

Old Dominion University

ODU Digital Commons

Educational Foundations & Leadership Theses
& Dissertations

Educational Foundations & Leadership

Summer 8-2020

Trust Issues: A Case Study of the Relationship Between Trust and Reform Implementation

Courtney R. Wilson

Old Dominion University, courtney.wilson3@live.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/efl_etds



Part of the [Educational Leadership Commons](#), [Education Policy Commons](#), and the [Organizational Behavior and Theory Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Wilson, Courtney R.. "Trust Issues: A Case Study of the Relationship Between Trust and Reform Implementation" (2020). Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Dissertation, Educ Foundations & Leadership, Old Dominion University, DOI: 10.25777/c02r-br15
https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/efl_etds/236

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Educational Foundations & Leadership at ODU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Educational Foundations & Leadership Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ODU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@odu.edu.

TRUST ISSUES: A CASE STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUST AND
REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

by

Courtney R. Wilson
B.A. May 2010, Hampton University
M.T. May 2011, Hampton University
Ed.S. May 2015, Old Dominion University

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

August 2020

Approved by:

Dr. Jay P. Scribner (Director)

Dr. Karen Sanzo (Member)

Dr. Cherng-Jyh Yen (Member)

ABSTRACT

TRUST ISSUES: A CASE STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUST AND REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

Courtney Wilson
Old Dominion University
Director: Dr. Jay P. Scribner

Reform creation and implementation tends to focus on the mechanics needed to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. School relationships are affected by the tension caused by reform implementation. Research suggests trust among teachers and between teachers and their administrator affects the way teachers make sense of, implement, and use new reform efforts. Given the demands reforms place on schools, trust has the potential to impact and encourage the implementation of reform and the maintenance of relationships. A qualitative case study method was used to decipher the impact trust plays in the implementation of reform. The concept of trust is used to explore and examine the experiences of one administrator and eight teachers. Interviews were conducted and transcribed. Transcriptions were coded, and recurring concepts, ideas, and themes were collected using a database. An analysis of the data revealed successful implementation was underscored by positive relationships with high levels of trust among teachers. Data also illuminated the value of relationships between teachers and their administrator to buy-in and the completion of tasks associated with reforms. Familiarity, risk, and vulnerability were found to be deciding factors in the maintenance of trust, relationships, and reform implementation. Study findings add to the current knowledge and literature regarding the importance of trust throughout the implementation of reform.

Copyright, 2020, by Courtney R. Wilson, All Rights Reserved.

This dissertation is dedicated to
James Wilson and Autumn Marie Wallace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Either way it goes, we’re gonna make it happen... I might thought it would take an hour and it took a week... As long as the end result is I got it done.”

- William “Rick Ross” Roberts, II

This quote truly got me through this process. There were many times that I was disappointed in myself for not meeting the goals I’d set. But, looking back, the important thing is it is finally done... and done well, I believe.

This entire process would not have come to fruition without the support and encouragement of my tribe. Dr. Scribner... Thank you for your dedication to my journey and the unknown number of hours you spent attempted to read through my continuous misuse of passive voice. I appreciate your time and attention to my personal journey. Your interest in my topic reignited my fire several times when I was at a point of quitting because I could not see the work I’d done. Additional thanks to my committee members, Dr. Karen Sanzo and Dr. Cherng-Jyh Yen who provided both their time and feedback on my research. You two have been instrumental in seeing me through to the end. And Dr. Sanzo, I am working on “planting flags” now.

Thank you to Old Dominion University for accepting me into such a prestigious program and allowing me to take this journey.

Amanda... this simply would not have been possible without you. Your words of encouragement, jokes, and ability to join me in my madness while also letting me know that “it can be done” really pushed me through. My next child will most likely be named Amanda. Robyn, Shamika, and Tara... Thank you for planning my graduation party in your heads for the

past four years. You ladies always kept the end in mind, even when I could not see the light at the end of the tunnel. Cierra, thank you for dropping everything to help me.

Latoya Edwards... thank you for your imaginary confetti throughout the end of this process. I'm so glad that God placed you in my path and encouraged me to seek you out. Toward the end, you were instrumental in helping me focus on what I was doing rather than what I was *not* doing. That small piece of advice really got me through to the end.

Finally, to my family. Each of you contributed to my sanity in some way. Thank you for taming Autumn so I could write for a bit. Thank you for forcing me to get to work, even when I did want to. Thank you for staying on my back. Thank you for thinking allowed with me. Thank you for being there when I needed you and not being there when I needed you not to be. Thank you for the random, but well-timed gifts of encouragement. I love you all for the way you have loved and supported me through this.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vvi
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY	3
ORGANIZATION OF STUDY	4
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	6
A HISTORY OF ACCOUNTABILITY-DRIVEN REFORM.....	6
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI).....	11
TRUST AS A CONCEPT	13
SUMMARY.....	25
III. METHODOLOGY	26
DESIGN.....	27
DATA COLLECTION	33
IV. RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS.....	39
PURPOSE STATEMENT	39
SAMPLE.....	39
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA.....	40
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	49
SUMMARY.....	93
V. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS	95
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	95
CONCLUSIONS.....	98
IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE.....	101
IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH.....	106
SUMMARY.....	107
REFERENCES	108
APPENDICES	112
A. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	113
B. INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT.....	121
VITA.....	125

List of Tables

Table 1. Participant Demographic Information	39
Table 2. Themes of Study	50

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Presentation of Themes.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Figure 2. Presentation of Themes.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Oftentimes, the development of reform focuses on the mechanisms needed to ensure that the reform will maximize the intended outcomes or changes. How to best craft and implement reform efforts addressing school accountability is an important aspect of any change initiative. Inherent in the expected implementation of reform efforts is the tension, or lack thereof, in the relationship between teachers and administrators. Research suggests that trust affects the manner in which people make sense of and interpret reform efforts (Louis, 2007; Louis et al., 2008; Moye, Henkin, & Egley, 2005). Absent in the development of reform is consideration of the conditions needed to maintain the relationships among those having to implement reform and how relationships may affect implementation and implantation. One important characteristic of teacher-administrator relationship is the concept and presence of trust. Current research identifies trust as an important factor in the effectiveness of a school, especially in terms of the trust between the teacher and their administrator. Trust is the basis for social interactions and is a necessary element in situations and interactions that require cooperation and the implementation of change (Louis, 2007). This study will specifically investigate the role trust plays in the implementation of reform at the school level. I seek to understand the relationship between trust and education reform implementations that are passed down from a district and are put in place via school administrators. Reform is created and implemented in response to increased demands for student academic success. In terms of the demands placed on school leaders Barlin (2016) stated “many K-12 leaders themselves have been inculcated into environments that overemphasize outcomes and de-emphasize school culture” (para. 8). When new reforms are implemented, trust has the ability to impact the vigor with which reforms are

implemented and maintained. A focus on outcomes has overshadowed attention to the relationships of those having to do the work of implementing change reform and increases the potential for tension between teachers and administrators (Baker, McGaw, & Peterson, 2010). With that known, there is little research that examines the implementation and implantation of reform coupled with teacher-administrator trust. This study is designed to examine the manner in which trust or lack thereof, impacts reform implementation. From the perspective of administrators and teachers this study also seeks to investigate how, if at all, administrators use trust to encourage reform implementation at the building level. Results will contribute to the overall literature regarding teacher-administrator trust and reform development. I intend to conduct a qualitative study to investigate the experiences of teachers and administrators during a change effort within a school district.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The field of education has seen an increase in the focus on accountability as a means to demonstrate improvement in the academic achievement of all students. This focus on accountability stems from what the Spellings (2008) reported as a need to educate more students at higher levels in response to the demands of the global economy in conjunction with demographic shifts. In order to meet this challenge school districts have changed the way in which they create and distribute standards-based reform (Darling-Hammond, 2004). These reforms are then passed down to school leaders for implementation. Though school leaders play an important role in the implementation of building level reform efforts and school effectiveness (Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, 1992), current research identifies trust as an important factor in the effectiveness of a school. Bryk and Schneider (2002) stated that social trust is a core “resource for school improvement” (p. 10). Understanding that trust can function as the key

characteristic of improvement, there must be a bridge established that supports both the importance of the role of the school leader as a key to reform implementation and the presence of teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher trust. This is especially true as the trust between teachers and principals and among teachers is challenged by the demand for expeditious change (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Studies account for a leader's ability to create and maintain trust among staff, but do not detail the manner by which a leader fosters relationships as a means to aid others in accepting change (Louis, 2007). The purpose of this study is to investigate the role trust plays in the implementation of reform as experienced by administrators and teachers.

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role trust plays in the implementation of reform as experienced by administrators and teachers. Specifically, this will explore the manner in which trust between teachers and administrators and among teachers informs the implementation and implantation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) database within Aquillard Public Schools.

The following research questions of this study include:

1. How and in what ways does trust manifest itself in within schools as it relates to Response to Intervention (RTI)?
2. To what extent does the potential difference in trust affect the implementation of the RTI database?
3. What factors contribute to the overall quality of the implementation of the RTI database?
4. How is the RTI database facilitated in spaces where trust does not exist?

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Though reforms are developed at the district level, it is the responsibility of school leaders to ensure that these reforms are implemented as outlined. What districts do not take into consideration are the possible effects implementing continuous reform can have on the relationships and trust established between administrators and their staff. Knowing the potential ramifications of building, maintaining, or straining any trust that has been established between administrators and teachers and among teachers within a building is helpful to district leaders. This understanding enables district leaders to make more informed decisions when determining the manner in which they will instruct leaders to enact reform. When particular expectations and/or outcomes are required, reform efforts are enacted as a means to achieve desired results. Throughout the change process varying factors affect the outcome of the reform effort. Through this study greater attention will be paid to the established relationship between teachers and administrators and among teachers in relation to RTI. This has the potential to improve the implementation of reform efforts while also enabling administrators to maintain positive staff relationships.

ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

This qualitative case study will analyze a sample of elementary school teachers and school administrators that have experienced a particular reform within a school district. In Chapter I, I will situate the problem to include relevant concerns regarding reform implementation, provide the purpose of my study and research questions that will direct my study, and a synopsis of the manner in which the study will contribute to the field of education. Chapter II will provide an overview of the literature related to accountability, accountability reform, and the concept of trust. In Chapter III, I will detail the design and methods of my study

to include data collection and data analysis. Chapter IV will present my findings, and Chapter V will present a discussion regarding the significance of my findings, implications, and a summary.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review will lay out an overview of reform implementation as seen through the concept of trust. In order to present the literature review, I must first explore the changes that have occurred in the delivery of education in American schools in terms of student achievement. This chapter will delve into the creation and implementation of accountability-driven reform efforts that have shaped the manner in which change is assessed in terms of student learning. It is also essential to focus on trust and how the research says trust manifests itself in relationships. Further exploration of trust will identify and examine the major themes that are most influential and impactful in its development. By focusing on research that speaks to the purpose of my study, this literature review will provide a frame for the research as a means to investigate the change process within a district and the role that trust plays in the implementation of the change process. I begin with a discussion about the history and current state of accountability. Next, I introduce the concept of trust in general. An exploration of trust and its role in the effectiveness of organizations follows. I then discuss trust in an educational context to include school leadership. Lastly, I discuss the role that trust plays in the successful implementation of reform.

A HISTORY OF ACCOUNTABILITY-DRIVEN REFORM

The field of education is currently in a climate centered on accountability. Current accountability standards use indicators of achievement as a measure of the quality of student learning. As a concept, accountability is broad and can be addressed in a number of ways (Figlio & Loeb, 2011). Linn (2003) stated “accountability, as mandated in federal and state legislation, is intended to improve the quality of education for all students” (p. 3). Federal accountability measures hold schools responsible for ensuring the perceived academic growth of students based

on their performance on various accountability checkpoints. Honig (2006) asserted, “school systems are now held accountable for demonstrable improvements in the academic achievement of all students in ways barely imaginable just 20 years ago” (p. 1). Linn (2008) argued that both testing and accountability have been key contributing factors in many of the reform efforts developed during the last 50 years. To this extent, accountability expectations have changed how districts react to policies and have altered the manner in which they develop, implement, and track reform efforts.

History of Accountability

The 1957 Russian launch of the Sputnik satellite is said to be one of the defining events that led to the nation-wide creation and adoption of accountability standards. This launch was a visual representation that countries were making strides in math, science, technology, and economics that the U.S. had not yet made. As a result, Congress enacted the National Defense Education Act of 1958 (PL 85-864) that called for “the fullest development of the mental resources and technical skills of... young men and women” as a means to address the perceived emergency caused by the launch (Flynn, p. 53, 1995). This emergency was shrouded in pressure to remain in the forefront of global competition. There was, and arguably still remains, the belief that if the United States does not better prepare students for the world, the country will lose its status in the global economy (Flynn, 1995).

Initial improvement efforts were a direct response to policymakers fears that students were educationally falling behind those in other countries. Bachrach (1990) recognized this initial wave as an intensification of what were current practices that were aimed at challenging students. In August of 1981, then Secretary of Education, Honorable T. H. Bell, created the National Commission on Excellence in Education and tasked them with researching and

presenting findings on the quality of education in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 1983). Linn (2008) stated that the resulting report, *A Nation at Risk*, “marked the beginning of a turning point in educational testing and accountability” (p. 5). The report’s findings revealed, “about 13 percent of 17-year olds were functionally illiterate, SAT scores were dropping, and students needed an increased array of remedial courses in college” (U.S. Department of Education, 2008, p. 1). Taking aim at leaders in education, administrators, and the public, the Commission accused the group of losing sight of the basic purpose of schooling, to include high expectations and the effort needed to attain and maintain them (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). The Commission recommended changes in five areas: content, standards and expectations, time, teaching, and leadership and fiscal support (Conti, Ellasser, & Griffin, 2000). Conti’s et al., (2000) report outlined the following charges:

1. Assessing the quality of teaching and learning in public and private schools, colleges, and universities,
2. Comparing American schools and colleges with those of other advanced nations,
3. Studying the relationship between college admissions requirements and student achievement,
4. Assessing the degree to which major social and educational changes have affected student achievement,
5. Identifying educational programs which result in notable student success in college,
6. Defining problems which must be faced and overcome as a means to successfully pursue excellence in education.

What followed the expectations set outlined in *A Nation At Risk* was a nation-wide overhaul in the evaluation of teaching and learning in the United States (Linn, 2008). Standards-based learning quickly came to the forefront of American education.

Standards-Based Accountability Reform

Standards-based learning has become a mainstay in the field of education. Early reform initiatives were created under the belief that schools had become lax and that there was a need for tighter educational standards and holding schools accountable for student learning outcomes (Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, 1992). These standards have been written as a means to assess the quality and rigor of student learning. This assessment of rigor and quality is necessary due to what the U.S. Department of Education (2008) characterizes as a rise in the demands of our global economy and shift in demographics. In order to meet these growing demands, states develop, implement, and assess learning standards. In terms of learning standards, the U.S. Department of Education (2008) stated the following:

states developed content standards and tests that allow us to know how well our students are doing. State and local academic standards and standards-based testing began in the 1980s and 1990s, and federal legislation required that states receiving federal aid for education have such academic standards and tests in certain grades (p. 3).

The standards-based movement was championed by the Bush administration's education initiative that was detailed in the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* which was characterized by standards, student performance expectations, and standards-based assessments (Linn, 2008). On a fundamental level, Goals 2000 provided grant funds to states to assist with the development of standards and standards-based assessments (Superfine, 2005). Such an emphasis on standards was further reinforced by the requirements set in Title I evaluations that were put in place by the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (Linn, 2008). Additionally, the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB 2001) extended the number grades to be tested and reinforced the accountability attached to test scores (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). As a result of NCLB 2001, there is now a wealth of annual test score data in reading and math from grades three through eight and high school (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). This data provides a detailed picture of annual student achievement in reading and math which enables those in education to readily see how various subgroups are performing (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

The Current Climate of Accountability

The culture of accountability has fostered an environment where reform efforts are expected to hold teachers and administrators responsible for student achievement, avoiding accountability sanctions, and improving student outcomes (Lee, 2014). In order to meet these expectations educators are consistently crowded with district-level mandates, assessments, and reform efforts that may, at times, present conflicting priorities at the building level (Russell, 2013). Bryk (2018) believed that such conflict could limit the engagement with given reform that is necessary to improve learning. It is the duty of the administrator to interpret reform effort's expectations and to disseminate it to the staff who will do the bulk of implementation. This interpretation is vital as Seashore, Louis, Febey, and Shroeder (2005) posits that "when teachers and/or administrators are tasked with implementing new reforms, their interpretation of it will determine whether or not they engage in significant change, incremental change, or resistance" (p. 178). It is during this time that it is import for principals must build and sustain relationships with teachers (DiPaola & Hoy, 2014). It is the principal's behavior that may be fundamental to teachers' perceptions and behaviors when implementing reform (DiPaola & Hoy,

2014; Lee, 2014). At this juncture, the presence or absence of trust among teachers and principal may have an even more intense effect on the manner in which reform efforts are implemented.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

In order to meet the demands of federal laws and accountability expectations many districts use Response to Intervention (RTI) as a means to monitor, implement, and report instructional and behavioral interventions for students (Barnett, Daly, Jones, & Lentz, 2004). Response to Intervention is defined as a problem-solving and data-driven process that allows users to continuously assess student achievement and use assessment data to provide data-based instruction along a system of tiered support (Castro-Villarreal, Rodriguez, & Moore, 2014; Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). The main goal of RTI models is a proactive approach to the academic and behavioral needs of students through the use of instruction and interventions (Berkeley, Bender, Peaster, & Saunders, 2009; Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). This is especially true in terms of its use in providing early intervention to all children at risk for school failure (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). Castro-Villarreal et al., (2014) stated that RTI models are “based on a research-based core curriculum, regular benchmark assessment for all students, clear criterion to identify students in need of additional instructional and behavioral supports, and efficient methods for providing such supports” (p. 104).

There are several characteristics common across RTI models. Each RTI model includes a tiered system for students based on predetermined success criteria. Castro-Villarreal et al. (2014) characterized each of the three tiers as follows:

tier 1 includes evidence-based instruction delivered with high fidelity to all students who need additional assistance. Tier 2 provides students additional support and more frequent progress monitoring in areas where they demonstrate risk or limited response to Tier 1

instruction. Tier 3 utilizes individualized, intense instruction for students whose needs are not fully met at Tier 1 or Tier 2. Sometimes, special education is included within the third tier... (p. 104)

Tiering is dependent upon student performance and can change depending upon a student's instructional performance (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009).

Response to Intervention models implement interventions that are based on data. Klingner and Edwards (2006) stated that "fundamental to the notion of the RTI model is that instructional practices or interventions at each level should be based on scientific evidence about what works" (p. 108). These interventions and practices are based upon the identification of students through the use of some form of a common screening tool that targets students who are or are not struggling to learn (Jenkins & Hudson, 2007). The main components of an RTI model include high-quality classroom instruction, universal screening in some form, ongoing progress monitoring, evidence-based interventions, and fidelity of instructional interventions (Berkeley, et al., 2009; Bradley, Danielson, & Doolittle, 2005).

General education teachers hold the primary responsibility for all aspects of instruction, progress monitoring, and student movement through tiers (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005). The implementation of any RTI model is dependent upon a certain level of replication and integrity. Nellis (2012) stated "intervention integrity is critical in an RTI model and should address the quality of the provided interventions (p. 251). In order to maintain such integrity, there are two general RTI approaches: problem solving and standard protocol models. Each model has its defining characteristics that differentiate it from others, though there is no evidence that one is more effective than the other.

The problem-solving RTI model addresses student deficits through the implementation of research-based intervention that is individualized per student (Berkeley et al., 2009). Fuchs and Fuchs (2006) believed that the process of the problem-solving model is as follows, “practitioners determine the magnitude of the problem, analyze its causes, design a goal-directed intervention, conduct it as planned, monitor student progress, modify the intervention as needed, and evaluate its effectiveness and plot future actions” (p. 95). This is done through a shared decision-making team who meets to discuss the student and reconvenes after some period of time to determine if interventions have proven effective or other interventions need to be put in place (Reschly & Tilly, 2009).

Standard protocol RTI models group students by difficulty and are given research-based interventions that are unique to that group’s difficulties (Berkeley et al., 2009). As students do not meet assessment benchmarks, interventions become increasingly intense and individualized (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). Instruction is delivered in a manner that increases in intensity and differentiation based upon the student’s response to the given instruction (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). Though both the problem-solving and standardized protocol models differ in how they are formed, both require the implementation of data-based interventions and the monitoring of student progress. Implementing such a model across districts requires collaboration among teachers and administrators within a building. It is here that trust may become a key factor in the implementation of RTI.

TRUST AS A CONCEPT

In terms of organizations trust is an elusive concept that has a number of definitions and applications. Currently, there is no universal definition of trust that has been accepted by scholars across all disciplines (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). Research views the

concept of trust as a wholly general and unspecified idea (Luhmann, 2000). Each definition of trust is characterized by the varying aspects of the respective discipline. Rousseau et al., (1998) believed that “disciplinary differences characterizing traditional treatments of trust suggest that inherent conflicts and divergent assumptions are at work” (p. 393). For instance, the characteristics of a trust definition in the field of psychology will differ from that in economics because the disciplines operationalize the concept from two very different focal points. Each definition is based upon the overarching “needs” of the discipline.

As a profession, education makes use of the manner in which various disciplines define trust a means to focus its understanding and implementation of the concept. Economists interpret trust in terms of calculative risk and gains (Luhmann, 2000). Here, trust is a certain level of probability in which one agent assesses another’s willingness to perform a particular action (Williamson, 1993). Williamson (1993) explained that willingness to trust is dependent upon the probability that the action performed will be gainful to the extent that risking possible detriment is understood and acceptable. Sociologists view trust in terms of the personal relationships established among people and entities. Research in this field suggests that a lack of a relationship makes trust impossible and hinders potential gains (Granovetter, 1985). Research in psychology frames trust in terms of behavior and social environment (Deutsch, 1958; Rousseau et al., 1998). Throughout the literature in psychology there are numerous references to behaviors in relationships. With this knowledge, it is difficult to funnel down to one universal definition of the concept of trust that is readily applicable across disciplines. Therefore, it is more useful for education as a profession to look at the common aspects central to each definition of the concept of trust rather than to try and apply one or a set of definitions.

Conditions of Trust

Based upon the research presented in the literature review, I have synthesized my research into four themes that characterize trust: familiarity, confidence, interdependence, and risk.

Familiarity and Confidence. Research states that both familiarity and confidence are key components of trust in a person, group, or entity (Baier, 1985; Luhmann, 2000). The first, familiarity, is unavoidable. Just mere interactions with people and entities makes one familiar. Confidence speaks to the cognitive decision to trust (Luhmann, 2000). Both familiarity and confidence lead to the risking trust in order to problem solve (Luhmann, 2000). Therefore, it must be acknowledged that the conditions of both familiarity and confidence and their limits affect the conditions under which one trusts. As a result, the presence of trust has the ability to impact and encourage change implementation and implantation in a manner that is more impactful and permanent (Baier, 1985; Luhmann, 2000).

Trust is a fluid concept that can go from familiarity to confidence to trust and back. Trust is subjective and, therefore, is given or taken based on the interactions of the trustor and the person, group, or entity being trusted (Luhmann, 2000). These interactions make way for some semblance of familiarity. Both familiarity and trust determine the degree to which another trusts a trusted person (Luhmann, 2000). Trust has to be formed in a familiar environment. Changes to the familiar environment may impact the possibility of developing trust among people (Luhmann, 2000). Dasgupta (2000) stated, “for trust to be developed between individuals they must have repeated encounters, and they must have some memory of previous experiences” (p. 7).

As conditions change over social evolution, and the number of encounters increase, familiarity may lead to confidence. Both trust and confidence refer to expectations that may lead to disappointment (Luhmann, 2000). This reasonable trust requires good grounds for confidence in a person, or at minimum no reason to expect ill will of them (Luhmann, 2000). Familiarity, confidence, and trust depend on one another and are also capable of replacing each other, dependent upon changes in social circumstances (Baier, 1985; Luhmann, 2000). Trust, therefore, is dependent upon the presence or absence of both familiarity and confidence.

Risk as a Condition of Trust. Trust is dependent upon risk. That is, while confidence and familiarity may be confused with trust, there must be an extreme risk present in order for trust to be present. Across disciplines risk is considered an essential condition of trust (Rousseau et al., 1998). Rousseau et al., (1998) posits that “the path-dependent connection between trust and risk taking arises from a reciprocal relationship: risk creates opportunity for trust, which leads to risk taking” (p. 395). People take risks when they perceive that potential gains outweigh potential losses (Deutsch, 1958). Trust is “only possible in a situation where the possible damage may be greater than the advantage [sought]... it’s only required if a bad outcome would make you regret your action” (Luhmann, 2000, p. 96). In what Kreps, Milgrom, Roberts, and Wilson (1982) refers to as the Prisoners’ Dilemma game, once one party decides to trust another it is up to the trusted party to either take advantage of that party or not. Trust involves both risk and a willingness to be vulnerable to the possibility that the other person may not fulfill the expectations held by the person doing the trusting (Moye et al., 2004).

A continuous cycle of trust is characterized by an arrangement in which all parties are respected. This risk depends on a cycle of action and inaction on behalf of the person doing the trusting, making it what Williamson (1993) referred to as “self-enforcing” (p. 466). This cycle

of trust-risk-trust-risk “represents a re-entry of the difference between controllable and uncontrollable in the controllable” (Luhmann, 2000, p. 98). It requires the person doing the trusting to understand that there could be serious negative consequences as a result of their trust and the acceptance of potential pitfalls. Williamson (1993) stated “trust is warranted when the expected gain from placing oneself at risk to another is positive, but not otherwise... the decision to accept such risk is taken to imply trust” (p. 463). This is dependent upon one’s willingness to be vulnerable and accept the potential for betrayal. This trust results in a position that makes one far more vulnerable than if they were strangers (Granovetter, 1985). This vulnerability leads to dependence upon another in terms of maintaining the trust relationship.

Interdependence. Interdependence is an essential condition of trust. As no one person is self-sufficient, trust must be given to others with the things that are of some level of importance (Baier, 1986; Hupcey, Penrod, Morse, & Mitcham, 2001). Trust emerges from the identification of a need that cannot be met without the assistance of another and some assessment of the risk involved in relying on the other to meet this need (Luhmann, 2000). Of the relationship between trust and interdependence, Rousseau et al. (1998) stated that, “although risk and interdependence are required for trust to emerge, the nature of risk and trust changes as interdependence increases. Degrees of interdependence actually alter the form trust may take...” (p. 395). This trust is limited to the area of need and is subject to covert and overt testing (Luhmann, 2000). Not only is someone being trusted with something, but they are also being trusted based on their ability to make decisions regarding the thing with which they are being trusted. This discretionary responsibility means that trusted people have the potential to fail to act as they were trusted with taking on the care of more than they have been entrusted with (Luhmann,

2000). Such discretionary responsibility can impact the trust relationship in the event that the person being trusted turns out to be an ill-fitting choice.

Consequences of Trusting

Trusting the “wrong” person or entity can prove to be detrimental to the trust relationship. This varies per person as one can be trusted for some things, but not necessarily all things. Negative trust comes into play when a trustor trusts the wrong people or entity with the wrong thing(s). There are instances in trust where what the trustor cares about is in direct conflict with the values and/or expectations of the person being trusted. Though trust among people or an entity is dependent upon the stability of the relationship, an untrustworthy trusted person may have the ability to mask their deceit. In terms of the stability of relationships of this kind Baier (1986) stated the following:

the stability of the relationship will depend on the trusted’s skill in cover-up activities, or on the truster’s evident threat advantage, or a combination of these. Should the untrustworthy trusted person not merely have skill in concealment of her breaches of trust but skill in directing them toward increasing her own power and increasing her ability to evade or protect herself against the truster’s attempted vengeance, then that will destabilize the relation, as also would frequent recourse by the truster to punitive measures against the trusted (p. 255).

The trustor may rely on the power they have over the trusted person as a means to keep the trust relationship going. Additionally, an untrustworthy trusted person may take advantage of the trust bestowed upon them through the use of morally corrupt means. When this occurs, the relationship is what Baier (1986) referred to as “morally corrupt” (p. 255). The relationship becomes immoral in the manner that either party relies on characteristics or qualities in the other

that weaken the relationship if those qualities became known (Baier, 1986). In sum, the concept of trust is a vital piece in all relationships.

Trust is such a fluid concept that there are a number of ways in which it is defined. Common among numerous definitions are the conditions of risk, familiarity, confidence, and interdependence. There are also consequences with trusting the wrong people with the wrong things. Knowing this allows the concept to be better situated in terms of exploring its presence in the relationship within organizations. Additionally, it enables an understanding of how the concept of trust manifests itself in and affects the running of organizations.

Trust Relationships in Organization and Education

Complex organizations continue to look for ways to extend the parameters of trust in relationships as a means to encourage collaboration among employees (Moye et al., 2004). This is important, as both the organization and the individual are dependent upon one another to achieve set goals. Tschannen-Moran (2000) stated, “in organizations with a high level of trust, participants are more comfortable and are able to invest their energies in contributing to organizational goals rather than self-protection” (p. 313). Bryk and Schneider (2002) and Dirks (2002) deduce from recent studies that trust in leaders serves as both a determinant for organizational performance and a product of organizational performance. The interdependence between organization and individual is an important factor in both the attainment of set goals as well as the tone of the work environment.

Trust is a contributing factor in a positive working environment that can be characterized by honest and supportive relationships (Moye et al., 2004). Edmonson (2004) believed that trust among colleagues contributes to psychological safety which leads to an individual’s perceptions about the consequences of risk-taking in their work environment. Uline, Miller, and Tschannen-

Moran (1998) found that the key to a healthy school climate is trust which ultimately allows schools to be effective. Relationships within an organization are continuous as individuals relate to similar networks of people, and there is incentive to behave in ways that are trustworthy, develop trustworthiness, and bolster benefits of trusting relationships (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) suggested that trust is the

willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control the other party (p. 712).

All parties in a relationship have an impression about and expectations of the obligations associated with their respective role and hold expectations about the obligations of the other parties (Maele & Houtte, 2009).

Trust is necessary for consistent, cohesive, and productive relationships in organizations (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) described that individuals who trust others are “more likely to disclose accurate, relevant, and complete data about issues (p. 581). Zand (1971) explained that trust allows individuals within their communities to be unified and maintain cohesiveness. As trust is an influence in the willingness to be collaborative, trust has an important role in the running and effectiveness of organizations.

The Importance and Impact of Trust in Organizations

The concept of trust is inherent in the day-to-day interactions among staff members and plays a key role in the daily success of an organization. Organizational trust can be defined as the “expectations individuals have about networks of organizational relationships and behaviors” (Shockley-Zalabak, Ellis, & Winograd, 2000, p. 37). Shockley-Zalabak’s et al., (2000) definition speaks to the role that trust plays on behalf of those doing the work and who are most

responsible for organizational outcomes. Trust is identified as one of the underlying components of a well-functioning organization (Moye et al., 2004). Trust may positively influence the “attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, and performance outcomes of organizational members” (Maele & Houte, 2009, p. 559). Trust acts in a way that reduces uncertainty, increases confidence that the expectations held of others will be met, and maintains order (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, p. 185). The attitudes and relationships of those doing the work within the organization set the boundaries for collaboration, especially in multi-tiered organizations. Tschannen-Moran (2000) stated, “although collaborative processes are increasingly called for as a part of reform efforts in schools, these processes will not come about in an authentic form if the people involved do not trust one another” (p. 314). Tschannen-Moran (2000) posits that

collaboration and trust are reciprocal processes; they depend upon and foster one another. Collaboration takes place between autonomous partners who choose whether or not to participate, therefore, it is unlikely that collaboration will develop without at least a measure of trust (p. 315).

Trust manifests itself in ways that affect the overall function of an institution.

Role of Trust in Successful Reform Implementation

With the goal of rapidly improving student achievement, reform efforts do not dictate strategies for how schools can implement reform from the viewpoint of those having to implement said policy. It should be taken into account that trust can affect the way in which reforms are enacted. Hoy, Tartar, and Witkoskie (1992) explained trust is directly correlated to student achievement as the absence of trust leads to low academic achievement. Friedman (1991) also linked low levels of trust to high levels of teacher burnout. Moreover, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) show a correlation between low trust and limited parent collaboration.

It is vital that trust be established prior to attempting to enact reform efforts in order to ensure a stable environment for change. Louis (2007) stated the following as it relates to the establishment of trust

a reservoir of trust, nurtured before or early in the change process can be an important resource. This is particularly true where sensitive issues that directly affect individual teachers, such as assessment criteria and procedures or changing the school schedule, are addressed (p. 18).

Having a reservoir of trust permits leaders to ask for the implementation of reform efforts without causing suspicious resistance (Louis, 2007).

Contrary to improvement reform, literature suggests that planned change has a negative impact on institutional trust because it hinders the underestimated pieces of the organization's daily functioning (Barnard, 1938; Sitkin and Stickel, 1996). This finding further reinforces the need for leaders to build and sustain trust as a means to sustain effective reform (Louis, 2006). In Hargreaves' (2002) study, teachers experienced betrayal with administration. The author found that

they seem to deal with betrayal by evading interaction with those who have betrayed them, or who might betray them in the future. Fewer interactions mean fewer opportunities for professional learning and lessened chances of school improvement. Betrayal is the emotional enemy of improvement (p. 405).

Violations of trust may derail previously docile environments (Louis, 2007). Trust is a vital element in all human learning, cooperation, school effectiveness, and in developing organizational cultures (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). If the adults operating a school lack

trust among themselves there can be a negative effect on their ability and willingness to take risks. Without trust, schools are hampered from making necessary progress (Barlin, 2016).

Teacher-Administrator Trust

Trust is an element of organizational culture that is vital and oftentimes overlooked by administrators (Louis, 2007). As a school leader it is easy to make student academic achievement a priority to the point that those most responsible for student learning are not considered. Those leaders that do take relationships into consideration may use the relationships built as a means to bolster collaboration and goal attainment. Mishra (1996) argued that trust is key because it makes collaboration possible and encourages communication needed to adapt to uncertain situations. Current research outlines leaders' ability to develop and maintain trust among staff, however, they do not outline the ways in which this trust can be leveraged to aid in the acceptance in change (Louis, 2007).

Literature suggests that accountability driven reform creates an environment that requires a certain level of trust between teachers and administrators. Louis (2007) stated the following the relationship between administrators and teachers has, in the past, been based on the understanding that administrators would buffer the 'core technology' of the classroom from unreasonable interference by outsiders who do not have the knowledge and technical expertise to understand the teaching and learning process... Teachers had the reciprocal responsibility of doing an adequate job so not to cause administrators any additional trouble... This traditional ecology of the administrator-teacher relationship is inherently challenged by the need to rapidly respond to demands for change (p. 2).

It is in times of duress due to reform pressure that the relationship between teachers and administrators is tested. The extent to which this relationship is affected by pressure to provide

academic results is unknown. What is known is that the trust relationship is needed to promote and maintain change efforts.

Bryk and Schneider (2002) take the position that though varying levels of trust can characterize an entire school, as they found that schools who scored high in trust, teachers still had less trusting relationships with their administration. Butz, Dietz, and Konovsky (2001) found that the actions and character of a supervisor is how their employees' view their level of trustworthiness. A teacher's trust in their administrator is based on interpersonal behaviors and the administrator's competence and reliability in both initiating and orchestrating change (Louis, 2007). Louis (2006) explained that this means teachers are more likely to take a cynical stance in terms of administrator-initiated reform. Hargreaves (2002) found that the absence, lack, and loss of trust between administrators and teachers weaken reform efforts within schools. The implementation, implantation, and maintenance of change efforts is highly affected by the initial response of the staff responsible for its implementation. When trust is absent, or distrust characterizes the relationship, there are numerous possible negative impacts that could affect the manner in which change reforms are carried out.

Distrust can have a number of effects on the presence of trust and on organizations. Distrust has the potential to change the actions of those that the lack of trust most impacts. The presence of distrust is costly and causes people to feel compelled to engage in self-protection behaviors that guard against the opportunistic behaviors of others (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Tyler and Kramer (1996) found that when one is betrayed that they are extremely careful about taking risks, and will protect themselves at all costs due to the absence of trust. It also affects interactions among otherwise trusting people or groups. Individuals that would otherwise be collaborative become more intrinsic and secluded. Distrust undermines cooperation (Hoy &

Tschannen-Moran, 1999) that may be needed to reach organizational goals, can impair organizational effectiveness, and is likely to have a deleterious effect on communication (Tschannen-Moran, 2000).

SUMMARY

With the increase in focus on accountability in the field of education, districts continue to develop methods through which they can increase and maintain student achievement. Reform implementation requires the collaboration and cooperation of all involved. Though school leaders play a vital role in the implementation of reform efforts and the overall effectiveness of a school, current research recognizes trust as a key to the effectiveness of reform and student achievement. Evidence states that reforms driven by accountability standards require trust among teachers and administrators. Studies detail the manner in which leaders can build and maintain trust, but do not speak to how leaders can use these relationships to their advantage in terms of reform implementation and implantation. Additionally, studies do not speak to the affect rapid reform can have on teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher relationships. Trust is necessary as it is the basis for social interaction and is especially essential in situations that require any form of cooperation and collaboration. Framing this study with the concept of trust enables the exploration of teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher relationships and the manner in which they affect the fidelity of implementation. It highlights the four themes of risk, familiarity, confidence, and interdependence that characterize trust. Though the literature details the importance of these characteristics, there continues to be a lack of emphasis on how these characteristics can be extended in terms of relationships as a means to influence successful reform implementation. There is a need for a greater understanding of how leaders can use their relationships to encourage implantation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role trust plays in the implementation of reform as experienced by administrators and teachers. The goal is to acquire the experiences of teachers and school leaders as they navigate the reform process. This will include the various factors that influence relationship dynamics between teachers and leaders and the effect of the relationship on the implementation of change efforts.

Qualitative research is any form of research whose findings are derived by any means that are not statistical in nature (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Maxwell (2012) defined qualitative research as a method that,

is intended to help you better understand (1) the meanings and perspectives of the people you study—seeing the world from their point of view, rather than simply from your own; (2) how these perspectives are shaped by and shape their physical, social, and cultural context; and (3) the specific processes that are involved in maintaining or altering these phenomena and relationships” (p. vii).

Researchers are concerned with the behaviors of participants from that individual’s particular point of view (Bodken & Bilken, 2007). Qualitative data is collected through continuous interactions within a natural setting where the participant of interest spends a great deal of their time (Bogden & Bilken, 2007). Qualitative research is best used in situations where one seeks to understand a particular phenomenon and what that phenomena entails (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

In terms of this study qualitative research looks to pinpoint the role that trust plays on the implementation of reform. Research allows for the unearthing of the manner in which change efforts are implemented in the presence or absence of trust among teachers and administrators.

The main goal of qualitative research is to expose the human aspects of a situation (Furgerson, 2012). Merriam (2009) posits that it is important to view experiences through the lens of the participant. Within this study the understandings of teachers and school administrators will be examined and evaluated.

DESIGN

For the purpose of this study I will use a case study design. Yin (2014) defined the case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, especially when boundaries between phenomenon and context may not clearly be evident” (p. 16). A case study details a particular situation, subject, or setting (Bogden & Bilken, 2007). Becker (1968) posits that a case study is dual purposed. The author explained that it first serves as a means to comprehensively understand the group or entity being studied. In addition, the case study is set to cultivate general statements about regularities across social concepts. In general, a case study focuses the study. According to Merriam (1998) the case can be a person, program, group, or policy and more. Additionally, only data collection that is finite should be considered a case study.

Case studies are also what Merriam (1998) describes as “particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic” and they “focus on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon” (p. 29). Such specificity allows for the examination of problems in context. Case studies are descriptive to the point that the product of a case study provides a vivid and in-depth description of the phenomenon being studied (Merriam, 1998). Case studies analyze the interactions between and among variables within a certain situation and, oftentimes, over a particular span of time (Merriam, 1998). Lastly, case studies are heuristic meaning that they “illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam, 1998, p. 30).

A qualitative case study design was chosen for its ability to identify and analyze the factors present in a reform process and what characteristics sustain the reform. This qualitative study will focus on gaining insight into the experiences of teachers and school leaders as they experience reform. This design was selected with the goal of getting the personal experiences of each participant during a reform effort from their perspective. A case study is not such if the number of potential subjects is infinite. As presented by Merriam (1998) the case study design was chosen as I am “interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing” (p. 29).

Case studies are usually selected because of an issue or concern (Merriam, 1998). In wanting to examine a particular phenomenon or circumstance it is beneficial for the researcher to get close to the situation and pertinent people involved. Bromley (1986) posits that case studies “get as close to the subject of interest as they possibly can, partly by means of direct observation in natural settings, partly by their access to subjective factors (thoughts, feelings, and desires), whereas experiments and surveys often use convenient derivative data, e.g. test results, official records. Also, case studies tend to spread the net for evidence widely, whereas experiments and surveys usually have a narrow focus” (p. 23).

A case study design was also chosen because of its ability to illuminate data that would otherwise not be known via other research methods. Merriam (1998) stated a case study is unique in **what** it can uncover about a situation or phenomenon. This study examines a single reform effort that has been implemented within a school district. Before Response to Intervention (RTI) database was disseminated among all schools in the district, the database was piloted by several schools. Therefore, the way in which RTI was introduced determines the

viewpoint of the implementation of reform. This is very specific feedback that only a select group of individuals have experienced.

Case Selection

This case study includes one elementary school within the Aquillard Public School District. It is expected that teachers and principals employed by the school district are evaluated using the same expectations and operate under the same organizational structure. Each school is afforded the same general support and resources from the district leadership team. Supports begin to branch off as the socioeconomic status is different from school to school, therefore, requiring additional resources be allotted to schools with greater numbers of low socioeconomic students. Additional resources include additional funding, the addition of reading and math specialists and coaches, and access to more technology. Schools also differ by culture, which may benefit the study as it adds diversity in demographics, insights, and other pertinent factors that influence trust among staff members.

Aquillard Public Schools is located in the urban city of Aquillard, Virginia. The district educates a population of approximately 20,000 students and employs about 1,500 teachers. Within the district there is one early childhood center, 19 Kindergarten-5 elementary schools, two pre-kindergarten through eighth grade schools, one gifted center, five middle schools, and four high schools. Currently, grades kindergarten through third have a teacher/student ratio of 1:23, while grades four and five have a teacher/student ratio of 1:25. This ratio varies depending on the population of each school, as well as whether or not the school is Title I based on the number of students eligible for free/reduced lunch. Schools that are designated as a Title I school have a large percentage of their student population that come from low-income families.

The case will study Autumn Springs Elementary School, an elementary school within Aquillard Public Schools. The school has a student population of 353 students in grades kindergarten through fifth. There are 25 students who are identified as gifted and 51 students who are receiving special education services. Autumn Springs Elementary also qualifies as a Title I school due to the school's high percentage of students who come from economically disadvantaged families. Due to its Title I denotation the teacher/student ration is about 1:20, which is lower than that of the district average of 1:25.

Currently, Autumn Springs Elementary makes use of the district online RTI database that allows employees to input and track student information and data. This school is unique in that it was one of three schools selected by the district to pilot the RTI database before it became a district-wide requirement. The goal of the database is keeping data and student information readily accessible in order to assist teachers with lesson planning and progress monitoring. Presently in the implementation phase, the district uses the system as a means to ensure student data is accessible to personnel district-wide, no matter where the student may move throughout the school system. Teaching staff is able to input interventions provided to students, no matter the capacity in which they serve that student. At the school level, staff is responsible for maintaining current student data. This includes, but is not limited to the non-negotiable assessments such as the district- and state-mandated assessments, assessment dates, and data entry deadlines. At Autumn Springs Elementary, the literacy team is responsible for ensuring classroom teachers meet assessment and data entry deadlines into the RTI online database. Teachers are informed of impending deadlines via email from a member of the literacy team and receive personal email reminders as needed. Assessment dates and deadlines are also input into

an online calendar which is accessible by all staff members and sends periodic reminders of due dates.

Selection of Participants

The sampling and selection of participants will be conducted in a manner that allows for the selection of those participants who have experienced the RTI database implementation within a certain span of time. It is important that these participants not only have experience with the RTI database during a certain timeframe, but they must also be willing to share their feedback (Corben, 1999; Streubert & Carpenter, 1999). This case study relies on the strength of a purposefully selected sample of participants that have a very precise experience as a means to support the research (Hays & Singh, 2012; Patton, 2002).

This study selected two groups of participants. Group A and Group B participants were recruited using purposive sampling. This type of sampling requires that the development of specific criteria for the sample of the study (Patton, 2002). Hays and Singh (2011) posit that this developing such criteria allows the researcher to “obtain information-rich cases of [the] phenomenon before [the researcher] samples the population” (p. 164). The sampling pool is limited in the manner that participants are limited to the number of pilot participants that fit the criteria and are still employed at Autumn Springs Elementary School and are, therefore, able to be reached by email. Criteria for Group A is as follows

1. A licensed elementary teacher or school administrator
2. One who has taught grades three, four, or five at Autumn Springs Elementary School
3. Was working at the school during the time the RTI database was piloted.

Criteria for group B is as follows

1. A licensed elementary school teacher or administrator

2. One who has taught grades three, four, or five at Autumn Springs Elementary School
3. Has implemented the RTI database after its pilot year and during the time it was disseminated to all schools in the district.

Emails were utilized as a means to contact current and previous Autumn Springs Elementary School employees to extend an invitation to share their experience with and feedback on the RTI database implementation. Current administrator and assistant administrator, and three grade level teams who are currently employed at Autumn Springs Elementary School were selected to participate in this study. Demographic information was gathered which included gender, race, years of teaching and administrator experience, years at Autumn Springs Elementary School, years on their current team and with each team member, and years of experience with the RTI database. This information allowed for a varied participant sample within the school.

Strategies and Decisions for Data Sources

The participants were divided into two groups consisting of those teachers who piloted the program at Autumn Springs Elementary School upon its inception and those who were introduced to the program after its introduction to the entire district. This distinction was made because those teachers who piloted the program were able to work directly with the division leadership team. This group of teachers were able to shape the way in which the program was presented to the rest of the teachers in the division. They were also given direct instruction from district leadership team members who created the program and were walked through the ins and outs of the database by these district leaders and their school administrators. For this reason, they offer a very different viewpoint of the change reform from those who were simply given the program to implement.

Participants were teachers and the administrator within Autumn Springs Elementary School. This sample included participants who were most familiar with the implementation of the RTI database within the elementary school setting. Teachers were selected from the upper grades, grades three, four, and five because of the high level of interaction teachers of these grade levels have with RTI. Due to the wealth of formal and informal assessments that teachers of these grade levels have to deliver and the subsequent data that is required to be collected and documented on a continuous basis, these participants are those who are able to give the most robust feedback on the system.

The upper grade level teacher teams are distinctive in terms of their varied experience with the RTI database implementation. The third-grade team is composed of four teachers who came to Autumn Springs after the RTI pilot year. Additionally, none of these teachers received training of any kind in terms of using the RTI database. The fourth-grade team was composed of three teachers, all of whom were teaching at Autumn Springs during the pilot year. Teachers in grade five are divided in terms of experience. Two fifth grade teachers were teaching during the pilot year and one teacher began teaching at Autumn Springs after its implementation and did not receive any training about the database. The varied composition of these three grade levels in terms of RTI training and experience allows for a variance in grade level discussions surrounding RTI and data entry.

DATA COLLECTION

Participants were selected with the goal of choosing those who have implemented RTI within a particular timeframe. Purposive sampling at Autumn Springs Elementary School is best due to the availability of participants. Participants were interviewed in their respective classroom or office. This was done to maximize the comfort of each participant. All participants

were interviewed using a semi-structured interview process (Appendix A). Doing so allowed the researcher to ask particular questions that were common across interviews while leaving room for additional probing questions and prompts. A semi-structured interview affords participants the ability to express additional information they deem pertinent while maintaining the overall structure of the interview (Horton, Macve, & Struyven, 2004). Interviews last approximately 45-60 minutes in length and were audio recorded. Questions included topics spanning key characteristics desired in a teacher/administrator, the importance of trust in working relationships, and the implementation of the RTI database. Following the interview, participants were contacted and they provided additional information that they deemed pertinent and beneficial in terms of the purpose of this study. Interviews were transcribed and participants were provided with a copy of interview transcriptions. This allowed participants to review and clarify or amend any statements made during the interview.

Interviews. Teacher and administrator interviews were conducted. Interviews, or purposeful conversations, will be used for their ability to aid in getting information from participants (Bogden & Bilken, 2007). Yin (2014) explained that case study interviews in most occasions “resemble guided conversations rather than structured queries” (p. 110). Questions included topics such as experiences with implementation of reform, relationships between teachers and administrators, and the importance of trust in their daily work with fellow teachers and administrators. Interviews occurred in the participant’s respective classroom or office and was scheduled during times that were most convenient for them. According to Hays and Singh (2012) using an interview protocol will guide the interview and will provide a starting point. Additionally, such structure allows flexibility in the pace and sequence of questions that enables the participant to fully describe their experience. It is also advantageous in that semi-structured

interviews include more participant voice as a means to “provide a picture of [the] phenomenon under investigation” (Hayts & Singh, 2012, p. 239). Interviews were transcribed and sent to participants for verification.

Data Analysis

Each interview was recorded and transcribed. Copies of interview transcripts were then provided to each participant for their approval and clarification of any misconceptions or points on which they would have liked to expound. After transcribing each interview, data was organized and coded to identify themes that occurred across the data. Additionally, patterns were identified through the transcription of the data. Each interview was printed and read through several times to draw out any patterns or concepts that recurred throughout. Key quotes and ideas were highlighted and identified using a single word or phrase. Those words and/or phrases were typed into a spreadsheet. As each word and/or phrase occurred across interviews, the occurrence was counted and noted in the spreadsheet. I then used a Venn Diagram to help me compare the concepts and ideas that appeared most frequently which then developed into my themes, categories, and sub-categories. Using both the spreadsheet and subsequent Venn Diagram helped me visualize the ways in which my concepts related to one another.

The coding process allowed the data to be segmented, conceptualized, and reorganized in new ways (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Each of the three types of coding was used to analyze interview data to include open, axial, and selective coding. Following the coding of data, the developed patterns and themes were utilized to draw conclusions about trust and teachers’ willingness to trust one another and admin in the implementation of reform efforts and will inform the identification of possible implications for the field and further research.

Types of Coding. Open, axial, and selective coding do not happen independent of one another. During the process of coding, one can flow from one type of coding to another. Open coding calls for the naming and categorizing of common occurrences across data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This required the researcher to break down interview transcripts into separate ideas that represent recurring subcategories. Open coding goes beyond just recurring words, but compares events, interactions, actions, as a means to develop these commonalities into subcategories (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Axial coding connects subcategories into categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). During selective coding each of the categories are combined into themes that stand among and define the subcategories (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

Role of the Researcher

Currently I am a fifth grade teacher employed by Aquillard Public Schools and a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership program at Old Dominion University. My professional experience includes seven years as a classroom teacher with five years in third grade and two years in fifth grade. All of my teaching experience has occurred in two Title I elementary schools. I have worked under three principals and four assistant principals. During my internship I was able to shadow an elementary and a high school administrator. Additionally, I spent four years as a grade level chair and six years as a member of each school's leadership team. I have also had the opportunity to serve on various district-level committees to include creating district-wide project-based assessments and developing a teacher preparation course. I have established relationships with many of the district leaders in charge of the reform process and the individual that created and implemented the RTI database used in Aquillard Public Schools.

Trustworthiness

The abovementioned experiences have enabled the researcher to be an integral part of each school's change process. Both schools were, at one point, in priority status due to the number of years the school did not meet state accreditation benchmarks and were required to submit and maintain an improvement plan that was reported to both the district and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Therefore, the researcher has intimate knowledge of the inner workings of the change process as it was implemented in Aquillard Public Schools. Over the past seven years, the researcher has been privy to a number of changes instituted by the district and reform efforts aimed at improving student achievement and ensuring accreditation (meeting district and state benchmarks) for all schools across the district.

Several steps were followed to ensure credibility. Dr. Jay Scribner, dissertation chair, served as a checkpoint as he reviewed the data collection and analysis process throughout. To begin, I sent an email to each participant introducing myself and the purpose of my study. Interviews were also conducted in the office or classroom of each participant to ensure their comfort throughout the process. Following the interview participants were provided with a copy of their interview transcript and were encouraged to read through it and provide clarity or expound on anything that they saw fit. Doing so allowed the opportunity to verify that each participant's feedback was accurately captured (Creswell, 2013). A few participants took the opportunity to do so and provided a wealth of additional information. Additionally, the researcher kept an inventory of all interview recordings, transcriptions, and coded materials. Materials were kept in a locked cabinet throughout the research process.

It is acknowledged that there is some bias in terms of the researcher's current position as a classroom teacher. As a current teacher, researcher bias serves as both a positive and a negative in terms of research and data analysis. From the viewpoint of the classroom teacher, the

researcher is able to better understand and more readily analyze the insights of other classroom teachers in terms of their relationship with school administrators and the implementation of reform. Opposite of that, the researcher must make strides to ensure that I am not merely analyzing data from one viewpoint.

Limitations and Strengths

The study investigated the experiences of teachers and administrators with a particular reform effort during a certain time frame in their district. The sample is limited in that such a group may not be representative of all school administrators. Additionally, the reform effort itself may affect administrator viewpoints in a manner that is not representative of all types of reform and their subsequent implementation. With this, only certain teachers and administrators were selected for their viewpoint. Though other teachers and administrators potentially experienced reform in their district, wanted feedback on a specific time frame made it so that their experience may not have been able to maximize their experience with the reform. Additionally, district personnel outside of teachers and administrators at this specific school were not used as a means to focus solely on the experiences of this group with the reform.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Chapter IV includes an analysis of the data that was collected from each of the participants in this study. This chapter describes the factors that hinder Response to Intervention database implementation and factors that relate to trust. This chapter restates the purpose, research questions, and sample of the study. The data for each research question is also included in this study, which is provided through a rich narrative description from the participant's interviews.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role trust plays in the implementation of reform as experienced by administrators and teachers. Specifically, this will explore the manner in which trust between teachers and administrators and among teachers informs the implementation and implantation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) database within Aquillard Public Schools.

SAMPLE

This study selected two groups of participants. Group A and group B participants were recruited using purposive sampling. The sampling pool is limited in the manner that participants are limited to the number of pilot participants that fit the criteria and are still employed at Autumn Springs Elementary School and are, therefore, able to be reached by email. Criteria for group A is as follows:

1. A licensed elementary teacher or school administrator
2. One who has taught grades three, four, or five at Autumn Springs Elementary School
3. Was working at the school during the time the RTI database was piloted.

Criteria for group B is as follows:

1. A licensed elementary school teacher or administrator
2. One who has taught grades three, four, or five at Autumn Springs Elementary School
3. Has implemented the RTI database after its pilot year and during the time was disseminated to all schools in the district.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Each participant answered four questions regarding their demographic information. The demographic information of each participant is listed in Table 1. In addition, a detailed explanation of each participant's education and experience is provided. Included in the participant descriptions is a narrative regarding their workspace and their interactions throughout the interview.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Information

Grade Level	Teacher	Years in Education	Years with District	Years at ASES	Part of RTI Pilot?
Third Grade	Bethany	8	8	4	No
	Michael	18	18	1	No
	Ramona	23	23	1	No
	Luann	5	1	1	No
Fourth Grade	Tinsley	6	6	6	Yes
	Dorit	18	12	6	Yes
Fifth Grade	Sonja	9	9	7	Yes
	Dorinda	8	5	5	Yes
Administrator	Lisa	25	25	8	Yes

One elementary school was identified and each member of its third, fourth, and fifth grade teams as well as their administrator agreed to participate in the study. Each participant is presented through the use of five sections. First, I give an overview of my experience with the grade level and individual team member as well as the administrator during our respective interviews. Their education and leadership experience is also included. Presenting this information better situates the participants within the context of the study in terms of their experiences with the implementation of the RTI database. I then present the manner in which trust manifested on teacher teams and between teachers and their administrator. Next, I detail the factors that affected teachers' implementation of reform. The nexus of reform and the teacher-to-teacher and teacher-to-administrator relationship is then presented. Lastly, I summarize my findings.

Third Grade Team

The current third grade team is comprised of four teachers: Bethany, Luann, Michael, and Ramona. All members of the team have worked at Autumn Springs Elementary School for one year, with the exception of Bethany who has worked at ASES for four years. Each member knew the other members of the team in some capacity prior to coming to ASES.

Participant: Bethany. Bethany's classroom was mostly neat and organized, with there being a great deal of paper bits and broken crayons on the floor. She opted to use large tables instead of individual student desks. Each table has a three-drawer rolling cart with community supplies to include scissors, glue sticks, crayons, and a pencil sharpener. It is apparent that she encourages student collaboration throughout the day. She also has a large kidney table in the rear corner of the room where she holds her small groups. Behind the table is a bookshelf that holds books and miscellaneous supplies. One wall is divided into four sections by subject area. Each section has subject-specific posters, drawings, and the learning intention and success

criteria for the day. She does not have a teacher desk and, instead, works from a cart with a document camera that allows her to present whatever she is working on or whatever she chooses to show from her laptop screen. We sat at a student table during our interview, which was approximately an hour in length.

Education and Experience. After receiving her Bachelor's of Psychology and a Master's in Teaching, Bethany began her career in education as a Class Size Reduction Teacher. Following her first year, she became a second grade teacher. This is her eighth year in the classroom, but only her fourth at Autumn Spring Elementary School. All eight years have been with Aquillard Public Schools and all in a Title I setting. She has also been grade level chair for six of her eight years in teaching. In her seventh year in the classroom, Bethany made the decision to go back to school and received an Education Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership. Bethany did not receive any formal training with regards to the RTI database.

Participant: Michael. Michael presented a calm demeanor and spent a few seconds thinking before responding to each question. For the first few minutes of the interview he did not make eye contact throughout the interview, choosing, instead, to play with a pen that he'd found on the table. His classroom walls are mostly bare with the exception of a few nautical-themed posters displayed throughout. His student desks are set up in a U-shape with all desks facing the center. There is no teacher desk, but Michael has chosen to do much of his small group work from a large kidney table in the rear of the room. There is no student work displayed.

Education and Experience. Following the completion of his degree in elementary education, Michael began his career in teaching. This is Michael's eighteenth year in teaching and as a teacher with Aquillard Public Schools. Outside of teaching, he has had no other job and

has only taught second, third, and fourth grade. He has also spent time as the grade-level chair, but his outlook on that position changed because the position changed from a paid to an unpaid job and it did not feel like he was an actual leader among his team. Of his time as grade-level chair he stated,

I guess at first with grade level chair I was kind of excited. I was young back then... [but then] I stopped getting paid for it [laughs]... I was kind of a younger person on my team. So my teammates had more experience than I did. So they really didn't need anything from me. I would ask them questions when I was the grade level chair. I guess maybe they didn't wanna do it. I would say I was grade level chair, but I technically wasn't.

Though Michael was not a part of the pilot program that introduced the RTI database, he did voluntarily attend several trainings opportunities provided by the district. He also received training by his previous school's media specialist.

Participant: Ramona. Throughout Ramona's interview she continued to check her phone and watch, but also appeared to be very professional throughout our interview. Her responses were very detailed and succinct. Her classroom is very organized and coordinated. The walls were covered in motivational posters and student work. She also has a few anchor charts that display the content for the week as well as the daily learning intention and success criteria for each subject. Student desks are organized in groups of five with one student desk standing alone. There is a rectangular table in the rear of the room and a kidney table in the front corner. The kidney table appears to be used as a teacher workstation as well as a table for small groups as evidenced by a rolling whiteboard that stands next to the table with the small group learning intention and success criteria displayed.

Education and Experience. This is Ramona's 23rd year of teaching and her second year at Autumn Springs Elementary School. She has spent her entire teaching career in elementary schools in Aquillard Public Schools. For many of those years she has been the inclusion teacher. Of her decision to teach inclusion she says "I really like working with inclusion, special needs kids." Her interest in teaching inclusion is largely due to the fact that she has a son with cerebral palsy. She has a Bachelor's of Arts in Elementary Education and Interdisciplinary Studies and a Master's in School Leadership, but has chosen not to pursue a career in leadership. She states,

When I first started my degree, I was super excited. I was like 'I'm about to get out [of] the classroom', but then once I started different parts of the degree [and] going around with my principal I began to think 'I don't think I want to do this anymore. I think I want to stay in the classroom and work with kids.' And then my personal life. I have a son with cerebral palsy and then I have another son so I was a single mom. So the classroom was the best place for me raising two boys. However, one graduated last year, one graduates this year, so I might change and go for it.

In addition to her time as a teacher, Ramona has also served in several leadership roles to include lead teacher, grade level chair, and STREAM coordinator. Ramona revealed that she never received training on the implementation of the RTI database. Prior to her coming to ASES, the RTI database was implemented by the reading specialist on behalf of the classroom teachers.

Participant: Luann. Luann was very forceful and direct when she spoke. She seemed very sure of herself and her abilities in the classroom and did not hesitate to share her opinion on any topic. Her classroom was a mix of various themes with her posters displaying positive affirmations and her anchor charts were geared toward different subjects. Her learning intentions and success criteria were written on her whiteboard that is on a wall in the front of her

classroom. The student desks were arranged in rows of three. There is a kidney table in the rear right corner and a small circle table in the rear left corner of the room. She mentioned that she spends most of her time at the kidney table because it allows her to “keep an eye on them.” In the front of the room is a cart with a document camera and behind the cart is a corner bookshelf that holds teacher supplies. This area appeared to be where she stores many of her personal supplies and materials.

Education and Experience. Luann started her career as an elementary school teacher at a charter school in Washington, D.C. After briefly working for Richmond Public Schools, she relocated to Aquillard and began to work for Aquillard Public Schools where she remains today. She most recently graduated from Old Dominion University having earned a Masters in Educational Leadership. Luann stated that she did not receive any formal training regarding her implementation of the RTI database, but did reveal that it was something that she was able to figure out on her own.

Fourth Grade Team

The current fourth grade team is comprised of two teachers: Tinsley and Dorit. Both members have worked at Autumn Springs Elementary School for seven years. They have been on a team together for four and did not know one another prior to being employed at ASES.

Participant: Tinsley. Tinsley’s classroom was organized and there were several bookcases that hold student books and papers. Student desks were in groups of four with two student desks isolated in the back of the classroom. She also had two large kidney tables. One kidney table is in the rear of the room and has a large rolling chair and five student stools around it. The other kidney table was near the front of the room and is used as her desk as she does not have a teacher desk of her own. One wall is divided into six sections. Four of the six sections

have content-specific posters and anchor charts. The remaining two sections display student work. There is a large screen in the front of her classroom that is flanked by a whiteboard that displays the learning intentions and success criteria by subject as well as their classroom rules and daily schedule. During our hour-long interview, we sat at her kidney table.

Education and Experience. Tinsley has been teaching for six years, all of which have been in a Title I setting at Autumn Springs Elementary School. She has taught both second and fourth grade and was an inclusion teacher for five of her six years. She also earned a Master's of Elementary Education. Tinsley was a part of the original team of teachers and staff that were trained on the RTI database prior to its use at the building level. She was also a teacher at ASES during its time in the pilot phase of the database's implementation. Additionally, she was a member of the building level team that introduced ASES teachers and support staff to the database and guided the staff through the pilot program.

Participant: Dorit. Dorit's classroom is color-coordinated and is mostly organized with the exception of her area. Student desks were organized in rows of three. Two student desks were in isolation in the rear of the room and one student desk stands alone in the front against the wall. She had a rectangular table in the rear of her room and a kidney table in the front. She did not have a teacher desk, but has opted to use the kidney table in its place. One wall is divided into five sections. Four of the sections have subject-specific anchor charts. The fifth section displays student work. She also had two bookcases that hold books for students to read. During our interview, we sat at the rectangular table in the rear of the room.

Education and Experience. Dorit has a degree in Early Childhood Education. She has been teaching for eighteen years and has taught third, fourth, sixth, and eighth grade. Prior to coming to Aquillard Public Schools, she taught sixth and eighth grades in Maryland. She has

been at ASES for the past six years. Dorit was employed at ASES during its time in the pilot phase of the implementation of the RTI database.

Fifth Grade Team

The fifth grade team is made up of two teachers: Sonja and Dorinda. Sonja has taught at Autumn Springs Elementary School for 9 years and Dorinda for 5. They have been on the same fifth grade team for 5 years and did not know one another prior to coming to ASES.

Participant: Sonja. Sonja's student desks were arranged in rows of three. There was a teacher desk and a circular table in the rear of the classroom. Behind the teacher desk was a bookcase with an assortment of textbooks and binders. There was also a small, square table in the front of the classroom. She had a large screen that hangs on the front wall that is flanked by a whiteboard. On the board were the daily schedule and student lunch choices. Lined on her counter were individual tubs that hold student work and materials. One wall was divided into five sections. Each section displayed posters by subject. There were also anchor charts scattered on all four classroom walls that illustrate specific skills in math and language arts. The floor was littered with pencils, highlighters, crayons, and papers. We sat at her circular table in the rear of her classroom for her interview.

Education and Experience. Sonja has been teaching for the past nine years, all in Title I schools in Aquillard Public Schools. She has a Master's degree in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. She most recently graduated with an Education Specialist degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and has begun a doctoral program in Educational Leadership at Old Dominion University. She previously served as grade level chair and was a mentor to new teachers in her building. Sonja has also served on her school's leadership team

for all nine years of her career. Sonja was employed at ASES during its time in the pilot phase of the implementation of the RTI database.

Participant: Dorinda. Dorinda's classroom was sparsely decorated with inspirational posters and student work. One wall had a long bulletin board that is divided into five sections. Each section had the learning intention and success criteria for math, science, history, language, arts, writing, and math. In the front of her classroom was a long white board with a large screen in the center. The white board had the class's daily schedule on one side and student lunch choices on the other. Student desks were arranged in rows of three. There was a teacher desk in the front corner of a classroom with a tall bookshelf behind it. The teacher's desk had piles of notebooks and papers in addition to office supplies such as pens, highlighters, and tape. In the rear of the classroom was a kidney table with one teacher chair and five student chairs around it.

Education and Experience. Prior to beginning her career in education, Dorinda was a Sergeant First Class – Platoon Sergeant in the United States Army. She then began her teaching career in Georgia where she taught for one year before moving to Maine where she taught pre-kindergarten for two years. Dorinda then relocated to Aquillard where she has been teaching for the past five years. Of her career change, she stated

I always wanted to be a teacher and so when I went to college I'd started my teacher program before I left for the military. So, I wanted to do it and when I was in the military I had the opportunity, I was a leader and I had the opportunity to become a teacher for military and I trained individuals so I just wanted that to carry over into my regular job.

She most recently graduated with an Education Specialist degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Dorinda is also currently her grade level's chair and has been a member of ASES's leadership team for the past four years. Dorinda was a part of the original

team of teachers and staff that were trained on the RTI database prior to its use at the building level. She was also a teacher at ASES during its time in the pilot phase of the database's implementation. Additionally, she was a member of the building level team that introduced ASES teachers and support staff to the database and guided the staff through the pilot program.

Administration: Lisa. Lisa's office was relatively small in size. There was one office desk, a small circular table, a tall bookshelf, and a small white board on the wall. Her desk was neat and included a family photo and other miscellaneous office supplies. The bookshelf was filled with reference texts, binders, and several awards. The white board had data written on it by quarter and grade level.

Education and Experience. This is Lisa's 25th year in education, all with Aquillard Public Schools. Prior to becoming an administrator she taught first through fourth grade, all in Title I schools. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education, a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, and an administration endorsement of leadership studies. She is also National Board Certified and received the Desmond Award for Outstanding Achievement with the Aquillard Federation of Teachers in 2007. She had no interest in becoming an administrator until a previous leader convinced her to get into a leadership program. Of this time she stated,

I was sitting in the lounge... running some copies or something and the principal came up and he said "You know you need to think about becoming a principal. What are gonna be your next steps?" And I was like no, I'm fine where I am, that's ok. And then he harassed me for it felt like it two or three months. A couple months later he comes back and he says "No, I'm serious. I really need you to get into a program. I think you would be great." And so I threw at him as a joke "Well, are you gonna be my mentor?" And

when he said yes, I didn't know what to say. I was like oh ok! Did it. Got in the program.

Lisa was the administrator during ASES's participation in the piloting of the RTI database.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

At the conclusion of my analysis, I unearthed three overarching themes. I used the chart seen in the table (Table 2) to help me organize my data into what came to be my final themes, categories, codes, and sub-codes. The final themes were: the manifestation of trust among teacher teams and between teachers and the administrator; and factors that influence trust throughout the implementation of reform. Inside the theme of "Manifestation of Trust Among Teachers and Between Teachers and the Administrator" I will present the foundation of relationships, leveraging relationships, and personal and professional relationships.

Under the theme of "Factors that Influence Trust Throughout the Implementation of Reform" I will discuss organizational factors that include teacher preparation, encroachment on teacher's time, understanding the purpose of the reform, the effects of changes made to the reform, and the perceived benefit of the reform; interpersonal factors include how relationships, professionalism, contributions, communication, collaboration and dependability, and support influenced reform implementation.

Table 2

Themes of the Study

Manifestation of Trust Among Teacher Teams and Between Teachers and the Administrator	Factors that Influence Trust Throughout the Implementation of Reform
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The foundation of relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust through the observation of others' actions • Familiarity as an indicator of trust. • Relationship dynamics between 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational Factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher preparation regarding reform implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of RTI training • Barriers to implementation

<p>teachers and the administrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveraging relationships • Personal and Professional Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal relationships between participants • Professional relationships between participants • Nexus of personal and professional relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encroachment on participant's time regarding reform implementation • Effects of teacher Understanding of the purpose of RTI database • Effects of the Changes of the Reform Post-Implementation • Effects of perceived benefit of implementation • Interpersonal Factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Teacher-Teacher Relationships Informed RTI Database Implementation • How Teacher-Administrator Relationships Informed RTI Database Implementation • Professionalism as an Influence on Reform Implementation • Influence of contribution on reform implementation • Influence of communication on reform implementation • Influence of collaboration and dependability on reform implementation • Influence of support on reform implementation
---	---

Manifestation of Trust Among Teacher Teams and Between Teachers and the Administrator

One theme that I discovered through the analysis of my data was how trust manifested among teacher teams and between teachers and the administrator. Questions asked during interviews delved into whether participants trusted their teammates and administrators, why they did or did not trust them, how they came to trust them, why they felt that trust was or was not required in their relationships, and how trust and their relationships with their teammates and the administrator affected the way they implemented the RTI database. The manifestation of trust was the most prevalent thread that wove participant responses together.

Over the course of participant interviews, the concept of relationships appeared to be one of the main sources of trust. In this section I present the foundation of relationships as detailed by participants. Specifically, I delve into how observations of others and familiarity build and maintain trust. I also explore the relationship dynamics between teachers and the administrator. Next, I detail how participants leverage their relationships with one another. Lastly, I detail personal and professional relationships and the nexus between the two.

The Foundation of Participant's Relationships

The foundation of relationships was a key determining factor in the way trust manifested for participants and was common across participant discussions. Relationships manifested through the inevitable interactions among teachers and between teachers and the administrator. On a team, teachers interacted with their teammates in various capacities to include grade level meetings, collaborative lesson planning, and other activities and/or tasks that require teachers to relate with one another. Conversely, administrators interacted with teachers to monitor classroom instruction and student achievement through classroom observations, hold one-on-one meetings, and during casual run-ins. Constant interactions among teachers and between teachers and the administrator shaped and led to the formation of the relationship.

Lisa, the administrator participant revealed that she took various approaches when setting out to build relationships and trust capital with teachers. To ensure tasks were completed and teachers met expectations, she aimed to establish relationships with all teachers. She stated that doing so enables her to determine the best way to interact with each teacher as a means to maximize cooperation and task completion. Lisa stated "I'm all about building relationships and trust with my teachers... I make it a point to find something to connect with each of my staff

members.” Her stance is that the way she builds relationships determines whether the relationship will be stable and whether that relationship is positive.

Participants postulated that the administrators they previously worked with who valued certain things built and maintained positive relationships with those teachers who were producing results and/or meeting or exceeding professional goals. Results and expectations mostly centered on student academic achievement and proven implementation of reform. Discussions revealed that yielding positive results and/or meeting or exceeding goals resulted in a positive teacher-administrator relationship and positive interactions since the teacher met the administrator’s expectations. Participants revealed they were aware that their active use of the RTI database increased the positivity of their relationship with their principal. Those that used the database less often or were not meeting set expectations believed their relationship with the administrator was negative. Sonja described how she discovered her relationship with her administrator was built and maintained around success and use of the database. She stated,

Initially I was just not high on her radar... I think our relationship was good because my classroom was successful and we were using RTI. Our grade level was successful. She would always shout us out and give us props for using the database and staying off the email list of people who got gentle reminders that their stuff wasn’t done. You start to notice it wasn’t about what you taught, but what you completed.

Additionally, data showed that being successful in terms of the expectations of the administrator reduced the chance that the administrator had to approach the teacher for a negative reason.

Once the relationship was established, it was maintained and leveraged through various courses of action or inaction. Trust was then established through the exchange of personal and/or professional information. Continued trust was maintained through a lack of negative

consequences from the sharing of information. Consequences included things such as being blackmailed, or the shared information being revealed to others. As the relationship continued, a cycle of sharing and receiving information developed and was maintained by a lack of conflict or the ability to continue the relationship after overcoming conflict. In instances where the cycle was broken, the relationship weakened and/or dissolved.

A lack of a relationship occurred due to a lack of interactions between two participants or the dissolution of a previously established relationship. In instances where there were no interactions between two participants, there was no opportunity to establish a relationship which meant there was also no opportunity to establish trust. A dissolution of a previously established relationship generally occurred as a result of a teammate or administrator's continuous inability to be trusted. Though the relationship dissolved, participants stated that the end of a relationship did not always result in negative feelings between themselves and the person or group. Luann stated,

Just because I don't [have a relationship] with you doesn't mean I won't speak or acknowledge your presence. I just know that I can't be cool with you like I used to and I have to keep you at a distance. I can't trust you anymore. No hard feelings. You just gotta keep your distance.

Bethany mirrored this sentiment when she stated, "It took me a while to learn to be cordial. At first, I'd be rude and nasty. Now, I know that's not necessary. I just speak and keep moving." Though the relationship dissolved, participants did not harbor ill feelings toward others in a manner that impacted work or the work environment.

Trust through the observation of others' actions. How teacher participants observed others' interactions with other teachers and principals informed their trust in that person. In their

experience, once they saw a trusted person's interactions with others, their trust in them increased or decreased. In their work, Bryk and Schneider (2003) highlighted the following,

As individuals interact with one another around the work of schooling, they are constantly discerning the intentions embedded in the actions of others... They ask whether others' behavior reflects appropriately on their moral obligations... These discernments take into account the history of previous interactions. In the absence of prior contact, participants may rely on the general reputation of the other... (p. 41).

Teacher participants who experienced a trusted coworker engaging in undesirable behaviors such as gossiping, decreased their trust in that person which led to their apprehension with reference to future interactions. Bethany witnessed a teammate interact with a coworker in a positive manner, but that teammate then spoke negatively about the coworker in a different setting. As a result, trust in that teammate decreased and then dissolved altogether. Bethany stated of her change in trust of that teammate in the following way,

I'm skeptical now... she has built relationships with tons of people and in our conversations, she says things about those people that she's very friendly with to me. So, in my opinion, if you're gonna say those things about people that *you* trust and are actual friends with, then what are you saying about someone who's not considered your friend?

Contrarily, some teacher participants came to see the positive interactions between an administrator and other teachers as a positive influence on their trust in that administrator. As they saw an administrator engage with teachers in a positive fashion such as through jokes or light conversation, trust in the administrator increased. For example, as Ramona became more familiar with how her administrator interacts with other teachers, her trust in her current administrator increased. She stated "I trust her as a person. I see how she interacts with people...

I trust her as an administrator.” Teacher participants agreed that seeing an administrator’s interactions with others has the potential to make one trust at a quicker rate.

Familiarity as an indicator of trust. Familiarity was a concept that recurred across participant interviews. Participants agreed that the way they came to know of and be associated with a person impacted their relationship. Additionally, familiarity had the ability to change the dynamics of an established relationship. Data revealed that familiarity manifested in two ways: indirectly and directly. Indirect familiarity occurred when teachers and administrators heard information about someone from a person with whom they already have a relationship and is characterized by reputation. Hearing positive or negative things about someone from another person with whom they already have a relationship makes the person in question able to be trusted or distrusted at a faster rate than normal. For instance, Dorit held disdain for Tinsley when she first learned that Tinsley would join the fourth grade team. Her feelings toward Tinsley changed in response to information given to her by a current teammate at that time. Dorit stated, “[Previous teammate] knew how I felt and she came to me like ‘Dorit, she’s cool. She knows her stuff and she’s about the kids. Give her a chance. If it wasn’t for that I would’ve probably never even worked with Tinsley, let alone open up and trust her.’” Having a trusted person vouch for an unknown person shows the unknown person in a positive light where there may have been no previous opinion formed.

On the contrary, direct familiarity occurred when participants were in contact with one another. Specifically, participants characterized it in terms of having met or worked with someone. This meant that teachers had one-to-one interactions with others as a means to become better associated. Interactions may have included personal conversations, sharing information, and/or collaborating to complete a task. The fifth grade team, for example, did not know one

another prior to being on a team together. Both participants revealed that the longer they worked on a team with one another, the more familiar they became with each other. Sonja stated, “I didn’t get to sit in on her interview or anything so when we met it was a little weird. But, the more we worked together and had meetings together and things, the more I liked her. We have a lot in common and it’s because we are both hard workers, I know her... I trust her...” Their continuous contact with one another in the workplace aided in their ability to grow to trust one another.

Participants who had a relationship with or were positively familiar with other members of their team prior to having to work together found that they trusted their teammates easily. Of his relationship with Ramona, Michael stated, “I knew her already so I knew her personality. It was easier to dive in and be a team because I knew what I was dealing with.” Due to the fact that they knew their teammate’s personality and characteristics that they appreciated, forming and maintaining a relationship was revealed to be less difficult than had they known nothing about the person.

Relationship dynamics between teachers and the administrator. Teachers and their administrator agreed that positive relationships were important and fostered trust on teacher teams and between teachers and their administrator(s). Participants took the position that teachers with positive relationships may feel open to take professional risks and embrace potential resistance that may come with said risks. In the context of this study, professional risks could include suggesting new instructional tools and/or techniques that are outside of those prescribed by the district, being creative with the implementation of reform, and making changes to daily scheduling to meet the needs of their students. Trust made taking risks easier for participants.

Trust also made teacher participants more comfortable with approaching their administrator when they were, or their team, was in need. Participants also believed trust enabled vulnerability among teachers and between teachers and their administrators which led to teachers feeling comfortable expressing concerns to their teammates and/or their administrator(s). Dorinda stated, “If I don’t trust [the administrator] and I don’t feel comfortable with them then I’m not going to approach them if I need anything so a relationship is important.” Sonja mirrored this sentiment and stated “education is all about building relationships. Whether it’s teacher to teacher... or administrator to teacher... I think the system focuses on relationships and when you build a positive relationship... you’re able to trust somebody.” In reference to the RTI database, teachers in relationships with trust felt more comfortable bringing their concerns about the database and its implementation to their team and/or administration.

The strength of the relationship between teachers and administrators varied. A strong relationship was characterized by interdependence, trust, longevity, and the ability to address conflict without causing damage to the relationship. Strong relationships were achieved through constant and consistent positive interactions over time. As time went on and the relationship persisted through conflict(s), those participants in the relationship were comfortable and forthcoming with one another. In terms of the relationship between administrators and teachers, teacher participants revealed that they were more likely to have a strong relationship with administrators who were transparent, open, and honest in their communication and feedback. From the lens of the administrator participant, teachers with whom they had strong relationships previously proved themselves to be leaders among their peers and did well with doing their job and meeting expectations. For instance, Lisa noted that she does not attend all meetings. She specifically identified the fourth grade team and revealed the team proved themselves capable of

running a productive meeting in her absence to include the use of the RTI database as a means to input and disaggregate data. The strong relationship between teacher participants and their administrator enabled the team to be trusted to work on their own.

In contrast, weak relationships were described as those that lacked trust, could not withstand conflict, and were short-lived. Teacher participants revealed that they were more likely to have a weak relationship with those administrators who they felt were closed off to their teachers. Ramona stated “You start to feel like they’re being sneaky and are out to catch you... always looking over your shoulder because you don’t really know them. You can’t read them.” Conversely, Lisa disclosed that those teachers with whom she had weak relationships were those teachers who had not proven their ability to complete tasks on their own without supervision, displayed an unwillingness to follow protocol and expectations, and/or who were not meeting building and district expectations. For example, where trusted teachers had the freedom to alter the implementation of reform as instructed by the administrator, teachers who were not trusted were instructed to strictly follow the directions given and were not permitted to add their own methods of implementation. Additionally, teachers that were not trusted were not given leadership positions. Lisa stated that she does not choose her grade level chairs based on length of time in their career, but on her perception of their ability to be trusted to lead a team and follow her and the district’s expectations. Overall, maintaining relationships was done through various approaches.

Leveraging Relationships

Participants leveraged relationships for varying reasons. Teacher participants revealed they may make use of their relationships with administrators to gain something for themselves or their team. The presence of trust ensured that the person on the receiving end of the leveraging

was less likely to push back or be against what was being asked of them. Teacher participants revealed they leverage their relationship with administration to communicate. They reported when their team was in need of something or wanted to communicate a concern, the teacher with the strongest relationship with the administrator used that relationship to communicate that need or concern. The strength of the relationship resulted in a level of power that particular teachers have in relation to administrators. They used this power to the advantage of their team and were a voice for team members who may not have established such a rapport/relationship with the administrator.

A position of power was particularly useful as it pertained to grade level concerns and requests. Of understanding her ability to leverage her relationship with her administrator, Bethany stated,

...it took me a while to really truly accept that I was treated a little bit differently from everybody else. It took for my team members to say things like ‘Bethany, you talk to Lisa about this because she’ll listen to you’ or ‘You complain about this because when you say something things happen.’ Like, my team hated RTI because, overall, none of us understand why we even needed to do it. But, I knew that I had to be the person to go to Lisa and let her know and she was actually open and gave us some more help with getting things done and stuff. So that kind of opened my eyes to maybe I’m in this role not just for the purpose of Lisa assigning it to me, but being the voice for my team when they don’t feel like they can go to her about things.

Tinsley similarly described leveraging her relationship as she stated, “I’m the fourth grade voice. [My team will] come to me and be like ‘Tinsley, go to Lisa and tell her this because I know that you’ll say it sternly enough that we’ll get it... I think the relationship I’ve built with admin that

they... when they see me coming they know it's a big deal. Otherwise, I wouldn't be asking them at all." In her opinion, administrators appeared to be more receptive when approached by teachers with whom they had a strong, positive relationship, whether personal, professional, or both.

Lisa leveraged relationships to communicate with a team and/or get tasks completed with optimal effort from teachers in spaces where participation would otherwise not be easily garnered. The relationship was used as an entry into the team in a manner that was efficient and effective. For instance, the Lisa found it easier to implement a change by having a particular team member present it to the team rather than themselves. Lisa revealed that during her rollout of the RTI database to her school, she strategically spoke to particular teachers beforehand, knowing that they would be able to assist her with teacher buy-in. From the view of a teacher, when describing the manner in which the administrator leveraged her relationship to garner assistance, Bethany stated that her administrator would make statements such as "I need you, Bethany" and would follow up with offering some form of relief or further assistance.

In some experiences, teacher participants agreed that their administrators used their established positive relationships with teachers as a bridge to establish a relationship with a teacher's "acquaintance" with whom the administrator had no previous relationship. This manifested itself through the use of an established relationship to secure another. Bethany recalled a time where an administrator used his relationship with a mutual friend as a bridge to try and establish a relationship with her. While this method may have had the potential to be effective, Bethany described this approach as the establishment of a "false relationship" and one that broke trust in that administrator. Of this broken trust she stated,

His establishment of a false relationship with me was based on his relationship with my friend. He knew her work ethic and I guess he was trying to find allies which, I guess a lot of people would do, but I didn't feel like that was authentic... it was very awkward. As a result, she viewed his desire to have a relationship with her as inauthentic being that he did not approach her directly. Approaching a relationship in this manner has the potential to negate any current or possible relationship due to perceived inauthenticity on behalf of the administrator.

Teacher participants with a positive relationship with their administrator agreed they were more receptive to tasks and were willing to communicate needs and expectations. They trusted the administrator was asking something of them and their team that will not have negative consequences. For example, the administrator was not making a request that would be a burden and take time from classroom instruction and instructional planning. Conversely, Lisa revealed that she also trusted that the teacher, teacher group, or grade level could get tasks done in a manner that met or exceeded expectations. Of her administrator, Bethany stated "I guess my administrator trusted me enough to assign me tasks and not micromanage me... I've never experienced her assign leadership roles to somebody who she didn't trust." Specifically, they trusted the teacher(s) to do their job and do it well. In terms of both teachers and the administrator, all participants agreed they used their relationships to their benefit and credited trust for their ability to do so.

Personal and Professional Relationships

Personal and professional relationships were revealed as another factor of trust among teacher teams and between teachers and their administrator. A relationship, whether personal or professional, was needed for trust to occur. Additionally, relationships of a personal and/or

professional nature were found to affect the degree to which one could be trusted. For example, in a personal relationship, participants trusted one another with personal things such as personal secrets and information. In a professional relationship, participants showed their trust in one another by exposing their weaknesses or suggesting ideas that went against directions given by an administrator. The type; however, different across participants and determined who was trusted and with what.

Personal relationships between participants. Personal relationships between participants were described as those that were not confined to the work environment. Participants in personal relationships communicated with others outside of work about topics that extend beyond work. They also spent time with one another in non-professional settings, such as a restaurant, a store, or in one another's home. For example, both the fourth and fifth grade teams revealed they get together on the weekends. Michael and Luann also revealed in separate interviews that they go out with one another outside of the work environment. Luann stated "We both like to go out to the same places and he's a cool dude so he's someone I can chill with both in and out of work."

Personal relationships were also characterized by having fun, friendship, and being social. Participants described personal relationships as those that existed through sharing personal events and/or information with others. Spaces where relationships were able to form, and flourish included weddings, vacations, family emergencies, etc., while personal information may include the exchange of social media accounts and insight into family dynamics. Dorinda revealed that Sonja had supported her through numerous personal moments in her life. She stated, "She's been there through some major low points in my life. She knows the ins and outs of everything. She's more than a coworker... she's like a sister."

Teacher-teacher personal relationships appeared to form easier than personal relationships between teachers and their administrator. By nature of the position, teachers interacted with other teachers more frequently and more intimately than they did with the administrator. For instance, teacher participants stated they tend to lesson plan together and may attend professional developments with one another. Luann asserted, "I'm forced to see [my team] all day long. Of course I'm going to be closer to them than anyone else in the building." Close proximity and frequent interactions increased the likelihood of a relationship between teachers.

The evaluative nature of the administrator's role made it difficult, but not impossible, to form personal relationships. For example, administrators are responsible for evaluating the performance of teachers, which may put strain on the formation or maintenance of a relationship at the personal level. Positive feedback may appear as favoritism of the teacher while providing negative feedback or consequences may put a strain on the personal relationship. As the administrator is in a position of power over teachers, there must remain some semblance of professionalism between teachers and their administrator. One teacher participant, Michael stated, "I know Lisa, but I don't know too much. I know just enough to know she has good intentions, but she also is my principal so I can't get too close and that's cool with me." Though there remained a level of professionalism, teacher participants revealed that knowing their administrator personally, even in a minimal capacity, enabled them to trust her more easily.

Professional relationships between participants. Professional relationships were rooted in the workplace. Participants described their professional relationships in terms of the sharing of professional goals, completing work-related tasks, and their teammate or coworker having some level of work ethic. The fourth grade team, for example, shared the common goal of

meeting a certain student pass rate on a standardized test and also collaborated on a presentation for the staff. In professional relationships, teacher participants revealed they limit conversations and sharing to topics that pertain to work. They also revealed they are less likely to share personal information and there is little tendency to communicate outside of work when only a professional relationship has been established. Additionally, accountability became a driving force in professional relationships.

Whereas personal relationships may have allowed the freedom to slack off on the job while also not creating conflict, professional relationships were based on work productivity. The people in the relationship were believed to be held to a higher standard and were seemingly scrutinized more closely in terms of their work. Though professional relationships made getting work done easier, they also allowed little room for the relationship to become personal and for there to be vulnerability to expose weaknesses and seek assistance. Bethany, for example, stated that she held those who she had a professional relationship with to a certain standard because she knew their “Ability to produce work that is of quality and isn’t cutting corners.” Professional relationships were centered on one’s ability to trust that work would be completed with fidelity.

Nexus of personal and professional trust in participant relationships. The nexus of personal and professional relationships varied. Some participants believed the two intersect while others did not agree the two types of relationships could exist at the same time. Though participants disagreed on the nexus between the two, common across interviews was the belief that trust underscored all relationships. When it came to personal and professional relationships some participants agreed that personal and professional relationships intersected. In their opinion there was no distinction between the two. For them, the approach was the same no matter the nature of the relationship or the manner in which relationship began. Specifically, in

terms of trust, those that could be trusted personally could also be trusted professionally and vice versa. Of this link Bethany stated,

I want to see the good in people and some people's positives are in their personal lives. Some people's positives are in their professional lives. Having them separate makes me still be able to have a personal relationship with that person. My head and my heart are conflicted on those two things... I try to separate the two but I guess they just run together so I can't... like I can't look outside of their work ethic... I'm torn because there are genuinely good people out there and I guess that's why I don't have any friends [laughs]...everybody that I can think of off the top of my head that I've trusted professionally, I've also had a personal relationship with.

Ramona mirrored those sentiments, but also linked them to her implementation of reform as she stated that she uses personal relationships, which she described as friendships, to build trust which let her know that her teammates could be trusted professionally to know their role and do what was expected of them. Ramona stated that she used friendship to "Build trust [because] if you don't have a friendship, you don't know what each other can do or what you are expected to do. You don't know how this person is going to help or hurt you when it comes to having to begin something new, because the district is always giving us something new we have to do or turn in." This overlap, participants posit, enabled trust no matter the origin of the relationship. Those participants that navigated relationships from this perspective were found to be able to begin relationships in any environment.

Other teacher participants agreed that one type of relationship could exist without the other while maintaining trust. Specifically, they believed teachers simply needed to have trust with one another in one form or another. Luann concluded,

I can trust you personally, but not professionally... I can trust you professionally, but not personally. It just depends on how I value you. But, also, if I don't trust you in one way, that doesn't make the trust I have for you in the other way any more or less valuable. I just know the ways I can and can't come to you. It's just not that deep to have to have both.

In terms of administrators, some participants valued professional relationships with their administrator over a personal relationship. A lack of a personal relationship did not hinder a teacher participant's ability to have trust in their leader. Of her lack of a personal relationship with her administrator, Luann stated "I believe we have a professional relationship and that's enough. I trust her as a leader." Consistent across discussions was the desire to have an administrator who behaved in a manner that a supervisor characteristically would. That included actions and communication that strictly pertained to their work and did not delve into the exchange of personal information. Maintaining a professional relationship was described as an action that set boundaries for the professional work environment and enabled teacher participants to maintain the integrity of their professional setting. Participants felt they were able to keep work-related tasks, actions, and relationships within the confines of work.

Factors that Influence Trust Throughout the Implementation of Reform

One aspect of my research centered on gaining insight into factors that contribute to the overall implementation of the RTI database. Through the coding of my data, I uncovered several factors that affected participant's implementation of reform and specifically the RTI database. Louis (2007) posits that, for teachers, breakdowns can occur around issues of understanding what the reform is about and its purpose, expected use and outcomes, and how the reform will impact their work. In my investigation, I unearthed that the presence or absence of trust among

team members and between the administrator and teachers affected the implementation of reform through several factors. The exploration began with the organizational factors that influence implementation. I then detail the interpersonal factors that influence trust through reform implementation.

Organizational Factors

Several organizational factors influenced the implementation of the RTI database. Participants explained that each of these greatly impacted their outlook on and implementation of the RTI database. Many of these factors were the responsibility of those responsible for the initial dissemination of the reform. Organizational factors include teacher preparation, encroachment on time, understanding the reform, changes made to the reform's expectations, and participant's perceived benefit of the reform to their work.

Teacher Preparation Regarding Reform Implementation. Teacher participants agreed their implementation of the RTI database was facilitated by their introduction to the reform and the training they received regarding its implementation. Specifically, optimal and effective implementation required a formal introduction. A formal introduction was characterized by detailed information about the reform that included what the reform aimed to achieve, how to use the reform, the participant's role in its implementation, and their expected frequency of use of the reform. Prior to their implementation of the RTI database, some participants attended a staff meeting where the administrator revealed to the staff that a new system of tracking data would be implemented. During the meeting, participants were given information regarding the database, its proposed use to teachers, and any other pertinent yet general information. While the content of the reform was expected to be the same across the school division, the way they receive the reform varied.

Participants also believed when given a reform, they should be able to trust they are going to be provided with the training necessary to aid in their successful implementation. When participants were not trained prior to implementation they believed it was unfair of administrators to set expectations of and hold them accountable for implementing tasks. One participant detailed the way a lack of training affected her outlook on both her trust in the administrator and the implementation of the database. Luann stated,

I was never trained on RTI and my principal knows that yet she continues to think that I'm supposed to be as fast as everybody else that already knows how to use it. Yes, I ask questions. Yes, I try to keep up with the deadlines and stuff. But, at the same time, you can't be giving me grief because *you* as my leader just threw this thing at me and said "Do it" without making sure that I could actually do it. That don't make sense and that's why everything she gives me and everything she asks me to do, she gets the automatic side-eye because I'm always thinking about how it can, and probably will, backfire on me and nobody should have to feel that way about their principal but it's what happens.

Based upon that experience, the participant's implementation of the database came from a place of defense rather than effort. Overall, a lack of training led to a break down in trust, which resulted in many participants left feeling defensive and/or hopeless.

Delivery of RTI training. Participants agreed that, in terms of reform, their buy-in was influenced by the way they were introduced to it. Particularly, Lisa believed the way administrators reveal reforms to their teachers and staff affects its reception. Lisa stated, "It's the way that it's unpackaged. It's the way that you bring it out. That makes all the difference." Delivery with the greatest amount of buy-in presented teachers with information through several

small sessions that occurred over an extended period of time. Doing so enabled participants to take their time in learning the database.

In the beginning stages of the RTI database the district chose to pilot the database. One location was Autumn Springs Elementary School. The training regarding the database that participants received was presented in eight sessions that took place over the course of a school year. Apart from the first and last sessions, each session began with a review of the previous session, the introduction of new information, an opportunity to practice tasks using the database, and an assignment to be completed before the next session. Of Autumn Spring's time in the pilot program Tinsley, who is a 4th grade teacher stated,

I feel like RTI started here, so I think it feels like we were with it from the beginning. So I feel like [the teachers who went through the pilot] have a better understanding of how to use it and we're able to understand it a little more quickly because we were introduced to it gradually. Not all at once like some schools were... So we were given it in pieces and not all at once so it probably flowed better.

The completion of the pilot program increased the understanding of the database of particular participants from a standpoint that gave them an advantage over those that did not. Teacher participants believed when delivered through sessions, the database was purposefully and intentionally divided into small segments that were easier to digest. In their opinion, these segments were small enough to allow participants in the training to digest the information being presented while also robust enough to ensure they received vital details needed to encourage successful implementation. Going through the pilot phase of the database enabled participants to grow alongside the database as they worked slowly through their understanding of it and its use by teachers.

“Buy-in” increased for participants when they had the opportunity to practice the implementation of the RTI database in the presence of those who were knowledgeable about the details it. In reference to the RTI database, knowledgeable people were those who created the database and/or were well-versed regarding the inner-workings of it. While teachers practiced the implementation of the reform, the knowledgeable people were available to answer questions and/or clear up any misconceptions that arose in the moment. When presented in this fashion, participants believed they were given the opportunity to digest information more readily as they had the opportunity to clarify any misconceptions they had in the moment. Participants were also afforded the opportunity to make mistakes in an environment that allowed them to receive feedback while also avoiding negative consequences such as being reprimanded.

Participants also identified the intensity and robustness of the training received as a factor that affected their implementation of the database. Those participants who were part of the pilot phase of the RTI database revealed a better overall understanding of the reform as it was presented. In their opinion, going through the training with those most knowledgeable about the database gave them a higher level of understanding than previous reform efforts they had been given to implement. Attending the training, participants deduced, presented them with a greater wealth of knowledge and insight about the intricacies of the database and their place in its implementation. Tinsley stated of her training, “Had I not been forced to go to that class with [the creator of the RTI database], I probably still wouldn’t understand how to do the stuff that I’m supposed to do or why it’s supposed to be done.” Having gone to the training that was run by the creator of the database gave her a more intense and purpose-driven understanding of her role in its implementation. Though there were many factors that supported implementation, participants also revealed there were barriers to their implementation as well.

Barriers to Implementation. Some participants agreed the manner in which the RTI database was delivered was a barrier to their implementation. In their experience, delivery of the database that did not communicate the expectations of those expected to implement the reform resulted in the least amount of buy-in. When the database was presented to them, they felt they received little to no information regarding the district's expectations of their implementation and use. Of her introduction to the RTI database, Ramona stated that the database was something that "just appeared" which gave her a negative view of it, initially. She added, "I had nothing to hang my hat on. I didn't know what, why, who, where, when." It was not until Ramona came to understand her role in terms of implementation that she implemented the database with effort and fidelity. Without prior grounding in the database, participants were unable to understand their role in the reform's implementation and were frustrated.

Participants who did not receive training on the RTI database viewed the reform negatively and struggled with use. Though expectations were, in some instances, communicated, a lack of training on the tasks and actions required for teacher implementation did not provide participants the opportunity to interact with the database and understand its mechanics prior to implementation. For example, participants who were not a part of the pilot phase of implementation were asked to implement the database but were not provided the opportunity to attend a training session on its use. The participants learned the database on their own while they also worked to meet prescribed deadlines. Tinsley was one of the individuals who was originally tasked with training teachers, but eventually no longer did so. Of the struggle for new teachers to implement the RTI database, Tinsley stated, "As time has gone on... new teachers come in and they're not getting the same training [the pilot program participants] got... so they're struggling with it and not using it because they just don't get it and don't like it." As a result,

participants believed they struggled with use, as they were simultaneously learning and implementing the RTI database. Doing so, in some instance, took a great deal of time on the participant's behalf.

Encroachment on Participant's Time Regarding Reform Implementation. The implementation of reform required participant's time. The difference in the effect of the time required for implementation depended on the degree to which the reform encroached on participant's time both in and out of work. Specifically, when implementing reform, participants desired the ability to trust the reform would not impact their daily work activities and would not add additional work tasks that would require additional time. Participants agreed that after a reform was introduced to them, one of the first things they did was consider the amount of time and/or effort they needed to dedicate to the completion of tasks associated with reform. In order to accept the reform, participants believed they needed to be able to trust they were able to complete assigned tasks associated with the reform in an amount of time that did not encroach on their current work and other tasks for which they were responsible. Acceptance also meant having to complete tasks would not have a negative impact on other daily tasks nor would it exponentially increase the amount of time spent on work.

Some participants reported that the requirements of the implementation of the RTI database did not always encroach on their time due to the ease of completing tasks. For some participants, there were situations where the database was able to replace a system they had in place, thereby supplementing a routine in a way that was helpful rather than adding cumbersome tasks. When given the RTI database to use to track data, some participants found they were able to do away with an old data-tracking system that they had been using. Participants reported they had little to no resistance toward their required use of the database because it streamlined a

process they were currently doing in a different fashion. As a result, implementing the database made work easier and made using the database less time consuming.

The RTI database encroached on participant's time in situations where the database required a great amount of their time. Their present work was hindered by the additional time required to implement the reform and meet expectations and deadlines. As a result, they reported they resorted to a compliance mindset when reform tasks consumed their time in a way that negatively affected their routine and ability to complete other required tasks. Participants who resorted to a compliance mindset did so because they did not trust that if they asked for additional time to complete tasks that they would not receive some form of negative response or consequence.

When given the database to use for tracking student progress, participants viewed the tasks associated with it as unnecessary and time consuming. Tinsley described this sentiment when she stated, "[the database] is time. Everything we do as a teacher takes a lot of time. The teaching part is the easy part. It's the everything else that's... tedious. It's time consuming... At this point I just do it because I have to... otherwise, you get an email." Through a compliance mindset, participants completed tasks associated with the database to avoid the potential negative consequences that could come from not completing tasks per expectations or by the associated deadline. There was no effort to use the reform to their benefit outside of complying with expectations. Additionally, participants agreed that the reform became a burden rather than a tool for improvement. As a result, they viewed the tasks as items on a checklist that consumed additional time and did not bring any benefit to their work.

The Effects of Teacher Understanding of the Purpose of the RTI Database.

Common across participant discussions was the idea of being able to understand the purpose of a

reform effort. Specifically, some participants who experienced the implementation of the RTI database developed their perception of the reform's purpose based upon their interpretation of the information given. Their understanding of its purpose was rooted in their development of their own understanding of their role in terms of the implementation. Conversely, there was the intended purpose as seen by those who created the reform. Participants described the intended purpose as the intention of a reform effort as communicated by the body that created and passed down the reform. This purpose was based on the expected outcomes as a result of the implementation of the reform.

When the purpose of the database was communicated, participants felt encouraged to implement the reform with effort and fidelity. Conversations revealed they believed being able to connect with and understand the purpose of the reform allowed teachers to take ownership of the database and include it as a part of their routine. This inclusion was dependent upon if it added to their work in a way that was meaningful to the participant. Sonja's comment exemplified the importance of understanding the purpose of the database as she stated,

There has to be a connection or a purpose for [teachers'] work for them to really want to do it or understand how to do it. Teachers hate just to be getting more tasks to do because we're already overwhelmed with our workload. So if you explain it to me how this is gonna help kids get it and how it'll help me get the job done, I'll do it.

Participants revealed, in schools, the purpose of a reform may be communicated in a variety of ways. For those participants who were a part of the pilot phase of the RTI database, the district communicated the purpose and were in total control of what was portrayed. Tinsley, who was a part of the pilot phase of implementation, stated, "They were clear about what the database was and was not... how we were and were not to use it." For those who experienced implementation

through their school, directions for how trainers and administrators were to introduce the reform were less rigid and concrete. For instance, some participants were in training sessions that involved watching a video that detailed its purpose, use, and tools. In other instances, the manner in which the purpose was communicated was left to the administrator and/or to interpret and communicate in a manner they felt best suited their staff to whom they were presenting. Across participants, there were varying experiences and initial introductions with regard to the database and its purpose.

Participants without an understanding of the clear purpose for the reform, found it difficult to implement the reform with fidelity. Without knowing the purpose, participants felt unable to connect with and make meaning of what tasks and expectations surrounded implementation. Of their lack of understanding the RTI database, Luann stated, “I don’t know who looks at it. I don’t know what they use it for... I don’t get the whole thing... I don’t really know what it’s for so it *is* confusing. It has never really been broken down to me *why* we’re doing it. So I don’t care.” As a result of Luann’s lack of understanding, she made no effort to seek understanding nor implement the database with effort. Overall, not knowing the reform’s purpose meant that participants felt they were unable to deduce in what way the reform may be of benefit to them and were unable to make meaningful connections with reform.

Tinsley further sympathized with teachers she believed had no understanding of the purpose of the RTI database when she stated, “I went through the training so I know the purpose and because of that training, I can see where it would be very frustrating for teachers who don’t know the purpose of [the RTI database], especially not understanding the how or why.” Dorit further explained the ideal process by which she would have been able to take more

ownership of the RTI database following her introduction. In response to being asked how she thought the purpose should have been communicated to herself and others she stated,

...what I would have liked was for [my administrator] to explain why we're doing it. I mean, just don't give me an email and say 'Get it done' because it makes us feel like 'Oh, one more thing.' But you didn't really explain why we had this one more thing... I just really need to know why... really, really why. I know it's coming from [the district] but *why* is it coming from up there? Can you explain it to me?

The inability to connect with the reform was a barrier to participants being able to include the reform as a part of their routine.

The Effects of the Changes of Reform Post-Implementation. Participants also agreed that changes in the way the district treated the RTI database changed their initial understanding. This change in initial understanding impacted their implementation and use of the database. After the initial implementation of the database, the district made changes to the way in which teachers and administrators interact with it. Changes included alterations regarding what teachers were expected to complete, the introduction of due dates for certain assessments and other items, and/or an overhaul of the materials associated with the database.

As participants continued to work with the reform, activating their understanding of its original purpose, they faced confusion as they applied their original understanding to the district's current expectations and guidelines. The district, for example, made changes to the way teachers used the RTI database since its initial introduction to teachers. These changes asked that teachers enter a new set of information in addition to what they had already been asked to track. They were also given a timeline for giving assessments and entering the subsequent data into the database. Previously, they were only required to enter baseline and

summative data. Participants who thought they had a grasp on the expectations of their use of the database had to reframe their perception and understanding to meet new expectations.

Bethany stated, “It became ‘one more thing’ every few weeks and I got tired.” As a result, they began to see the database as a burden based on the change in teacher expected use.

The evolution of the reform also brought about tasks that detracted from the intended purpose of the reform as it was initially communicated and understood. These tasks were implemented after the initial introduction of the database and contradicted, undermined, or added to the initial instructions. The requirement of additional tasks negatively impacted implementation effort on behalf of participants. Implementation of the reform became an act of compliance. The additional tasks added extra work and diminished the care taken when implementing the reform. One such task was replicating information in several sources. For example, teacher participants were asked to input information that was required to be input in a district-mandated database into a separate spreadsheet that was required by the administrator. As a result, participants were not able to see the use in inputting the same information in two places at the same time when the original database could be accessed by everyone and held the same information.

Sonja described how having to put information in several places reduced her interest in using the RTI database. She stated, “If it was *just* the RTI database that we were putting data in, the data would be more valuable to me... you have more animosity toward it. And you start forgetting why you’re even doing it and what it really means.” Participants who understood the database to be a hub for student data were frustrated when they were also expected to put that same data in other places. Though all participants revealed frustration as a result of the

duplication of information, those participants who were a part of the piloting of the database revealed a greater level of disdain and angst for having to do so.

Dorinda explained her experience of the evolution of the RTI database by stating the following,

I think it's changed a lot because before I used to look at it a lot more. I used to use it a lot more. And now I just see when running records dates come around and I'm like 'Oh, let me get into that system. Then, I gotta put it in RTI and then I gotta put it into three other spreadsheets. When really, RTI should be the catchall. You shouldn't have to go somewhere else and put the same data in over and over again. That's the purpose of RTI: so you can have all of that data in one location and you can look at it...

As participants continued to work with the RTI database in the manner in which they originally understood its purpose and use, they found that they were confused by their original understanding and the district's current expectations and guidelines for use. Where they once understood and internalized the purpose of the reform, they came to view it as simply another task on a list of things to complete.

The Effects of Perceived Benefit on Reform Implementation. Participants stated they determined the manner in which they implement any given reform based on their perception of the reform's benefit to them. In terms of the RTI database, as they became more familiar with it and its inner workings they came to understand the database's benefits and drawbacks as it pertained to them, their work, and any personal, team, and/or group goals. Participants' believed their perception of feasibility also increased when they became more comfortable with using the database. They came to see the database's usefulness to them and were more apt to embrace and make purposeful use of the change. These participants also included the database as part of their

routine. For example, upon originally being introduced to the RTI database, a participant was skeptical of its use to her own work. After numerous uses and incorporating the reform into their routine(s), the participant's perception changed from skepticism to acceptance and implementation with effort. Dorit detailed her journey from discomfort with to dependence on the database based on her use. She stated, "At first it was annoying... it was a lot... Now, I'm comfortable with it and I look forward to working with it because that's where I get my information. That's my go-to place now." For some participants, as they grew to see the reform's usefulness, their actual use increased.

When participants were unable to see the usefulness in a given reform effort, they revealed they were more likely to negatively view the reform. As a result, these participants were unlikely to implement the reform in a manner that extended beyond minimum requirements or refused to implement the reform altogether. For example, Bethany was assigned a task to complete regarding the RTI database that she deemed useless and unbeneficial to her work. These negative feelings toward the database resulted in her having completed the task without effort. Of her use of the RTI database, Bethany stated,

Basically, I just follow expectations. If I'm supposed to put in a running record and word study every month, I do that and I don't open RTI back up again. Until I can see the true benefit of RTI over any other data entry tool from the teacher's perspective, I don't think my level of implementation will change.

Teacher participants with a negative opinion of the database left tasks incomplete, completed them incorrectly, and/or lacked the thoroughness that could have been possible had the task been completed with interest and effort.

Participants also stated they were less apt to see the use of a reform effort if they believed the reform mirrored a system that they are currently using. Many participants stated they had been using a system that worked for them in the same manner as the RTI database. Those participants agreed that they did not see the benefit of using the RTI database over their own data-tracking system. Luann stated,

I put my scores in there, but I have my own data chart that I put all of my scores in, so I don't need [the RTI database]! It's easier to look at mine because it's written down and it's there. I don't have to go searching and clicking this tab and all of that."

Ramona mirrored her sentiment by saying, "I try to go back and look at the scores in RTI, but I made myself an RTI data book of my own where I just write my own scores down. Everything I'm putting in RTI, I'm writing down." Participants were steadfast in their agreeance that having to do the same task twice in order to be in compliance with expectations hindered their ability to engage with and implement the database with care and fidelity.

Interpersonal Factors

Numerous interpersonal factors influenced the implementation of reform. These factors looked at how teachers and the administrator related to one another and how those relations influenced the implementation. Factors explored how relationships, professionalism, contributions, communication, collaboration and dependability, and support influenced reform implementation.

How teacher-teacher trust and relationships facilitated the implementation of the RTI database. Though the type of relationship did not affect the development of trust, participants concurred that it did affect the things with which a person is trusted. In terms of the database, Luann summed up the overall sentiments of all participants when she stated, "No

matter what, I gotta be able to trust that when we are on a team together, we are going to get the job done. Personally or professionally, the goal is to do what we gotta do. Especially with all of the [things] we have to get done in RTI in like 2.5 seconds.” Having trust on a team enabled participants to work together to ensure that the database was implemented, and expectations and goals were met.

Relationships with teammates informed some participants’ opinion of a reform effort before the reform effort was introduced. Knowing the opinions of someone they trusted and with whom they had a relationship was an influential factor in terms of teachers’ outlook on reform. Some opinions of the RTI database were established or changed based upon the opinion of a trusted teacher or teammate. Michael, for example, initially negatively viewed the RTI database because a teammate he trusted informed him of their negative opinion. Overall, participants believed that trust in some form was necessary for reform implementation.

How teacher-administrator relationships informed RTI database implementation.

The relationship between teachers and their administrator was a driving force behind the acceptance and internalization of a reform effort. Participants agreed when teachers had a positive relationship with their administrator they were more apt to accept and implement reform without or with little pushback. They also implemented the reform with maximum effort and some even exceeded expectations beyond what had been asked of them. When teacher participants were given a reform to implement by an administrator with whom they had a positive relationship, they trusted the work was important, had a purpose, and would not negatively impact their work. Participants had this outlook based on past positive experiences through interactions with their administrator. Past experiences included having implemented reform with the administrator with little or no negative experiences, consequences, and/or

results. For example, several teachers implemented the RTI database without question based on their positive experience of the previous implementation of a reading program.

In situations where there was no relationship or a negative relationship existed, teacher participants agreed they were less receptive to consider the change and, at times, implemented the reform with minimal or no effort. Participants did not trust reform if they did not have a relationship with the administrator. Luann referred to a lack of a relationship in terms of reform as she stated, “I have nothing to hang my hat on. I don’t know [the administrator]. I don’t know their intentions. I don’t know that I can trust that I’m gonna give my all, slip up, and still be supported.” Trust was a key factor in the effort with the reform was implemented.

Conversely, participants who had a negative relationship with their administrator had previous negative interactions. The most common negative interaction was receiving a consequence from district personnel for having incorrectly completed a task per their administrator’s directions. As a result, any previous trust diminished and the teacher was less apt to take the change into consideration and/or implement it with effort. Teachers then either implemented the reform for compliance or refused to implement the reform altogether. Bethany, for example, described a relationship with an administrator that could have impacted her internalization and implementation of reform. In response to being asked about a potential reform being implemented by a previous administrator with whom she had no relationship, Bethany believed that even if the administrator’s delivery was good, the negative relationship between the two would have been a barrier to acceptance of the proposed change. Of the connection between their dynamic and her implementation of the reform she stated, “I feel like if [the administrator with whom she had the negative relationship] had explained the why effectively, I possibly would have accepted it, but his delivery would have unhooked me. Just

because it's him. I didn't have a relationship with him." For many participants, the relationship had more of an influence on the implementation than the reform itself.

Lisa revealed there were situations where teachers did not earn a particular level of trust. In some cases the lack of trust stemmed from a limited amount of time and interactions between a teacher and their administrator. Limited interactions did not afford teachers and the administrator the opportunity get to know one another professionally and/or personally. In other instances, a teacher may have had a negative impact on the administrator. Negative impacts included insufficient student success, going against the administrator's communicated expectations, and/or addressing building level concerns with individuals other than their administrator. Teachers who did not earn the trust of the administrator were held to higher and stricter expectations than those teachers the administrator trusted. The lack of trust was most evident on teams where not all team members were trusted. For example, Bethany made the observation that her administrator treated her teammate negatively after the two had several negative interactions. Bethany recalled, "[The administrator] would come to meetings and would praise us for using the RTI database and having it pulled up and putting stuff in on time. But, then she would ask [my teammate] more specific questions about her data and why it looked the way it looked. She didn't trust that she did it right. Mind you, she could have had that same conversation with all of us. Her class was actually doing better than the rest of us. But, it always felt weird with those two. [The administrator] always had something to say to her." The administrator's lack of trust in the teacher in question led to her inability to trust her data and increased expectations.

Professionalism as an influence on reform implementation. Participants noted they implement reform with effort based upon the professional title of the person passing down the

change to them. Their trust in their administrator was based on the fact that the person is in the position of an administrator. Ramona stated, “The boss is the boss. What your principal says goes. I trust that she’s not steering us wrong with the RTI.” There was a general understanding that the administrator is in a position of power and that reforms being passed down by them must be implemented without question. By nature of the position, participants automatically viewed and respect their administrator as an authority figure as the legitimacy of their position is already in place. Ramona, for instance, was one participant who was steadfast in her quest to follow the directives of her administrator. When given the RTI database to implement, she revealed that she would always do what she was asked to do no matter her feelings toward the database. She stated,

That database. I don’t like it. It’s the same thing that I was already using with my notebook. Pencil and paper. But, just like with anything else she tells me to do, I’m gonna do it because that’s what I’m supposed to do. That’s my duty. That’s my job. Who am I to question what she says? That’s my boss. That’s not my place. You gotta remain professional and trust that they ain’t doing you wrong.

Though the participant did not agree with the continued use of the database, she did not communicate that feedback to her administrator because she did not want to appear to be unprofessional and trusted her administrator’s intentions.

This mindset was only found to be true of those participants who viewed their administrator as an authority figure and believed that the administrator possessed a greater amount of power than themselves. Over time, teachers with this point of view may have become unusually disempowered. Of this disempowerment, Luann stated, “You have some teachers who will do anything their principal says and don’t push back. They feel like they can’t. As teachers,

we are usually made to feel like we need to stay in our place.” Disempowered teachers have received messages over time that communicate their low position of power in relation to their administrator and have the mindset that there are certain ways in which teachers are to behave and interact with their administrator based on this hierarchy of power. Messages may include not having input in the daily happenings at the building level such as the schedule or planning time, having experienced situations and/or environments where asking questions and raising concerns is met with negativity or consequences, and/or working in environments where it is understood that things go according to the administrator’s expectations. For many, they do not question what has been asked of them because they see doing so as a sign of disrespect toward their administrator. From that point of view, teachers take the expectation of completion more serious than they do the concept of the reform on its own.

Influence of contributions on reform implementation. Teacher participants were consistent in their discussion of the contributions of themselves and their teammates at work. Contributing was described as an aid in building and maintaining trust as all participants valued a team member who helped balance the work. Many participants referred to this as “pulling weight.” Pulling weight was described by participants as contributing to the work in an equitable and complete manner. It is characterized by consistent participation, being active during work, effort, and helping balance the workload. Participants agreed that though the work did not have to be divided equally, they did need to feel that each member of the team was contributing in a fair fashion based upon their skills and abilities.

Contributing to the work in an equitable and complete manner was both a contributing factor and barrier to trust. In terms of being an influential factor in trust, positive contributions may manifested through the completion of lessons plans in a timely manner and volunteering to

take on or help with a task given to another teammate. When contributions were made for the benefit of teammates, trust is boosted was maintained. Participants were able to trust that they would have help with completing tasks and that others would complete these tasks correctly. As the RTI database had a wealth of tasks associated with its implementation, participants felt they could count on their team to get things done. For example, in reference to her teammates consistently pulling their weight on her team, Tinsley stated, “I don’t really have to go back and make sure they’re doing it right... I know the job will get done.” Sonja mirrored those sentiments as she stated, “If I trust my team then I know that they’re gonna get whatever they have to done. Tasks won’t go undone and we won’t get that lovely RTI reminder email.” Overall, participants felt that proven quality and efficiency in terms of RTI tasks, led to the contribution of trustworthiness.

In contrast, a lack of contributing was described as a barrier to or something that diminished trust and reform implementation. When teammates did not contribute to their teammates in a manner that helps, teammates who valued contributions found it difficult to trust them in a professional capacity and took on more work themselves. A lack of contributing included not completing assigned tasks on time, completing tasks in a manner that is below expectations, or not completing tasks altogether. This resulted in animosity and a lack of trust. As a result, some teams experienced tension and stress. Sonja stated, “[inconsistency] made Dorinda and I more stressed out and carry heavier workload. And then I think it creates some kind of animosity because of it.” As a result of her teammates not pulling their weight, Bethany came to not trust her team and their ability to get tasks done. Of her team and their work with the database she stated,

I don't see the initiative and the drive to do things themselves... it gives me more work. I would just shut down and say forget it [because] I'm not doing their work, so I guess nothing gets done then... For the next couple of weeks everyone understands the importance of getting things done... but everyone pretty much goes back to their own ways... it's more stressful for me to have to complete all of *my* tasks and then carry on the load that someone else should have carried.

Situations where contributions continued to lack and were not consistent created a cycle of trust and mistrust.

Influence of communication on RTI implementation. Common across participant interviews was the discussion of the importance of communication about the reform both among teammates and with administrators. Specifically, it was characterized as listening to others as a means to understand their point of view in a situation. Listening to others manifested in most participant's relationships through reflective listening. For example, after a teacher details an issue or conflict, the person to whom they were speaking recants the issue or conflict to show that they understand what has been conveyed. That listener can also act or respond in ways that communicate their understanding. Actions and/or responses may include providing resources that are relevant to the situation or taking action that solves or alleviates the situation. Bethany recalled an experience where she did not feel as if her administrator listened to her. She stated,

I went to him with an RTI problem *once*. I already didn't trust him because of other things, but I reached out... I told him the problem... and all he did was give me examples of when he had problems. Like... he didn't even address what I had said. He could've at least repeated what I said... thought about what I needed. Offered help or sent me to

someone else... but none of that happened. It was a waste of time and it solidified how I already didn't like him and I was like f*ck this database.”

When these types of actions and/or responses are not given the teacher may not feel as if they are being heard, which can be a barrier to trust that can affect reform implementation. As a result, the teacher may be less apt to communicate future questions or concerns and communication may diminish.

Participants also agreed that conversations among teams and with their administrator were important to maintain trust. Specifically, the conversations must be open and honest. Open and honest conversations were described as conversations that included receiving and providing important and pertinent information, receiving and providing detailed feedback, and communicating expectations. As a result of open and honest conversations, participants stated that they expected to leave the conversation feeling confident that the information exchanged was true and included as much pertinent detail as possible. Having received feedback regarding their implementation of the RTI database, participants felt more engaged with the database as they trusted that the feedback received was helpful.

One barrier to communication was confusion in terms of expectations of teacher participants. In order to circumvent present or potential confusion, participants felt communication must be clear, constant, and direct. Clear communication was communication that was explicit and detailed in laying out expectations and projected outcomes. For instance, step-by-step guidelines regarding the expected use of the RTI database were provided to teacher participants. Of the communication of expectations, Tinsley stated that “If I'm told what the expectation is I will meet the expectation... I know I can get the job done as long as I know what it is I'm supposed to do.” Dorit mirrored this sentiment as she stated “if we discussed it a certain

way then that's the way I'm going to take it." Quality implementation of reform was, in part, a result of participants having been given explicit expectations for completion and knowing what the end product should look like.

Constant communication was described as communication that occurred frequently. For teacher participants, this could be daily grade level planning meetings where lesson plans are created and student data is discussed. For example, Dorit stated that her team communicated daily as a means to know how each class is performing and how the team should proceed with regard to the RTI database. Direct communication included communication that did not include any additional information outside of what is relevant to the situation and/or task. Regarding how teachers can build this trust and avoid miscommunication Tinsley stated, "Just having a conversation, really. [You] don't wanna be the team where you're getting a question where you don't know the answer... We should be able to come up with a data-fueled thought that we've processed with conversation and RTI data from the database. I'm not doing anything without [my team]." This clear, constant, and direct communication breeds and maintains trust among teammates and between teachers and administrators.

Adapting communication styles helped make Lisa's communication more efficient, effective, and helped build trust. Of her process Lisa stated,

Adults have communication styles. There's some folks who just want 'Get to it, Lisa. What's the big picture? Where are we going with this at the end?' Then, there's the folks that are caught up into the data. 'Ok, what's the research behind this?' There's the feelers. You have to spin it to give the feelers the opportunity to work together. Knowing what their communication style is... and some people are just about the business. No jokey-jokey. Just get right to it. The tier one interaction is always positive, it's always

professional... I make it a point to find something to connect with each of my staff members. And then, when I'm delivering information... some people want it long, drawn out or those that want to know the why and the research behind it. We've got something for everybody... I know [the RTI database] is a lot for teachers so I do whatever I can do to help them get it all done the best way they can and I feel like they appreciate that.

Lisa revealed that, in her experience, when teachers were communicated with through a style that suited their social needs, they were more prone to internalize information and accept and complete tasks. It also enabled the administrator to use communication as a means to build trust and get things done.

Influence of collaboration and dependability on reform implementation. Teachers described collaboration and dependability in terms of their teacher team. Participants agreed that both concepts were key aspects of implementing reform as a team. Teacher teams where participants were able to depend on one another and collaborate effectively did well with implementing the RTI database per expectations. Gabarro (1987) posits working relationships develop trust through a historical pattern of reliability across experiences. When utilizing the database together, those teams whose members had a high level of dependability and collaboration were able to work together to complete tasks. In instances where participants were to complete tasks individually, they were able to depend on their team members to help them when completing tasks.

In places where collaboration does not occur consistently, participants revealed teammates did not trust one another to complete tasks. Tasks included those in which team members worked together on the same task or those that were mini tasks that are part of a larger project. When there was a lack of trust in terms of collaboration, work isolation occurred.

Isolation was due to teachers choosing to work in isolation, when possible, rather than work with a teacher whom they did not trust. Teachers tend to alienate themselves at work in these instances as they may feel the effects of their isolation (Dworkin & Tobie, 2014). For example, Bethany stated that at one point she chose to no longer collaborate with her team because, in her opinion, they did not produce quality work and she could not trust them to get things done. The same was true for Luann as her experience with collaborating with her team led her to believe that they could not be trusted to complete tasks according to expectations. In instances where teachers were required to work together, the work was done for the sake of compliance rather than genuine effort and care in the completion of the task. Teams were disjointed and had little communication.

Influence of support on reform implementation. Participants also revealed a desire to want to know that they have the support of their administrators through the implementation of reform. In reference to expectations of an administrator, Sonja stated, “You want to know your administrator has your back and they’re going to stick up for you... not if you’re wrong, but at least they’re going to support you and be there for you and work through the situation with you.” Support did not always mean physically being there for teachers. Though Lisa did not attend all grade level and collaborative meetings, she trusted teams to continue to work at optimal levels in her absence. The administrator believed that her absence allowed grade level teams the space and freedom to continue working and to maintain student achievement. Of her support style Lisa stated,

...the reason why I attend is support is requested and they need me to be there. I believe in differentiating my support the same way we need to differentiate for kids. There’s some folks that are just strong with integrity whether an administrator is there or not. It’s gonna

be business as usual. They got this. I don't need to interfere. And they have the data to back up the work that they're doing.

Some teacher participants understood that this absence did not mean that there is no support. Tinsley stated, "She supports us, but she really doesn't ever come to us." Dorit mirrored her sentiments as she followed up with "we've been pretty successful without her. She don't bother us. She doesn't put demands on us that we can't meet. She trusts us to hold our own and complete tasks like we should."

Support on teacher teams, participants believed, led to successful reform implementation. Ramona stated that support and collaboration enabled her to trust her team. She stated, "Us working together means we just trust we're gonna just help each other. Trust each other. We're here to do well." Other teammates may provide teachers with the resources or help needed to get things done. For example, an RTI task for teachers was to complete and log running record data into the database. One participant stated that, as a team, they take turns teaching one another's class so that one teacher can complete running records without interruption. This ensured that each member of the team was able to get running records done without interruption and that they would also be able to input data by the expected deadline. Additionally, an administrator may see a teacher who is struggling with classroom management and may offer to guide them through some resources and strategies for finding success.

Participants found it important that they be supported even in instances where they may not be meeting expectations and achieving desired results, though they put forth effort to do so. They valued being able to trust that their teammates and their administrators would continue to support them in instances where there was no success or where they struggled. Dorit stated, "I can run to Tinsley and I do it faithfully. I can come to Tinsley and I can tell her I need help for

whatever dealing with technology or the database or a skill and if she knows, she'll help me with it. If not, then we will both go and find some help within the building... She doesn't put me aside." Similarly, of her support of and from her current teammate, Dorinda stated, "we back each other up... especially with them running records! If one person feels one way about something or is not doing too well on something... we'll go to bat for each other." Based upon her ability to depend on her team, she was comfortable admitting her weakness in terms of using the database to her team and asking them for help. The team, in turn, was willing to collaborate with their teammate in order to help her understand how to use the database and how to input information. Having such free-flowing collaboration ensured the reform was being implemented while also helping teams work together to see results.

Summary

This chapter presented two major themes that emerged from my research. I first presented the manifestation of trust among teacher teams and between teacher participants and the administrator. Under manifestation were the subthemes of the foundation of relationships, how and why participants leveraged those relationships, and personal and professional relationships. I also explored and detailed the factors that influenced trust throughout reform implementation. Two major types of factors emerged: organizational and interpersonal. Organizational factors presented included teacher preparation, time, understanding, perceived benefits, and changes made to the reform post-implementation. Interpersonal factors included how relationships, professionalism, contributions, communication, collaboration, dependability, and support. Each aspect of both themes played a role in the implementation of the RTI database.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role trust played in the implementation of reform as experienced by administrators and teachers. My findings, presented in chapter four, showed that reform implementation is influenced by trust and the foundation and maintenance of relationships among teachers and between teachers and administrators. In this chapter I present a discussion of the connections between my research and the literature. I then provide concluding thoughts on the results of my study. Lastly, I close the chapter with an explanation of implications for both research and practice.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of my study were filtered through a lens of trust. Bryk & Schneider (2002) took the position that “trust is a core resource for improvement” (Louis, 2007, p. 17). Understanding that trust can function as the key characteristic of improvement, my study began with an exploration of accountability-based reform, Response to Intervention (RTI), and trust. One school that piloted a reform effort and all members of its third, fourth, and fifth grade team were selected. This study’s findings are congruent with the literature on trust, relationships, and reform implementation.

Relationships and trust with reform. Data from this study reinforced a key point in the literature that underscored the role of relationships and trust in successful work in organizations and the implementation of reform as shown in figure 1. All persons involved in a relationship understand the expectations and obligations associated with their role and consequently have expectations of others (Maele & Houtte, 2009). Those expectation include trusting the trusted person or group to act in a manner befitting their role. Individuals that trust one another are also

more apt to disclose pertinent data about issues (Tschannen-Moran, 2000). Organizations with a reservoir of trust have members that are comfortable with sharing concerns and issues and invest effort in contributing to common goals (Tschannen-Moran, 2000). The findings align with the research and agree that trust contributes to the achievement of group goals and work tasks.

Teacher teams with a high level of trust were highly productive and readily worked together to supplement and complement one another in their collective quest to complete tasks. They also trust each other to do their work and do their work well.

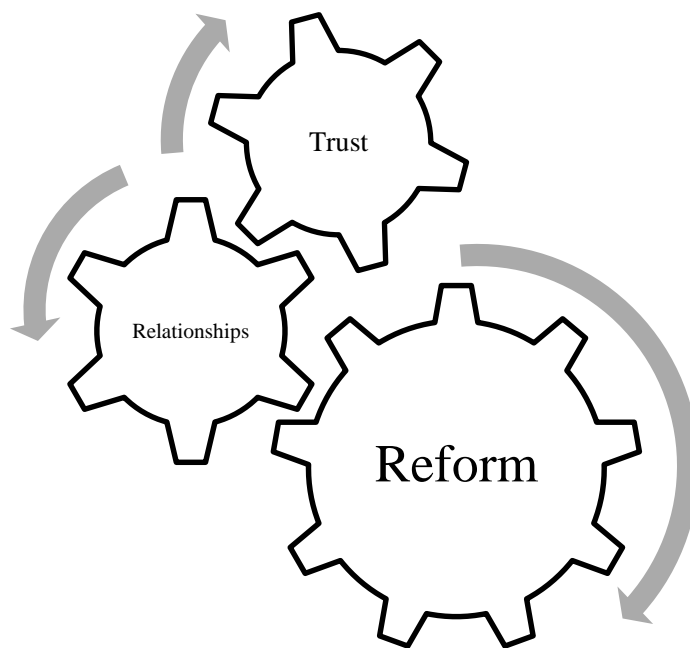


Figure 1. Presentation of theme. Demonstrates how reform is informed by relationships and trust.

Relationships become “morally corrupt” when the person being trusted takes advantage of the person that trusts them (Baier, 1986). The relationship(s) are immoral in the manner that one party heavily relies on the qualities of another in a manner that weaken the relationship (Baier, 1986). Current literature aligns with my study as evidenced by the weakening of the relationships on a team of participants that heavily relied on the wealth of knowledge and work

ethic of one team member. The findings suggest that this reliance on one person led to team members' feelings of being used, betrayed, and underappreciated and their trust in the team diminished. Additionally, tasks associated with the reform were incomplete or done haphazardly. This finding agreed with Hargreaves (2002) who found the lack or loss of trust weakens reform efforts within schools. Tschannen-Moran (2000) stated, "although collaborative processes are increasingly called for as part of reform efforts, these processes will not come about in an authentic form if the people involved do not trust one another" (p. 314).

Findings in this study demonstrated how as individual team members feel underappreciated over time, they resort to isolation. This sentiment is further supported by the work of Hargreaves (2002) who stated people respond to feelings of unappreciation in the following way:

They seem to deal with betrayal by evading interaction with those who have betrayed them, or who might betray them in the future. Fewer interactions mean fewer opportunities for professional learning and lessened chances of school improvement.

Betrayal is the emotional enemy of improvement (p.405).

Distrust causes people to engage in self-protection behaviors that protected themselves against the unscrupulous actions of others (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). In doing so, isolation increases and collaboration and productivity decreases.

Trust, reform, and the administrator-teacher relationship. Results from this study were in line with Bryk and Schneider (2002) and Dirks (2002) who indicated that leaders serve as a determinant of organizational performance as seen in figure 2. The literature supports the notion that reform efforts create an environment that requires a particular level of trust between teachers and administrators prior to implementation. Louis (2007) posits that the need to respond to

reform efforts' attempt at change challenges the natural teacher-administrator relationship. Findings from the study suggest administrators work to maintain relationships with teachers to build trust capital to use to get things done. Leaders can ask for the implementation of reform without causing suspicion or resistance when there is a reservoir of trust between themselves and staff (Louis, 2007). Even so, when implementing reform the administrator removed themselves a step further as they found it easier to introduce it to staff through a teacher who was trusted by both the administrator and staff.

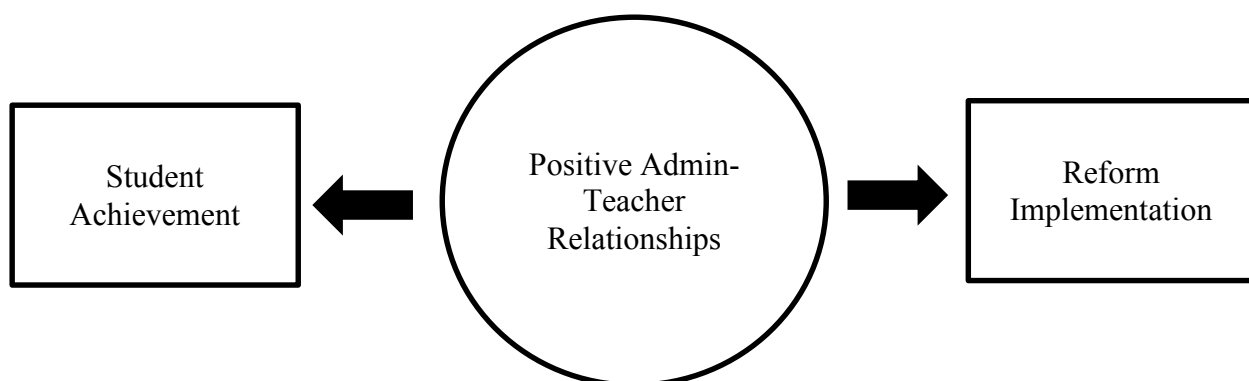


Figure 2. Presentation of theme. Demonstrates how admin-teacher relationship is informed by teacher success and informs reform implementation.

Lacking in the literature is discussion regarding teacher-administrator relationship dynamics in relation to teacher work performance and reform implementation. Findings indicate teachers' awareness of the impact their work, goal attainment, and reform implementation have on the relationship with their administrator. Teachers primarily equated their classroom success to a positive relationship with their administrator. Conversely, the lack of student achievement and completion of goals led to negative interactions. Though the administrator did not explicitly equate teacher performance to relationship dynamics, many of the findings in my study pointed to the administrator's focus on teachers' ability to complete reform tasks and boost student achievement and not necessarily their skill as a teacher.

Familiarity to determine trustworthiness. Results supported evidence in the literature that addressed familiarity as a key component of trust among teachers and administrators as shown in figure 3 (Luhmann, 2000; Baier, 1985; Dasgupta, 2000). Familiarity guides the conditions under which people trust and can impact and encourage implementation in an impactful and permanent manner (Baier; 1985; Luhmann, 2000). Familiarity also determines the degree to which people are trusted (Luhmann, 2000). For familiarity to occur, literature specifies there must be several encounters that result in memories of previous experiences (Dasgupta, 2000).

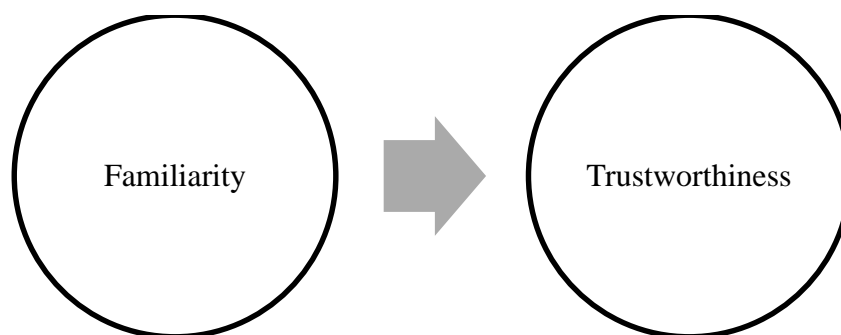


Figure 3. Presentation of theme. Demonstrates how familiarity determines trustworthiness.

Teachers inevitably interact with one another throughout the school day. Each encounter makes them increasingly familiar with one another. The data revealed as participants became more familiar with teammates and their administrator, the dynamics of the relationship shifted and changed. Memories of past interactions were used to inform relationships as teachers recalled how others behaved in similar situations. Teachers carefully watched the principal's interactions with other teachers and used their assessment of those interactions to determine future interactions such as soliciting help or presenting a problem. These findings are supported by Butz, Dietz, and Konovsky (2001) who found the actions of a supervisor is how employees view the supervisor's trustworthiness. Based on their familiarity, teachers were able to better

gauge the intentions of others and predict the things with which others could be trusted such as data or vulnerabilities. This was especially true of the relationship between teachers and the administrator.

Risk and vulnerability. Trust involves risk and a willingness to be vulnerable (see figure 4) to the possibility that expectations may not be met, and someone may fail to act as expected (Moye et al., 2004; Luhmann, 2000). Risk is dependent upon a cycle of trust-risk-trust-risk as the relationships flows through controllable and uncontrollable situations (Luhmann, 2000; Williamson, 1993). Trust among colleagues informed an individual's perceptions about the potential consequences of risk-taking in the work environment (Moye et al., 2004; Edmonson, 2004). Central to trust was the belief that both teachers and the administrator had to show some level of vulnerability. Participants that trusted their teammates took risks when sharing their shortcomings and needs. They also took risks when revealing their deficits to their administrator. When participants believed the administrator was, at some point, vulnerable with them, they were more prone to take risk with the assumption that there would not be consequences for their decisions. They ran the risk of being ridiculed or reprimanded, but their trust encouraged them to take the risk anyway.

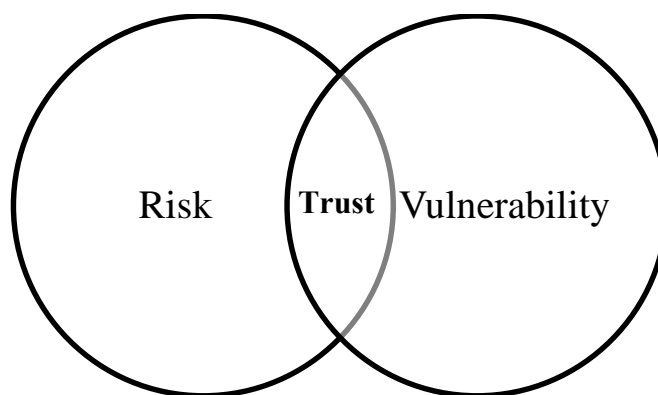


Figure 4. Presentation of theme. Demonstrates how risk and vulnerability contribute to trust.

Conclusions

Reform implementation extends beyond the mechanics of what the reform looks like, who will do the work, and how will the work be completed. Relationships were extremely critical in the successful implementation of reform. Relationships that lacked trust had a negative impact on the implementation of reform as the lack of trust led to a breakdown in collaboration and the isolation of the most productive members of a time. Trust between teachers and the administrator aids in making sure positive relationships are established. Positive relationships lead to teachers who are more likely to be willing to implement reforms with effort and care. Trust on teacher teams helps ensure communication and collaboration regarding common goals and tasks occurs to help implement reforms as prescribed. Meaningful and purposeful implementation occurred most often in situations where trust was high and people were comfortable with being vulnerable with others and taking risks to get things done. Current literature and my findings align to specify the significant impact trust and relationships have on reform implementation.

Implications for Practice

The implications for theory resulted in quite a few implications that are practical. Overall, three implications for practice arose for consideration. Implications include administrators encouraging teacher's trust in them through their actions to aid in implementation of reform, promotion of relationships on behalf of the administrator, and consideration of the current atmosphere of the district and individual schools with an emphasis on relationships.

Build Trust Through Actions. Leaders must be more cognizant of and purposeful in their actions. Their daily interactions with teachers and actions within the school building must

be such that encourages teachers to trust them. Shockley-Zalabak, Ellis, and Winograd (2000) state the following,

Many leaders pride themselves on their personal identity without understanding that the position they occupy provides few within the organization the opportunity to interact on an interpersonal basis. Although their intentions may be trustworthy, the impact of leadership is interpreted through multiple networks of relationships and events (p. 43).

Though many leaders focus on their individual relationships with teachers, greater attention must be given to their interactions with others as teachers use their perception of a leader's relationship with others as a contributing factor in their navigation of their own relationship. This means ensuring conversations with one teacher or group do not go against or contradict the information or data shared with others. Greater attention must also be given to ensuring that teachers are treated in a manner that is equitable and does not hold one teacher to a higher standard than another without clear provocation.

Though building trust is a key factor in the implementation of reform, accountability standards and benchmarks have created an academic atmosphere where relationships are not considered and student outcomes are the sole focus of reform efforts (Lee, 2014). It is the duty of the building administrator to distribute reform that is created at the district level and the manner in which the reform is disseminated determines whether or not teachers engage the reform (DiPaola & Hoy, 2014). Distrust in administrators during the onset of reform implementation only leads to assumptions of ill-intent and manipulation (Louis, 2007). Additionally, teachers draw no distinction between personal behaviors and professional show of competence and reliability shown before and throughout the implementation of reform (Louis, 2007). Throughout dissemination, an administrator's behavior is central to teachers' perceptions

and behaviors when implementing reform (DiPaola & Hoy, 2014; Lee, 2014). However, my findings suggest that though research states relationships are a factor in the implementation of reform, the relationship established between teachers and the administrator have far greater influence on the behaviors that impact reform and implementation.

According to the data, teachers gauged their implementation of reform through their perception of the actions of their administrator(s), teacher team, and/or district. They explained their perception of those actions determines the way in and effort with which they implement reform. Participants were clear that both positive and negative actions informed their implementation, continued use, and effort. Though each participants used the RTI database, all reported varying levels of effort and use that was underscored by what they witnessed from their administrator, team, and district. Michael shared he does not trust the longevity of reforms because, in his experience, the district does not invest time or follow through with reform. Therefore, he gives minimal effort in terms of implementation. Luann has seen the difference in how she is expected to use the reform in relation to other teachers and, therefore, does not trust that their implementation via her administrator is based on compliance rather than academic change. Using the four characteristics of trust deduced from my research, I posit some measure of the perception of the administrator's actions is essential before implementing reform. This may be done through a focus group centered around providing information regarding the current climate of the building and perceptions of leadership. Perceptions may also be gleaned from a survey given to staff centered on the same topics.

Promotion of Relationships. Inherent in trust is the establishment and maintenance of relationships. Relationships encourage collaboration among people and is important in order to achieve set goals (Moye et al., 2004; Tschannen-Moran, 2000). Several researchers have written

with regard to the importance of trust in work relationships during the implementation of reform as a means to ensure optimal implementation and positive change (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1992, 1999; Louis, 2007). The findings of my study encourage site-level administrators to understand the importance of the establishment of relationships between themselves and teachers and among teacher teams; however, I did not come across evidence to support the idea that relationships are being promoted at both the site and district level.

The data revealed that relationships had an influence on the way teachers interact with and implement reforms. It is, therefore, vital that the individuals responsible for creating reform and crafting the mechanisms by which it will be implemented consider how the reform may depend on the presence of relationships. Doing so means considering the extent to which teachers must depend on one another to complete tasks and how the reform may negatively impact trust relationships with the district and at each school site. Administrators must also work to build structures and create environments where relationships among teacher teams and with themselves can be created and nurtured. To do this, Van Maele and Van Maele (2009) believe that administrators should practice distributive leadership which is relationship-based because it is focused on how leaders build and maintain conditions for positive interactions with others rather than the implementation of reform. Distributing leadership by giving teachers larger roles in terms of leadership among their peers places teachers in a position to build relationships with others in order to maximize collaboration and the completion of goals. My data suggests the reforms that are created and implemented in a manner that focuses on the relationships among teachers and between teachers and their administrator boosts results under the reform. Such may be due to the lack of attention to the relationships that may impede implementation and/or reduce engagement.

Administrators can boost trust among teacher teams by accentuating the importance of an individual teacher's work as their work supports the interdependent activities of the school that are aimed at common goals and outcomes (Moye, Henkin, & Egley, 2004). Doing so may come in the form of a public or private acknowledgement of the teacher's work and how that work contributes the work as a whole. At the same time, principals must show that they value the interdependent relationships among their teacher teams by acknowledging teamwork when it occurs and investigating teams where collaboration does not take place. My administrator participant recognized the importance of their relationship with teachers but did not speak to how teacher teams related to one another. Teacher participants recognized the importance of their relationship with their team members and the administrator, but many valued their team relationships with those with whom they share common characteristics rather than work to build relationships with teammates with whom they had no working relationship. Administrators must have a pulse on the relationships of their teacher teams and make strides to promote their dependence on one another to get work down and complete tasks.

Consideration of the Current Atmosphere with an Emphasis on Relationships.

Understanding the existing culture within a group provides a gauge for what could and could not be expected from a group (Louis, 2007). More specifically, the relationships among teachers and between teachers and their administrator undergird the established culture. It is with this understanding that I suggest districts gauge the current atmosphere of the district as well as individual schools with particular attention to the relationships within the building. Districts should value the culture, size, and group configuration of schools when creating reform (Van Maele, 2009). It is vital that reform policy makers include climate and relationships when creating and rethinking reform (Cohen, 2009). There should be some reasonable consideration

of a school site's readiness to implement reform as a whole staff prior to implementation. Additionally, districts should evaluate trust levels throughout the implementation process (Shockley-Zalabak, 2000).

Findings revealed that teacher participants lacked trust in the district, administrators, and/or teacher team in relation to reform implementation. Many participants had a low level of trust in the district's implementation of new reform. The overarching reason was the shared experience of having implemented numerous reforms in a seemingly short span of time with little to no longevity. These participants reported they interacted with the reform merely out of compliance. Participants with poor relationships with the district, administrator, and/or teacher team prior to reform implementation reported a negative stance before and during implementation that was unable to be overcome. Those teachers with positive relationships had a positive overall experience with implementation and used the reform to inform their practice. Such a revelation infers the importance of pre-established positive relationships within each building.

Implications for Future Research

An overwhelming wealth of trust research speaks to characteristics required for trust and how those characteristics impact relationships. Research also theorizes the importance of the administrator's role in implementation. In order for future researchers to better comprehend the impact of trust relationships on reform implementation, they should explore relationships before and after implementation. Future studies can better gauge and potentially build a scale of a school's readiness to implement and ability to withstand the implementation of change reform. Furthermore, future researchers should determine what policymakers are using when crafting

reform and why consideration for relationships, overall, are not a part of the reform implementation process.

Summary

This chapter presented a discussion, conclusion, and the implications gleaned from my study. My discussion presented three connections: relationships and trust with reform, familiarity to determine trustworthiness, and risk and vulnerability. Under relationships and trust with reform, I delved deeper into the specific relationship dynamics and outcomes of the relationship between administrators and teachers. I then presented conclusions I drew within the context of my study. Next, I offered implications for both research and practice. In summary, it is vital that reform creators think beyond the mechanics of reform and keep the human factor of relationships in mind when determining how and in what manner reforms are to be implemented by teachers and administrators.

REFERENCES

- Bachrach, S. (1990). *Education reform*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Baker, E., McGaw, B., Peterson, P. (2010). *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Elsevier Science.
- Baier, A. (1986). Trust and antitrust. *Ethics*, 96(2), 231-260.
- Barlin, D. (2016). Trust is missing from school-improvement efforts: Psychological safety is critical to healthy school climates. *Education Week*, 36(7), 26-27.
- Barnard, C. (1938). *The function of the executive*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Barnett, D. W., Daly, E. J., Jones, K.M., & Lentz, Jr., F. E. (2004). Response to intervention: Empirically based special service decisions from single-case designs of increasing and decreasing intensity. *The Journal of Special Education*, 38(2), 66-79.
- Berkeley, S., Bender, W.N., Peaster, L.G., & Saunders, L. (2009). Implementation of response to intervention. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 42(1), 85-95.
- Bradley, R., Danielson, L., & Doolittle, J. (2005). Response to intervention. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 38(6), 485-486.
- Bromley, D. B. (1986). *The case-study method in psychology and related-disciplines*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Bryk, A. (2018). *Charting Chicago School Reform: Democratic Localism As A Lever For Change*. United States: Taylor & Francis.
- Bryk, A. & Schneider, B. (2003). Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement. *Creating Caring Schools*, 60(6), 40-45.

- Butz, R., Dietz, J., & Konovsky, M. (2001). *Top management and immediate supervisors as distinct targets of trust*. San Diego, CA: Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychologists.
- Castro-Villarreal, F., Rodriguez, B. J., & Moore, S. (2014). Teachers' perceptions and attitudes about Response to Intervention (RTI) in their schools: A qualitative analysis. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 40*, 104-112.
- Corben, V. (1999). Misusing phenomenology in nursing research: Identifying the issues. *Nurse Researcher, 6*(3), 52-56.
- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. *Qualitative Sociology, 13*(1), 3-21.
- Cosner, S. (2009). Building organizational capacity through trust. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 45*(2), 248-291.
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2004). Standards, accountability, and school reform. *Teachers College Record, 106*(6), 1047-1085.
- Dasgupta, P. (2000). Trust, credibility, and commitment. In D. Gambetta (Eds.), *Trust: Making and breaking cooperative relations*, (pp. 49-72). New York: Blackwell.
- Deutsch, M. (1958). Trust and suspicion. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 2*(4), 265-279.

- DiPaola, M. F. & Hoy, W. K. (2014). *Improving instruction through supervision, evaluation, and professional development*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Dirks, K. T. (2000). Trust in leadership and team performance: Evidence from NCAA basketball. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*(6), 1004–1012.
- Dworkin, A.G & Tobe, P.F. (2014). “The effects of standards based school accountability on teacher burnout and trust relationships: a longitudinal analysis”, In Van Maele, D., Forsyth, P.B., and Van Houtte, M. (Eds.), *Trust and School Life: The Role of Trust for Learning, Teaching, Leading, and Bridging* (pp. 621-656). New York, NY: Springer.
- Edmondson, A. (2004). Psychological safety, trust, and learning in organizations: A group level lens. In R. Kramer & K. Cook (Eds.), *Trust and distrust in organizations: Dilemmas and approaches* (pp. 239-272). New York, NY: Russell Sage.
- Figlio, D., & Loeb, S. (2011). School accountability. *Handbook of Economics of Education, 3*, 383-421.
- Fletcher, J. M., & Vaughn, S. (2009). Response to intervention: Preventing and remediating academic difficulties. *Child Development Perspective, 3*(1), 30-37.
- Flynn, P. (2010). Global competition and education: Another Sputnik? *The Social Studies, 86*(2), 53-55.
- Ford, J. D. & Ford, L. W. (1995). The role of conversations in producing intentional change in organizations. *The Academy of Management Review, 20*(3), 541-570.
- Friedman, I. (1991). High and low-burnout schools: School culture aspects of teacher burnout. *Journal of Educational Research, 85*(5), 325–333.
- Fuchs, D. & Fuchs, L.S. (2006). Introduction to response to intervention: What, why, and how is it? *Reading Research Quarterly, 41*(1), 93-99.

- Furgerson, S. P. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 12(6), 1-10.
- Gabarro, J. (1987). *The dynamics of taking charge*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Garcia, E., & Weiss, E. (2019). *The teacher shortage is real, large and growing, and worse than we thought*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.
- Granovetter, M. (1985). Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91(3), 481-510.
- Hallinger, P., Murphy, J., & Hausman, C. (1992). Restructuring schools: Principals' perceptions of fundamental educational reform. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28(3), 330-349.
- Hargreaves, A. (2002). Teaching and betrayal. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 8(3), 393-407.
- Hays, D. & Singh, A. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry in clinical and educational settings*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Honig, M. (2006). Complexity and policy implementation: Challenges and opportunities for the field. In M. Honig (Ed.), *New directions in education policy implementation: Confronting complexity* (pp. 1-23). New York: State University of New York Press.
- Horton, J., Macve, R., & Struyven, G. (2004). Qualitative research: Experiences in using semi-structured interviews. In Humphrey, C., & Lee, B. (Eds), *The Real Life Guide to Accounting Research* (pp. 339-358). New York, NY: Elsevier.

- Hoy, W. K., Tartar, J. C., & Witkoskie, L. (1992). Faculty trust in colleagues: Linking the principal with school effectiveness. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 26(1), 38-45.
- Hoy, W. K. & Tschannen-Moran, M. (1999). Five facets of trust: An empirical confirmation in urban elementary schools. *Journal of School Leadership*, 9, 184-209.
- Hupcey, J. E., Penrod, J., Morse, J. M., & Mitcham, C. (2001). An exploration and advancement of the concept of trust. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 36(2), 282-293.
- Jenkins, J.R., Hudson, R.F., & Johnson, E.S. (2007). Screening for at-risk readers in response to intervention framework. *School Psychology Review*, 36(4), 582-600.
- Klinger, J.K. & Edwards, P.A. (2006). Cultural considerations with response to intervention models. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 41(1), 108-117.
- Kreps, D. M., Milgrom, P., Roberts, J., & Wilson, R. (1982). Rational cooperation in the finitely-repeated prisoners' dilemma. *Journal of Economic Theory*, 27(2), 245-252.
- Lee, H. (2014). How principals facilitate teachers' learning under accountability systems. *Journal of School Public Relations*, 35, 117-146.
- Linn, R. L. (2003). Accountability: Responsibility and reasonable expectations. *Educational Researcher*, 32(7), 3-13.
- Linn, R. L. (2008). Educational accountability systems. In Ryan, K. E. & Shepard, L. A. (Eds.), *The Future of Test-Based Educational Accountability* (pp. 3-25). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Louis, K. S. (2006). Changing the Culture of Schools: Professional Community, Organizational Learning, and Trust. *Journal of School Leadership*, 16(5), 477-489.
- Louis, K. (2007). Trust and improvement in schools. *Journal of Educational Change*, 8, 1-24.

- Louis, K. S., Meyrowetz, D., Smiley, M., & Murphy, J. (2008). The role of sensemaking and trust in developing distributed leadership. In A. Harris (Ed.), *Distributed leadership: Studies in educational leadership* (Vol. 7) (pp. 159-183). Springer.
- Luhmann, N. (2000). Familiarity, confidence, trust: Problems and alternatives. In D. Gambetta (Ed.), *Trust: Making and breaking cooperative relations*, (pp. 94-107). New York, NY: Blackwell.
- Mastropieri, M.A. & Scruggs, T.E. (2005). Feasibility and consequences of response to intervention: Examination of the issues and scientific evidence as a model for the identification of individuals with learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 38(6), 525-531.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2012). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). An integrative model of organizational trust. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 709-734.
- Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to implementation and design*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mishra, A. (1996). Organizational responses to crisis: The centrality of trust. In R. K. a. T. Tyler (Eds.), *Trust in organizations: Frontiers of theory and research* (pp. 261-287). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Moye, M. J., Henkin, A. B., & Egley, R. J. (2004). Teacher-principal relationships: Exploring linkages between empowerment and interpersonal trust. *Journal of Educational Administration, 43*(3), 260-277.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Reschly, D. J. & Tilly, W.D. (2009). Reform trends and system design alternatives. In Reschly, D.J. & Tilly, W.D. (Eds.), *Special Education in Transition: Functional Assessment and Noncategorical Programming* (pp. 19-48). Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Rotter, J. B. (1967). A new scale for the measurement of interpersonal trust. *Journal of Personality, 35*(4), 651-665.
- Rousseau, D. M., Sitkin, S. B., Burt, R. S., & Camerer, C. (1998). Not so different after all: a cross-discipline view of trust. *Academy of Management Review, 23*(3), 393-404.
- Russell, J. L. (2013). Crafting coherence from complex policy messages: Educators' perceptions of special education and standards-based accountability policies. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 21*(21), 1-23.
- Seashore Louis, K., Febey, K., & Schroeder, R. (2005). State-mandated accountability in high schools: Teachers' interpretation of a new era. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 27*(2), 177-204.
- Shockley-Zalabak, P., Ellis, K., & Winograd, G. (2000). Organizational trust: What it means, why it matters. *Organizational Development Journal, 18*(4), 35-48.
- Sitkin, S. & Stickel, D. (1996). The road to hell: the dynamics of distrust in an era of quality. In R. Kramer & T. Tyler *Trust in organizations: Frontiers of theory and research* (pp. 196-215). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Spellings, M. (2008). *A nation accountable: Twenty-five years after a nation at risk*. Washington, DC. U.S. Department of Education.
- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Procedures and techniques for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Streeton, R., Cooke, M., & Campbell, J. (2004). Researching researchers: Using a snowball technique. *Nurse Researcher*, 12(1), 33-45.
- Streubert, H. J. & Carpenter, D. R. (2011). *Qualitative research in nursing: Advancing the humanistic imperative*. Philadelphia, PA: Wolters Kluwer Health.
- Superfine, Benjamine M. (2005). The politics of accountability: The rise and fall of Goal 2000. *American Journal of Education*, 112, 10-45.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. & Hoy, W. K. (1999). A multidisciplinary analysis of the nature, meaning, and measurement of trust. *Review of Educational Research*, 70(4), 547-593.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, W. (2000). A multidisciplinary analysis of the nature, meaning, and measurement of trust. *Review of Educational Research*, 71, 547-593.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. (2000). Collaboration and the need for trust. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 39(4), 308-331.
- Tyler, T & Kramer, R. (1996). "Whither trust?" In R. Kramer & T. Tyler *Trust in organizations: Frontiers of theory and research* (pp. 1-15). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Uline, C., Miller, D., and Tschannen-Moran, M. (1998). "Underlying dimensions of school effectiveness". *Education Administration Quarterly*, 34, 462-483.
- U.S. Department of Education (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform: A report to the Nation and the Secretary of Education*. Washington, DC: The National Commission on Excellence in Education.

- Van Maele, D. & Van Houtte, M. (2015). Trust in school: A pathway to inhibit teacher burnout? *Journal of Educational Administration*, 53(1), 93-115.
- Van Maele, D. & Van Maele, M. (2009). Faculty trust and organizational school characteristics: An exploration across secondary schools in Flanders. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 45(4), 556-589.
- Volante, L., Earl, L. M. (2012). Thoughts on school leadership policy, practice, and future inquiry. In L. Volante (Eds.), *School leadership in the context of standards-based reform* (pp. 249-260). New York, NY: Springer.
- Williamson, O. (1993). Calculativeness, trust, and economic organization. *Journal of Law & Economics*, 30, 453-486.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Zand, D. E. (1971). "Trust and managerial problem solving." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17, 229-239.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Good morning/afternoon,

My name is Courtney Wilson and I am a current doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership program at Old Dominion University. I appreciate your willingness to participate in my study regarding the role trust in accountability. The purpose of this study is to investigate the role trust plays in the implementation of reform as experienced by administrators and teachers. I am also interested in the factors that affect reform sustainability. Results will contribute to the overall literature regarding teacher-administrator trust and reform development. It is my belief that data drawn from this study will aid in an increased understanding of the actions of school principals and how those actions, if at all, influence reform implementation at the building level.

My goal for this interview is merely to collect data. Your feedback will not be judged nor will I be forming an opinion. My interest is learning about the experiences and perception of teachers and school administrators. I will ask questions about particular details of your experiences, but all of your responses will remain confidential.

Our interview should last no longer than an hour and is fully dependent upon your responses and feedback. During our interview I will record our discussion. This will ensure that I do not miss any vital information you provide. The recording will only be used as a means for me to transcribe our conversation and will remain confidential at all times. Any identifying information will remain anonymous. Your participation is completely voluntary and you have the ability to discontinue the interview at any time. May I have your permission to begin recording this interview?

Turn on audio recorder.

This discussion will focus on your relationship experiences with teachers as a school administrator. Specifically, you will be asked questions regarding the various factors that influence the basis for each relationship and how you interact with teachers on an individual level. You will have the opportunity to provide subsequent information that you feel will be an addition to this study.

Demographic Information

1. Tell me a little bit about your background in education.
2. Can you tell me about your past/present teaching/leadership roles?
3. How long have you been teaching here at Autumn Springs Elementary School?
4. How long have you been on your current grade level?
 - a. How long have you spent with each of the members of your grade level team?

Important Characteristics

5. Teacher - How do you approach your participation on your current grade level team?
Administrator – Describe what ideal participation on a grade level team looks like.
6. Administrator – What factors determine when and in what ways you interact with your grade level teams? During grade level meetings, conferences, etc.
7. What are the three most important characteristics you look for in a teacher/administrator?
8. Why are these characteristics important to you?
9. What characteristics do you look for in a person that you trust?
10. When you think about yourself as a member of your grade level team, what characteristics do you believe contributes to your interactions with your team members?
11. During a team meeting, under what circumstances do you feel you most involved?
 - a. What does this involvement look like?
12. In what way does your relationship with your teacher/administrator affect your work, if at all?
13. Would you say that trust is needed in order to implement reform effectively and with fidelity?

Response to Intervention (RTI)

14. What is your understanding of the Response to Intervention database?
 - a. Did/do you understand its purpose?
 - b. What do you know about its expected usefulness...
 - i. ...for teachers?
 - ii. ...for administrators?
 - iii. ...for the district?
 - c. Did you receive initial training prior to having to implement the RTI database?

- d. How were you prepared for RTI implementation?
- e. Were you afforded any freedom in its implementation?
- f. Did this freedom, or lack thereof, affect how you implemented it?
- g. Was it easy or difficult to implement? What factors made it easy/difficult?
- h. If you could repackage the way in which the RTI database was presented to you, what would you want to see in its introduction?

15. Is there any other information/feedback/insight you'd like to share?

Again, I appreciate you taking the time to provide me with feedback for my study. I will transcribe this interview and will provide you with a copy of the transcription as soon as possible. At the time of receipt, please review the transcription and provide feedback regarding its accuracy and give any additional information that you feel will assist me with my study. Thank you, once again!

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: Trust issues: A case study of the relationship between trust and reform implementation

INTRODUCTION: The purpose of this form is to give you information that may affect your decision to say YES or NO to participation in this research. The form will be used to record the consent of those who say YES. The title of this study is Trust issues: A case study of the relationship between trust and reform implementation. The research study will be conducted at Old Dominion University.

RESEARCHERS:

Responsible Principal Investigator:

Jay P. Scribner, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Darden School of Education
Department of Educational Foundations & Leadership
Old Dominion University
120 Education Building
Norfolk, VA 23529

Co-Investigator(s):

Courtney R. Wilson
Darden School of Education
Department of Educational Foundations & Leadership
Old Dominion University
Norfolk, VA 23529

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

Several studies have been conducted looking into the presence of trust and its ability to affect an organization's effectiveness. Absent from the literature is an explanation of how the presence or absence of trust effects the implementation and implantation of efforts to change an organization. This study is designed to examine the manner in which trust, or lack thereof, impacts reform implementation. From the perspective of administrators and teachers this study also seeks to investigate how, if at all, administrators use trust to encourage reform implementation at the building level.

If you decide to participate then you will join a study involving research of your experience as an administrator or teacher and your experience with the Response to Intervention (RTI) database. You will be interviewed to solicit feedback regarding your role as an administrator or teacher

and your interactions with the RTI database. Results will contribute to the overall literature regarding teacher-administrator trust and reform development. If you say YES, then your participation will last for 30 minutes to 1 hour at your place of employment. Approximately 4 principals and 6 teachers will be participating in this study.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA

To be included in this study, you must currently be employed by Hampton City Schools as a principal or classroom teacher of grades three through five. Participants must have worked within the district for a minimum of five years and has had at least two years of experience with the Response to Intervention (RTI) database.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

RISKS: If you decide to participate in this study, you may face a risk of feelings of uneasiness and discomfort related to disclosing personal information regarding your work experiences and interactions with district tools. The researchers have tried to reduce these risks through the use of volunteer participants. Participants are provided an option to withdraw from the study at any time and will be provided with a transcript of interviews. As with any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet identified.

BENEFITS: The main benefit to you for participating in this study is for personal growth and reflection on your professional practices that can come from disclosing and processing your thoughts and feelings regarding teacher-administrator relationships and reform implementation. Others may benefit from the continued research on teacher-administrator interactions as they relate to the implementation of reform efforts at the building level. Additionally, district-level administrators may benefit from your feedback regarding the manner in which you implement reform at the building level.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS

The researchers are unable to give you any payment for participating in this study.

NEW INFORMATION

If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision to participate, they will provide it to you immediately. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The researchers will take all reasonable measures to keep private information, such as recordings and interview transcripts, confidential. Only the researchers listed above will have access to your data. The researchers will remove any identifiers of the data, destroy all tapes, securely delete all recordings, and store information in a locked file cabinet prior to its processing. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications; but the researchers will not identify you. Of course, your records may be subpoenaed by court order or inspected by government bodies with oversight authority.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study – at any time. The researchers reserve the right to withdraw your participation in this study, at any time if they observe potential problems with your continued participation.

COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY

If you say YES, then your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of harm arising from this study, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participation in any research project, you may contact Dr. Jay P. Scribner, the responsible principal investigator at 757-683-5163, Dr. Tancy Vandecar-Burdin, the current IRB chair at 757-683-3802, at Old Dominion University, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research at 757-683-3460 who will be glad to review the matter with you.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

By signing this form, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them or you can contact Dr. Jay P. Scribner at 757-683-5163.

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. Tancy Vandecar-Burdin, the current IRB chair at 757-683-3802 or the Old Dominion University Office of Research at 757-683-3460.

And importantly, by signing below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this study. The researcher should give you a copy of this form for your records.

 Subject's Printed Name & Signature

 Date

 Researcher's Printed Name & Signature

 Date

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

I certify that I have explained to this subject the nature and purpose of this research, including benefits, risks, costs, and any experimental procedures. I have described the rights and protections afforded to human subjects and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice this subject into participating. I am aware of my obligations under state and federal laws, and promise compliance. I have answered the subject's questions and have encouraged him/her to ask additional questions at any time during the course of this study. I have witnessed above signature(s) on this consent form.

Subject's Printed Name & Signature

Date

VITA

Educational Foundations & Leadership
Darden College of Education
Old Dominion University
120 Education Building
Norfolk, VA 23529

Courtney Wilson is a public school administrator in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and is a doctoral candidate at Old Dominion University. Her research interests include trust, education reform, and teacher-administrator relationships as a factor in school improvement.

Education

Education Specialist, Educational Leadership, May 2015
Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
Administrative Certification: K-12 Leadership

Master of Teaching, Teaching, May 2011
Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia

Bachelor of Arts, English, May 2010
Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia
Teacher Certification: Grades PK-6