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A Study of the Educational Climate of a Suburban Middle School and the Effects
Administrative Decisions Have on That Climate

by
Joseph C. Beierschmitt

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Masters of Arts Degree
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
May 1, 1999

Approved by _____ Professor

Date Approved April 22, 1999

Abstract

Joseph C. Beierschmitt

A Study of the Educational Climate of a
Suburban Middle School and the Effects
Administrative Decisions Have on that
Climate

1999

Dr. Ted Johnson

School Administration

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of this study was to discover the organizational climate of Collingswood Middle School by using a survey of the students and the staff to evaluate the institutional climate. The data was used to target specific behaviors to make institutional changes that would hopefully improve the climate of the school. The result of these changes were then evaluated with a second survey to determine the effectiveness of the organizational changes.

Description of Methodology:

The study for the assessment of the organizational climate involved surveying the views of the school's administration, the staff, and the students of Collingswood Middle School. This intern used an existing instrument, the School

Climate Survey by Human Systems Development, of Dayton, Ohio, to survey the staff. The student survey was written by the researcher based on the middle school student needs as identified by Kathy Vatteroot (1991).

The administrative changes were designed to improve the area of recognition at both the student and the staff level.

Major Findings and Conclusions:

The changes resulted in improved the scores in both surveys. This proved the researcher's hypothesis that the administration can improve the organizational climate of a school by instituting a behavioral change in his or her staff.

Mini Abstract

Joseph C. Beierschmitt

A Study of the Educational Climate of a
Suburban Middle School and the Effects
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Climate

1999

Dr. Ted Johnson

School Administration

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if an administrative change could improve the climate of a school.

Methodology:

The study assessed the school climate before and after the administration made organizational changes.

Major Findings and Conclusions:

Proving the hypothesis, administrative decisions can improve school climate.

Acknowledgments

This study could not have been completed without the total cooperation and assistance of the administration and staff of Collingswood Middle School. The professionalism exhibited by the members of this educational institution is of the highest quality. I would especially like to thank Mary Jackson for her help and guidance in the editing of this thesis. She helped to make my writing flow smoothly. In addition, I would also like to thank Mr. Ed Hill for showing me the ropes as a Vice Principal. His quiet direction was invaluable to me now and surely in the future. Finally, I would also would like to thank Alan Gansert for his leadership, guidance, and thoughtfulness to make this study possible. He allowed me to do the study and use his school as a laboratory to prove my thesis; an administrator can make a difference in the climate of the school he or she leads.

The person who helped most and kept me on track and motivated me when I needed it is my wife, Coleen. I would not have thought of entering into such an undertaking without her support. She is my better half, and I would not have finished this project with out her love, help, and understanding.

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

"School climate has been a concept difficult to define but easily perceived. Schools have a feel about them." (Feldman, 1997, pg.18-21.). It does not take long to get the feel of the climate of a school. This intern and any other educator will know what a school is like by spending only a few hours within the confines of the institution's walls. It is uncanny, but there is definitely a feel about a school.

This intern was transferred to Collingswood Middle School from the high school five years ago. Immediately, a difference was perceived between the two schools. The middle school felt more relaxed and collegial, and the intern was at home immediately even though this transfer was not voluntary. The move was a positive one, and it revitalized this intern's career in education.

The intern was discussing this revitalization with Alan Gansert, the school Principal, and he suggested that a school climate study be done. He stated that no matter how positive of a climate there is in an organization, that climate could be improved in some aspect. "The concept of climate is an important tool for the analysis and practice of supervision because it has a major import on the behavior of both teachers and supervisors." (Hoy, Forsyth, 1986, pg. 147.). Mr. Gansert wanted to know the state of the climate of Collingswood Middle School. In the focus of this study, this intern wanted to examine and to unearth the truth about the organizational climate of the Collingswood Middle School by surveying the administration, the teachers, and the students in order to assess the school's

organizational health. This assessment will be used to make recommendations for organizational change to improve the school's climate.

"Based on the assessment, the principal and a staff committee can determine a course of action for a positive change in climate while working to preserve those practices that already promote a supportive climate for the students. This should be a collaborative effort among administrators and teachers if meaningful improvement is to occur." (Vatterrott, 1991, pg.2-8.).

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to discover the organizational climate of Collingswood Middle School using a survey of the stakeholders, the students and staff, to evaluate the institutional climate. This will result in a report to the administration on the status of the school. The administration and the intern will collate the data from the survey and attempt to make institutional changes that would improve the climate of the school. These changes will then be evaluated with another survey to determine the effectiveness of the organizational change brought about by the first survey.

The intern's leadership development component is that the intern will be able to survey an institution and make reasoned recommendations on the data collated from the study. This will lead to the ultimate goal of an improved school climate at Collingswood Middle School. "These improvements will lead to a better educational environment because, for the teacher and the students to succeed, the proper environment must be provided. Success at this level will be enhanced if the staff like and trust each other. (Feldman, 1997, pg. 18-21.). The principal must not only encourage and recognize this but also be able to exercise a change in the school climate. In order to do this, an effective administrator must be able to assess the climate of his or her own school.

The intended organizational changes will be sound educational and management policies that will create a positive educational environment for the staff and students of Collingswood Middle School.

The study for the assessment of the organizational climate will involve surveying the views of the school's administration, the staff, and the students of Collingswood Middle School. This intern will use an existing instrument that is statistically valid and reliable to assess the school's organizational climate.

Definitions:

The definitions for the terms used in this study are as follows and they were taken from the authors Wayne K. Hoy and Patrick B. Forsyth (1986) in their book, Effective Supervision Theory into Practice.

- " 1. Climate - a set of internal characteristics that distinguishes one school from another and influences the behavior of its members.
2. Environment - a synonym for climate
3. Open Climate - a high degree of professionalism by both the principal and the staff exists. Information and ideas pass freely back and forth between the administrative and faculty levels and among faculty members also.
4. Engaged Climate - a climate in which the faculty acts in a professional manner while the principal acts in a rigid and autocratic fashion.
5. Disengaged Climate - a climate in which the principal acts professional by listening to the concerns of the faculty. The faculty does accept any direction from the principal and are unprofessional in carrying out their duties.
6. Closed Climate - a climate in which both the principal and the

staff act in an unprofessional manner.

7. Health - a descriptor of an organization that can range from healthy to unhealthy depending on how well the school personnel confronts their problems. Areas of concern are institutional integrity, the principal's influence, the principal's consideration, the principal's initiating structure, the morale of the school, and the academic emphasis of the school."

Limitations:

The major limitation that this intern foresees in this project is constructing a school climate questionnaire that is appropriate for the middle school student. There could also be a limitation on the ability of the intern to measure the amount of the change in the climate of the school by January or February of this school year because the result of the changes in school policy might not have had any effect within the stipulated time line. Another stipulation is that this study will only be applicable to the educational climate of the Collingswood Middle School. It follows that any conclusions drawn will only apply to the building focused in this deliberation. These conclusions cannot be representative of or impact another building.

The town of Collingswood is a quaint, old, staid, and established community in South Jersey that was first settled in 1681 and incorporated in 1888. The town is a suburb of Philadelphia to which many of the inhabitants commute to work. Collingswood has a population of approximately 14,500 residents with an assessed socio-economic level of lower middle to middle class. The borough is governed by three commissioners, one of whom is the Mayor, and they serve four year concurrent terms. There is an active social and religious

community in the town supported by a thriving recreational and sports program for the children in the community.

The school district has a high school grades 9 to 12, a middle school grades 7 to 8 and five elementary schools. The combined school population is approximately 2,230 students. The district has 197 professional staff, 20 administrators, 37 aides and secretaries, and 26 support staff.

The specific site of this project will be Collingswood Middle School which is one of the seven schools in the Collingswood School District. This institution has approximately 260 students in grades seven and eight. The school has professional staff of 32 in addition to a vice principal and principal. The school also has an active PTA which exercises a major role in the direction of the school.

Significance:

"Halpin and Kraft viewed the climate of the school as a combination of two dimensions of social behavior: principal to teacher interactions and teacher to teacher interactions." (Hoy, Forsyth, 1986, pg. 148.). If either of these social behaviors are troubled, the climate of the school will be in jeopardy also. The school can be characterized by the combined interactive behaviors of these two groups. A competent administrator must be able to recognize the climate of his or her own school.

This project will help to develop the skills and to hone the tools needed by this intern to be able to evaluate future school climates and assess what type is present. The critical link between attitude and performance of staff is especially evident in dealing with middle school students whose psychological and emotional states are fragile. Middle school environments that are responsive to student needs promote positive attitudes and higher achievement. (Vattrott,

1997, pg. 2-8.). This intern views that a positive school climate is another way to promote a unobstructed learning environment for the student, which is the primary goal of the school administrator.

What is the climate of Collingswood Middle School? In the process of answering that question the intern will discover and illustrate the positive and negative aspects of CMS. The answers to this question will also help to suggest the manner in which the climate can be improved and the steps needed to be taken for that improvement. The process of doing the study will give this intern and the school district a guideline on how to upgrade the educational climate of the other schools in the district. The process of answering the question can have a positive and lasting effect on Collingswood Middle School and on the Collingswood School District as well.

Organization of the Study:

Chapter one of this thesis deals with how this intern became interested in the climate of Collingswood Middle School. Studying school climate elucidates the issue of the school atmosphere and how that milieu can enhance or detract from the education offered to a student attending that school. The basic assumption of Hoy and Forsyth (1986) is that the climate of the school is closely related to the supervisory practices of that institution's administration. Subsequently, if administrative practices could be found wanting, a change in those practices would improve the educational climate of the school.

This chapter has also defined the terms and terminology that will be germane to this paper so that the reader will be able to understand the study. The chapter sets the limitations on what can be drawn from the study and how the study can be applied to other circumstances such as other middle schools or

schools in the district. The setting of the study is described and as well as the rationale for this thesis.

Chapter two is the literature review of the study. In this chapter, this intern researched literature and data to frame the questions being asked by the study. The review helped the intern to collate and incorporate the information into a coherent theory on how the climate of the school was formed. This research literature has helped to discover and design the type of instrumentation to be used in the study. The research itself has guided the intern in determining what important questions should be asked to ascertain the climate of a school from the point of view of the faculty and of the students.

Chapter three will discuss and describe the research design used in the study of the climate of Collingswood Middle School. The chapter will chart the development of the instrumentation used and how the intern intends to use the instrumentation in the collection of the data. The chapter will describe how the data will be analyzed and used to determine the course of action needed to be taken to prove or disprove the theory that the principal can initiate actions that will improve the climate of a school.

Chapter four is the presentation of the research findings. This chapter will answer the questions, "What information was found?" and "What does it mean?" When these questions are answered, the intern will be able to make a logical conclusion on how to improve the climate of a school.

Chapter five is the conclusion of the study. This chapter tells the reader the inferences the intern has deduced from the research study. This section will state the intern's insights and the implications of the study and how it will apply to a particular practice in the conduct of a principal. The conclusion will also highlight how this study will change Collingswood Middle School and what further areas of study might be worthy of investigation in the study of school climate.

Chapter 2

Literature Review:

The organizational climate or atmosphere in a school has very important implications on the education of the students attending that institution. A school administrator must be aware of the type of climate that is in a school to make effective changes for the well-being of that institution. The more aware an administrator is of the climate, the better that educator can anticipate the needs of the staff and of the students.

Climate is how the staff feels about the institution in which they teach. When there is a school climate that is professional and collegial, the teachers will perform better than if they are unhappy and do not act as professionals. A new or an experienced administrator should be able to gauge the atmosphere of a school to determine the educational climate. The principal must be aware of all the tools that can be used to measure the climate. The knowledge gained by the use of these tools can then be applied by the administrator. The decisions made in such areas as team teaching, staffing, or curriculum integration will have been carefully reasoned and soundly based on real information and not done by intuition. These judgments should not be made without an intimate knowledge of the atmosphere of the school or the decisions will be doomed to failure.

The source most helpful in the conceptualization of this intern's research is Effective Supervision Theory Into Practice by Wayne K. Hoy and Patrick B. Forsyth (1986). This book gives a general background of the different types of organizational behaviors that can be found in an educational institution.

The basic assumption of Hoy and Forsyth (1986) is that the school climate is closely related to its supervisory practices. The authors assert that the "school's openness and emotional tone are associated with a higher rate of student satisfaction as evidenced in lower dropout rates and less student alienation." (Hoy, Forsyth, 1986, pg. 155.). Thus, this intern can surmise that a change in administrative behaviors should alter the perception of the climate by the staff. This change in attitude will have an improvement on the school climate thus moving towards Hoy and Forsyth's goal of an Open Climate.

The organizational climate of a school can be seen in four different descriptions of teacher-principal behavior. These examples of the supervisory process show an institution's organizational climate, organizational health, pupil-control orientation, and type of managerial system.

As the first key aspect of organizational climate, Hoy and Forsyth (1996) describe how the principal can be supportive, directive or restrictive in his interaction with his teachers. Meanwhile, the teachers can act as collegial, intimate or disengaged in their reaction to the directives of the principal. The authors also describe the behaviors that each of these groups produce so that they can be identified and measured.

There are four different types of school climates described by the authors. These climates are open, engaged, disengaged, and closed. The open climate can be described by the ease in which information and ideas pass back and forth between the faculty and the principal. This open climate promotes a high degree of professionalism at both the administrative and the faculty levels.

The engaged climate behaves in such a way that the faculty is operating in a professional manner of cooperation and information sharing with each other. "While on the other hand, the principal acts in a rigid and autocratic manner,

neither respecting nor eliciting the faculty's views on their needs or ideas on education." (Hoy, Forsyth, 1986, pg. 153.).

In the disengaged climate, the principal acts in the professional manner by listening to the faculty's concerns and needs. The principal also attempts to be flexible in the dealings with the faculty. The faculty, however, are unwilling to accept any direction from the principal and are unprofessional in carrying out their duties. This faculty may ignore the administration or actively try to undermine the principal's authority.

The closed climate is where both the principal and the faculty act in unprofessional manner and show a lack of enthusiasm for education, both factions appear to be just putting in time. This closed climate is marked by ineffective leadership at the administrative level and apathy, devisiveness, and noncommitment at the faculty level.

For the purpose of this paper the climates will be defined as follows:

1. The Open Climate that has principal and the staff both exhibiting open behavior.
2. The Engaged Climate that has the principal exhibits closed behavior while the teachers have open behavior.
3. The Disengaged Climate that has an open principal with a disengaged staff.
4. The Closed Climate that has both the principal and the teachers are acting in a closed manner.

These descriptions will be very useful in this intern's evaluations of the Collingswood Middle School. The behaviors that will be described in the questionnaire will help to place into which group the school belongs.

The second description of behaviors is the organizational health of the institution. This descriptor ranges from healthy to unhealthy and deals with how

the institution administers to a range of areas. "These areas include the institutional integrity, the principal's influence, the principal's consideration, the principal's initiating structure, the resource support, the morale of the school, and finally the academic emphasis of the school. Singly or in combination, the factors will influence the health of the organization." (Hoy, Forsyth, 1986, pg. 161.).

"The third descriptor was the Pupil Control Orientation, and this deals with how the pupils are treated by the institution from a humanistic manner to a custodial manner on the other end of the continuum." (Hoy, Forsyth, 1986, pg. 167.). This area addresses the relations between the pupil and the teacher, unlike the previous descriptors that dealt with principal-teacher relations. This area gives the intern an added view on the climate from the perspective of the student.

"The authors cite Renis Likert as the developer of the scale by which institutions can be measured and categorized into four types of managerial systems." (Hoy, Forsyth, 1986, pg. 167.). These styles are exploitive - authoritative, benevolent - authoritative, consultative, and participative. These are the managerial styles of an institution and run on the continuum from the participative to exploitive. Likert-type scales are also used in most of the questionnaires that measure climate in schools.

Effective Supervision Theory and Practice by Hoy and Forsyth (1986) has been an invaluable aide for this intern to understand what the concept of school climate is and how climate affects the education of students. The book also has given this intern an enlightening view on what is important in school climate and on how this intern is going to measure climate in this study on Collingswood Middle School.

The article in NASSP Bulletin, Measuring the Health of The School: A Conceptual Framework, by Wayne K. Hoy and C. John Tarter (1992) addresses a school's organizational climate. The authors define climate as "a set of internal

characteristics that distinguishes one school from another and influences the behavior of its' members." (Hoy, Tartar, 1992, pg. 74-79.). They describe the climate by using a health metaphor as a way to assess the interpersonal relationships in a school.

The authors cite Talcott Parsons (1967) in stating that all organizations must solve four basic problems in order to flourish. "These are coping with the environment, attainment of goals, solidarity of the work force, and developing a cohesive value system." (Hoy, Tartar, 1992, pg. 74-79.). These objectives must be considered on three levels from the teacher in the classroom to the administration and finally to the Board of Education.

This article gives this intern a further understanding of the indicators of a healthy school climate as assessed by the principal, the teacher, and the school board and any ramifications therein. It also gives indicators that show what to look for in an unhealthy school environment at the three levels of the school hierarchy. Hoy and Tarter (1992) explain how these indicators can positively and negatively affect the operation of a school. The authors also state that the health of the school climate will affect the way students perform in these institutions. This is the reason why the aforementioned three groups, teachers, administrators, and school boards, have come together in the first place.

"The authors give seven aspects of measuring school health. One aspect at the Board level is institutional integrity. There are four at the administrative level which are initiating structure, consideration, resource support, and principal influence. The teacher level has two; moral and academic emphasis. These seven indicators are measured to find the health of the institution being studied." (Hoy, Tartar, 1992, pg. 74-79.).

This article gives this intern a valuable resource for evaluating different instruments, such as the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) that can measure

the climate of an institution. The authors conclude that schools with a healthy climate are more successful than schools that are unhealthy. They also state that "a principal should want to find out the organizational health of his or her school in order facilitate the education of the students." (Hoy, Tartar, 1992, pg. 74-79.). This gives the intern more reason to find a suitable instrument to evaluate the Collingswood Middle School.

The article in the NASSP Bulletin by James W. Keefe (1989) titled Assessing the Environment of Your School: The NASSP Case Model gives this intern a background in the rationale of the development of the Comprehensive Assessment of School Environments. This instrument (CASE) was developed by the NASSP to evaluate the entire school environment. There are three independent components of this system: the student, the parents, and the teachers. Each separate instrument will rate the school environment from its particular point of view.

The intern found this article very useful in finding indicators that are going to be helpful in developing a student satisfaction survey. The creation of such a survey without knowing what areas this intern should ask in the random sample of the Collingswood Middle School would have been impossible. This article is instrumental in convincing this intern to limit this study because of time constraints to two groups of stakeholders: the students and the teachers in the school.

Cathy Vatterott's (1991) article that appeared in the NASSP sponsored publication called Schools in the Middle published an article Assessing School Climate in the Middle School, gives this intern insights into the different approaches of gathering data to determine climate in a middle school. The author states "if the middle school students feel disconnected and if the school's climate does not meet their needs, the students will not learn to their optimum potential."

(Vatterott, 1996, pg. 2-8.). The school climate must be supportive and open so that the students will have a much better chance to perform to their potential. Thus, the author cites the basic need for a climate study from the students' perspective. "An administrator who knows the climate of his or her school will be able to structure remedies so that the school will meet the needs of its students." (Vatterott, 1996, pg. 2-8.).

The article provides this intern with a list of beliefs and attitudes that are cited from Johnston and Perez (1985), Purkey and Strahan (1986), and Van Hoose and Strahan (1988) that will assist in forming a student questionnaire for this study of the Collingswood Middle School climate. There is also a list of sample questions that helps this intern in the wording of the questions so that it will be suitable for middle school students. The article also states alternative means of gathering data, such as archives and observations by the intern. These techniques along with anecdotal materials will provide this intern with a well-grounded view of the school's climate.

The author cites that the middle school student needs are acceptance, belonging, responsibility, and recognition. "Acceptance is that people will like the student the way he is. Belonging means the student will be able to feel that he is part of a group. Responsibility happens when that the student feels that he can be trusted and he is a valuable member of the school community. Recognition makes the student feel special and capable of succeeding in the school. These four areas are the indicators of the pupil's view of the school climate." (Vatterott, 1996, pg. 2-8.).

One of many aspects in the climate of the school is the disciplinary policy of the administration. The School Discipline Climate Survey: Toward a Safe, Orderly Learning Environment by Donald R Grossnickle, Thomas J. Bialk, and Beverly C. Panagiotaros (1993) gives this intern examples of how to set up a

survey in a school. The article delineates concrete steps as to when and how to do a limited survey on just one aspect of school climate. This also elucidates for the intern another clue on how to limit the scope of the Collingswood Middle School study, and also it provides specific examples of questions that can be included in a student and teacher climate survey.

The intern is learning that such a limited survey could not lead to a reappraisal of any administrative procedure without evaluating the whole aspect of school climate. This type of study should be done after a general school climate study has been completed to follow up on areas of concern that might have been found in the larger study.

The historical background of the term school climate can be found in an article written by Dr. Bruce Howell (1993) titled The Essence of School Climate. This article explains that the term came from the need of the public to explain "the contemporary circumstances surrounding the situations facing the public schools today, such as discipline, integration and busing." (Howell, 1993, pg. 1-6.). He illustrates the parents' concern by citing the Ninth Annual Gallop Poll of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools in 1977, which listed the most frequent concerns. These concerns included, "lack of discipline, integration / segregation / busing, lack of financial support, difficulty in getting good teachers, poor curriculum, student abuse of drugs, parents' lack of interest, the size of the schools/classes, teachers' lack of interest, and finally the mismanagement of funds and programs." (Howell, 1993, pg. 1-6.). These concerns in education are still with us today, twenty years after the poll.

Dr. Howell states the "essence of the school climate is found in two factors: productivity and satisfaction." (Howell, 1993, pg. 1-6.). Productivity means that the schools are educating the students in a positive way and are meeting the educational standards and expectations. By satisfaction, he means

that the schools must live up to the expectations of the public by educating their students in a fair and credible way. These two factors should be analyzed to determine the type of climate that a particular school possesses.

The author states, "If a school is to have a positive climate, it must meet the basic human needs of both the students and the staff." (Howell, 1993, pg. 1-6.). These descriptors are the need for personal comfort, the necessary instructional devices, safety in the school, acceptance of both the students and the faculty, school's recognition of achievement at the student and faculty level, and maximized potential for both the faculty and the students. These six basic needs have to be met.

Howell also states, which confirms this intern's hypothesis, "The principal is the primary change agent in any school." (Howell, 1993, pg. 1-6.). The principal must implement any plan to improve the climate of a learning institution. Howell outlines the questions that an administrator needs to ask about before meeting the basic needs of the school, such as how to reward and how to determine school rules cooperatively. These ideas are going to be very useful in creating questionnaires and defining the needs of Collingswood Middle School.

Supervision as a Proactive Process by John C. Daresh (1989), gives a historical background for the development of theory based analysis of complex organizations such as schools or businesses. These theories offer this intern a framework by which an informed decision can be made on how to evaluate the data from the study on Collingswood Middle School.

The three formal theories cited by Daresh were Hage's Axiomatic Theory, Getzel's concept of social systems, and Gareth Morgan's eight organizational metaphors. The author also explains informal-based analysis, such as Matthew Miles' description of organizational health and the studies by Halpern and Croft that define organizations in terms of human personalities as open or closed in the

dealings between the principal and the teachers. These readings are going to be very useful when this intern examines an instrument and will be able to surmise on which theory it was based and what it is actually measuring. This is necessary when planning a school climate survey.

Gerald Hage's Axiomatic Theory of Organizations develop two basic characteristics as stated by Daresh (1989). Structure and how the organization is put together with outcomes is the purpose of the organization. "These organizations have four common structural ingredients: centralization, complexity, formalization, and stratification." (Daresh, 1989, pg. 60.). These factors state that with the Propositions of the Axiomatic Theory of Organizations that the following will occur:

- " 1. The higher the centralization, the higher the production.
2. The higher the formalization, the higher the efficiency.
3. The higher the centralization, the higher the formalization.
4. The higher the stratification, the lower the job satisfaction.
5. The higher the stratification, the higher the production.
6. The higher the stratification, the lower the adaptiveness.
7. The higher the complexity, the lower the centralization. "(Daresh, 1989, pg. 68.).

Jacob Getzels in his work during the 1950's finds that no matter what type of organization, they all have two common dimensions: The Nomothetic or the organization itself, and the Idiographic comprised of the people who are part of the organization. Getzels adds a third dimension which is how these areas mesh in the needs of the institution and of the individual to create a social system that benefits both the individual and the organization.

Gareth Morgan in 1986 found a way in which a manager or supervisor could understand what is happening in an organization. He did this by developing

eight predominant metaphors that would describe what is going on in a given situation. They are the following:

- " 1. Organizations as machines.
2. Organizations as organisms.
3. Organization as brains.
4. Organizations as cultures.
5. Organizations as political systems.
6. Organizations as psychic prisons.
7. Organizations as emblems of flux and transformation.
8. Organizations as instruments of domination." (Daresh, 1989, pg. 72-74.).

Mathew Miles (1965) cited by Daresh (1989) "A healthy organization is one that survives and copes with set backs by adapting to the new situation. There may be short term relapses, but the organization survives and learns from its mistakes. This organization stays around for a long time. The unhealthy organization does not learn from its troubles, flounders and has a much shorter life span than the healthy one." (Daresh, 1989, pg. 76-77.).

The author cites Andrew Halpern and Donald Croft for inventing the Occupational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ). Their work was based on the theory that all organizations have personalities. They find six different profiles describing the types of climates found in institutions today.

- "1. Open Climate: an energetic organization that is moving toward its goals while its staff members are satisfied in their personal and social needs.
2. Autonomous Climate: an organization in which the leadership emerges primarily from the group and the formal leader exerts little control over the staff members.

3. Controlled Climate: an environment that is impersonal and highly task-oriented.
4. Familiar Climate: a highly personal, but undercontrolled environment in which personal needs are satisfied, but little attention is paid to task accomplishment.
5. Paternal Climate: an organization in which the formal leader tries consistently to constrain leadership emerging from the group: the leader tries to do it all alone.
6. Closed Climate: an organization that demonstrates considerable apathy by all members." (Daresh, 1989, pg. 78-79.).

The intern finds the historical data and explanation interesting and useful. The book explains the genesis of organizational climate theory. It will be very valuable in aiding the intern in selecting and creating evaluative instruments to be used in the school climate study of Collingswood Middle School.

Today's educator must know how our schools developed to understand truly where they are headed in the future. Allan C. Ornstein and Daniel U. Levine (1993) in Foundations of Education give this intern a balanced view of the historical implications of school reform and educational trends in the United States over the last fifty years. They give the reasons why schools are structured in the manner they are today. The use of the industrial model in the setting up of our schools is evidenced in the assembly line process of a typical high school schedule. This can also be evidenced by the top down form of a management style of most school administrations, and most recently the introduction of site based management techniques developed in industry.

They also cite recent trends in American education that allow for input from groups not traditionally included in educational reforms, such as parents, teachers and students. This intern has learned that to get these views, surveys

and polls must be conducted. This will give the administration the data by which reforms and changes can be made to improve the climate of today's schools.

This intern is impressed with Theodore Coladarci's and Gordon A. Donaldson's (1991) approach to school climate assessment. Their article in the NASSP Bulletin titled School Climate Assessment Encourages Collaboration gives this intern an outline on how to conduct a school climate assessment in Collingswood Middle School. It is a six step plan that was designed for a district-wide survey, but components of the plan will be applicable to this intern's study. These steps range from deciding what type of climate the study will examine, the developing of the assessment instrument, including the distribution of the assessment instrument, collating the raw data, reviewing the results in groups and formulating a plan of action to improve the areas identified in the review process.

The article also names the NASSP's CASE or Comprehensive Assessment of School Environment instrument as the one used in the survey. It also gives a table full of staff, student and parent descriptors that will be useful in deciding what instrument this intern will use or what questions to ask if an original questionnaire is to be produced.

The physical surroundings or working environment of a school is very important to the psychological well being of the staff. Elizabeth Foster-Harrison's 1997 article Professional Climate:How Does Your School Compare? describes some remedies and suggestions on how to improve the ambiance of a school and how little things can make a difference. She uses the corporate world as an example where much thought is given to the improvement of the workplace. She also states that with the limited resources of the public sector, these factors often give rise to a very sterile working environment.

Foster-Harrison in her article, Professional Climate: How Does Your School Compare from Schools in the Middle, May, 1997, gives this intern ideas on how to change economically, the physical climate of the Collingswood Middle School. Examples of some dissatisfaction are bound to come up in the school climate survey. Anticipating some remediation of the physical plant seemed to be a prudent move. The author gives examples of plants, banners, and window treatments as economical ways to make the building more inviting to the students and the staff. She also encourages the staff to provide touches of warmth to the decor of their classrooms.

Using the Effective School Battery: Assessing Effective Schools by Gary D. Gottfredson, Ph.D., is essentially an advertisement for the Effective School Battery (ESB). This article does, however, provide this intern with many ideas on how to construct an assessment for school climate. This assessment tool evaluates thirteen different areas. These areas are identified by researchers as characteristics that are aligned with a flourishing school. They are as follows:

- " 1. school-site management and leadership
- 2. maximized use of instructional time
- 3. clear goals and high expectations
- 4. recognition of academic success
- 5. parental involvement and support
- 6. orderly and secure environment
- 7. a system of monitoring performance and achievement, and use of data to assess progress
- 8. collaborative planning and collegial relations; a bias for action
- 9. on going staff development
- 10. good teacher - student relations
- 11. high levels of student participation

12. a sense of community

13. district support" (Gottfredson, 1990, pg. 12-14.).

These areas of inquiry are designed to measure problem areas and the areas in which the school is succeeding. This instrument can provide a benchmark by which improvement can be measured after remediation for problems found in the survey are put into effect. The article is also instrumental in aiding this intern in deciding the areas in which to base the study of Collingswood Middle School's climate survey, the teacher view of the school climate and the student perception of the school climate.

John Feldman, Ed.D., in Profiling Your School's Organizational Health (1997) cites seven criteria for measuring school: "organizational health, academic emphasis, resource support, morale, initiating structure (principal behavior), principal influence, consideration (principal behavior), and institutional integrity." (Feldman, 1997, pg. 18-21.). This article is another advertisement of a assessment tool for school climate that Feldman is selling.

The instrument called the Organizational Health Inventory or (OHI) follows the organizational levels developed by Parsons and the organizational needs proposed by Etzioni. This instrument deals with one area of concern and that is the teacher-principal relationship. It examines the support that the administration gives the teachers and how they perceive the relationship between the two levels. This intern finds the article and the instrument (OHI) itself useful in determining the scope of the Collingswood study.

How Are We Doing? Why Not Ask the Kids: Measuring Climate in the Kindergarten and Primary Classrooms by Diane J. Fuqua (1989) is very useful in setting the parameters of the questionnaire that this intern developed for the use of the student population. The My Class Inventory (MCI) examines five areas of student concern that can be applied to the Collingswood Middle School. These

descriptors are satisfaction, friction, competition, difficulty, and cohesion. These areas of concern will give this intern a basis to develop a survey that will examine the unique concerns of the Collingswood student. This instrument was developed by Barry J. Fraser, and it was part of the ERIC document. The complete title for the survey is The Short Form of the Class Inventory Illustrating Scoring for Satisfaction and Cohesion.

The literature also gives strategies on how to go about changing the climate for the better. Dr. Christine A. Johnston 's (1993) Empowering the Organization Through Professional Talk: Communication that Makes a Difference is such an example of the literature giving the intern the tools with which to affect change in a situation. This will be very useful when pointing out some deficiencies to another colleague or staff member. The author gives the intern insight into how to take a diplomatic approach and at the same time improve the educational climate of a school. The most important role of a school principal is to provide the staff and the students with the most positive educational environment possible.

The Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement or TESA program was Developed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (1993). The program was based on the expectation theory by Thomas Goode and Jere Brophy which was defined as the following: teacher expectations are inferences that teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students, based on what they know about these students now. This program was designed to change the teacher's perceptions and to illustrate how these perceptions affect their expectations of the students. Thus, the teacher will expect more from low achievers and then be able to minimize the negative and maximize the positive effects of expectation.

The intern used this program to chart the effectiveness of an administrative initiative on how the students feel about the climate of their school.

Dr. Christine A. Johnston's book is a tour de force on how anyone can communicate in an organization. This author shows this intern how positive communication can make a change much less threatening in an organization. The author also demonstrates the ways in which people can talk in a professional manner, no matter what is being discussed. This leads to a much more professional, working atmosphere which is very useful when discussions on school climate and the improvement of the climate are being discussed. This intern has used Dr. Johnston's techniques in contract negotiations and has been very successful.

The School Climate Survey (1996) authored by Human Systems Development and Rudy Bernardo of Dayton ,Ohio, is a diagnostic, feedback and development survey that examines character traits and behaviors within a school. This survey has fifty questions using the Likert scale that examines the administration's relations with the teachers and the students. The survey also examines the relationships among the students and the teachers. These are the specific areas this intern wants to cover in the study. This instrument has been given over fifteen thousand times and it can measure CMS against itself and other schools of the same population and socio-economic grouping. This intern has called the author and has arranged for permission to use the instrument for the study of Collingswood Middle School.

This intern has learned from the literature that the school's climate can be profoundly affected by the way the principal, the staff, and the students perceive each of their situations in that educational institution. That perception can color the way the principal administers the school , how the teachers instruct their students and how well the students themselves learn. Thus, a good school

environment is a necessity in any school. This is what this intern has learned and is going to attempt to assess at Collingswood Middle School.

The assessment of the climate must be done in a manner that will give an accurate picture of what is taking place in a school. That means that the administration, the staff, and the students should be polled in such a manner to cover all the areas that could conceivably affect the participants' views of the climate in the school. The literature has given this intern examples of assessment instruments and questions that can be used. These instruments will give this intern a true view of the educational climate at Collingswood Middle School. Then a remediation plan can be developed to correct a problem or problems found in the surveys.

Chapter 3

General Description of the Study:

The organizational climate or atmosphere of a school has very important implications on the education of all the students attending the school. Hoy and Fosythe (1986) stated in Effective Supervision Theory into Practice that the climate of the school is closely related to its supervisory practices. The greater the principal's awareness is of the type of climate existing in his or her school, then the better that educator can anticipate the needs of the staff and the students. "The primary change agent in any school is the principal." (Howell, 1993, pg. 1 - 6.). Therefore, a school administrator must be aware of the type of climate that is in the school in order to make effective changes for the well being of the institution.

This intern examined the climate of Collingswood Middle School, CMS. The study was twofold: the point of view of the staff and the point of view of the students. The procedures for gathering the data was by a survey that has been used in other studies and is statistically accurate. This survey was distributed to the staff. The students received a survey that was much shorter and was prepared by this intern using the existing literature in order to write appropriate questions that deal with the students' perception of the climate of the Collingswood Middle School.

Description and Design of the Research Instruments:

The teacher survey used in this study was the School Climate Survey written by the Human Systems Development Inc. (1996) of Dayton, Ohio. This survey has been given to over fifteen thousand teachers and is statistically accurate. This fifty-question survey was designed to measure the character traits and behaviors within a school by using a five-response Likert scale. The areas being measured were motivation and energy, openness and trust, innovation and continuous improvement, involvement and interdependence, service to students, recognition, leadership, teamwork, and finally learning and development. This survey gave this intern an accurate picture of the climate of Collingswood Middle School's staff.

The student component of this study was a twenty-question survey developed by this intern. This survey was based on the needs Vatterott (1991) stated in Assessing the Climate in the Middle School. These four areas of need were acceptance, belonging, responsibility, and recognition. The responses were measured by a five-response Likert scale. The survey was designed to give this intern a general view of the students' attitudes about the school's climate.

Description of the Sample and the Sampling Technique:

The School Climate Survey (1996) was given to twenty-seven teachers of which twenty-four replied for an 88% response rate. The respondents answered all fifty questions of the survey. There was no need to establish a baseline with this questionnaire because the intern used the statistical data supplied by Human Systems Development Inc. and their fifteen thousand respondents.

The student survey, however, was another matter. The intern, to establish a baseline of norms, gave the survey to three sub-groups of students. This collective group acted as a control group. These groups were two homerooms

and this intern's special education class, a total of 55 students out of the 260 attending the school or about 21% of the total school population. The responses then were collated and a base line was established so that an average and mean could be determined to evaluate the study group.

The surveys will be reissued after the recommendations are put into place and implemented for four months. The purpose was to measure if any change in the school climate has taken place on the areas tested by a change in administrative procedure. Conclusions will be based on changed responses in the subsequent survey.

Description of the Data Collection:

The instrument used to evaluate the climate of Collingswood Middle School showed that Collingswood Middle School scored above the mean in all areas tested by the School Climate Survey (1996). The key driver, as stated by Human Systems Development "HSD", was the leadership component. This component scored a 4.32 out of a possible 5 on the Likert scale or .53 above the mean established by HSD. The low score of 3.68 was in the area of recognition. This score was still .45 above the mean.

This was the area that the intern and the principal decided to improve for the teachers. This area was specifically the area question number 33, or "The school informs people of success." The intern and the principal decided to institute concrete strategies for improvement of recognition. These strategies were personal memos, monthly announcements, and press releases to inform the staff, the students and the public of the successes in Collingswood Middle School.

The student survey also focused on the area of recognition. The question ranked nineteenth out of the possible 20 questions. This question, "The teachers

treat all students equally," was picked because it also dealt with the area of recognition. This question was tested by the introduction of a pilot program in a selected math class. This pilot program called Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement or TESA acted as the administrative initiative.

The TESA program was developed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (1993). The program was based on the expectation theory by Thomas Goode and Jere Brophy which was defined as the following: teacher expectations are inferences that teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students, based on what they know about these students now. This program was designed to change the teachers' perceptions and to illustrate how these perceptions affect their expectations of the students. Thus, teachers will expect more from low achievers and then be able to minimize the negative and maximize the positive effects of expectation.

The data of the first survey and the second survey will be applied to the questions targeted by this intern and the principal in the teacher and the student surveys. These questions were again assessed at the end of the four month interval. The data was then applied to the changes targeted by the first surveys to examine whether the initiatives planned by this intern and the principal, Mr. Gansert, were successful in improving the climate of the school at both the teacher and the student levels.

Chapter 4

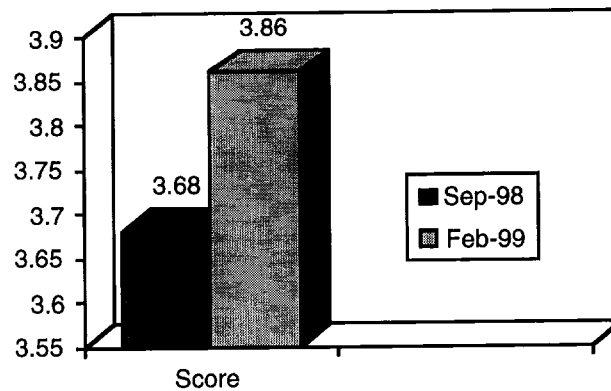
What Data Was Found from the Research?:

The targeted questions selected by both Mr. Gansert and this intern for this study were number 33 in the faculty survey and number 18 in the student survey. Both questions showed a measurable increase in the second survey after the administrative initiatives were put into place. The data collected revealed that there was improvement made in both areas of study, in the faculty's and in the students' perception of recognition. Recognition is an area that has traditionally scored low in the in the School Climate Survey. In the student control scores, it was the second lowest scored question.

This intern reissued the test instruments to the two study groups. The two groups responded with a 100% response on the student survey and a 69% response rate on the teacher survey. Both groups again answered 100% of the questions in the surveys.

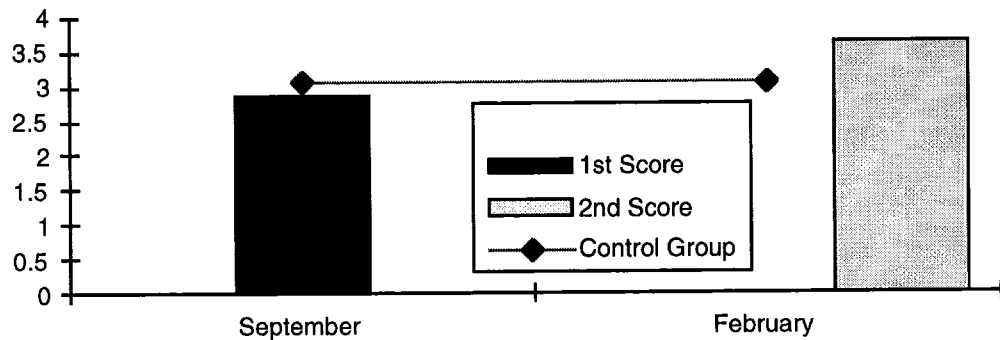
The study on the faculty focused on the question # 33 of the School Climate Survey, "Our school informs people of its success." The first issue of the survey was taken during the week of September 13, 1998. The response to the question had an average of 3.68 on a five-point Likert scale. The second survey taken four months later during the week of February 14, 1999, had a score of 3.86 of increase of 0.18. This a 5% increase in the mean average score of the same question taken in September of 1998.

Teacher Study



The student survey was first given during the week of September 27, 1998, to the group taught by the teachers using the Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement pilot program. The response to question # 18, "The teachers treat all students equally," was a 2.86 average on a five-point Likert scale. The control group score was 3.05 by comparison. The study group was given the same survey again during the week of February 14, 1999. This same question had a score of 3.65 an 0.81 increase. This is a 28% increase in the score for the average over a four-month period.

Student Study



What Did the Research Findings Mean?

Hoy and Fosyth (1986) stated that the school climate is closely related to its supervisory practices. Howell (1993) in the article, The Essence of School Climate, stated that "The primary change agent in any school is the principal, and the principal must be the prime mover for any improvement in the climate of a school."

The improvements in the scores of the questions targeted for study by this intern were seen as the direct results of the actions taken by Mr. Gansert to improve the climate of the school. Mr. Gansert's and the Intern's plan was the use of notes, newspaper articles, television news, and a bulletin board to improve the way the teachers felt about how the school recognized them for their contributions to Collingswood Middle School. The implementation of this plan realized 5% increase in the average score.

The improvement of 5% is significant. The score was already was 0.45 above the average norms in the area of recognition set by Human Systems Development (1996) in their School Climate Survey used in this study. This is empirically a low number in all school surveys by the School Climate Survey as stated by Human Systems Development.

The second group studied, the students, also improved in their scores. This improvement was dramatic because the February score had a 28% increase over the initial score measured in September. It was also noted that while the first score for the study group was 7% lower than the control groups score of 3.05 in September the study group's score was 21% higher in February than the control groups score.

For the students, the improvement over the average of the first survey was seen as a result of the implementation of the Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement program on the students studied. This program was designed to

help teachers to expect the best from every student and to treat the students in a more positive, even-handed way. The training for this program encouraged the teachers not to let negative preconceptions impact how they taught their the students. The students, sensing the change in the way they were being perceived, responded in a more positive manner to the question. Thus, the climate of the classroom improved measuably, and hopefully the learning process of the students was enhanced by favorable perceptions from their teachers.

Chapter 5

Conclusions of the Study:

The literature review and the independent research for this intern's thesis confirms the hypothesis that the principal of a school can influence the climate of a school in either a positive or a negative manner. Hoy and Forsythe cited Halpin and Kraft in their statement that a competent administrator must be able to gauge the climate in his or her school. (Hoy, Forsyth, 1986, pg. 156.). This intern has been able to witness and document an improvement of the climate of Collingswood Middle School. The improvement came about as a direct result of the principal, Alan Gansert, instituting two programs that were designed to test the narrowly designed question for the study.

The area of recognition was the area that this intern and the principal decided to test. Recognition has traditionally been scored lowest on the eight areas tested by the School Climate Survey as noted in the description of the survey-instrument design. This area offered a unique opportunity to improve a lowly scored area and at the same time to test this intern's hypothesis. The area of recognition was also tested under the TESA program that instructs teachers on how to reorder their expectation of students' performance in the classroom. Recognition proved to be an excellent choice for an area of testing.

The faculty study proved that with the advent of an administrative initiative, even the area of recognition can be improved. This initiative focused on publicizing the accomplishments of the staff in the classroom to the school, the

school district, and the public at large. The initiative used a school bulletin board that was strategically placed at the entrance of the school office to inform guests, students, and colleagues of the honored teachers' accomplishments. It also used the local and school newspapers to publish this news in columns and items. Along with the print media, television was employed in the school and in conjunction with local television stations as a way to promote the successes of the faculty and students of Collingswood Middle School when the facts warranted. The effort was a success because the climate in this area improved over the four-month span of the study.

The student component of the study took a different tact. This area of the research dealt solely with the classroom. The Teacher Expectation and Student Assessment pilot program or TESA was designed to change how teachers treated students. This, in turn, would affect how the students felt about the teachers treatment of them. The program did improve the climate of the study group over a four-month period. This improvement was shown by how the study group students responded to the question dealing with equal treatment as compared to their control group peers.

Implications for the Study:

The assumptions of this study are that a principal can change how the school is operating and that the principal can also evaluate the climate of his or her school to find what is right or what is wrong with the climate. This is a courageous thing to do because some of the answers that the administrator receives might not be what he or she wants to hear about his or her own job performance. To carry this out takes an administrator with an open mind, who has the courage to improve the situation in a school when it might be easier to let things coast along at the status quo.

This ability of an administrator to evaluate the type of environment in a school will aide him or her in adapting the staff to new and changing circumstances in education today. The knowledge gained will give the administrator the tools to categorize the type of climate. This will aid in determining the chances of whether a planned change will come about successfully or will be fought at every turn during the change process. In education, change is often necessary, so it is better to create the climate that allows change to occur.

There are four types of climate as identified by Hoy and Forsyth (1986) The open climate is best suited for any type of change. Ideas flow back and forth between the administration and the faculty. There is a high degree of professionalism at both levels. This is a healthy way for an institution to function. The closed climate is the exact antithesis of the open climate in that the staff and the principal exhibit unprofessional behavior, and there is no chance for change. The closed climate cannot be changed because there is no one in place to identify what is wrong, and everyone is trying to survive on his or her own. There can only be improvement if either the staff or the administration is changed or if both are changed.

However, there are two climates that can be improved. In the engaged climate, there is evidence of professional behavior in the staff. The disengaged climate shows evidence of professional behavior in the administration. These two climates both have the potential for change if the administration has the will to carry out the evaluation and the knowledge to analyze the data. The analysis will give the reasons why the staff or the administration acts as it has been accustomed. Thus, a plan can be proposed and changes can be made to improve the climate.

There are examples of all these types of climates in schools throughout New Jersey today. The schools that are successful and can adapt are the schools that are of the open-climate type. This can also be said of school districts. The administration of these institutions must be ready to meet the challenges of today's world to provide the best education for the students of the state. The only way to do this is by being willing to change. The only way that change can be brought about is by having schools that have open climates and are ready to meet that endeavor.

The school administrators are the people who will have to be the prime movers of this challenge. They are the ones with the tools, the knowledge, and the opportunity to create schools in which the staff is up to the task. The administrators are the key personnel to institute change on any and all levels.

Further Study:

This method of action research can and should be used to promote and expand the positive changes in Collingswood Middle School. The questionnaire used in this study can be used to analyze further the school's climate. This survey analyzed the narrow question of recognition while there are other areas that can and should be examined besides recognition. The questionnaire examines nine areas, such as motivation and energy, openness and trust, innovation, involvement and interdependence, service to students, vision and focus, leadership, teamwork, and of learning and development. Mr. Gansert should review the data to determine in which way action research can promote the appropriate behavioral changes in his school.

This instrument, the School Climate Survey, could also be used by other administrators in the Collingswood School District to promote the appropriate behavioral changes in their schools. The questionnaire, when used as an

evaluative tool in the action research method, would measure the climates of other schools. By further extrapolation of that data, the climate of the school district itself could be determined. This, in the opinion of this intern, is a first positive step toward the improvement of the climates in the individual schools and the entire Collingswood School District. The researcher must know the climate in order to determine the best course of action to improve the climate and thus the education of the students in the educators' charge.

The area of student climate is also an issue that should be addressed by the principal. Like teachers, the students will learn better if they feel that the school is responding to their needs. Vatterott, (1991) in her article, Assessing Climate in the Middle School, stated that if the school does not meet the needs of the students, the students will not learn to their optimum potential. Vatterott lists areas that are important to the student that an administrator can measure to see how the students assess their climate. These areas are "acceptance, belonging, responsibility and recognition." (Vatterott, 1991, pg. 2-9.) The principal, by using action research, can measure the students' climate in his or her school and use the data to affect positive change.

This can be achieved in any of the following ways: questionnaire, interview, or observation. A principal may use the method of this study or another that might be more appropriate for that school's makeup to measure the climate of his or her own particular school. However this is done, the need to know what the students' needs are is of paramount importance in the administration of any school.

When the administration acts on the data gained from the research in their schools, positive change becomes a logical result of the treatment which is suggested by the use of that data. This way of affecting change becomes a modus operandi for the administration. Whenever possible, before a change is to be made, the needs of the school or the school district at large should be

researched. The effects of that proposed change then can be anticipated because the research will show where the change is needed and why there is a need for change. Thus, change in the school can be facilitated and will lead to a more enlightened and rational way to guide a school into the exciting challenges and changes needed for the future.

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Appendix A

Teacher Survey and Student Survey

School Climate Survey

This questionnaire is designed to measure character traits and behaviors within your school. In order to have results which accurately reflect your perceptions, please be straightforward and candid. Answer the questions according to how you perceive the situation *now*, and not how you would like things to be. This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers.

Each of the statements has five possible responses. Using the response scale to the right of each question, circle your preferred choice. If you do not find a choice that fits your exact needs, circle ~ one closest to it. Answer in terms of how you experience the situation.

If you find a question where you have no information to base a response, or you do not understand, skip the question. Please answer as many questions as possible.

1- Strongly Agree 2-Agree 3-Somewhat disagree/Agree 4-Disagree 5-Strongly Disagree

Circle one response to the right of each question.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our school is an energetic and exciting place to learn. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The school administration is genuinely interested in the well being and satisfaction of its teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The staff looks forward to coming to school each day. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The staff is dedicated and enthusiastic about making the changes necessary for the school to be successful. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. There are things about working here (staff, students, policies, conditions) that encourage you to achieve higher levels of academic excellence. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Our school expects openness; candor within the school is a way of life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The staff is listened to in an open and non judgmental way. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. High levels of trust exist at our school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Knowledge and information needed to perform well is widely shared. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Our school actively seeks suggestions and ideas from students, staff, parents, and the external community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Our school continually examines its ways of teaching, making improvements? and learning from each experience. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Our school encourages different points of view and looks beyond one size fits all approaches. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

1- Strongly Agree 2-Agree 3-Somewhat disagree/Agree 4-Disagree 5-Strongly Disagree

Circle one response to the right of each question.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. At our school, teachers' requests and needs are responded to on a timely basis. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Eliminating cost and waste throughout the school is a priority. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Equipment and resources to do the job are adequate, efficient and well maintained. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. Different units and teams within the school plan together and coordinate their efforts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. All parts and components of the school - teachers, staff, parents, community, facilities, curriculum, and students, work together to do what is best for the learning environment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. Teachers are involved in making decisions that affect their work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. Problems between units and teams are resolved through mutual effort and understanding. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. The school is structured and organized in a way that facilitates and encourages learning. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. The school values and looks for the inherent goodness in our students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. Concern for the student is the essence of our work; the foundation of our existence as teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. Students' needs and academic requirements are understood by the staff. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. Teachers at our school work hard to relate to the thoughts and feelings of | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. The school's vision, values, and priorities are clear. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. The educational curriculum includes the teaching of the school's characteristic. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. The focus at our school is on student learning and achievement. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. The principal understands what is going on and is clearly visible in leading the school toward its vision. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. "Catching someone doing something right" is the norm at our school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

1- Strongly Agree 2-Agree 3-Somewhat disagree/Agree 4-Disagree 5-Strongly/Disagree

Circle one response to the right of each question.

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30. Students and staff frequently thank and praise each other. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 31. Meaningful recognition is given for a job well done. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 32. Students spend time with the principal for good behavior. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 33. Our school informs people of its successes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34. Our principal is friendly and easy to approach. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35. Our principal listens and pays attention to what I have to say. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 36. Our principal provides the appropriate level of coaching and counseling. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 37. Our principal is focused on high standards and academic results. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 38. Our principal has open, honest discussions with teachers about their performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 39. Our principal's time is spent doing what's important to support the learning environment for our school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 40. Our principal works to eliminate roadblocks for the teaching staff. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 41. Our principal doesn't hold back what needs to be said; constructive feedback is provided. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 42. There is a free exchange of opinions and ideas within our teaching staff to improve our teaching methods and processes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 43. Staff meetings to solve problems are useful and productive. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 44. All members of the teaching staff share responsibility for achieving our school's vision. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 45. The skills, knowledge, and abilities of the school staff are fully utilized. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 46. Our school's staff works well together. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 47. There is mutual trust and respect among members of our school staff. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 48. Our school encourages me to develop my knowledge and skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 49. The staff receives the training needed to do their jobs well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 50. The staff accepts responsibility for their own learning and development. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Collingswood Middle School
Student School Climate Survey

Answer Range:

Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Somewhat Agree/Disagree	Mostly Agree	Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. I feel safe in Collingswood Middle School. | _____ |
| 2. I look forward to coming to school each day. | _____ |
| 3. The teachers listen when I have something to say. | _____ |
| 4. I can talk to my teachers when I have a problem. | _____ |
| 5. I only talk to the Principal when I am in trouble. | _____ |
| 6. The school is clean and neat. | _____ |
| 7. The Principal is easy to talk to. | _____ |
| 8. The teachers urge me to do my best. | _____ |
| 9. I like to get good grades. | _____ |
| 10. Students look up to other students who get good grades. | _____ |
| 11. The school rewards students who do good in school | _____ |
| 12. I have many friends in school. | _____ |
| 13. My teacher knows when I am absent from school. | _____ |
| 14. Most of the students participate in a school activity. | _____ |
| 15. I can earn rewards in this school. | _____ |
| 16. I can be trusted to handle equipment and help the teacher. | _____ |
| 17. The teachers treat all the students equally. | _____ |
| 18. I can get along with any social group in the school. | _____ |
| 19. The teachers and the Principal talk to me about my interests. | _____ |
| 20. I feel comfortable in Collingswood Middle School. | _____ |

Appendix B

Graphs

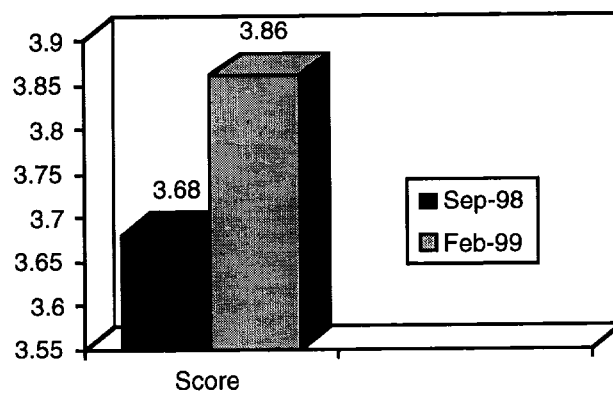
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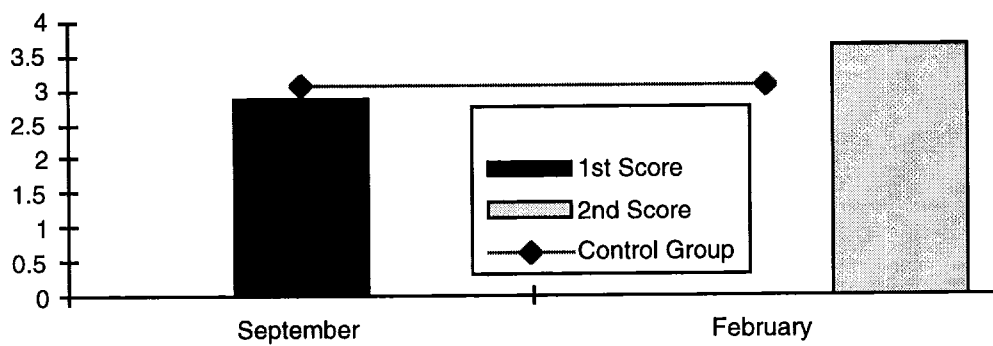
Graph 1

Teacher Study



Graph 2

Student Study



Biographical Data

Name	Joseph C. Beierschmitt
High School	Rancocas Valley Regional Mount Holly, New Jersey
Undergraduate	Bachelor of Arts Health and Physical Education Glassboro State College Glassboro, NJ
Graduate	Certification Teacher of the Handicapped Glassboro State College Glassboro, NJ Masters of Arts School Administration Rowan University Glassboro, NJ
Present Occupation	Special Education Teacher Collingswood Middle School Collingswood, NJ Assistant Athletic Director Collingswood School District Collingswood, NJ