	.058	.164	-.274	.390
Question 40	Equal variances assumed	6.130	.015	1.660	118	.100	.188	.113	-.036	.411
	Equal variances not assumed			1.450	30.728	.157	.188	.129	-.076	.451

Table continues

Table 26 (Continued)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Question 41	Equal variances assumed	24.140	.000	-2.670	118	.009	-.396	.148	-.689	-.102
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.273	95.518	.000	-.396	.093	-.580	-.212
Question 42	Equal variances assumed	.206	.650	-.084	118	.933	-.010	.124	-.257	.236
	Equal variances not assumed			-.097	43.943	.923	-.010	.107	-.227	.206

APPENDIX R

MARY'S PRAYER SERVICE: AN EXAMPLE OF EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR STAKEHOLDERS

One family with children at the school found out that their youngest child needed brain surgery because she had a very aggressive form of cancer. The doctor said she wouldn't live another three weeks. The child had surgery in November just before her second birthday. A few weeks later, she was going to go into the hospital for radiation and chemotherapy.

The principals and priest, in one day, organized a community-wide prayer service for her. E-mail messages went out to all parents the night before asking them to come and offer their prayers. The prayer service was held the next day on a regular school day at 2:00 p.m. All of the students, teachers, and principals were present. Many parents took off of work to attend. The whole church was nearly full. It looked like a busy, Sunday morning service.

Attendees were struck by the principal's opening remarks for the service:

More than math, more than science, more than volleyball, more than football, we are a community of faith. And we are here today because someone in our community has a need. [Mary] is very sick and we need your prayers.

Everyone joined hands and lifted them up together to pray to God our Father in Heaven. The priest asked everyone to lift their voices so God would hear them. Students did the first and second readings. There was also a Gospel reading. A very big group of students, the priest, the principals and a teacher went over to where Mary was sitting and laid hands on her. The priest anointed her with oil.

At the very end of the service, the priest had everybody yell out to Mary's family, "We are one with you!" Then everybody sang, but more like shouted, the closing song, "And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love." Mary's father started waving to everyone in the Church as if to thank them all for their prayers and support.

It was at this point that I saw Mary for the first time after her brain surgery. Her hair was shaved down the middle of her head. She was clinging on to her dad so tight. The poor dear. Such scary, un-understandable things for her and her family to go through. It was astonishing the number of people who showed up. Among the adults, there was not a dry eye in the house.

The family moved out of state to live close to another hospital they felt could better help Mary. Some of the school's stakeholders meet for half-an-hour every week to pray the rosary for Mary and her family. Stakeholders send Mary and her family care packages.

APPENDIX S

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF OBSERVATIONS

I observed six teachers teaching sixth through eighth grade classes. In order for the reader to more fully understand the environment and the participants in this study, I provide thick descriptions of observations. To protect individual identities, teachers' subjects and grades will not be included. Because there are fewer male teachers at this school, all teachers are referred to in the feminine.

Mrs. Brown's Classroom:

Students placed their books and notebooks neatly in their cubbies. Student backpacks were neatly hung on the hooks underneath the cubbies. By one of the doors, there was a bulletin board which emphasized a character skill or trait. It read, "Show respect. Be responsible." Another bulletin board display showed two categories of pictures of people from around the world: 1) People who have love in their lives and 2) People who need love in their lives.

The teacher began a Power Point lecture to explain material in students' textbooks. Mrs. Brown engaged the students in discussion and in answering questions. She stressed academics but kept it enjoyable as she would sometimes make jokes that she would laugh at and the students would laugh with her. Mrs. Brown kept the discussion interesting and, as a result, students were on task, listening and eyes were attentive.

Next, the teacher explained a role-playing group project that the students were to complete. The teacher shuffled a deck of index cards with the students' names to divide them into groups. One group was short one person. The teacher apologized to the group that had more work to do: "One group of three. Sorry, life happens." The teacher calmly answered students' questions. There was a very short transition time as students switched desks and

rearranged their books and materials. Mrs. Brown often reminded students of the amount of time they had left to complete the project.

Students were busy working. At one point, I observed some students getting off track, and the teacher made the following comments with a firm tone to two different students, “I’ve got my eye on you girlfriend” and “I don’t want to hear anything about casinos.”

Mrs. Brown remained warm, friendly, confident, caring and concerned about students’ learning throughout this observation period. The level of the discussion was appropriate for the age of the students. The teacher did not expect the students to listen to a lecture during the entire period but also had a group activity for them to work on, followed by a group presentation. As a trained professional observer, I noticed that students had opportunities to practice many skills in this classroom: listening, note-taking, communicating orally, working in groups, and giving oral presentations.

Mrs. Jones’ Classroom:

Students’ books and notebooks were strewn messily in their cubbies. Desks were arranged in rows. The seating arrangement appeared lopsided – there were more students sitting at the back of the room than in the front of the room. During this observation period, the teacher remained in the front section of the room.

Mrs. Jones was holding a clipboard in her hand, standing in the middle of the front of the room, calling upon individual students to answer questions. If students didn’t know the answer, they could refer to their notes. If students gave the correct answer, Mrs. Jones placed a check mark next to their names. The teacher spoke loudly and excitedly and seemed to be

demanding. In this classroom, many students yelled back their responses at Mrs. Jones. For example, students yelled, “NO!” or “Oh! I know it!” or “I said that!”

In one exchange, a girl gave up on trying to get the right answer and yelled, “Oh, whatever!” Another exchange with a student went as follows: Mrs. Jones demanded, “I want to know the definition of ...” [omitted for identification reasons]. The student gave a definition. The teacher replied, “It’s not the definition.” The student said something else incorrect. The teacher pressured, “Come on.” The student stomped her feet on the floor and yelled, “It’s not in our notes! It’s not in our notes!” The teacher called on a few more students to answer the question and finally someone answered it correctly.

In another exchange, Mrs. Jones said a student’s name and was about to ask him a question. The student replied, “Uh oh.” The teacher responded, “It’s not uh oh. This is an easy one,” and asked the student the question. Another time, a boy was struggling to get a right answer to a question the teacher had asked. Mrs. Jones was trying to lead him to the right answer. The student was sitting nearer to me at the back of the classroom. Under his breath, I heard the student whisper, “So, I don’t know.” The teacher continued trying to help him get to the right answer. The teacher and the student seemed to be frustrated. During this time, other students became fidgety and distracted.

The teacher’s purpose for using the question and answer strategy appeared to be to hold students responsible for knowing the material and also for explaining questions that students were answering incorrectly. The focus during this lesson seemed to be about getting the right answer. Students needed to be prepared in this class to avoid becoming singled out for not knowing an answer to a question the teacher asked them. Since students could refer

back to their notes to look for the correct answer if they didn't know it, it appears that the teacher emphasized the importance of taking good notes.

Some students seemed to like the competitive nature of being the first to get the right answer and some students seemed to like shouting answers to the teacher. The teacher talked loudly and excitedly and would allow the kids to talk loudly and excitedly back to her. Some students seemed to enjoy "going at it" with the teacher, while others seemed to become frustrated or embarrassed by being singled out and put on the spot with no escape. Whether students experienced care or did not experience care in this classroom probably has a lot to do with their personalities. Some students may be shy and may not like being under the spotlight to answer questions in front of the whole class. Some students, if they come from harsh home environments, may experience difficulties in dealing with the loud, excited talking and being talked to by the teacher with a raised voice or some might just be accustomed to it. Students in this classroom had opportunities to practice listening, communicating orally and correcting their worksheets.

Mrs. Ambrose's Classroom:

The classroom was very quiet when students were working individually on their assignments. The teacher spoke gently, yet firmly when needed, to her students. Students' desks were arranged in clusters of four or five. The weekly schedule was posted on a white board which took up half of one side of a room. In the front of the room there was a table that the teacher placed books and handouts on. She sat or stood behind the table while talking to the students. She also wrote frequently on the chalkboard which was behind the table.

The teacher gave the students a worksheet to complete. She used a timer, which was posted on the chalkboard, to limit the amount of time students had to finish. After the timer

beeped, the teacher went over the correct answers. She asked, "How many got it?" The majority of students raised their hands. She replied, "Wonderful, wonderful." The teacher distributed another worksheet. A couple of students began to talk very quietly. The teacher said, "Shhh! No talking." The teacher again set the timer and the students became engrossed in their work. The timer went off and the teacher instructed, "Those of you finishing up, go ahead and finish." She walked around the room to help students. The teacher posted the right answers on the chalkboard and directed, "If you got it wrong, look at why." Students asked for help and she went to them and helped them. The teacher was very gentle and patient and would make comments such as, "Do you see it now?"

This teacher maintained control over students' classroom behavior. If students started to talk out of turn the teacher needed only to raise her hand. As soon as students saw her hand raised, they all raised their hands and everyone immediately stopped talking.

Students were then given an assignment to complete out of a textbook. While students worked on their assignments, the teacher wrote on the chalkboard. A girl needed help and said, "Mrs. ..." [name omitted.] The teacher replied, "Be right there." A boy then said the teacher's name. The teacher replied, "I see you. I hear you," and went over to the boy right away. The girl was slightly upset that the teacher didn't help her first. The girl turned to her neighbors and seemed to be questioning why the teacher went to the boy first.

The teacher walked around the room helping those in need. When the students were finished she had the students tell her the correct answers. The teacher wrote the answers on the board and explained how to get them. After the teacher answered all students' questions, she asked, "If you saw this on a test you'd be comfortable?" Next the teacher reminded

students that she had promised them a quiz that day. She stated, “And I am a person of my word,” and begun to hand out the quiz.

Mrs. Lang’s Classroom:

Students’ work was posted everywhere. The classroom was full of activity. Mrs. Lang posted an outline for the class. She made her expectations very clear to the students.

Students’ desks were arranged in clusters of four. The students were given a few minutes to study together as the teacher was about to give a quiz. The teacher directed them to put their notes away. She then stated, “You studied. Good way for you to be prepared for test on Friday.” Some boys were still talking as she passed out the quiz. She directed them, “Shhhh! There’s no talking. It is a quiz.” The teacher walked around the room. When students completed the quiz, they could begin working quietly on their assignments. Students were very considerate of those still trying to concentrate on the quiz so they were not making much noise.

The teacher said that time was over for the quiz. A boy immediately complied and turned his quiz in. A girl questioned, “What if I’m not done?” The teacher said “Write faster.” The boy went back to the basket to try to get his quiz back but the teacher stated, “Once it’s in the basket, it’s dead. You can’t retrieve it!” The girl, by questioning, got a couple of minutes extra time for the quiz, whereas the boy who followed the teacher’s directions immediately did not. The teacher told the students, “I’ll get this [quiz] corrected tonight and give them back to you tomorrow.” The teacher was concerned that the students be given back their quizzes promptly so they could learn from their mistakes and make improvements for the test at the end of the week.

Students had a choice to work on three different activities, each of which was due on a different day later that same week. Students were on task. If students completed one of the activities they would move on to another. One girl informed the teacher that they hadn't started to work on their skit yet. The teacher directed, "You need to prioritize. You will have time after skits on Thursday to work on this." The teacher set up different activities for students to work on then helped them to prioritize to meet all of their deadlines.

Some students were using the internet to do research for their presentations, while other students were using the photocopier to make copies of their scripts or information they wished to share with all of their group members. The teacher walked around the room continually, observing students and answering questions if they had any. This teacher listened attentively to her students. In fact, she would hear students who were on the opposite side of the room, asking other students questions and if their questions weren't being answered, she would answer them.

The teacher observed a student's desk was messy from one of the activities and asked the student to clean it up. She said, "Use one of these wipes. We don't want to leave a mess." The teacher taught students to care for school property. She directed all students, "Make sure you wipe your tables down."

Mrs. Lang helped students to be successful in completing their projects and helped them to be successful academically by getting quizzes back to them very promptly. Mrs. Lang was very approachable, frequently smiling at her students.

Mrs. Anderson's Classroom:

The students had just finished a class with another teacher. Mrs. Anderson walked in, talked to the teacher and organized her materials for the class. She hung up pictures on the

white board. All of the students, except for one boy, were sitting together in clusters of four. This boy's desk was situated at the back of the classroom, away from the others. There was a stack of five chairs in the back of the room. The students were noisily talking to each other. Mrs. Anderson said to the students, "I hear talking. Excuse me. I thought we were starting the class." While Mrs. Anderson was distributing handouts to the students, the other teacher left the room.

Students in Mrs. Anderson's class often talked when she was talking. Mrs. Anderson would stop and say things like, "We are not talking." Other times she would call students' names individually to tell them to stop talking. Mrs. Anderson was very gentle and soft spoken. She made many affirming statements to her students such as, "Very good."

Some students were fidgety in this class. Students' chairs did not have the traditional four legs, but rather had long metal bars that lay against the floor. A few boys rocked in their chairs. Two boys were playing with a pen. The teacher looked over and they stopped. One of these boys later knocked a water bottle off of their desk. Another boy played briefly with his youth-sized scissors. He held them right below the top of the desk level so the teacher couldn't see. When the teacher turned her back to write on the board, he tossed his scissors a short distance across the floor to another boy. This boy picked up the scissors, played with them very briefly and tossed the scissors back, again when the teacher had turned her back to write on the board.

After reviewing material with the students, she had them play a game where students in the front half of the room would be a team competing against students in the back half of the room. The teacher had one member from each team come to the front of the room and asked questions. The first student to get the right answer gained a point for their team. Many

students seemed to enjoy this game. If students couldn't answer the question, she would give hints or coach them along until they could. In one case, neither of the team members was getting the answer. Someone whispered the answer and a boy then answered correctly. A girl said out loud, "That's cheating. You can't help him." The teacher did not end the game until she was sure that everyone had a turn to participate. Next, the teacher had students come up to the board to answer questions.

Mrs. Morgan's Classroom:

Students' desks were all facing forward and were positioned together in groups of two. Mrs. Morgan taught from the front of the room and mostly stood behind an overhead projector which she used. Mrs. Morgan spoke very fast. The room was organized neatly and students' work was displayed on a very large bulletin board, which was almost as long as the width of the room.

Mrs. Morgan began the class by going over correct answers to students' homework. Students often talked when the teacher was talking and she would make comments such as, "Hold on. Guys, guys, guys." Mrs. Morgan gave students ample time to ask questions on their homework and was concerned that she answered everyone's questions. She was very concerned that all students understood the material and asked, "Did you get it correct?" After students' questions were answered, they turned their papers in by placing them in a pile on a table at the back where I was sitting.

Mrs. Morgan had planned to give students a quiz next but couldn't find the quiz. She said, "I put them in a place where you wouldn't see them when you walked in." She asked herself out loud, "What would I have done with it?" Students teased her and made comments such as, "Maybe it's in your car," "Maybe it's at your house," and "Maybe they're in another

state.” Mrs. Morgan decided to have the students play a game they had never seen before. She said, “Let’s try this instead....Be prepared for a quiz on Monday.” Many students shouted, “NO!”

After Mrs. Morgan got them settled down, she explained the rules of the game and gave them some examples to practice. Mrs. Morgan was a team playing against the class. The class had to make choices and they couldn’t seem to agree on the moves they wished to make. The teacher had students vote for the move that would be made. Some students weren’t participating, and the teacher asked, “Who’s never going to raise their hand?” She stated, “Okay, guys. Everybody needs to participate [to vote].” The teacher won the first game and some students were upset they didn’t win. The teacher instructed, “Guys, sometimes I win. Sometimes you win.” The teacher talked about strategies and explained that they needed to use forethought in choosing their moves. Some students seemed to be enjoying the game, while others may not have liked all the noise from many students shouting out the answers they wanted and arguing over the best move. Mrs. Morgan showed care for her students’ learning by making sure all of their questions were answered.

Introduction to Lunch Observations

There are approximately 400 students at this school. The students’ lunch periods are divided into three groups based on their grades: K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. During the observations students played first then ate their lunches afterwards. While K-2 were eating their lunches, grades 3 through 5 played on the playground. When K-2 finished eating their lunches they returned to class, while grades 3 through 5 took their places at the lunch tables and grades 6 through 8 came outside to play on the playground. At this point there may be approximately 157 third through fifth grade students at the lunch tables and 123 sixth through eighth grade

students present on the playground. There were usually between three and four parents supervising the 120 students on the playground areas. There were usually an additional three parents passing out lunches from local businesses. There were between two and three parents supervising the lunch table areas where Kindergarten through seventh grade students ate. A teacher supervised the eighth grade students' lunch table area. Some teachers, administrators, and staff were also sometimes present during the lunch periods.

There is a large, grass area which students play various games on, including soccer and flag football. There are large blacktop areas where students play games such as four-square, handball, volleyball and basketball. There is a playground area with slides and monkey bars.

There are five extra long tables and seven regular sized tables for Kindergarten through seventh grade students to eat lunch at. The principals and staff also appear at times and help supervise or clean the area. All stakeholders (principals, faculty, staff, parents, and students) were seen cleaning tables and sweeping up the lunch areas. The lunch areas were kept very clean. The eighth grade lunch tables are on the other side of campus. There are three long tables that they may sit at. Many students choose to sit on the ground leaning up against the long, classroom walls. The eighth grade lunch tables are usually supervised by a teacher. When this teacher was absent one day, a parent volunteer substituted.

Sixth through eighth grade lunch observation #1

During the play period, most students were playing, walking or talking with other students. The group sizes ranged from two to a dozen or more students. There were a few exceptions. A girl was playing basketball by herself. After playing by herself for approximately 12 minutes, she walked past a group of six girls playing four-square. The girl looked directly at

this group of girls while walking past them but no one made eye contact with her. The girl then talked to one boy who was standing and reading a book next to a classroom wall.

Three upper grades boys were chasing each other in the field. One boy tackled a boy to the ground. The boy broke his fall with his arms and landed with his stomach on the grass. Another boy pulled on the boy's leg who was on the ground and yanked him backwards a little bit. The boys left the boy laying there. The boy lay on his stomach for several minutes. He appeared physically fine, but I thought maybe his ego, his emotions were hurt. A girl walked right past him and didn't make eye contact. About 30 seconds later, three different boys came over. One sat gently on his legs, one sat cross-legged in front of him so he could talk to him and one boy gently kicked a soccer ball against his legs. One boy then knelt down in front of him and seemed to be asking him if he was okay. After about four minutes of laying there, the boy propped himself up on his elbows. Eventually, he got up.

It was quiet at the lunch tables. Students threw their trash away and kept the area very clean. At the end of this period, there was only one chip, one piece of paper and one bottle cap on the ground. One wrapper flew out of the trash and a student picked it up and put it back in.

Sixth through eighth grade lunch observation #2

During the play period, there was a huge group of boys playing flag football at one end of the field and a huge group of boys playing soccer on the other end. There was a huge mass of boys and girls talking on the steps which were on the side of the field. Another huge group of boys was playing basketball. Groups of girls were playing volleyball and playing on the playground equipment.

The bell rang. Students transitioned to sit at the lunch tables or to stand in the lunch lines. A teacher approached a group of eighth grade girls sitting at a table and looked at her drink. The teacher asked, “How many milliliters are in this apple juice container?” The students guessed, “24, 32.” The teacher asked, “How many milliliters are in our graduated cylinders?” The students shouted, “50!” The teacher encouraged them to make a comparison, “Do you think this container has more or less than 50 milliliters? Could we put 50 milliliters in here?” The students answered and the teacher said they would test it in class, “Bring it into me. Wash it and put it on my desk.” This teacher used everyday objects that students were familiar with to help her students learn outside of class time.

The lunch areas had many, many crumbs on this day. The students had several cakes that they were sharing with everyone. Someone had dropped a couple of chunks of cake on the blacktop area. By the end of the lunch period, the cake chunks and the crumbs were swept up.

Sixth through eighth grade lunch observation #3

Errant balls seemed to be flying everywhere during this observation. For example, I was sitting on a bench when a basketball rolled under the bench. A boy ran right at me, without saying a word, to retrieve the ball and slowed down just in time to avoid bumping into me. Less than a minute later, when I was looking in a different direction, a volley ball almost hit my feet. A girl yelled to me, “Watch out!” And yet another time, I was talking with a parent when a girl, several feet away, kicked a ball but didn’t look in the direction it was going. The ball curved and rolled gently bumping into my foot.

When I came around a corner, I observed one boy pushing another boy into a wood handball court wall. He wasn’t pushing him hard but hard enough to make him move

backwards. One boy on crutches carried a very small lunch bag. He sat down on a bench by himself and watched all the other students play. About twelve minutes later when it was time to move to the lunch table area, he was still alone. He struggled to get his crutches positioned and grab his lunch bag. He hobbled across the blacktop over to the lunch tables on his own where he then joined a large group of boys at a table. After the boy on crutches finished eating, he left his lunch bag on the table and went to the restroom. Instead of doubling back to get his lunch bag, he left it on the table and headed back to class.

While observing the eighth grade area, many students were sitting on the ground up against walls eating their lunch. Three boys were standing. One boy began to throw a football to a girl sitting down. She threw it back to him. The two other boys standing up also began to play. They were not being very careful of the other students in close proximity. One boy began to throw the football hard against the ground and it was bouncing up unpredictably in different directions. A supervising parent walked over to tell the boys to stop. It is interesting to note that the regular teacher who normally supervised this area was absent. On the other days when the regular teacher was present, the students did nothing but eat their lunches and talk.

A parent sat at one of the eighth grade lunch tables with the students. A couple of minutes before the bell rang for lunch to end, a teacher walked toward her classroom. The parent informed the teacher that she gave her son's paper to another teacher to place on her desk. Another teacher walked by and the parent gave this teacher her son's work as well. The teacher asked if she wanted to talk to her and invited her into the classroom. The parent went in to speak with her.

Passing Periods

I observed six periods where sixth, seventh and/or eighth grade students were transitioning to other classes. Most outside transition times were very short - between three to five minutes. Students did not have much time to go from one class to another but the classrooms they needed to transition to were very close. Students were very well-behaved during transition times probably partly because they were always within earshot of the teachers.

During a passing period, somebody dropped a book in the process of entering a classroom door. The book stayed there in the doorway for a couple of minutes. Many boys just stepped over the book; no one stopped to pick the book up at first. Then, I saw a hand from inside the room reach down and grab the book. Others entering the room just stepped around the hand.

During another passing period, a teacher swept away the morning puddles from the blacktop probably so that the students wouldn't slip and fall. A boy was watering a plant which was just outside the classroom door. A girl said, "Hi," to one of the teachers and she replied, "Hi," back. The teacher was walking away and the girl yelled, "Don't keep walking away from me! Fine! Gees! I guess she didn't want to talk to me."

During another passing period, some boys were standing in front of a door, blocking its entrance. The teacher's policy was that the boys allow the girls to enter first. The teacher came out of the classroom to address the boys, "It doesn't help when they have to fight their way through you to get in the door."

During another passing period the students were very quiet. Across the blacktop I saw a teacher bring her class outside to another teacher. She and the entire class sang Happy Birthday to this other teacher.