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An Analysis of Erickson's Concept of School Legitimacy In Relationship to School Success and Failure

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DEDICATION

This project could not be possible without the support of my immediate family. Their encouragement, assistance, and criticism have been the force to bring me back into focus when I became weary. The most important person in the completion of this dissertation is my wife Patricia. She allowed me these five years to put both of us under stress. She bore my frustration and tolerated me being exhausted. I have given up Saturdays and part of Sundays for a long time to complete this study. I could not have done it without her. I dedicate this writing to the woman I love, Mrs. Patricia Griggs. Every man should be as lucky and blessed as I am.

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ABSTRACT

School legitimacy is the approval of principal and teacher authority that derives from the school community's trust (Erickson, 1987). When clients—the various stakeholders, including parents and students--recognize their school as legitimate, they trust that those in authority will help their economic future, protect their personal identities, and look out for their best interests. The concept of school legitimacy is applied to four case studies which involve poor and minority students to examine its role in a school's success or failure. The dissertation seeks to examine the process for constructing school legitimacy through reviewing literature, case studies, and surveys. Surveys taken from Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy's book, *Collective Trust,* will show the level of trust the groups have for each other as well as in the school. The data from the literature review and the surveys will be used to examine the process for constructing school legitimacy. The surveys revealed that the level of collective trust between different groups in school was exceptionally high. The individual and focus group interviews revealed the school staff and parents' adherence to the three essential elements of school legitimacy. With the exception of the principal, all other stakeholders demonstrated the school to be legitimate based on the criteria established and posited in the article by Fredrick Erickson.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

> Whatever the reasons for school failure may be in schools, it is necessary for educators to transform routine practices and symbol systems in their own school settings as well as to work for the change in the larger society. Changing society and changing school societies involves reorienting the daily struggles of doing school from collective work at failure toward collective work at success. (Erickson, 2007, p. 336)

This dissertation is a study of school legitimacy as posited by Frederick Erickson (1987) in his article "Transformation and School Success: The Politics and Culture of Educational Achievement." School legitimacy, as declared in Erickson's article, is a status acquired by a school when all stakeholders recognize and approve of the school's authority. Students, parents, and the communities that recognize their school as legitimate, trust that those in authority will help their economic future, protect the personal identities, and look out for their best interest (Erickson, 1987, p. 344). Trust of the school's authority by stakeholders is central to school legitimacy (Erickson, 1987). School legitimacy is not seen without carefully looking for it. Just as healthy school culture can produce achieving schools, school legitimacy is necessary for the academic success of a school (Erickson, 1987).

The dissertation will look at school legitimacy through Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy's (2011) book *Collective Trust: Why Schools Can't Improve without It*. "Collective trust is socially constructed out of talk and nonverbal interactions among group

members" (Forsyth, et al., 2011, p. 24). According to Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy, "collective trust is a group belief that emerges through the social construction of shared perceptions about the trustworthiness of another group or an individual" (Forsyth, et al., 2011, p 22). The determination whether to trust or not trust school staff by stakeholders also determines whether they will approve or disapprove of the schools authority. Collective trust is very similar to school legitimacy.

By combining the definitions of school legitimacy, derived from Erickson, and collective trust, from Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy, we have a more comprehensive definition of school legitimacy. School legitimacy for this dissertation is a status acquired through trust among stakeholders which allows for the acceptance and approval of the school's authority. Individual trust of school staff, students, parents, and community, and collective trust between groups of stakeholders is essential for school legitimacy. Just as people have opinions about the trustworthiness of school authority, groups of stakeholders also holds strong beliefs about whether other groups are trustworthy. *Trust* is of fundamental importance for school success (Erickson, 1987; Forsyth, et al., 2011, p. 99). The above definition and ideas formulate the concept of school legitimacy for this dissertation.

Rather than summarizing what relevant literature says, this dissertation applies the concept of school legitimacy to several prominent and powerful qualitative case studies that involve minority students in order to test the concept's role in a school's success or failure. This dissertation seeks to explain and develop a process of constructing school legitimacy through reviewing literature. Tried and proven surveys from Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy's 30 years of studying "trust" provide evidence of the existence or non existence

of collective trust. These surveys also show schools specific areas among stakeholders that hinder school legitimacy and what is necessary for developing a process for constructing school legitimacy.

Statement of the Problem

Responsibility for school failure generally falls to one of two sources. First, there are schools that fail their students. Second, there are students, parents, and communities that fail the schools. Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy call the students and parents "the clients" (p. 23). As Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy used the word client to represent students and parents (Forsyth, et al., 2011, p. 23), the word "clients" in this dissertation is used to represent parents and students. The politics (practices) and the culture of schools decide whether they are schools that work at success or work at failure (Erickson, 1987). Schools will never be successful without the acceptance and adherence to school authorities by the clients. Schools fail when the clients do not trust that school authorities have good intentions, do not trust that those in authority will protect their cultural identities, or do not trust that compliance with the authorities will be positive for their personal interest (Erickson, 1987). Lack of individual trust becomes a central problem for minorities and poor schools that work at failure. The lack of individual trust can morph into lack of group trust. When clients lack trust, minority and high-poverty schools are more likely to fail. Failing or unsuccessful schools are not able to acquire the status of a legitimate school. Failing schools lack of compliance is due to their lack of trust in school authorities (Erickson, 1987).

Erickson combined two prominent positions once used individually to explain school failure of poor and minority students to form his explanation for the failure of predominately minority schools. Each reason touches on the ideas of trust.

The communication process explanation. The first position Erickson called "the communication process explanation" (1987, p. 336). This position credited the low academic achievement of minority students to the cultural difference in communication styles between teachers and their students. In this explanation, the problem of school failure is due to a lack of effective communication between teachers and students. Cultural and language differences provide the catalyst that promotes the unintended problems (mainly noncompliance due to lack of trust) that occur between teachers and students. It is important to note that communication problems (verbal and nonverbal) occur in the early grades.

Perceived labor market explanation. Erickson's second position is John Ogbu's position. Ogbu identified the reason for school failure as coming from the cynical dispositions passed on from minority parents and communities to children because of generations of inequity of access to employment (Ogbu, 1998). This position, which Erickson calls "the perceived labor market explanation," places the cause of school failure outside of the school (Erickson, 1987, p. 339). The negative dispositions passed to students allow students to have the same lack of trust of schools and school staff as their parents. It is important to note that this occurs more in the middle and upper grades. Trust issues between teachers and students begin unintentionally in the lower grades and proceeds in a different fashion in the middle and upper grades with some help from the clients.

Politics and culture of school success. Erickson's main explanation for school failures is a synthesis of the two stated positions, which he calls "the politics and culture of school failure and success" (Erickson, 1987, p. 341). He views school achievement in his main explanation as a political process where three elements of trust (legitimacy, identity, and economic interest) are central and framed by the discourse of school staff (Erickson, 1987). To view school success politically we must analyze how the actions of school staff and stakeholders speak of how they understand and execute their roles in the trust necessary for compliance to school authority (Erickson, 1987). How do poor and minority students view the teacher's or the school's authority? How do teachers view their role in developing the trust clients need to assent to school authority? The three elements of "trust" form the core of school legitimacy that is necessary for student achievement. Trust becomes central to acceptance and approval of school authority, which in time gives a school the status of legitimacy.

Communities' distrust of schools, their staffs, and the society creates a divide between teachers and students that stifles the ability for one to teach and the other to learn. Individual and group trust creates genuine relationships between school staff and clients that appreciates, respects, and accepts the client's identity while preparing students for a successful and profitable future (Erickson, 1987). Clients comply when school authorities appreciate their personal and economic interest.

"Learning what is deliberately taught is a form of political acceptance. Not learning is form of political resistance" (Erickson, 1987, p. 343). Poor and minority students who assent to school authorities take on the risk that their political acceptance produces kindness, gentleness, and consideration (Erickson, 1987). Assent is the risky

part of the political process of school success or failure that leans heavily on trust. Students and teachers who will trust each other will take the risk of both being successful academically. School staff and clients demonstrated trust when they are willing to risk working with and helping each other. Without trust none of the parties are willing to risk working together. Since taking a risk is essential for acceptance of authority, without trust there is no acceptance of authority. When there is no assent to authority, students become unruly and the intended learning prescribed by the authorities does not occur. When the intended learning does not occur, schools fail.

Schools today are so concerned with passing annual state test that they lose focus on the high poverty and minority students who performs worst on the test. Accountability has caused educators to focus more on pedagogy than on relationships. What matters most to school administrators is a passing grade on the school report card. Twenty-five years after Erickson wrote his article, poor and minority students are still lagging behind the general population academically. Today it seems that there is even less emphasis on changing schooling practices or the society around the school to help the students who need it the most. Schools with the status of legitimacy today would have greater potential to move students from poverty to the middle class in large numbers. This study will shed light on the processes needed to construct legitimacy in schools. Trust is the essential concept of school legitimacy.

High poverty and minority schools clients for many of the reasons discussed in this dissertation fail to trust school staff. School staff also fails to trust poor and minority clients. This lack of trust on both sides eliminates the school being accepted as legitimate and thus doomed to failure.

I will use the more thorough definition of school legitimacy and identify fundamental strategies to construct school legitimacy. My study will apply the theoretical concept of school legitimacy to case studies of poor, minority, and inner city schools. Two questions must be answered in my research. First, how is school legitimacy constructed and maintained? Second, how does the school staff help to construct trust among its clients in a local school?

In the literature review, I examined qualitative studies of schools with high poverty and/or high minority children. Rather than simply summarizing their findings, I used these cases to conduct a critical analysis of the concept of school legitimacy in those settings. The case studies that I will use were not written to discuss school legitimacy, but the concept is clearly seen in the discussion. Each case study relates to a specific element of school legitimacy. Teachers and clients in the studies reveal not only the existence or non existence of school legitimacy but also their efforts in developing or diminishing their schools status of legitimacy. The surveys will provide a modern day view of what teachers, parents, and students think of their school as it relates to the concept of legitimacy. Analyzing the information from the case studies and school staff and clients surveys will give me the informational tools to develop a process for constructing school legitimacy.

Research Questions

The research question that will drive this study is, "How is school legitimacy constructed and maintained?" In the study I will look at multiple ethnographic cases studies of school success and school failure to determine why school legitimacy was

lacking in failing schools and present in successful schools. The purpose of the study is to identify the process by which school legitimacy is earned and constructed.

Research Framework

Erickson's view of school failure and success provides a significant part of the conceptual framework for this dissertation. There are two methods of viewing school success and school failure. The first sense refers to the involuntary ways in which schools "work at" failing their students and students "work at" failing to achieve in the school (Erickson, 1987, p. 336). The second way refers to what the school does as well as what the student does. School legitimacy, the status acquired by a school through the acceptance and approval of the clients, conceptualize why schools fail or succeed. Trust is the central concept in school legitimacy (Erickson, 1987).

Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy summarizes why schools fail or succeed in what they called "Collective Trust" (p. 22). Collective trust forms the conceptual framework for why schools succeed and the lack thereof is the reason schools fail. "Collective trust emerges during repeated exchanges among group members" (p.24).

The key concept in school legitimacy and collective trust is trust. Trust, in Erickson's conceptual framework, emphasizes both individual and group perceptions. Collective trust, from Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy does the same. This dissertation combines the two conceptual frameworks, which align closely, to form a more comprehensive concept and conceptual framework of school legitimacy. Rather than writing Erickson's conceptual framework of school legitimacy and Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy's conceptual framework of collective trust, I will simply use "school legitimacy" to represent the two conceptual frameworks. School legitimacy is individual and group trust

of school staff and authority that produces a culture and climate for school success. Schools must earn school legitimacy.

School legitimacy. School legitimacy is trust between students and teachers and clients and school staff. Erickson implies that to have school legitimacy, two things must happen: 1) transformation of routine educational practices and symbol systems in individual school setting; and 2) educators must actively work to change the larger society or community where the school exists (Erickson, 1987). It becomes imperative that we look inside the school, as well as, outside of the school into the community, to find the reason for school failure or success (Erickson, 1987).

An inside perspective. The communication process explanation provides some answers about why students withhold assent. "Cultural boundaries are behavioral evidence of culturally differing standards of appropriateness. Boundaries, the manifest presence of cultural differences, are politically neutral phenomena" (Erickson, 1987, p. 345). There is no difference in the rights, privileges, or obligations because of these cultural differences. When there is intergroup conflict, which is sometimes created between teachers and students, cultural boundaries become cultural borders. Cultural borders are the features of culture differences that are not politically neutral. When a person possesses a different kind of cultural knowledge than another, their rights and obligations are allocated differently. Speaking of practices such as these, Erickson said "this cultural border work –making cultural communications style a negative phenomenon in the classroom –seems to have stimulated student resistance that was manifested linguistically" (Erickson, 1987, p. 347). "Black English vernacular became an occasion for stigmatizing border work by the teacher and for resistance by the children"

(Erickson, 1987, p. 347). Cultural differences, as seen in the communication process explanation, can become a source of conflict between teachers and students, and over time, inhibit trust to the extent that there is consistent and continual trouble between teachers and students. Cultural boundaries are not political, yet these symbolic acts polarize students. Failure is the result and trust defeated.

An outside perspective. Teachers are not the only people who contribute to a lack of trust between students and themselves because of cultural communication differences. The lack of trust between students and teachers by other students also advances the academic failure of minority students. The communication process explanation exists inside the school and occurs mostly in the early grades. Outside of the school, the perceived labor market explanation stifles students from accepting or assenting to school authority because of a different force. Ogbu suggests that cultural differentiation through resistance develop to the point of a sharp distinction between "acting black" and "acting white" by the time American black students are of high school age (Ogbu, 1998). Peers make big differences of slight divergences from a cultural norm. "The peers of the high-achieving students use strong sanctions to enforce a stringent cultural standard that symbolizes group membership" (Erickson, 1987, p. 350). These black students were using cultural differences as a powerful political symbol. The source of confusion is both inside and outside of the school. The role of culture and cultural differences varies in school success (Erickson, 1987).

Hegemony. Hegemonic practices must also be mentioned because they relate to school failure and school success. “Schools are one of the arenas where people can work to change the existing distribution of power and knowledge in our society” (Erickson, 1987, p. 352). When it comes to African-American students, if we continue to do in schools what we have always done, we will continue to get what we have always gotten and the achievement scores of African-American students will always be below the general population. What we have always done in education is part of the cultural hegemony of established classes in society (Erickson, 1987). Erickson, summarizing Graamsci’s notion of hegemony (as cited in Bluci-Glucksmann, 1982, p.352), wrote that,

> hegemony refers to the ubiquitous and taken for granted status of a dominant culture within a culturally plural and class-stratified society such as the United States. Because of the ubiquity of the dominant culture and the institutional arrangements that are consonant with its assumptions, it is not necessary for dominant groups to use overt means, i.e. naked force, to maintain their position of advantage. Rather as members of the society, dominant and subordinate alike, act routinely in concert with the cultural assumptions and interest of the dominant group, existing power relationships can be maintained, as it were, by an invisible hand.

Hegemonic practices are routine practices and actions that make sense to the oppressed group; therefore, they do not resist their oppression and stay in servitude to the dominant culture. “Hegemonic practices are alive in society, schools, and the classroom. They permeate and frame the school experience of students who are members of stigmatized social groups” (Erickson, 1987, p. 352). You can change hegemonic

practices. People can decide which aspects of that conventional wisdom to adopt and which to reject, creating a learning environment that not only does not stigmatize minority students, but stimulates them to achieve (Erickson, 1987). Cultural politics in the young grades can lead to maintaining trust and assent if teachers adopt instructions in the student's home cultural communication style. Culturally responsive pedagogy can support trust and legitimacy between teachers and students. The politics of legitimacy, trust, and assent seem to be the most fundamental factors in school success, although cultural differences do not always stop students from achieving. Erickson argues that a more prevalent pattern is that cultural differences make a negative difference because they give to miscommunication in the early grades and those first problems of miscommunication escalate into student distrust and resistance in later grades (1987). Race is still significant in matters of schooling (Barlett & Mckinley, 2006).

Significance of the Study

There are two reasons that this study is significant. First, understanding the construction of school legitimacy and the role it plays in a schools success among poor and minority schools is important. These concepts bring to light policies and practices that will ensure a culture of leaning that will be able to transform failing schools into successful schools.

Second, by understanding of the role legitimacy in school failure and success, this study will bring to light a new look at an old position on why schools fail or succeed. It could be that we have missed the mark and have had a working solution all the time, but lacked the courage to put forth a plan to transform schools. After the results of this study,

I will revisit Erickson's position and make suggestions for implementation or disregarding. The literature review will begin in the next chapter.

Preparation for the Literature Review

School legitimacy for poor and minority schools is pertinent to their academic success. Discipline, low motivation, and disengagement from class work are the problems facing schools with a majority of minority and poor students. I have taken in-dept qualitative case studies of diverse schools that had high enrollment of minority and low-income students and sort to determine the extent to which school legitimacy was applicable in these cases. It did not matter if school legitimacy was the author's original intent; the concept is so significant to academic achievement that it materializes in every discussion of school failure or success. We will see this in the literature review.

The literature review will connect school legitimacy with the studies I have chosen. In five case studies I outlined the purposes for school failure and school success. Three of the studies will accent school failure and two school success. Each study was viewed through the lens of school legitimacy. The case studies for school failure are: *Bad Boys* by Ann Ferguson, *Subtractive Schooling* by Angela Valenzuela, and *Ain't No Making It* by Jay MacLoad. The case studies for school success come from an article by Jerome Morris entitled "Can anything good come out of Nazareth". Each of the studies emphasizes a particular aspect of school legitimacy by focusing on a particular reason for school failure or success. Ferguson explores the aspect of "identity". Valenzuela focuses on the idea of "institutional and individual legitimacy" (looking out for the students' best interest). MacLeod identifies the role of "poverty" (failure to advance economic interest) in school failure. Morris in his treaties on successful schools elaborates on how the

elements of school legitimacy were the source of school success. Trust that leads to the acceptance of school authority is central if schools are successful. The lack of trust alienates the client's wiliness to be successful.

While the studies of school failures strongly reflect portions of Erickson's concepts of school legitimacy, a more complete knowledge of his concepts could have provided stakeholders in failing schools a means to help the school population in their efforts toward success. The strong impressions made on me by these studies sharpened my resolve to seek to further the study of school legitimacy.

CHAPTER II CONNECTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

Study 1 - Bad Boys

I will begin by discussing elements of Ann Ferguson's book "Bad Boys: Public Schools and the Making of Black Masculinity" and contrast it with school legitimacy. I will look at Rosa Parks Elementary School, used in Ferguson's research, to show how the bad boy identity produces trust issues that contribute to school failure. I will analyze the similarities between Ferguson's study and the concept of school legitimacy; decide if there is a consensus in ideas of school failure and success, and use that analysis to begin developing strategies that can be widely adopted in order to construct school legitimacy.

Ferguson's study focuses on the making of black masculinity in public schools. The heart of her research was working with twenty-five strategically selected fifth and sixth grade African-American boys from Rosa Parks Elementary School. Because of their school records, she called ten of them "school boys" (those doing well in school) and ten of them "troublemakers" (those characterized as getting in trouble). The remaining five warranted no specific categorization. She conducted interviews with all of them and spent time observing, hanging out with, and getting to know this smaller group (Ferguson, 2000, p.9). Their voices are what Ferguson said bind her text (Ferguson, 2000, p.11).

Ferguson speaks quite extensively about the punishing room in Rosa Parks School. Teachers send students in trouble to the punishing room. The room is small and

two doors down from the school's main office. The sign on the door, Student Specialist's Office, conceals what happens in the room (Ferguson, 2000, p. 30).

Ferguson's study of the making of black masculinity emphasizes portions of Erickson's conceptual framework for school success and failure and demonstrates how the lack of trust is one reason for school failure. Erickson posits that legitimacy, trust, and assent are the most fundamental factors in school success (Erickson, 1987). The absence of these elements would produce school failure. I apply Erickson's conceptual framework to the data from Ferguson's study.

Trust: that my identity will be protected. One way the schools become legitimate is through the essential element of trust. Students must trust that the school authorities care about their cultural identities (Erickson, 1987). Without this sense of trust, students will not assent to the authorities, and generally they become discipline problems. Schools with excessive discipline problems are generally failing schools. The punishing room is a window into the disciplinary system of the school and illustrates how the race/gender identities of preadolescent African-Americans boys are shaped through punishment (Ferguson, 2000, p. 40). The "bad boys," or the kids with the discipline problems, are a manifestation of the school's policies and practices on discipline. It is in the punishing room where we investigate how black masculinity becomes a resource for school adults forming the school identity termed "bad boys."

"The punishing room is also a site to explore how boys negotiate their identities and life histories in the collective experience of race/gender (Ferguson, 2000, p. 40)". These negative student identities are one way to hinder the legitimacy of schools and the academic success of the students. The punishing room creates a negative personality

while reconstructing African-American culture as deficient and those who accept it as deviant. Students who spend time in the punishing room take on the reputation and identity of the "bad boys." This label and the identity associated with it impede the students' opportunity to learn and achieve (Anderson & Lee, 2009). This unfortunate occurrence facilitates the distrust of teachers, the resistance to school authorities, and the assumption that the school does not have the students' best interests at heart. Policies and practices of the school aid in creating negative identities. Students no longer trust the school to protect who they are and resist through rebellion. Ferguson's study of school discipline illustrates how schools can create a culture of school failure. Understanding how student identity relates to school is crucial for school success. Understanding trust as it relates to legitimacy can set in place actions that prevent creating the "bad boy" personalities by transforming school politics, policies, and culture to practices more readily accepted by the students that they teach.

Teaching must relate to the student and the student must to relate to the teaching to develop a positive self-image. "Culturally relevant teaching is one way to develop a "relevant black personality" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p.17). Students need their own identity to be protected and must trust that within the school their identity is not recreated. "Culturally relevant teaching fosters a natural cultural identity that empowers students to live successfully in society" (Osborne, 1996).

School authority and identity. Legitimate schools recognize the students' lack of trust as a prerequisite to their lack of assent. Schools with high discipline problems and schools that use discipline to separate the so-called "bad boys", ignore these two important concepts, trust and assent. The design of Ferguson's study reveals an

interaction between institutional and teacher authority as they relate to student identity. She first describes and analyzes the disciplinary system of the school (school authority), and then discusses the labeling and categorization that destroys the boys' sense of self and redefines them as students with behavioral problems (teacher's authority) (Ferguson, 2000, p. 22). Just as trust in the legitimacy of the authority (institutional and teacher) and the good intentions of those exercising it is a concept of school legitimacy which leads to success (Erickson, 1987), Ferguson's study describes in great detail how poor discipline techniques creates the lack of legitimacy. School practices of stereotyping students as problems are steps toward school failure.

"Students who get into trouble during the school day are attempting to reaffirm their sense of self under extremely discouraging circumstances" (Ferguson, 2000, p.22). The school works at controlling students through discipline while simultaneously attempting to formalize an identity that authorities think is best for the students. The students find a way to resist the authority and keep the image they want, albeit with negative connotations. A consistent pattern of refusal to learn in school is a form of resistance to a stigmatized ethnic or social class identity assigned by the school. Students can refuse to accept the negative identity by refusing to learn (Erickson, 1987). The school projects an identity that students are willing to risk failure to avoid. The perceived negative identity put forth by the school is what Ferguson found in the making of the "bad boy" image.

Student assent is one of the components that is necessary for school legitimacy, and the legitimacy of a school is essential for school success. With student assent there is trust of teachers by students and students by teachers. When teachers and students trust

each other, learning can take place (Erickson, 1987). The role school discipline plays in the learning process is crucial. "Adults in school believe students must conform to the rules in the classroom for learning to take place" (Ferguson, 2000, p.52). The problem that Ferguson's study addresses is that the African-American male is having a hard time conforming to the rules and assenting to the school authority. This is a trust issue that leads to academic failure. Schools must build trust with students and parents and teach teachers to do the same for school success.

Communication and identity. "Differences in ways of speaking and listening between the child's speech networks and the teacher's speech networks lead to systematic and recurrent miscommunication in the classroom" (Erickson, 1987, p. 337). The cultural explanation for what is going on between the teacher and the student does not occur to either of them. The teacher does not see that the student's behavior is being generated by the actions of the teacher. "The teacher moves to use clinical labels and attributes inherent traits to the student instead of seeing a cultural difference" (Erickson, 1987 p. 337). "The use of Black English, or the mother's tongue, rather than "standard" English will get an African-American child in trouble" (Ferguson, 2000, p. 72). The cultural difference in speech becomes a disadvantage for the African-American students. To teachers, African-Americans students are in the "outer limits". "The 'outer limits' is the place where students exist when compared to the desired norm which is a docile bodily presence and the intonation and homogeneous syntax of Standard English" (Ferguson, 2000, p. 72).

Rosa Parks School received federal allocations to compensate their poor and minority students. This compensation was for what the state called the "deprivation" in

the home environment, which they bring into the school and that black children and their families are "culturally disadvantaged" (Ferguson, 2000, p. 55). This ideology emanates from the prevailing perspective of white, middle class culture being superior and the "inferior nature of the values, life experience, and knowledge that black students bring" (Ferguson, 2000, P.55). Teachers who have this line of thinking are harmful to the African-American student. Schools must learn to recognize cultures as simply different, not better or worse.

Poverty and identity. School failure is from the perceived racism in the minds of the castelike minorities that creates a defeatist attitude towards school, which produces resistance to authority and failure to excel in academics (Ogbu, 1998). Poor and minority students (and their parents and peers) believe that school success will not help them break out of the poverty that they attribute to the racism that is an epidemic in American society (Erickson, 1987). This is the main reason for low school achievement of minority students in the U.S (Erickson, 1987). "Institutional practices continue to marginalize or exclude African-Americans in the economy and society through the exercise of rules and standards by people who may consider themselves racially unbiased" (Ferguson, 2000, p.19). These institutional practices, through rules and standards, support the institutional racism that is oblivious to the average white teacher teaching minority students. The common thread tying these three concepts together is that racism within society and its institutions, such as schools, continues to perpetuate the cycle of poverty. The idea is that since society creates scenarios that lead back to poverty, there is no need to succeed at school because it will not ease their circumstances.

Punishment occurs when African-American students reject the identity that the school staff attempts to impress upon them and their discipline rates are disproportionately higher than their statistical representation in public schools. Coined as the discipline gap, racial and ethnic disparities are present in virtually every major school system across the United States (Monroe, 2005). **"**Punishment is a fruitful site for a close up look at routine institutional practices, acts, and cultural sanctions that give life and power to racism in a school setting that not only produces massive despair and failure among black students, but that increasingly demonize them" (Ferguson, 2000, p. 20). Punishment becomes a racist practice used by schools to exercise power and force submission of young black students (Pollock, November, 2004). The resistance to the supposed racist power over students moves them to resistance and lack of trust, which is instrumental in producing failure (Erickson, 1987). School failure that arises from punishment broadens the chasm between students and teachers and brings to light similar practices that are found in the same communities where the minority students live. "Institutionalized racism is the most devastating factor contributing to the lowered achievement of students of color, which we recognize as the unexamined and unchallenged system of racial biases and residual White advantage that persist in our institutions of learning" (Singleton, 2006, pg. 33).

Summary. School success and school failure are political processes in which student identity is important (Erickson, 1987). Principals and teachers attempting to change the students' cultural identity can produce situations where learning or not learning in school becomes a political event. In the attempt to protect their personal identities, by rejecting the docile identity prescribed by the school, many students at Rosa

Parks Elementary became academic failures, bad boys. Accepting school and teacher authority is risky and demands trust of both school staff and clients. Trust allows for vulnerability and risk that the groups will respond to each others' best interest (Forsyth, et al, 2011, p. 32; Erickson, 1987). Collective trust (school legitimacy) respects the other group's culture and identity. Ferguson's research highlighted cases at Rosa Parks Elementary School where majority groups in schools at times look down on the language, culture, and economic status of many minority groups. "We see racial inequalities today in two ways: 1) through institutional practices and 2) through cultural representations of racial differences" (Ferguson, 2000. p. 44). "Institutional norms and procedures in the field of education support a racial order, and images of racial myths frame how we see ourselves and others in a racial hierarchy" (Ferguson, 2000, p. 44). Clients of legitimate schools trust that their identity will be protected (Erickson, 1987). Trust in the protection of identity is the first leg of Erickson's elements of school legitimacy. We will now look at the second element, which is trust that those in authority will look out for my best interest. Erickson called this institutional and personal legitimacy (Erickson, 1987).

Study 2 - Subtractive Schooling

Angela Valenzuela studied a high school (Seguin High) in Houston, Texas, and determined a cause of school failure among Mexicans or Latinos. It was once nearly all white and middle class, but is now nearly all brown (predominantly Mexican) and working class. At the time of Valenzuela's study, the school's student population was 95% Latino (mostly Mexican) with a faculty that was 52% white, 27% African-American, 1% Asian, and 20% Latino. The 80% of the staff that is non-Latino struggles with relating to the Mexican community (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 38). "The failure to relate

to minority students is clear by the fact that Seguin High, once a model institution, is now one of the poorest performing schools in the Houston Independent School District (HISD)" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 33).

Mexican and Mexican American students, much like African-Americans, are a block of American society that suffers from academic underachievement. For most regular track students (students without specific accommodations to help them be successful in school) of Seguin High School, schooling is the means by which the schools divest the students of their social and cultural resources. This process is called a "subtractive process". The subtractive process is the cause or reason the Latino students are vulnerable to academic failure. "Subtractive Schooling proposes that these students need more cultural assimilation and re-socialization. These alleged "deficiencies" are themselves symptomatic of the ways that schooling subtracts resources from them" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 5). Before dismissing urban youth as lazy underachievers, researchers should examine the schools' role in fostering poor academic performance (Erickson, 1987, Ferguson, 2000, p. 91, Valenzuela, 1999, p. 5). Speaking primarily of Latino students, Valenzuela wrote that,

> U.S. born youth are neither inherently anti-school nor oppositional. They oppose a schooling process that disrespects them; they oppose not education, but schooling. My research suggests that schools like Seguin High are organized formally and informally in ways that fracture students' cultural divisions among the students and between the students and the staff. (1999, p. 5)

School failure reflects in the lack of transforming routine practices and symbols systems (Erickson, 1987) that assist in bringing positive cultural change between all groups in society. The daily struggle of how schools operate must change to fit those whom the school serves (Erickson, 1987). These routine practices and symbol systems divest Latinos and African-Americans of their social and cultural backgrounds and inadvertently contribute to school failure.

The element of school legitimacy that suggests students must trust that those in authority are looking out for their best interest is lacking when it comes to Latino students. The subtractive process seeks to assimilate Latinos rather than help them in the development as successful students. Institutional and individual legitimacy speaks of the school and the teacher looking out for the students' best interest (Erickson, 1987).

Schooling. Legitimacy encompasses in its core a sincere, intellectual, and emotional acceptance of the school and its staff by the students and community that it serves. School stakeholders recognize that the school has the students in mind. "What Mexican American youth at Seguin High reject is schooling – the educational content and the delivery method" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 19). Schooling, to the Mexican American youth, does not have their interest at heart and sets a barrier between them and the teachers. Instead of the school being legitimate, it is subtractive. Latino students want an education, but if they are to accept education as presented to them, they must reject who they are culturally as Latinos. By rejecting the schooling process, they keep their personal identity but fail academically (Erickson, 1987). Some students protect themselves from the pain of possibly failing by choosing to do poorly (Valenzuela, 1999, p.70). A poor academic performance maintains a strong social connection to peers who recognize the

subtractive process that happens in the schools. By not understanding the students' culture, teachers treat students in ways that cause them to lower their expectations about the likelihood of forming productive relationships with their teachers (Valenzuela, 1999, p.72).

Seguin High would do well to heed Noddings' (1992) call for continuity (in place, people, and curriculum). Continuity in place suggests that students should stay in their schools for two or three years and take part in caring for the school itself and the surrounding community. This helps develop a sense of belonging. Continuity in people suggests students should stay with one teacher three or more years. Students should know that someone cares for them as people. Teachers and students should know each other well enough to develop relationships of care and trust (Noddings, 1992, p. 69). Continuity of curriculum provides a variety of courses constructed by students and teachers organized around themes of caring (Noddings, 1992, p. 73). Such continuity permits developing trusting relationships and preempts students from turning exclusively to peers and strategies for academic survival that often increase their marginalization (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 104). Schooling must restore its moral purpose if schools care for their children (Noddings, 1992, p. 65).

Trust/caring. Trust in Erickson's and Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy's study is related to caring in Valenzuela's study. Valenzuela's optimal definition of caring comes from three sources: caring theory, Mexican culture (embodied in the term, *educacion*), and the relational concept of social capital. "Caring theory addresses the need for pedagogy to follow from and flow through relationships cultivated between teacher and student" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 21). As a part of school legitimacy, pedagogy must have

its basis in the needs of the student. Although *educacion* has implications for pedagogy, it is first a foundational cultural construct that provides instructions on how one should live in the world. "With its emphasis on respect, responsibility, and sociality, it provides a benchmark against which all humans are judged, formally educated or not" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 21). *Educacion* adds a moral aspect to education that judges all people according to how they function with their fellow-man in society. *Educacion* allows people to keep their identity and be respected regardless on their ethnicity.

Social capital aligns with the idea of taking a village to raise a child. The composite imagery of caring that unfolds accords moral authority to teachers (individual legitimacy) and institutional structures (institutional legitimacy) that value and actively promote respect and a search for connections, between teacher and student and among students themselves (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 21). Although they may think of themselves as caring, or "trusting", many teachers communicate a different message. "Some teachers ridicule committed teachers saying, stop working hard 'since these kids aren't going anywhere anyway.' The sub-text is more damning still: Seguin students don't 'go anywhere' because they don't, can't, or won't try" (Valenzuela, 1999, p.64). These inferences drawn and accepted by some teachers create student responses that compound the problems of their academic success. The attitudes of some of the teachers at Seguin High are uncaring and lack trust in their students. The students will fail and change cannot occur without mutual respect and trust (Valenzuela, 1999, p.68). Students who say and act like they do not care about school mystify teachers; the latter profess great difficulty in understanding such attitudes. "The possibility that an uncaring attitude might

be a coping strategy or a simple façade has little currency among Seguin teachers." (Valenzuela, 1999, p.70)

Assent. "An obvious limit to caring exists when teachers ask all students to care about school, while many students ask to be cared for before they will care" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 24). The onus belongs to the teachers to make the first move in developing of the caring relationship. Teachers must earn students trust before they are able to truly help them academically (Erickson, 1987). Without caring or trust there is no accepting school and staff authority by students. Not caring is a form of student resistance as not trusting leads to student resistance (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 94, Erickson, 1987). One teacher in Valenzuela's study, Mr. Johnson, stated the sentiment shared by teachers and other school staff, namely that Mexican students are immature, un-ambitious, and defiant of authority, and that teachers have no power to change the situation since it is the students' fault (1999, p. 64). This attitude clearly demonstrates that there is little caring from the teacher towards the students. Mrs. Hutchings, another teacher in Valenzuela's study, was uncaring toward one of her students because of what she called the student's nonchalant behavior and funny faces made towards her when she tries to engage the student in class work (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 73). Regardless of the student's reason for the behavior, both student and teacher resist a caring relationship. When both student and teacher resist caring, the student pays the heavier price. As the students' sense of alienation gets reinforced, the willingness to stay even marginally mentally engaged will steadily erode (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 73).

For Frank, a student in Valenzuela's study, "not caring constitutes resistance to teachers, school, and a curriculum that he views as meaningless because it is not helping

him to become a "better" person that is socially minded and who cares about his community" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 94). His resistance was a means of trying to save and keep his Mexican culture. Since his definition of caring was different from his teacher's, he had to choose between his community and the schools demands. If success in school means consenting to the school's projection of cultural disparagement and de-identification, he would be a failure (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 94). "It is not that Frank was unwilling to become a productive member of society; he was simply at odds with productivity divorced from the social and economic interest of the broader Mexican community. With his indifference, Frank deliberately challenges schoolings implicit demand that he derogate his culture and community" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 95).

Politics and culture of school success. There are racial and authoritarian undertones that go with the demand that youth at places like Seguin High "care about" school (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 25). School officials and teachers internalize the idea that Latinos that accept their version of schooling will be better off for having done so. The school shift from being a stellar school with a predominately white student population to a failing schools with a nearly all Mexican composition (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 33), is evidence that the teacher's way is the best way. "An overt request overlies a covert demand that students embrace a curriculum that either dismisses or belittles their ethnicity and that they respond caringly to school officials who often hold their culture and community in contempt" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 25). Many Latinos (the college-bound) accept the premise and begin to assimilate by removing themselves from that which is Mexican and embracing more American ways (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 31). "Moreover, teachers see the difference in culture and language between themselves and

their students from a culturally chauvinistic perspective that permits them to dismiss a more culturally relevant approach in dealing with this population (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 66).” When cultural borders become cultural boundaries as a result of different speech communities, the result is subtractive schooling (Erickson, 1987). **“**Cultural distance produces social distance, which in turn reinforces cultural distance” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 20).

“The operant model of schooling for acculturated, U.S.- born youth structurally deprives them of social capital that they would otherwise enjoy were the school not so aggressively (subtractively) assimilationist” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 30). Latinos have only limited success without social capital, resources, and opportunities. Instead of students failing school, as Erickson (1987) suggests, schools fail students. “Schooling uses a pedagogical logic that not only assures ascendancy of a few, but also jeopardizes their access to those among them who are either academically strong or who belong to academically supportive networks” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 30).

The predominantly non-Latino teaching staff at Seguin High sees students as not sufficiently caring about school, while students see teachers as not sufficiently caring for them. Cultural differences and differences in definition (caring specifically) create practices and policies that fail students and students that fail schools. Teachers expect students to show caring about school with an abstract or aesthetic commitment to ideas of practices that purportedly lead to achievement. “Immigrants and U.S. born youth, however, commit to an authentic form of caring that emphasizes relations of reciprocity between teachers and students” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 61). Authentically caring teachers relate to their students as they develop a sense of competence and mastery over any tasks.

Without this connectedness, students are just objects that divert from learning the skills necessary for mastering their academic and social environment (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 62). Thus, the difference in the way students and teachers perceive school-based relationships can bear directly on students' potential to achieve (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 62).

The students' vision of education parallels the Mexican concept of *educacion*. That is, they prefer a model of schooling premised on respectful, caring relations (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 61). This idea is more important than success itself. For Mexican students holding this concept, schools and classes are like families. Everyone looks out for the good of the other. *Educacion* mimics the idea of "it takes a village to raise a child" and uses the school as the village. Schools however, have different ideas of why schools fail or succeed. "The schools brushed aside their obvious systemic problems, most evident in its dropout rate, and understand the burden of responsibility and the struggle for change as rightfully residing first with the students, their families, and the community" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 65). The aesthetic focus of teachers that is devoid of authentic caring could come from the idea that teachers believe school is the domain where education takes place and that it is separate from their homes and communities (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 73). Trying to make adults (they say) out of the young students, the teacher utters "no one is forcing you to stay here." "These words when uttered without authentic caring, objectifies students as dispensable, nonessential parts of the school machinery (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 67)."

Summary. The subtractive nature of schooling creates barriers for the trust necessary for academic success. Latinos view schools as a village with supposedly trusting and caring people. Their concept of "educacion" emphasizes that all people work

together for the good of everyone. Cultural difference and the understanding of the purpose of schooling and schools held by those in authority demand that Latinos release their culture to accept education. This divide in conceptual thinking places Latinos at odds with those who are educating them. The interests of the Latinos are not considered and there is no "trust" in the teacher and client relationship. School failure is imminent when the clients recognize that their interests are not considered (Erickson, 1987). Without trust, neither party is willing to risk the vulnerability necessary for both students and teachers to succeed academically (Erickson, 1987; Forsyth et al., 2011, p. 17). Neither the authority of the institution nor the individual authority of the teaching staff at Sequin High was looking out for the best interest of Latinos. Erickson spoke of both teachers and students contributing to their failure due to cultural misunderstanding (1987). School legitimacy only develops when clients trust that their best interest is cared for. School will never acquire the status of legitimacy if they seek to change the culture identity of the clients or neglect to make clients feel that the school or the teachers can be trusted to have the client's best interest at heart.

The essential elements of school legitimacy (collective trust) discussed in the previous two studies reveal schools fail without them. Ferguson's study emphasized a client's need to trust that their cultural identity is secure. Valenzuela's study emphasized the client's need to trust that those in authority will have their interest at heart. Without these essentials of school legitimacy, schools fail. We will now look at poverty and the third leg of Erickson's essentials for school legitimacy. The clients must "trust" that my economic interest will be advanced by those in authority.

Study 3 - Ain't No Making It

This ethnographic study by Jay MacLeod is about two groups of poor teenage students, one black and one white, living in the projects of Clarendon Heights, a low-income housing development in a northeastern city. Approximately 65% of the population is white, 25% black, and 10% other minorities. Single mothers head 85% of families and are second or third generation poverty. One group, the Hallway Hangers, who are mostly white, hang out in a particular hall of Clarendon Heights. Their attitude is quite different from the other group. The other group, the Brothers, is all black except for one. The Brothers speak with relative optimism about their future, while the Hallway Hangers are despondent about their prospects for social mobility (MacLeod, 1995 p.6,). Both groups are students at Lincoln High School. The purpose of MacLeod's study was to attempt to understand the aspirations of older boys from Clarendon Heights (MacLeod, 1995, p. 6). I will use MacLeod's study to look at the relationship of poverty and school legitimacy as posited by Erickson.

Poverty. MacLeod's study illustrates how poverty circumscribes the horizons of young people and reproduces, at the societal level, the class structure (MacLeod, 1995, p.10). Schools are responsible for educating all citizens on how to live in a democratic society with the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, as stated in the constitution. Upward mobility is not a false or implausible concept for the poor, but a reality if the schools do their part. If schools reproduce the class structure, then it becomes impossible for the poor to change their status. These schools are unlike legitimate schools that serve clients. Education is the way out of poverty.

Poverty often breeds crime and gangs. The thuggish attitudes and actions of the Hallway Hangers form a culture that signifies they are a part of a certain group. The group's culture sometimes is different from the schools culture, which is middle to upper middle class. To maintain discipline, the school tries to force those in poverty to follow their rules and accept their cultural practices, which is difficult for the Hallway Hangers (MacLeod, 1995, p. 110). Poor students with family backgrounds of uneducated single parents and generational poverty have inferred from life experience that the school is not looking out for their best interest. When students do not trust the school staff there is no school legitimacy.

The achievement ideology. Legitimate schools seek the greater good of all their students, protect their identity, and their economic interest (Erickson, 1987). The Hallway Hangers and the Brothers in Clarendon Heights were students in poverty. The school espoused the achievement ideology to all students as their way of poverty, with the message being that American society is open and fair and full of opportunity. "One must merit success, and economic inequality is due to differences in ambition and ability. Individuals do not inherit their social status; they get it on their own" (MacLeod, 1995, p.3). The achievement ideology is regularly stated in Lincoln High School in Clarendon Heights (Macleod, 1995, p. 97). The Brothers view education as the remedy of social inequality; schooling makes the race for prestigious jobs and wealth a fair race (MacLeod, 1995, p. 98). Legitimate schools seek to support the truth of the achievement ideology. Schools that are not legitimate create frustration and rebellion for those who know their interest is not looked after and disappointment for those who believe teachers are being disingenuous. Mike, the only white student who was a part of the Brothers,

believed the achievement ideology. He said, “If you work hard, really put your mind to it, you can do it” (MacLeod, 1995, p. 9). Many in America believe that education ensures equality of opportunity and the ladder of opportunity is there for all to climb (MacLeod, 1995, p. 3).

Important aspects of school legitimacy were lacking in Lincoln High School. Trust is important for school legitimacy, but the Hallway Hangers did not trust nor care for the teachers in their school (MacLeod, 1995, p. 96). They held the position that going to school, and working hard was a waste of time, because it would not do any good for their lives. They refused to accept the school’s achievement ideology (MacLeod, 1995, p. 102). Hallway Hangers did not trust that those in authority would advance their economic interest if the assented to their authority. The Brothers on the other hand trusted the teachers and believed the schools achievement ideology. “The teachers in many ways symbolized what the Brothers hoped to become” (MacLeod, 1995, p. 110).

To maintain discipline, Lincoln High School had a team of security guards policing the hallways. They also used suspensions, detentions, and parent notifications to keep students obeying rules. They also use the achievement ideology to reinforce discipline: “Behave, work hard, earn good grades, and you will get a good job and make a lot of money” (MacLeod, 1995, p. 97). Academic performance is crucial to economic success. In spite of the school’s attempt to maintain discipline, Hallway Hangers were constantly rebelling against those in authority at school. Their resistance could be rooted in moral or political indignation (Erickson, 1987, Macleod, 1995, p. 20). Violation of the school rules is not in itself an act of resistance unless committed by a youth who sees through the school’s achievement ideology (MacLeod, 1995, p. 21). The Brothers tried to

respect the schools rules and policies. They also trusted the school and its staff, but the Hallway hangers did not (MacLeod, 1995, p. 88).

Lincoln High School in Clarendon Heights is a picture of a failing school. The teachers did not seem to help the students, and one group of students did not appear to help themselves. Without trust and assent there is not a caring relationship between the students and teachers. The teachers determined the routine practices of the school without involving parents or community, and their main concern was to keep order in the classroom. The students constantly heard from the teachers that if you work hard and get good grades, you will be able to get a good job that pays a lot of money. These lines motivated the Brothers, but did not inspire the Hallway Hangers. Generational poverty had shown the Hallway Hangers that the teachers were not being truthful.

Reproduction theorists. Students from poverty have opportunity to move up the social ladder. Legitimate schools assist in this effort. "As reproduction theorists explore the social relations of capitalist society they come to one site, the school" (MacLeod, 1995, p.11). Reproduction theorists believe schools reproduced social relations and social class. Deceiving the poor into believing the achievement ideology and secretly programming them to stay in their place of poverty is what some reproduction theorists advocate. Schools for the poor, if this is correct, cannot be legitimate unless their staff believes the place of the poor students is in poverty, and they must stay there.

In the popular mind, school is the great equalizer. By providing a level playing field where the low and the mighty compete on an equal basis, schooling renders social inequality superfluous. Reproduction theorists, in contrast, show that schools actually reinforce social inequality while pretending to do the opposite (MacLeod, 1995, p. 11).

Summarizing Bowles and Gintis, two reproduction theorists, Macleod states, "the American education system is subordinated to and reflective of the production process and structure of class relations in the United States" (MacLeod, 1995, p. 12). Schools maintained the class structure. This idea is devastating for the poor and a challenge for those who seek the legitimacy of schools in America. The belief that the schools should produce minimum wage workers and appoint the lowest level jobs and positions for the poor clearly stated (as sited in Bowles and Gintis, 1976), "In short, schools train the wealthy to occupy places at the top of the economy while conditioning the poor to accept their lowly status in the class structure" (MacLeod, 1995, p. 12). Education should transcend social and economic levels and provide space for educated and quality individuals in any sector of any social ladder. Teachers and school staff that seek legitimacy from those they teach are honest and true to the students, parents, and communities where they work. Reproduction theorists suggest that the work of the school is to keep in place the dominant culture and subjugate the poor to menial job positions and poverty without their being aware of what is happening.

There is a major structural difference in schools. Poor schools emphasize rules and behavior control. Middle class schools and higher have less direct supervision and a value system emphasizing internalized standards of control (MacLeod, 1995, p. 13). The implications are that schools for the poor produce workers who will follow direction while schools for the middle class attempt to produce those who will control and direct themselves. Schools, curricula, materials, and standards produce attitudes and values. Legitimate schools will not seek to make laborers but educated students who are able to climb both the educational and social ladder. Reproduction theorists imply that

impoverished children attend schools designed for the poor and tracked to low status jobs. Children of the more well to do, in contrast, make independent decisions and internalize social norms which prepare them for economic success (MacLeod, 1995, p. 13). Schools, therefore, prepare students to take positions in life that they already inhabit.

Cultural capital. The Hallway Hangers, eight years after their interview in high school, were still in poverty and several had been to prison. They could no longer hang in the hallways because the projects were now predominantly black. The new Hallway Hangers were now African-American. Failing to put forth effort in school helped the Hallway Hangers maintain their poverty. On the other hand, the Brothers all graduated from high school and a few even went to junior college, but they too were unable to break the cycle of poverty that they were in. Jobs were hard to come by for the Brothers, and the few that they were able to obtain paid little over the minimum wage. Neither group was unable to break the cycle of poverty. The school was not legitimate because it didn't work to change the students or the community that they came from; therefore the education they received did nothing more than perpetuate the cycle. "Pierre Bourdieu shows how schooling entrenches social inequality by reproducing class privilege and simultaneously sanctifying the resultant inequality" (Macleod, 1995, p. 16).

According to Bourdieu, cultural capital is the general cultural background, knowledge, disposition, and skills passed from one generation to the next (MacLeod, 1995, p. 13). From this definition we can recognize the poor will receive one set of skills, knowledge, disposition, and culture, while the middle and upper class will receive another. Schools primarily cater to the middle and upper classes, which puts the poor at a disadvantage. The school at Clarendon Heights had no real concern for the students in the

projects. Project kids had their own culture and code that they were proud of and wanted to keep. By not acknowledging or trying to understand the students, their background, or culture, the school provides the opportunity for the students to put forth political resistance, where they could claim, "If you don't care about me, I won't care about you" (Macleod, 1999, p. 14).

By embodying class interest and ideologies, schools reward the cultural capital of the dominant classes and systematically devalue that of the lower classes (Macleod, 1999, p. 14). This idea was seen in Ferguson's study of African-American boys and Valenzuela's study of Latinos. Erickson (1987) viewed school success or failure as political. Schools that work at failing their students sought to change their cultural identity (Ferguson's study) or did not look out for their best interest (Valenzuela study). Schools tend to value the dominant culture and devalue all others, whether poor or minority. Upper-class students, by virtue of a certain linguistic and cultural competence acquired through family upbringing, have the means of appropriation for success in school. In other words, we reward upper-class students for being who they are. School design and teacher training is for middle and upper middle class students. All but the poor start out in school with a considerable advantage. "Children who read books, visit museums, attend concerts, and go to the theater and cinema acquire familiarity with the dominant culture that the educational system implicitly requires of its students for academic attainment" (Macleod, 1999, p. 14). Schools reinforce the cultural ideals and actions that the more well-to-do students have already acquired. The poor, having not acquired those skills and habits, are graded badly for not having them. Social class frequently determines the success or failure in school. But cloaked in the language of

meritocracy, academic performance is the result of individual ability by both high and low achievers (Macleod, 1999, p. 14).

"Hence, schools serve as the trading post where socially valued cultural capital maneuvers into superior academic performance. Academic performance is then turned back into economic capital by acquisition of superior jobs. Schools reproduce social inequality, but by dealing in the currency of academic credentials, the educational system legitimizes the entire process" (MacLoed, 1995, p. 14). The parents of the poor students in Clarendon Heights lack the cultural capital necessary to escape poverty. They could not function in school in a way to get the assistance needed to succeed. They could not pass the correct information to their children to help them function in school with the same advantage of the middle class students. This absence of culture capital contributes to school failure (Jaeger, 2009). Teachers could teach students in poverty to "play the game" (Jaeger, 2009), by providing cultural capital and knowledge of the how schooling works. Parents with cultural knowledge "work the system" to make sure it works for their child (Jaeger, 2009). They have the time and money to help create and take part in school activities. They are familiar with the teachers and the teachers are familiar with their children. This advantage helps the children of the parents with cultural capital to develop cultural capital themselves.

Habitus. "Social reproduction theory identifies the barriers to social mobility, barriers that constrain without completely blocking lower-and working-class individuals' efforts to break into the upper reaches of the class structure" (MacLeod, 1995, p. 7). The barriers are imbedded in such a way that the participants in the class structures are not aware of what is actually going on around them. The Brothers in Lincoln High would

blame themselves for their failure, not realizing that there are barriers in the system that they must understand to be successful.

Freddie, a young Hallway Hanger, is pessimistic about his prospects for social mobility and disputes schooling's capacity to "deliver the goods" (MacLeod, 1995, p. 3). For every exception to the norm, there are thousands of able and intelligent workers who are left to occupy positions in the class structure not much different from those held by their parents (MacLeod, 1995, p. 3). This student's pessimism is reminiscent of the perceived labor market explanation about why schools fail. Students often believe there is no point in trying because they will fail anyway. Several decades of quantitative sociological research have demonstrated that the social class you are born into has a massive influence on where you will end up. Although mobility between classes does take place, the structure of class relations from one generation to the next remains largely unchanged (MacLeod, 1995, p. 4). Failing schools produce students that will stay in the social class that they are in. Students who recognize that hard work in school produces no good results lower their expectations (MacLeod, 1995, p. 4).

"Habitus is a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions" (Macleod, 1995, p. 14). "Put simply, the habitus is composed of the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of those inhabiting one's social world" (Almquist, Modin, & Ostberg, 2010; MacLeod, 1995, p.15). "Individuals and institutions both possessed Habitus" (Ingram, July, 2009). The individual internalized values will affect one's attitude about school. A poor student, based on his attitude about school, might believe he has less chance for success than the rich student. The African-American might believe he

has less chance of academic success than Whites. The Latino may believe he is disciplined more severely than others. Habitus frames the way one sees and understands the world around him. "The structure of schooling, with its high regard for the cultural capital of the upper classes, promotes the belief among working-class students that they are unlikely to achieve academic success." (MacLeod, 1995, p. 15)

"Habitus engenders attitudes and conduct that enables the social structures to succeed in reproducing themselves. It functions as a regulator between people and their external world, between human agency and social structure." (MacLeod, 1995, p. 15) Through the concepts of cultural capital and habitus, Bourdieu seeks to explain how social inequality is perpetuated and why this process of social reproduction is so readily accepted by exploiter and exploited alike (MacLeod, 1995, p. 15). The mechanisms of social and cultural reproduction are hidden by practices that protect the interest of the dominant class and are viewed as reasonable and natural. "Schooling is crucial for the reproduction and legitimization of social inequality" (MacLeod, 1995, p. 16). "The school maintains its own habitus that transforms or restructures the student's habitus (Ingram, 2009)." It is schooling that instills in marginalized students values that lead them to see themselves as the causal agents of a process that is institutionally determined. Schooling entrench social inequality by reproducing class privilege and simultaneously sanctifying the resultant inequality (MacLeod, 1995, p. 16).

Summary. To understand school failure among the poor, we must look at the family, community, and the schools. "The problem is not that the lower-class children are inferior in some way; the problem is that by the definitions and standards of the schools they are consistently evaluated as deficient" (MacLeod, 1995, p. 100). The concepts of

cultural capital and habitus provide a reasonable explanation of how and why these problems persist. The educational system's curricula, pedagogy, and evaluative criteria favor the interest of the middle and upper class. These items fit the cultural capital of the middle and upper classes. The school devalues the mannerism, norms, dress, styles of interaction, and linguistic faculty of the poor, while rewarding the culture of the middle and upper class (Macleod, 1995, p. 100). Achievement ideology is a powerful force in legitimizing inequality and in social reproduction (MacLeod, 1995, p. 112). Both the Brothers and the Hallway Hangers accept the blame for their failure because they believed that individual merit and achievement is the basis for rewards and upward mobility. "Poor people attribute their subordinate place in the social order to personal deficiencies, thus legitimizing inequality" (MacLeod, 1995, p. 113). They believe they are responsible for their place in society. Both groups fail to see that the school devalues their cultural capital, and their habitus is unacceptable among the middle and upper-classes. School officials at Lincoln High were also aware of the social reproduction of the poor. Speaking of the social position of the poor students, the guidance counselors stated "they're geared to manual labor jobs, like their brothers, sisters, fathers, uncles, whatever – mothers, like the jobs they have" (MacLeod, 1995, p. 115).

The Hallway hangers did not trust that school authorities would help them out of poverty and they stayed in poverty. The Brothers put trust in those in authority and they also stayed in poverty. The school and staff were not trusted by the clients and the school was not successful. Erickson's third leg of school legitimacy, trust that assenting to those in authority will advance my economic status, was not present at Lincoln High. Students in poverty whether they assent to the authorities in the school or not had to work twice as

hard and still were not successful. Schools are legitimate that have the support and backing of its clients. This was not the case in Clarendon Heights where Macleod's study took place. The last three studies show how failure to implement the elements of trust connected to school legitimacy produced student failure in school. We will now look at two successful schools through the lens of school legitimacy.

Study 4 – Two Successful Schools

Jerome Morris examines two successful schools and found characteristics that were similar even though they were in different states. These schools defied the odds because they were predominantly African-American and over 90% free and reduced lunches. In the article "Can Anything Good Come From Nazareth? Race, Class, and African-American Schooling and Community in the Urban South and Midwest," Morris posits how predominantly African-American schools in low-income areas can successfully educate their students. He studied Fairmont Elementary School in St. Louis, Missouri and Lincoln Elementary in Atlanta, Georgia, and we will look at what made them successful.

Fairmont Elementary integrated in 1956 two years after the passage of Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. In the next decade, the schools and the communities in the northern section of the city were predominantly black. A court settlement in 1982 resulted in a voluntary desegregation plan between 16 predominantly White suburban schools districts and the St. Louis public school district. Under this plan, low-income Blacks students could attend middle-class predominantly White suburban schools. The city created Magnets schools to attract Whites from the suburban districts (Morris, 2004). Fairmont is located in a low-income to working-class neighborhood on

the north side of the city. 370 students in the pre-kindergarten through fifth grade were African-American. There were only one or two whites students in a given year. 95% of the students qualified for free or reduced meals. The predominantly African-American staff of 40 members included two White teachers. Six of the teachers had taught for over 30 years and most of the teachers received their certification from an all-Black teacher's college. Fairmont's parents are satisfied with the education their children received.

Lincoln Elementary was predominantly white until the 1950s, but by the early 1960s, it was predominantly Black and was over capacity by 675 students. It is now a kindergarten to fifth grade school; over 99% African-American, with 94% of its students qualified for free and reduced price lunch. The faculty consisted of 41 members (34 African-American, 4 foreign-born blacks, and 3 White). The Atlanta public schools became predominantly Black when the city implemented the "Atlanta Compromise" in 1973. The school system went from 32% Black in 1954 to 82% in 1974. The plan reflected the belief that Black children could achieve in a school system controlled by Black people. Prior to these changes, there was little educational gain by Black children, especially the poor. In the 1970s and 1980s, some middle class Blacks moved to the suburbs and others placed their children in private schools. The parents at Lincoln worked primarily blue-collar jobs and some received public assistance.

Politics and culture of school success. I have posited that based on the synthesis of Erickson's communication process explanation and the perceived labor market explanation that schools in predominately African-American communities fail because of problems both inside and outside of the school. These two explanations merge when considering school success as a political process with legitimacy, identity, and interest as

its key elements. Students, teachers, and the community understand and conceptualize the ideas of legitimacy, identity, and economic interest based on their daily interactions with each other inside and outside of school (Erickson, 1987). In a process of political rhetoric stakeholders "trust" each other and take the "risk" concerning legitimacy, their identity, and their economic interest. Forsyth et al. suggest "risk and vulnerability creates the opportunity for Trust" and collective trust develops through repeated exchanges or constructed talk among group members (2011, p. 24). Labor market inequities perceived by the community and conflicting teacher/student communication styles are both impediments to "trust" that is essential to school legitimacy. Assent to the exercise of authority of all stakeholders involves "trust" that is unnecessary without risk, which is the threat to a positive social identity in the process of learning by students and teachers (Erickson, 1987). Successful schools have communities, staff, and students who assent to those in authority and trust that their identity, economic interest, and overall well-being are cared for (school legitimacy).

Agency. What made these two schools successes among the many schools that were failing? One element in both of the successful schools studied by Morris was the idea of the "Agency." Agency is constituted by the collective actions of Black people to positively influence the schooling of Black children. It developed by cultivating the relationship between the African-American parents, community, and the school. These actions occurred in the successful schools and historically occurred in the midst of legalized racism and segregation. Perceptions of predominantly African-American schools and their staff by many outside of the school and community is they are non-caring and deficient. The African-American community and culture are also depicted as

inferior and deficit oriented (Morris, 2004). Despite the odds in the past, the agency was a central part in the success of African-American schools. In the past, the school also played an integral role in solidifying African-American communities (Morris, 2004). The school was a focal point in connecting the community and the church. School legitimacy cannot occur without a close connection between the school and the outside social structure of the community. School faculties and administrators must also have connections to the community (Erickson, 1987, Erickson, 1996, Morris, 2004). These connections enable students, parents, and the community to believe the school is their school.

The Agency positively influences the schooling of African-American children with parents in particular being important for their child's academic success (Jaynes, 2005). Tapping into this aspect of the African-American community is a part of what schools must do to create school legitimacy and success. The agency is developed and strengthened with the school's help. It will aid in developing school legitimacy by creating a stronger bond between the school and community and create a positive influence on African-American children's education. A strong agency will develop a working relationship with the school and build trust that is necessary for school legitimacy.

Teachers. "African-American educators once helped to change society, uplifted the culture of African-Americans, shaped the schooling practices, and helped to shape the political experiences of African-American students. African-American educators, schools, and communities once collectively worked to improve their children, families, and communities within an oppressive social structure" (Morris, 2004, p. 71). In the civil

rights era, as in both successful schools (Lincoln and Fairmont), all the teachers played a part in the politics and schooling experience of the black children. Since there was a strong school and community connection, there was little problem with the communication argument posited by Erickson. The perceived labor market explanation is also negated because the schools taught more than just the school curriculum. The political clarity of the teachers made African-Americans aware of the social conditions in which they lived. Teachers taught students how to deal with life issues, racism in society, and intra-racial inequities. African-American educators, communities, and schools affirmed African-American culture, giving students a sense of pride in who they were. It is imperative that we understand under what circumstances these two schools have succeeded with their students (Morris, 2004).

"Many states punished the African-American community after the Brown vs. Board of education decision. There was wide-spread firing and demotions of African-American educators and the disproportionate busing of African-American children to white schools" (Morris, 2004, p.71). The actions of the states after the Brown decision created fewer African-American educators and the symbiotic relationship between the African-American community and the schools begin to disappear.

Relationships. The successful schools in Morris's study both had an essential quality that is crucial for school legitimacy. They both worked to have good relationships. Legitimate schools not only had trust between the stakeholders, but they also took academic risks that enabled students to reach higher heights. Effective face to face encounters between teachers, students, and parents affirmed school legitimacy.

Both Lincoln and Fairmont schools had parents, teachers, and students who believed in their school. Parental belief in the school produces students that are willing to work harder at being successful. The students believed in the school and had the highest attendance rate in their cities. They also outperformed students in other schools in the city including the magnet schools. The teachers of both schools had strong connections to the school and the surrounding community (Morris, 2004). Connection to both school and community is necessary for the school to be part of the social change required for schools legitimacy (Erickson, 1987). The schools' principals also had strong connections with the community and the businesses in the area. Partnerships with the local community and the businesses also created connections that eliminated the perceived labor market explanation in areas where schools fail. The schools had strong relationships and worked with the community on various projects. Lincoln Elementary School in Atlanta worked with the urban educational research project at a local university and had a strong reputation for involvement with African-American "grassroots" efforts in Atlanta. Student attendance, standardized test scores, curriculum, and parent participation demonstrated the strong relationships in these two schools (Morris, 2004, p. 74).

An analysis of the nature of the school and community relationship produced three areas of interest: 1) The schools' support for parents and students, 2) parents' role in schools, and 3) participants' perception of how social forces influenced the nature of the relationships (Morris, 2004, p.76). These important parts of school legitimacy removed the problems of the communication explanation and the perceived labor market explanation, which shifted the focus of school success to cultural transformation and the symbol systems in the school.

Transformation of culture (routine practices and politics). Lincoln Elementary School in Atlanta is a segregated school, while Fairmont Elementary in St. Louis is an integrated school. Both schools have over 95% African-American students and both schools are excellent schools. In both schools all school policies and practices consider the culture of the stakeholders. Instead of transforming the culture, legitimate schools accept the culture and cultural identity of its population and consider it important and vibrant for the population. Both schools replace deficit thinking about culture with adequate and knowledgeable thinking. The change in the teachers and students perception of the students' culture creates a healthy school culture and climate.

Both schools moved from white population students to having a predominately African-American school population. "As whites departed, so did the financial resources and political support for urban schools" (Morris, 2004, p. 81). Now the school has a poorer student population, less money, and more social problems. Schools that have experienced this generally have difficulty accepting the new population of students and parents. "School leaders, teachers, and parents experience cultural tension. Cultural tension is an anxious feeling of distrust for people who do not share one's way of life" (Cooper, 2009). Distrust is one element that will stymie efforts of school legitimacy. It was Agency that fought against racial and social class inequalities that worked to undermine the schools, the educators, the community, and the families (Morris, 2004). "Agency and the educators did not allow such daunting realities to overwhelm their day-today quest to educate their children". The school and community worked interdependently to meet the social and educational needs of the students. The parents and teachers valued their relationships with each other (social capital) and they valued the

African-American culture (cultural capital) (Morris, 2004, p. 87). This value of relationships and culture by the parents (agency) and the educators, provided the trust necessary to establish the legitimacy of the schools. Parents recognized the entire child was considered and cared for. This is Erickson's definition of legitimacy. When educators do not fully understand the low-income African-American student and are not interested in knowing the student, parent, or community, there is no connection and the school does not earn legitimacy.

To facilitate the change in culture, both schools had to find creative ways to build and sustain relationships with family and community residents (Morris, 2004). Fairmont achieved this by having teachers who lived in the community themselves or had relatives who lived in the community. Teachers connected to the community and gave economic and political strength to the students. They knew the community people and levels of trust were high. Parents believed the school had their students' best interest at heart. The school staffs in both schools were the catalyst for transforming the culture. "The Fairmont and Lincoln educators did not wait for parents to initiate parental participation; they reached out and welcomed these parents into the school - an example of agency" (Morris, 2004, p. 89). When transforming school culture, building trust is important in establishing school legitimacy. "It is trust that alleviates altercations and mitigates the class boundaries that are so common between teachers and low-income families" (Morris, 2004, p. 91). The transforming of the school culture of Lincoln and Fairmount was not easy. Teachers, administrators, and school staff worked hard at getting parents to take part and accept responsibility for their child's schooling (Morris, 2004). Teachers had to resolve altercations, establish trust, and identify with the community, and develop a "love

ethic" for black children (West, 1998). "They saw themselves as having similar experiences and took on the role of 'other mothers', and strongly identified with the community where they taught" (Ladson-billings, 1994). "School personnel at both schools enthusiastically celebrated African-Americans' historical and cultural celebrations" (Morris, 2004, p. 92).

"The schooling process in both schools and the educators' pedagogical and interaction styles created an environment where African-American students could see themselves and their culture in a positive light" (Morris, 2004, p. 93). "The students were taught African-American history, their cultural heritage, and the lessons were relevant to the students' everyday life" (Ladson-Billings, 1995). At Fairmont, the students were also taught the struggles and insurmountable odds Black people have had and still strive to overcome. Lincoln Elementary teachers wore African garb and Kente cloth patterns at times throughout the school year (Morris, 2004). Agency in both schools ensured students maintain a sense of identity. Legitimate schools make sure students' cultural identity is protected. These schools demonstrate characteristics of what is necessary for a school to earn legitimacy from the stakeholders.

Transformation of symbol systems. Agency assists in transforming the school culture and symbol systems (Morris, 2004). Different aspects of culture create symbols for group associations. Students and parents that do not trust school staff develop their own culture to show their distrust and distance from the school establishment.

Teacher stability can be a symbol of stable schools. Unlike many schools with predominantly African-American and low-income students that have a large degree of teacher turnover, Lincoln and Fairmount Elementary were different. Another symbol of

low performing, high poverty minority schools is new or inexperienced teachers. “Most low performing schools have teachers who lack the repertoire of skills and strategies for addressing student needs, which can adversely affect student learning” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2003). “Fairmont had the highest teacher stability rate of all the elementary schools in St. Louis” (Morris, 2004, p. 95). Although Lincoln’s mean of total teaching experience among the teachers was 13 years, it was lower than the school systems mean of 14.8 years. Lincoln’s older and more experience teachers had recently retired a few years before Morris’s research began and the school had hired 20 new teachers over the course of two years (1999 - 2001). The principal recognized that she needed the community and built a “sense of community” among her new faculty and staff (Morris, 2004). This philosophy was not different from that of Fairmount Elementary. Teachers that stay at a school for extended periods of time have taught the parents and sometimes the grandparents of some of their students. These teachers become known by the community and become symbols of the school’s stability. Legitimate schools transform from the image of a school that has large amounts of turnover to schools with stable teaching staffs known and respected by the community.

“Lincoln Elementary School built a reputation for meeting the schooling and social needs of the students because of the efforts of the former principal who set high standards for teachers and students and garnered resources to assist teachers and students in the overall teaching and learning process” (Morris, 2004, p. 96). The former principal set the standard for the current principal. A reputation of doing what is necessary for the students and teachers to be successful becomes a symbol of the school. Both Lincoln and Fairmount Elementary schools assumed the role of “pillars” in their respective

communities and were centers for many community activities and events. Working with and changing the larger society is part of what it means to be a legitimate school. Events like the annual carnival held at both Lincoln and Fairmount where parents and community residents enjoy a day of games, activities, and refreshments symbolically capture the role of the school in the community. "Parents look forward to the event and help in the planning of it" (Morris, 2004, p. 97). Social and student needs were cared for by these schools without overshadowing the teaching content. Afterschool child-care programs and tutorial assistance for parents studying for their GEDs are offered at both schools. Lincoln and Fairmount provide services that go beyond schooling for the students, parents, and community. Both schools provide clothing for students in need. The schools assist in the needs of the community (Morris, 2004). Schools that change the symbols systems from the deficit thinking models to images of social change agents and pillars for the community earn legitimacy from the students, parents, and community.

Failing schools allow issues such as patterns of language use or clothing styles to become symbols of the connection and disconnection between teachers, students, community, and the school (Erickson, 1987). The change in school symbol systems becomes clear when language and culture cease to become a deficit for predominantly African-American school and become an asset. Successful schools help to create and maintain "agency" in urban and predominantly African-American schools, without ignoring the political climate or racial and class inequalities. The major change in the successful schools in Morris's study was the use of the parents and community in the school, creating "agency." "Strong agency in both Fairmount and Lincoln was paramount to the schools' success and a symbol of what is necessary for success in similar schools.

Agency has used their cultural and social capital to positively shape Black students' schooling" (Morris, 2004, p. 102).

Trust. Low-income and working class African-Americans school staff must reach out and create a climate of trust that encourages and creates opportunities for families to actively participate in school events (Morris, 2004, p.102). School staff must create trusting relationships with African-American families similar to those found in segregated black schools. "The relationship between school staff and the families in both Lincoln and Fairmount were intergenerational and culturally reaffirming" (Morris, 2004, p. 103). Families and the educators must develop a sense of community.

The role of African-American educators should not be minimized (Morris, 2004). This does not mean that all African-American teachers effectively teach Black children, nor does it imply that white teachers cannot effectively teach African-American children. White teachers in both Lincoln and Fairmount affirmed African-American children's culture and prepared them educationally, but such teachers are rare (Morris, 2004, p. 103).

Principals at Fairmount and Lincoln bridged their schools with the surrounding community and with the outside agencies. They created high expectations for students and teachers, solidified the connection between the school and the community, provided resources for success for both students and teachers (Morris, 2004, p. 104). "Principals in Lincoln and Fairmount were both academic leaders and cultural leaders who understood how race and culture had shaped African-American schooling" (Dillard, 1995). Successful schools are legitimate schools. School earn legitimacy when teachers, students, parents and community, have trust in each other, are willing to submit to

authority, and recognize that the well-being and interest of the student is the primary concern of the school. Legitimate schools seek to change school practices and symbol systems from deficit to positive while working to change the overall social structures (Erickson, 1987). Fairmount and Lincoln had excellent principals, committed teachers, a love ethic for Black children, and a strong connection with communities where the children lived. Fairmount and Lincoln functioned as stabilizing forces for the community (Morris, 2004). Strong relations between school staff, students, parents, and community leads to legitimate schools and effective schooling (Morris, 2004).

Summary. Successful schools maintain a staff that understands the culture of the students they teach and teach them about their culture. Beyond teaching cultural skills, they are able to support the identity and culture of their students by being aware of the complex interplay of class, culture, and identity (Hermes, 2005). These important aspects of the teachers' work establish legitimacy in the minds of the students and community. To be successful, schools must actively be a part of changing the outside social structure and cultures of the communities where they exist (Erickson, 1987). Successful schools develop a reputation for being involved in the community they serve. Trust is not an issue in successful school. The clients recognize that the school and the teachers not only have their interest at heart they also believe that assenting to the authority will advance their economic interest. The parents at these two successful schools believed their children received an excellent education and the data for the schools proved they were correct.

School Failure and Success - Reflections

I believe there is validity in Erickson's concept of school legitimacy. Failing schools keep policies and practices that substantiate their failure or they work at failing.

Successful schools are dynamic and make changes to fit the culture of the population they serve and move the students in those cultures to academic success without destroying or minimizing their culture. School legitimacy is ultimately based on trust among all the schools' stakeholders. Trust produces an agreement to submit to the authorities in the school and enables students and teachers to work together. Trust also creates a climate where students and parents feel the school is there to serve their interest. Schools that are part of the community seek to change the outer social structure.

Successful schools are not possible without the school staff understanding the culture of the population it serves. Their policies must also reflect the school and stakeholders beliefs. Teachers in the high poverty schools researched by Jerome Morris wore African garments at times during the school year. These became symbols of the connection between the teachers and the students that increased the trust and relationship between teachers, students, parents, and community. Teachers also were familiar with and taught students about their own history in the United States and their community. These cultural connections provided the glue to bind the school with the community, which helps the school to earn its legitimacy.

The three ethnographic studies, Ferguson's *Bad Boys*, Valenzuela's *Subtractive Schooling*, and MacLeod's *Ain't No Making It*, emphasize the need for schools to understand and assist in producing a positive culture for the students and community. I believe a positive school culture and climate is imperative to develop and sustain schools that earn legitimacy. Students must maintain their cultural identity and believe that by respecting school authority their personal and economic well-being is enhanced. School policies must benefit teachers, students, parents, and community. Schooling should be an

asset for all those that attend and school policies must have the efficacy of teachers, students, and parents in mind. Poor students should feel that they are destined for success and that they have great possibilities for movement up the social ladder.

Successful schools in poor and/or minority communities must help parents and the community understand how ideas of habitus and the concept of hegemony maintain the hopelessness in many poor and minority communities. Knowledge of the processes indicated by these concepts, not necessarily the words themselves, will help in raising the aspirations of poor and minority students and help to break the cycle of generational poverty. I believe when a community feels the school is instrumental in helping their students be a force for good in society, they will be willing to work diligently with that school for success. Parental participation in the school will be forthcoming when the community believes the school wants and needs their help.

The school and its staff initiate efforts to build school legitimacy. I believe school leaders and staff are key and crucial in the process of school legitimacy. They should begin by understanding the culture of the population in which they serve. School practices and policies would be in sync with the culture. School symbol systems should reflect those that are representative of the school culture. Legitimate schools must have a part in the community and the community must feel that the schools belongs to them and are for them. Teachers who work in minority communities must develop lessons that will be culturally relevant for their students. Culturally relevant pedagogy is necessary for students to identify and develop trust in the teachers and the school. Culturally relevant teaching uses students' culture to maintain it and to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 17). Self-awareness and self-esteem

improves when the student's cultural history can be seen within the lessons. Trusting relationships between all stakeholders is important to school legitimacy. Students and teachers who trust each other will assist each other in going places of learning that neither can go nor learn on their own and this learning process is essential to successful schools which are legitimate schools.

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

I will discuss how I gathered and analyzed the information in the literature review to explore the role of school legitimacy in successful school. The literature review helped to shape the questions necessary for my research. I have two questions that must be answered for my research. First, "how is school legitimacy constructed and maintained?" Second, how does the school staff help to construct trust among its clients in a local school?

Case studies, surveys, interviews, and focus groups will be used to gather the information about school legitimacy. Although the writers' purpose in my case studies was not to discuss school legitimacy, it is such a powerful concept that it resonates in nearly all discussions of school success or failure. Each of the case studies I have chosen also emphasize a particular element of school legitimacy as discussed in Fredrick Erickson's article. The case studies give a prospective of the principal, teachers, and parents that provide evidence and purpose for a school to receive the status of legitimacy. The surveys will provide a modern day view of what principals, teachers, and parents, think of their school as it relates to the concept of legitimacy. The surveys were taken from Forsyth, Adams and Hoy's book entitled *Collective Trust*. Some of the questions in the book will be modified and additional open ended questions will also be given. The interview and focus groups will provide first hand information and stories that can reveal the principal's, teachers' and parents' perspective of school legitimacy. The interviews and focus group questions were developed and guided by Erickson's concept of school

legitimacy. Analyzing the information from the case studies, surveys, interviews and focus groups will give me the informational tools to develop a process for constructing school legitimacy. The surveys taken from *Collective Trust* were developed from thirty years of research on the subject of trust. I will study specifically one high poverty minority school, but the concept may be applicable to any school.

School Legitimacy

Erickson perceives "school legitimacy as a political process having the central elements of institutional and personal legitimacy, identity, and economic interest" (1987, p.341). Erickson also suggests, "The symbolic discourse through which legitimacy, identity, and economic interest are understood and framed is by students and teachers in the community and schools" (p. 341). Erickson posits "assent to the exercise of authority which involves trust is the essential concept in school legitimacy" (p. 344). Because legitimacy of the school is essential if learning is to succeed in its aims, I will examine the principal, teachers, and parents' view of their "trust" relationships through surveys. The level of trust determined through the surveys will indicate the amount of risk teachers, parents, and students are willing to take to be successful. The surveys will also provide evidence of teacher collaboration and collegiality with each other and the principal as well as their feelings of efficacy with the school. From information acquired from surveys, interview, and focus groups I will seek to understand the internal perspective of the teachers concerning their beliefs of themselves, parents, students and the principal. The attitude behind the political rhetoric, daily school talk that characterized the school, can be manifested through the surveys.

"The institutional legitimacy of the school is affirmed existentially as trust in face-to-face encounters between school staff and students and their parents" (Erickson, 1987, p. 345). Through surveys, interview, and focus groups of teachers and parents, I will examine parents and teachers thoughts concerning their trust of the teachers and the principal. Clients trust is central to school legitimacy. "Refusing to learn can be seen as a form of resistance to a stigmatized ethnic or social class identity being assigned by the school" (Erickson, 1987, p. 350). Whether student identity is protected by school teachers and principals can be revealed in the surveys, interviews, and focus groups. The significant elements of school legitimacy that leads to the acceptance of school authority will be revealed through the surveys.

Erickson suggests

> Schools are not passive mirrors of an economy, but active agents of reproduction of dominant social relations (p. 351). Schools are where the existing distributions of power and knowledge can be changed. School practices cannot continue according to conventional wisdom, which involves assumptions that are part of the cultural hegemonic practices of established classes in society. Hegemonic practices permeate and frame the school experience of the students who are members of stigmatized social groups, as well as the local community outside the school (p. 352). If hegemonic practices are the result of human choice, they are not inevitable. The politics of legitimacy, trust, and assent are the most fundamental factors in school success. (1987, p. 353)

I will explore what schools are doing to develop a society where transformation can take place. If a public school is legitimate, the school must earn this perception with its local minority community. "This involves a profound shift in the daily practices and symbolism away from hegemonic practices and toward transformative practices" (Erickson, 1987, p. 355).

Qualitative Research: Rationales

My goal is to expand and show through evidence the concept of school legitimacy as a necessary policy for predominantly minority and poor schools by examining school failure and success of low socio-economic status students and minorities from several ethnographic studies through the lens of Erickson's concepts of school legitimacy. I will also determine whether the concept of school legitimacy as posited by Erickson needs to be updated for today's schools. Erickson's concept of school legitimacy is not new, but is difficult to put into action in schools that are not progressive in their approach to dealing with the failure of poor students and minorities. Qualitative research methods will illuminate thoughts and concerns of the principal, teachers, and parents about school legitimacy and provide evidence as to why schools fail or succeed based on Erickson's concept. If the research reveals school legitimacy is necessary and a systematic method of construction is developed, then schools and educators can implement it with fidelity.

The Role of the Researcher

My purpose is to find answers to my questions concerning school legitimacy and its connection to school failure or success in minority and poor schools. School legitimacy is a useful concept in assisting schools and school districts in raising the achievement rates. Its absence contributes to school failure. As an African-American

father of two sons, I am interested in school statistics that show minorities and especially African-American males, scoring at the bottom on all standardized tests. As a teacher, I am concerned with why the African-Americans in a predominantly African-American school still score lower than the white students. As a principal, my concern focuses on raising the academic performance of all students, especially the low performing ones, which are generally my minority students. I consider school legitimacy in my personal work. My connections to students, parents, and community have always been strong, but by adding a solid relationship with my teachers, I converse about what is necessary to make certain changes if we hope to acquire school legitimacy.

Positionality. My relationship with parent and student participants is complicated. I will be studying African-American children and parents, who live mostly in an African-American community. As an African-American male that comes from outside of the community, sometimes my presence is not readily accepted. This could be due to many African-American men do not remain with their families in the low socioeconomic and urban areas. My position, as one of authority is also rarely seen by students and parents in the school that I will be studying. I will also study through surveys, interviews, and focus groups both white and African-American women teachers in the schools.

Implications of my position in comparison to my participants. I recognize that in this study, it is highly possible that some students, teachers, and parents will see me as an outsider. In one elementary school where I previously was an administrator, I found that the younger children (up to fifth grade) seemed to enjoy my presence. Older students eventually were glad for me to come around and spend some time with them.

With the students, I moved from an outsider to an insider. Parents are quite different. Some parents will not trust me simply because I am a black man, and they have had difficulty with black men in the past. Some will not trust me because I do not live in their neighborhood. Overall, I will be more of an outsider with the parents in the school. Although they may see me as an outsider, some parents will still be willing to give factual information in surveys, interviews and focus groups. Some teachers will be glad that I am doing the research, while others will think it is a waste of time. Administrators will be willing to give information depending on their position on school legitimacy.

My subjectivity. My study can be strengthened by staying true to the research and removing as much personal biases as possible. I can only monitor my subjectivity by being cognizant of it, and I must understand and acknowledge what my position is with the research itself and the participants. I was raised during the time of segregation and school was an extension of the home. Our teachers lived in our neighborhood or in walking distance from the school. All schools were neighborhood schools and there was no school bus transportation. School legitimacy is a concept that to my generation was the natural state of schools.

Ethical Issues. The ethical considerations of this study first deal with Internal Review Board's demands being fulfilled. Human research demands will be accounted for by all participants in conjunction with university requirements. The ethical considerations for the participants will be considered for their safety. The participants will be informed enough about the study to make an intelligent decision about the issues; they will be able to withdraw from the study at will, and assured that if necessary, all information and names will be changed to conceal their identities. I will do everything

necessary to ensure that the research does no harm to those involved in the process. Individual and focus group interviews will be reviewed by the participants before being released to be part of the study. Participants will not be exploited, deceived, or coerced. This study will only be beneficial if they give honest answers to the research questions. The only type of reciprocity for this study will be in the form of snacks and refreshments for the focus group participants during that part of the research.

Risks and Benefits.

This particular study carries very little risk to the participants with the exception of some teachers whose thoughts about Erickson's concept of school legitimacy are contrary to those of their principal. Using anonymous names is one way to protect the integrity of the study and also the identity of the participants. Parents and teachers do not incur any risk in this type of study. The benefits of the study will help many schools and districts that may consider school legitimacy or some of its concepts as policy changes that will be instrumental in helping all stakeholders in their school system.

Limitations/Considerations.

This study does not rely on random sampling and is not intended to be generalizable for all schools that are minority, urban, and/or low performing, but many of the issues will likely resonate in such contexts. This study will be limited to the local area and the specific population that make up the body of stakeholders. There will be some matters that can be used to help other schools with similar demographics. If school legitimacy concepts can transform a school from a failing school to a successful school, then the idea of taking school legitimacy into account when formulating policy for

schools will become a valid consideration. Any school can apply the concepts as long as the school adjusts them to fit or change their particular culture and climate.

Implications.

This study may broaden the understanding of what makes a traditionally failing school successful. It can also authenticate Erickson's concepts for low performing poor and minority schools. If the concepts of school legitimacy work for low performing, urban, poor, and minority schools, then it feasibly could work to improve all schools. This becomes a valuable piece of research for educational leaders and educators.

My study seeks to establish school legitimacy and its necessity as a school process for schools to transform from failure to success. This particular idea for transforming low performing, poor, and minority schools is for any district. School administrators with similar demographics in their schools could see a pattern to shape their school reform process and thus place their school on a path to success.

Data Collection Methods.

Interviews. Interviews are one way to understand the life experiences of others. Interviewing also assists in uncovering and understanding the context in which people see themselves within an organization and what they believe their role is in accomplishing the task or goal of the organization. Through interviews we will understand the principal, parents, and teachers' individual perceptions of the concepts of legitimacy. This study will explore the concept of school legitimacy and its connection to the failure and success of poor and minority schools. Phenomenological interviews of three members of each group (teachers, parents) of school stakeholders and the principal will provide much of

the data for the investigation of the concepts of school legitimacy. I will also use members of the same groups of stakeholders for focus groups.

The conventional model or logic regards the interview process as a means to gaining direct access to an interviewee's experience. Using the logic of stimulus-response (questions and answers), my aim is to ask the right questions so as to elicit responses in the form of authentic feelings and meanings of the interviewee (Schwandt, 2007, p. 162). I intend to remain neutral and behave in such a way that I do not contaminate the process or bias the interviews of the school stakeholders. My quest is to find out how the stakeholders feel, what they believe, and what they think should be done with the concepts of school legitimacy. I will not negate stories from the interviewee's experiences in references to the concepts of school legitimacy. Oral history (historical events, skills, ways of life, and cultural patterns) and life history (life experiences of individuals) as a type of interview questions will also be used when I interview the school stakeholders (Glesne, 2006, p. 80).

The interview questions dealing with the concept of school legitimacy will be modified to fit; school staff, parents, and the principal. Each interview will be around 60 to 90 minutes long. A second interview, given less than two weeks after the first, will be 30 to 60 minutes long and will give the interviewees the opportunity to correct any misstatements or add to any answer. This second interview will also provide me the opportunity to delve deeper into any responses that I feel need clarification. All interviewees will be provided an opportunity to review their statements.

Focus Groups. The focus groups interview will allow me to bring together a group with similar interest and skills to discuss issues they all have in common

(Schwandt, 2007, p. 119). Each group of stake holders will be able to answer questions. Focus group discussions can take on their own direction and be lead away by strong personalities in the group into a direction not intended by the interviewer. Therefore, discussion, facilitation, and moderator skills are particularly important for focus groups (Glesne, 2006, p.102). Focus group interviewing depends on the interaction within the group, stimulated by the researcher's question (Glesne, 2006, p. 103).

I will not have more than three individuals in each of the focus groups that will meet at a place and time that is most comfortable for the participants. Preferably, teachers could meet at the school and parents in a home. The setting for the focus groups is important because it enables the participants to feel at ease and less reticent in their discussion of the topic. Focus group interviews will last about one hour and contain five carefully selected questions on the concept of school legitimacy. I will record the sessions, as well as take notes during the focus group sessions. I will also bring a second person to assist with dictation and recording. Ethical problems related to confidentiality can arise in focus groups, therefore, the researcher can limit certain topics before the interview starts and not expect to get to in-depth with any one person during the focus group interview (Gesne, 2006, p. 104).

Surveys. I will send surveys to the principal, teachers, and parents of the chosen school. Forsyth, Adams and Hoy have provided questions from thirty years of research on trust in school. These questions are used to find a schools legitimacy status. The questions are designed to determine collective trust. Since collective trust is so similar to school legitimacy, these questions will work perfectly. Forsyth, Adams and Hoy "encourage researchers to use any instruments in their book free of charge and join them

in their quest to understand and improve schools" (Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy, 2001, p. xiv).

Triangulation and validity. I plan to construct a reliable study using notes from surveys, interviews, and focus groups. I will have a second person taking notes with me in the focus groups and give participants of both the interviews and the focus groups the opportunity to examine the notes of their discussion. The participants will have a time line as to when the data will be collected, analyzed, and reviewed with them. I will keep correspondence between myself and the participants in the study, as well as copies of all field notes and recorded sessions and any documents. I will document my perceptions of the surveys, interviews and focus groups by reflecting in journals after the interview and have peers examine my research design, data, and findings. I will triangulate the data received from the parents, teachers, and the principal. I will have a detailed data set (from the interviews, observations, and focus groups) to ensure sufficient information to understand the stakeholders' perceptions of their experiences with the concepts of school legitimacy as posited by Erickson.

I recognize that there are those who disagree with these concepts. The Nation of Islam has a black achievement ideology the goes counter to the achievement ideology rejected by the poor whites in the study "Ain't No Making It". It attempts to negate Ogbu's suggestion in Erickson's perceived labor market explanation (Akom, 2003). I also recognize that there are a number of successful poor and minority schools that do not employ any of the concepts of school legitimacy as posited by Erickson. Marva Collins's school in Chicago is an example of a successful school that does not use culturally relevant pedagogy, yet her students excel academically. I believe this school, as well as

schools like it, is an aberration that arises from a strong personality that cannot be reproduced.

Trustworthiness.

There are three ways in which I will attempt to maintain the integrity of this study. First, I will use colleagues to assist me in reviewing surveys, notes, documents, and interview manuscripts (respondent validation) to give me feedback on the accuracy of my interpretations and summations of my data. I recognize my closeness to the research topic, and as an educator, I am a part of the subject that I am studying. Being cautious of this fact and understanding how my personal opinion can skew my research, I will be extra careful with interview questions and their interpretation. Second, I will maintain a daily journal of events to keep my own subjectivity at a minimum throughout my research. My own sentiments and bias will be kept out of the study by continuing to check my feelings and personal theories. Last, I will allow participants to review final transcripts to ensure my conclusions, descriptions, explanations, and interpretations as recorded in my observations and their responses are accurate and precise. I will also triangulate the data collected from the principal, parents, and teachers looking for common ideas, thoughts, and themes. I will be open minded about what the research reveals and recognize and accept negative or positive results. I will be committed to this ethnographic study, build rapport with participants, and collect data through surveys and a number of interviews to get accurate answers to the research.

Site and sample procedures.

I selected an elementary school that has gone from having a predominantly white student population to having a predominantly African-American student population. This type of transformation is usually meet with opposition by the teachers and community (Morris, 2004). The school that I selected, in spite of the change in student population, has a teaching staff that remained committed to the school and the school had little teacher turnover. The teaching staff is more than 90% white, while the school's student population is now more than 90% African-American and more than 90% of the students are on free or reduced lunch. The school has maintained an average to good school rating over the years, has few discipline problems, high teacher attendance, over half the teachers have advance degrees, and 84% of the teachers return the next year. The teachers are 100% satisfied with the learning environment and the social and physical environment. They feel, based on the school's climate survey, that parental participation can be improved. The parents are also highly satisfied with the school's learning environment and the social and physical environment. The parents are also 93% satisfied with their participation in the school. It is interesting to note the student climate survey indicates that the students are less satisfied with the school learning environment, social and physical environment, and the parent's participation in the school. The student survey provides interesting questions about the differences in perception and offers insight into how the school can improve. I believe this school would be a good test subject for the concepts of school legitimacy.

The participants of the surveys, interviews, and focus groups will be selected by the principal based on my recommendations. I know most of the teachers have been at the school for more than ten years and some for more than twenty. There are two

African-American teachers on staff. I will balance the interviews among the teachers by having two white and one African American if they have been at the school more than five years. If the African American teaches have not been at the school more than five years, I will interview three white teachers that have been at the school more than five years. I will have interviews with three parents who have been at the school at least three years and have participated in school events or affairs. The parents must have students who are attending the school at the time of the interview. The interviewees will also be in the focus groups. I will have two additional people in each group as alternates in case someone changes their mind or some event causes them to no longer be able to participate in the research.

Data-analysis procedures

For this study, the data will be analyzed after the audio recorded interviews have been transferred to manuscript. The manuscript will be coded and examined for categories and themes. From these themes, I will create sub-heading that will become concepts for the actual writing process. I will also observe teachers and students in various school settings. The opinions derived from the observations will be examined by me and other colleagues to ensure I am accurately interpreting the information. I will also have focus groups made up of parents and teachers in the school setting. School discipline data will be collected and analyzed. These methods and strategies will give me a more accurate assessment of my research data.

Tentative Questions for Interview

These questions bring light to the basis ideas of school legitimacy.

1. Is trust between parents, teachers, and students important in your school? If so, give five ways it manifests itself. If it is not manifested, give five ways trust should be seen.
2. By what process is discipline maintained in your school and is it effective? And if it is, what causes it to be effective? If not, how can it be more effective?
3. Explain how your school takes responsibility for the interest, what they need, of all of its stakeholders?
4. What is the schools relationship to the community, and how does it affect the community? Name three ways it has a positive effect on the community.
5. What school policies or school cultural practices are in place to ensure the academic success of all students, and are they effective?

Tentative Questions for Focus Groups

1. Talk to me about how trust in relation to parents, students and community is important in this school?
2. Do the students, parents, and community believe that this school belongs to them? Discuss how you know they have a vested interest in the school and/or are proud of it.
3. Talk to me about how parents and students accept the authority of the school, and are they willing to submit to the schools authority for the academic success of the students?

4. How is the schools culture? Are there symbols, rituals, and ceremonies that occur to motivate parents and community to work together for the success of the students?
5. What does the school do to help the society or community where it exists? Are there aspects of the school's work that seeks to help change the society? Does the school have a role in what goes on in the society where it exists?

CHAPTER IV RESULTS

The purpose of the research is to analyze the acceptance of school authority (school legitimacy) by stakeholders and study its construction. I answer two questions in the research. How is school legitimacy constructed and maintained? How does the school staff help to construct trust among its clients in a local school? According to Erickson, trust is the most important element of school legitimacy. This study seeks to illuminate the process of constructing school legitimacy. To conduct the research, I selected a school, its teachers, parents, and the principal. I interviewed the parents, teachers, and the principal, they filled out surveys, and the parents and teachers participated in focus groups. I compared the results of the surveys and interviews to the literature that revealed the process of constructing and maintaining school legitimacy.

Participants

The School. I selected the school for three reasons. First, the school went from an all Caucasian school to an all African American school without losing the status of being a good school for the last five years. Second, the school staff remained predominantly Caucasian after the student population was 99% African American. Third, the school still exists in a predominantly white community. The school district bus most of the students to the school. These reasons made the school a suitable place to study school legitimacy.

The Teachers. The principal selected the teachers from the staff who taught in the school at least five years. The teachers in the study have taught in the test school at a minimum of ten years and a maximum of twenty-three years.

The Principal. This is the fourth year the principal served the test school.

The Parents. The parents had two requirements in order to be selected to participate in the study. They had to have been in the school at least three years, and they had to have children either in the school or who had recently left the school. Parents also had to participate in some school activities.

The Surveys

The acquired surveys from Forsyth, Adams and Hoy's book *Collective Trust*. The surveys analyzed the degree in which parents, teachers and the principal had collective trust in each other and the school. "Collective trust emerges during repeated exchanges among group members (Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy, 2011, p.24)". Each question in the surveys reveals one's level to one of the facets or characteristics of trust. The facets of trust are Benevolence, Reliability, Competence, Honesty, and Openness. Each set of questions reveals the level of trust with different role referents. Referents are the different groups that should have collective trust with each other. There are eight sets of referents in this study. The referents are faculty trust in clients (parents and students), faculty trust colleagues, faculty trust in principal, parents trust in school, parents trust in principal, principal trust in teachers, principal trust in parents, and principal trust in students. The surveys provide a view of what teachers, parents and the principal think of the school and each other in relationship to collective trust. Trust is important for school legitimacy.

Interviews

The concept of school legitimacy guided the interview questions. I sought answers to the questions of constructing and maintaining of school legitimacy, and how school staff constructs trust among clients. I asked five questions in the individual interviews and the focus groups.

Individual interviews. In the individual interviews, I asked three questions to answer the question of how to construct and maintain school legitimacy. I asked, how does the school take responsibility for the interest of stakeholders, what is the school's relationship to the community, what are the cultural practices and policies in place to ensure academic success, and what does the school do to help the society or the community where it exists? The questions also accent strategic points of Erickson's concept of school legitimacy, which are the aspects of personal and institutional legitimacy, trust, and economic interest. To answer the question of how to construct trust among clients, I asked questions about the value of trust in maintaining discipline.

Focus group interviews. To answer the research question of constructing and maintaining school legitimacy, I asked questions of teachers and parents about acceptance of school authority, symbols and rituals that involved parents and community, and the school's role in developing society. To answer the question of the staff constructing trust, I asked questions concerning the parents' interest in the school, relationships, and their importance.

Data Collection

Surveys. All participants in the study signed consent forms. I hand delivered and collected all surveys. I analyzed survey results according to Forsyth, Adams and Hoy's

directions for administering the trust surveys. I scored surveys with formulas designed for the study done at The University of Ohio. I calculated and compared all scores to their counterparts in the Ohio study. The reliability and validity of the parent trust survey scales was between the .95 and .97 range. The reliability and validity of the teacher trust survey scales were between .90 and .98 range. The reliability and validity of the principal survey scale was between .86 and .87 range. The reliability validity scales came from The University of Ohio study.

I gave surveys to three teachers, three parents, and the principal. I worked in one school with a teacher population of fifteen classroom teachers. Three classroom teachers (1/5) were a reasonable cross section of the teacher population. Three parents were a reasonable number to receive an assessment of the parent trust ideas.

Interviews and Focus Groups. I conducted one interview at a college campus and all other interviews at the school. Both focus groups' interviews took place in the school conference room. I recorded all interviews which lasted between 50 and 70 minutes. Three teacher, three parents, and the principal received individual interviews. The focus group contained the teachers and parents interviewed for their population. Focus groups' interviews lasted 75 minutes. I typed all interview and focus group manuscripts and analyzed them for commonality. I developed a list of statements and quotes and matrices to view commonality.

Study Participants

Teachers. Mrs. Smith has been a teacher in the test school for nineteen years. She taught under one of the teachers who is still at this school. She taught second grade for sixteen years, fourth grade for three years, and this year she functions as the lead

teacher. This is the only school where she has ever taught. Mrs. Jones came to South Carolina from Pennsylvania where she taught middle school. She and her husband both lost their jobs in Pennsylvania and migrated to South Carolina to find work. She taught middle school in the inner city of Columbia, South Carolina before moving to Charleston. She taught in an inner city elementary school in Charleston for four years before moving to the test school. She has been in this school for twenty years. She taught fifth grade one year and third grade for the last nineteen years. She said, "I just love teaching these kids, I think they are awesome, they make me young." Mrs. Williams has taught fourth grade, fifth grade, and middle school in North Carolina before coming to Charleston. She now teaches fifth grade in this school. This is her tenth year at the test school. She said, "I am pretty happy here. It is the best faculty I have ever worked with."

Parents. Ms. Butler is a single parent who has one child in the test school. Her child has attended this school for five years. He started in CD4 and is now in third grade. Ms. Love is a single grandmother who has had children in this school for eight years. Some have moved on to middle school, but she still has three in this school. She has one child in Child Development, one in third grade, and one in fourth grade. Ms. Nice is a single parent who has been at the test school for sixteen years. Last year her child moved to middle school, but she still serves as the PTO president.

The Principal. The principal has been in this school for four years. She has been a school administrator for eleven years. Four years as an assistant principal and seven years as a principal.

Surveys Results

Forsyth, Adams and Hoy's thirty years of research on trust has led them to three dimensions or referents to trust for teachers. The three dimensions measure what they call the Omnibus T scale. The Omnibus T-scale is a survey that contains twenty-six items that measure trust between teachers and their principal (dimension one), their colleagues (dimension two), and the clients (dimension three- parents and students) in the school. "Trust is an individual or group's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is vulnerable, benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open. The survey measures these three dimensions of trust" (Hoy, survey, 2013). Each question in the survey probes one of the five facets or characteristics of trust and enlightens a specific dimension. This survey is a valid and reliable measure of trust between teachers and their principals, colleagues, and clients. "The Omnibus T-Scale is a short operational measure of the three dimensions of trust, which can be used for elementary schools. The alpha coefficients of reliability of the three subscales typically range from .90 to .98. Factor analytic studies of the Omnibus T-scale support the construct and discriminant validity of the concept" (Hoy, 2013).

Hoy gave the following instructions for computing the scores for the test schools for comparisons to the schools in The Ohio State Trust study. The computed scores from the survey are averaged to determine the faculty trust scores of the three dimensions. The computed trust scores are standardized for each dimension for purposes of comparison. Hoy gives the following directions for creating standard scores on his web page: (www.waynehoy.com/faculty_trust.html).

Convert the school subtest scores to standardized scores with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. Hoy suggests researchers use the following formulas:

Standard Score for Trust in Clients (TCl) = 100(TCl-3.53)/.621+500

Standard Score for Teacher trust in the Principal; (TP) = 100(TP-4.42)/.725+500

Standard Score for Teacher trust in Colleagues; (TCo) = 100(TCo-4.46)/.443+500"

First compute the difference between your school score on (TCl) and the mean for the normative sample (TCl-3.53). Then multiply the difference by one hundred [100(TCl-3.53)]. Next divide the product by the standard deviation of the normative sample (.621). Then add 500 to the result. You have computed a standardized score Standard Score for Faculty Trust in Clients. Do the same for the other dimensions. You have standardized your school scores against the normative data provided in the Ohio sample.

The range of these scores is presented below:

If the score is 200, it is lower than 99% of the schools.

If the score is 300, it is lower than 97% of the schools.

If the score is 400, it is lower than 84% of the schools.

If the score is 500, it is average.

If the score is 600, it is higher than 84% of the schools.

If the score is 700, it is higher than 97% of the schools.

If the score is 800, it is higher than 99% of the schools

Teacher Survey Results. Three teachers took the survey of twenty-six questions shown in three groups on the survey results page. The first group of questions was faculty trust in the principal; the second group was faculty trust in colleagues, and the

third group was faculty trust in clients. The response to the questions had a range from one (strongly disagree) to six (strongly agree). The survey questions are in the appendix. Actual survey data is listed on Table D.1.

Teacher Trust Principal: 100(5.9-4.42)/.725 + 500 = 707. This score indicates that this school's teachers trust their principal more than 97% of the schools in the study.

Teacher Trust Teachers: 100(5.96-4.46)/.443 + 500 = 839. This score indicates that this school's teachers trust each other more than 99% of the schools in the study.

Teacher Trust Parents/students: 100(4.91-3.53)/.621 + 500 = 722. This score indicates that this school's teachers trust parents and students more than 97% of the schools in the study.

The results of the teacher trust survey were as follows.

Teachers' trust of their colleagues at the test school was over 99%. Teachers' trust in clients was over 97%. Teachers' trust in their principal at the test school was over 97%. These percentages according to the Ohio State study indicate teachers trust in their principal and the clients in the test school was better than 97% of the schools in the Ohio state study. Teacher trust in each other was better than 99% of the schools in the Ohio State study.

Parent Survey Results. Three parents took the survey of twenty-six questions shown in two groups on the parent survey results page. The first group of questions was parent trust in the principal; the second group was faculty trust in teachers. The response to the questions had a range from one (strongly disagree) to eight (strongly agree). The survey questions are in the appendix. . Actual survey data is listed on Table D.1.

Parent Trust School: 100(8-5.78)/.68 + 500 = 826. This score indicates that the test school's parents trust their school better than 99% of the schools in The Ohio State University study.

Parent Trust Principal: 100(8-5.78)/.68 + 500 = 826. This score indicates that the test school's parents trust the principal better than 99% of the schools in the study.

Principal Survey Results. The principal took a survey of twenty questions shown in three groups on the principal survey results page. The first group of questions was principal trust in the parents; the second group was principal trust in teaches, and the third group was principal trust in students. The response to the questions had a range from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). The survey questions are in the appendix. Actual survey data is listed on Table D.1.

Principal Trust in Teacher: 100(5.2-4.911)/.618 + 500 = 546.76. This score indicates that my test school's principal trust in the teachers is average in comparison to the schools in the study.

Principal Trust in Students: 100(4.83-4.827)/.587 + 500 = 500. This score indicates that my test school's principal trust in students is average in comparison to the schools in the study.

Principal Trust in Parents: 100(4.8-4.502)/.719 + 500 = 541. This score indicates that my test school's principal trust in parents is average in comparison to the schools in the study.

Individual Interviews

The Questions. This study is an analysis of Erickson's concept of school legitimacy in relationship to school success and failure. I used surveys, interviews and

focus groups to acquire prospective from parents, teachers, and principal on the concepts of school legitimacy. I answered two questions in this study. How is school legitimacy constructed and maintained? Second, how does the school staff help to construct trust among its clients in a local school?

The research indicates that school legitimacy is the approval of principal and teacher authority that derives from the school community's trust (Erickson, 1987). Individual trust of school staff, students, parents, and community, and collective trust between groups of stakeholders is essential for school legitimacy. School legitimacy is a status that must be earned by the school from the community. Schools earn status when there is a shift in the daily practices and symbolism from hegemonic to transformative (Erickson, 1987). "Hegemonic practices are routine actions and unexamined beliefs that are in agreement with the dominant culture. In these practices, it makes sense to take certain actions without harmful or evil intent that will nonetheless systematically limit the life chances of member of a stigmatized group" (Erickson, 1987). Transformative practices are actions and cultural policies that lead to trust and assent if teachers adopt instruction related to the student's home cultural communication style and culturally responsive pedagogy (Erickson, 1987).

Question 1 – How is school legitimacy constructed and maintained? The teachers, the parents, and the principal answered questions related to the question for the study. How does the school take responsibility for the interest of stakeholders? What is the school's relationship to the community and how does it affect the community? What are the policies and cultural practices that ensure academic success for all students? What does the school do to help the society or the community where it exists?

Agreement and cooperation with those in authority involves trust. This leap of faith trust - that one advances his/her own interest by compliance (Erickson, 1987, p. 344). Trust involves belief that others are acting in the best interest of the relevant party (Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy, 2011, p.4). When stakeholders believe their school looks after their best interest, they are more apt to ascribe a status of legitimacy to the school.

Teachers – How does the school take responsibility for the interest of stakeholders? Ms. Smith –The school has support from the community. We have business partners and the Rotary Club who read with the kindergarteners and CD kids.

Lighthouse Church is the biggest supporter who comes in and reads with second graders. They read one-on-one and AR books with the students. In the classroom, teachers give interest surveys at the beginning of the year. We are looking for where we can spark an unmotivated child's interest. Every parent at David Walker Elementary receives paperwork from their child's teacher that asks the parent to "tell me about your child". We learn their interests, their hobbies, what they like and dislike, and what are their weaknesses and strengths. We use that as a springboard to tap into the unmotivated child. What weaknesses the parent foresees and how we can work on them?"

Ms. Jones – I just think David Walker Elementary goes above and beyond. I have been here twenty-two years, and we have always put the kids first. Whether they need medical help, glasses or whatever, we always find a way to get it to them. We had parent educators who went to homes and made parents respect what we are doing and made them get on board with us. As far as the community, we have wonderful support. Lighthouse Church is wonderful in supporting us; in return I'm not sure we are doing as much as we should do for them. They give teachers time off, monitor the cafeteria, and we are appreciative of their efforts. I think David Walker Elementary does a good job helping the kids, parents, and the community.

Ms. Williams – We do not see students in isolation; we see them as members of a larger community. A lot of times that is their family or extended family. So when there are situations going on out in the community, the school tries to address that. Like financial support sometimes.

I had a child last year who did not have electricity in the house. I do not know exactly where the money came from, but it came from this school. (*Interviewer laughing)*

A couple years ago we had a grandmother who had several children who went to this school, and they had a fire. I do know the faculty all donated money to help them. If new children come in and they do not have uniforms, we will help them get new uniforms. Some teachers do unpaid tutoring before and after school, but that is something that many of us have done and will do.

We did parenting classes with the guidance counselor last year. Some classes were in the evening and some in the morning. Morning classes meet in the media center. The topics on how to help your child with study skills, child nutrition, how to have a cleaner greener home, cut down of cardigans in the home, the importance of sleep, and parenting stuff."

Parents – How does the school take responsibility for the interest of stakeholders? Ms. Love – Every time we find parents in need we try to help out. We have to know that they are in need of something. We have clothes and stuff here. We bring in clothes that parents had before that are too small for their child, so we put them in the closet. If students need something during the school year, they will have those items. We have Lighthouse Church that brings us a lot, (and they bring school supplies). We also have realtors who provide supplies.

The teachers have things in place that keep the kids on track. Teachers send notes home to let parents know that their child's grades have fallen and try to bring them up. For the reading celebration, each kid has to read twenty-five or more books. We do the celebration just before the end of the year.

Ms. Butler – We are talking about the plans for students in the school. They give the parents a chance to come and interact with each other and interact with the principal.

We talk about what the goals for children and their reading assignments. They also give us things to prepare the children for the next grade or things for the same grade. They give us materials that will help us help the kids with the things they work on in the class.

Ms. Nice – Well, I know if the first principal knew a family was homeless, she would help the kids and help the family find a place. If the electricity were off, she would help them pay the light bill. That would be confidential. The second principal did the same things, and now Ms. Boss does it. I know if there is a need, the school will make sure they step up and help the family.

Principal – How does the school take responsibility for the interest of stakeholders? Ms. Boss – We try to meet all of the stakeholders where they are. For students, we try to instruct them where they are, at their instructional level. If it is parents, we try to accommodate them where they are. If they have two jobs and they cannot come to parent conference meetings, we do home visits. We make home visits happen.

Interviewer – Tell me about one of those.

Ms. Boss – I do home visits. I would not be embellishing to say that at least once a week I'm going to someone's house. So often, what would happen in this population is that we will call home, and we do not have an accurate number. We cannot reach anybody, so if I cannot reach them by phone, I am coming to your house. It is as simple as that. We have some students who have issues with behavior, and if I cannot get a hold of the Mom, I'm coming to see him. I usually do not go alone; a guidance counselor comes with me.

Agreement and cooperation with those in authority involves trust. It takes faith to trust in the legitimacy of the authority and the good intentions of those exercising it (Erickson, 1987, p. 344). Trust is a state in which the individual or groups are willing to

make themselves vulnerable to others and take risks with confidence that others will respond to their actions in positive ways, that is, with benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. (Forsyth, Adams and Hoy, 2011, p.19)

Teachers – What is the school's relationship to the community and how does it affect the community? Ms. Smith - Lighthouse Church comes in and reads with the kids, and they also support the teachers and staff. Just the other day they brought in lunch for us. They always bring something on holidays like Christmas or Valentine's Day. During teacher appreciation week, they make us little goody bags and stuff. This year, Ms. Boss and three teachers went to the church because they wanted to recognize us. We went to the services a couple of Sundays ago. They had been running pictures of things that they do at the school throughout their services. We have a reading celebration at the end of the year that involves a lot of the community helpers. The helpers are Lighthouse Church, Rotary Readers, Chick Fil-A, and others community member. We have pre-school club, which is another thing we hold every six weeks. There is a pre-school club meeting, and there is a parenting aspect of that. The parents come in and furnish literature books for children, and they feed them supper.

Ms. Jones – I think the school has a good relationship with the community. Not so much around the vicinity of it, because a lot of those kids go to private schools, but, for the kids that go here, I think we have built up their trust in us. We have some new kids in the neighborhood coming to school this year, and I was just talking with parents on car rider duty, and letting them know what we are about, and they like it here. So we are starting to get more and more kids from the community coming back to David Walker Elementary. I know that has been a problem in the past, but it looks like now it is turning around a little bit. So that is good news.

I think the test scores make the community look at the school in a positive way. Just seeing the reports in the newspaper is positive. We have had parents come by last year at the end of the year having seen our scores published in the newspaper to check out the school and see what we are about. I think the community, seeing the report published in the news and on the web site, is starting to realize we are a good school. There is not a teacher here who does not care about their students. It is a small school, and everybody knows everybody. The parents appreciate that every teacher in the school knows all the kids. All the teachers know all the students.

Ms. Williams – I think the community is mostly across Highway 17. That is the community. So it is not the homes right around us. We have a small hand full of students that are right around us. When the school went from being this neighbor school to being the integration and the mixing up of the communities, there was an exodus of middle class white families from this school. I was not here then, but I talked with several people who retired in the last few years who stayed. One of them still volunteers at this school. She lives in the neighborhood, and her children attended this school. The school community is not far away, but it is not this immediate community. We are starting to see a little bit of that coming back.

Part of the reason some are coming back is the economy. We had some parents who were sending their children to private school. Then we got some pretty good publicity about school scores in the paper. I think some parents have said, "I am paying all this money to send my kids to XYZ, and I got this school that is right around the corner, let us give it a try." We have not had any that have left that have come. I do not want to make it racial because it should not be. For an example, the first five or six years

that I was here, I did not see a white student. The whole time, there would be two in the whole grade level. I think there is now a handful. We are starting to see diversity in the school population. I think it is good for everybody.

Parents - What is the school's relationship to the community and how does it affect the community? Ms. Love – We have students coming out of the Springfield area, Crenshaw, Sherwood Forest, and walking from this area. The community has always been good. The community loves David Walker Elementary.

Ms. Butler – I do not know what the school contributes. There is a crossing guard in the morning, and the same crossing guard is there when we come back when school lets out. In the morning when we come in, we have Ms. Boss, the maintenance guy, Ms. Burk and a volunteer lady, helping to get the students out of cars. We have children that walk to school. The crossing guard helps them get across the street safely. That is all I remember. The crossing guard directing traffic around the building.

Ms. Nice – The school partners usually come and bring donations and school supplies. The partners are Chick Fil-A, Piggy Wiggly, and Costco. Costco brought school supplies to the school last year but not this year. Piggy Wiggly brings fresh fruits and vegetables when we have pre-school club and other functions. If we have teacher appreciation week, whatever we ask for they will send it.

Principal – What is the school's relationship to the community and how does it affect the community? Ms. Boss – Last Thursday and the Sunday before last, my lead teacher, my guidance counselor, and I went to Lighthouse Church, because they are one of the school's most consistent partners. They do a lot for David Walker Elementary, and they wanted us to come and be introduced to their congregation so that they will know

whom they are supporting. So it is on Sunday morning, and I went to both services. I went to the 9:30 service and stayed for the 11:15 service so both congregations can just have a visual of whom these folks are at David Walker Elementary that they are supporting. So that was Sunday before last, and just on last Thursday I went to the Charleston Rotary meeting because they also support David Walker Elementary. They have a Rotary Reading Program where the Rotarians come and read with the CD's and five year olds. They also wanted to introduce the principal to the members of the organization. The people would know that these are the people whom we support. At the meeting, they presented us with an $800.00 check for the RIF Book program. We do a lot to engage the community. We have some faithful partners, not a lot, but the ones who are faithful, we try to reciprocate.

Interviewer – How does the community play into your school's responsibility? Does the school do anything specifically with community members, whether that is business, or organizations? If so, how do those actions think that affects the community?

Ms. Boss – I think it plays a big part, I think by nature most people want to help. Schools are one of the biggest areas of impact. We are affecting the future of society and the community. I find that when we can support the community, the community can support us. It is going to take everybody for the school to be effective. It is going to take parents, teachers, community, and everybody contributing to make something positive. I think we can make a tremendous impact.

Trust is impaired when there are social and cultural conflicts between teachers and clients, and school legitimacy is nullified. To find the roots of school failure and success, we must look inside and outside of the school (Erickson, 1987, p. 345). The politics of legitimacy, trust, and assent seem to be the most fundamental factors in school success, the role of culture and cultural difference varies in relation to school success. In

some exceptional circumstances cultural difference does not seem to prevent students from persisting and achieving. A much more prevalent pattern, I have argued, is for cultural differences to make a negative difference, (1) because they contribute to miscommunication in the early grades and (2) because those initial problems of miscommunication escalate into student distrust and resistance in later grades (Erickson, 1987, p. 354).

Teacher – What policies and cultural practices are in place to ensure academic success for all students? Ms. Smith – The month of February is big. The kids in each grade are responsible for a certain African American, and they have to present it on the morning news. So they can do it with a skit, with a rap, or whatever they want. They can do a poster and read it. Afterwards, we hang the posters up in the hallways. The staff has a pot luck at the end, and they bring their favorite cultural food from their culture. So we have Black History month, the reading celebration, and the PTA meetings. PTA meetings are performances. That is annually, and every grade level will perform.

Interviewer - How do these practices contribute to the success of the students?

Ms. Smith – I think it brings cohesiveness; it makes us feel we are one big family. That is important. I think it is important to make parents feel welcome and see family. We have family BINGO night. We did this for the last two years in a row, so that is annually for the last two years. We have family bingo night in March. It is nice, a huge success, and a lot of fun. So I think if it brings people in as a family, a school family.

As teachers, a lot of us do things outside of school together. A lot of us play on the same tennis team. I live on a creek and about eight of us kayak. We are going to the beach in two weeks. In October, we are going to spend a weekend at a beach house and have a girl's weekend. We only have two male teachers here, so they are not invited, and no husbands are invited. We get together after school. Two of the teachers had husbands

who passed away within six months of each other. It was very traumatic between last December and June, so we try to keep them busy. Like mother hens, we are always trying to find something to do.

Ms. Jones – Every year the kids have to read at least twenty-five books. In May after PASS testing, we have the big reading celebration that lasts all day. Everybody in the community knows about that, and every teacher is going to help the kids get to it. Now we do have kids that will not make it, but only reading twenty-five books, there is no reason why every child cannot. We have a lot of volunteers that help us with that. I have a student working on a master's degree in education, and she volunteers twice a week. She comes in, and she helps me with their reading, and makes sure they are making their reading goal. Lighthouse Church comes by regularly and reads with the second grade and makes sure they are getting their points. We have a lot of volunteers including teachers that have retired from David Walker Elementary. I think that is very positive, and it lets the community know that we are doing whatever we can for student learning.

I think we have a very positive culture, and parents love it. When parents come in they will see teachers laughing, talking, and hugging students. I had a student coming down the hall today, and from the look on his face I knew that something was bothering him, so I just went up and gave him a hug and said, make it a good day, and he said I know. We try to get the kids to feel comfortable and know that we love them. And I think that is a hard thing for kids to really understand. That we do love them, and by the end of the year we have learned to love them no matter what they are like. I think that all teachers here at David Walker Elementary do that. For the most part, we do. I will hug

them when they need a hug, and when we get out the door we high five each other. Sometimes it is easier to high five than hug. The kids know we care. The kids know we are doing the best that we can for them no matter whom they are.

I think parents coming in seeing us maybe talking to a child negatively because they have done something wrong, but saying, now how can you change this? I had a child in the hall, and a parent was coming down the hall and of course I was reaming him about something, and I said "How can you make this a positive situation?" She just looked at me and just smiled. She knew that I was telling the kid what he did wrong, but I want the kid to tell me. That happens a lot at David Walker Elementary. We try not to yell at a child when he is with a group. A lot of time, we will take him out in the hall, or I will bring him back here and say, what can we do to make this better? Many of the teachers do that with students. I think parents like seeing that. Parents come eat lunch with us, see what we are about. In the last couple of years, we probably had at least 10 parents (per class) on a field trip. Usually we use to have to beg for parents. So I think the more parents see us on field trips, the more they see how we relate to the kids. If I were not happy at my job, parents would pick that up very quickly.

Ms. Williams – Part of the culture is we are here for business. This is a place of business. People do not get to take Friday off. It is not a four day work week. That is why I love my principal. I admire her so much. She says to children we are here to learn, but you are here to work. You are not here just to absorb the information, you are here to work. You are here to do the jobs and the task, and it is very businesslike. That is an important part of the culture. Now we do celebrate success. We have honor roll every nine weeks, and we take it seriously. If children are standing there, they have earned it.

Sometimes there are not a lot of children, and we say this happens. We must try harder next time. We do the big end of the year reading celebration. The kids love it and look forward to it. The fifth graders get to perform and do a reading rap; that is very traditional. If you try to get rid of it, there will be great wailing and gnashing of teeth. They already know all the words to the rap; they have been practicing it since third grade. They know that if they do not earn enough points for their books they do not get to be a Reading Rebound Rapper. So that would be like a big deal. We are very businesslike, and that appeals to me and fits my nature, and what I think is best for the children.

Parents – What policies and cultural practices are in place to ensure academic success for all students? *Interviewer – Talk to me about Black History month.*

Ms. Love – During Black History month students do a different person every day. They read books for the reading celebration. The cafeteria is full. (*Interviewer –Is the cafeteria full of parents?*) It is full of parents and children. We get a good crowd. We have siblings that come also (*laughing*). I get to the majority of the PTA meetings.

Ms. Butler – This might be something different. Other schools have a butt load of field trips. We do not have many field trips. People ask why we do not go on a lot of field trips. We at David Walker go on a couple of field trips, but the field trips are more educational. I know that is right. We focus on education versus going on the field trips.

Ms. Nice – Well, when the students come to school, the teachers treat them as though they are new to the school. On the first day, each grade level and teacher walk the kids down the hall the way they are supposed to, the let them know where everything is, and how to line up in the cafeteria, how to dump their trays, and then they bring them

back to class. Teachers tell them how to follow the rules on the bus, how to follow the uniform rules. They also go over the discipline policy and everybody follows it.

Interviewer - What does it feel like in this school?

Ms. Nice – Happy! Well, I'm here, and I'm always happy, and everybody seems happy. They come in happy. A good word is pleasant.

Interviewer- Ok tell me about if there are symbols that represent this school.

Ms. Nice – We are dolphins. We love to surf. We surf to success.

The kids have to read a certain amount of books. *(Interviewer -Twenty five books is the district policies, what happens then?*) They start off with a beginning celebration and end with a fun day. It is a fun day. We have face painting, nail polishing, *(Interviewer -face painting, sounds like a carnival)* cake race, and sack race. The principal and the teachers organized it and the parents come in to volunteer and help. It will be an all day fun activity. We have a little snow cone machine, popcorn, a jump-castle, and it all takes places on the baseball field in May the day before Memorial Day. We also have a grandparent's week in September. We have muffin and drinks (*muffins for?...)* for grandparents. They come and ask questions and give the principal their concerns.

Principal – What policies and cultural practices are in place to ensure academic success for all students? Ms. Boss - As a building level principal?

Interviewer – Let's start with the principal.

Ms. Boss – I view policies as if they are programs, but what I must be staunch about in the buildings I've been principal is maximizing instructional time. So there's the defining of a program that says for example you must teach English Language Arts for 120 minutes a day. We are intentional and deliberate about time on task. We are

minimizing distractions and maximizing instructional time. I feel most schools, and in particular high needs schools and high poverty schools, or anytime schools are working from a deficit trying to get to the next level; I think that is the way to go. Maximize teaching time, minimize distractions and time on task applies to everybody. Time of task applies to children and adults in the building. That is a big deal for us at David Walker Elementary. Teaching standards based instruction is second on the list. We are not teaching to a test, we are teaching standards base instruction. We are not teaching cute fancy units because it is a favorite unit, we are teaching curriculum as prescribed by the district. The Common Core State Standards is the focus school wide. We involve the parents. I always encourage teachers; we do not come to conference empty-handed. Have some data in hand so we can talk about progress. They may not be able to come to every conference, but they may be able to attend a field trip. The three big areas for us are: maximizing teaching time, standards based instruction, and parental involvement on all levels.

Interviewer – Tell me this, are there any cultural practices that do not necessarily involve instruction that parents might be involved in at the school or does the school has anything that it does that bring parents in but not necessarily academic but it makes them a part of the program and if so?

Ms. Boss – For example, School Improvement Council?

Interviewer – Let's talk about that.

Ms. Boss – PTA, I would not say that we have ideal involvement; an ongoing goal is to have more parental involvement. We do have some faithful and dedicated parents apart of School Improvement Council and PTA that we know are the go to

people. When we need to make things happen, get this word out, or there's a board meeting we use them. This is relevant to what we just experienced with the crisis at Sandy Hook, and with the mayor of Charleston trying to secure schools with officers in the Charleston area. That is downtown schools, Peterson schools, and a few other areas, so there are some parents who I knew I could call on to advocate on behalf of safety being priority number one at the school. Parents play or are able to become involve on a lot of different levels. It is not just about fund raisers, it is about the real deal issues like school safety, and when issues come up we use all parents as much as we can.

Interviewer – Do the parents, as far as something that happens on an annual basis, say things like, David Walker Elementary does this every year. Is there anything besides the Student Improvement Council, or PTA that parents show their appreciation for being a part of David Walker Elementary or the kids and the teachers? Tell me about that.

Ms. Boss. – Sure we have in the past and continue to mix it up, it does not look the same every year, but we try to bring parents in and focus on different groups. So we will have a parent breakfast, quarterly, and one theme.

Interviewer- Who is responsible or who works that out?

Ms. Boss – We have a parent person who will focus on dads. We have a parenting breakfast that was just for dads. We have a speaker, who can speak to, encourage, and promote parent involvement at the level that dads will be able to receive it. It was a powerful thing to see seventy-five fathers in the cafeteria, talking about what their involvement specifically as a male in their children's lives is vital. We have had recognitions and acknowledgement for parents whose children have had perfect attendance for the year. We know kids do not get to school by themselves. Somebody

made sure that they did not miss a day out of school. So we have done a perfect parent celebration where the parent gets to come up, be acknowledged and recognized for their children having perfect attendance for the year.

Interviewer – How long has the school been doing the perfect parent?

Ms. Boss – I have done it for a couple of years. I stole the idea from Foster Elementary, my friend at Foster Elementary gave me the idea of the perfect parent breakfast, and I thought that is a nice way to acknowledge and recognize the work that parents do in supporting children.

Interviewer – How do most of the children get to school?

Ms. Boss – The students are either going to be bus riders or car riders.

Interviewer – So we do not have any walkers?

Ms. Boss – A handful. Literally.

Interviewer – Describe David Walker Elementary School.

Ms. Boss – I describe David Walker Elementary as being a traditional neighborhood school, and this is my fourth school term. I came here in 2010. I can describe David Walker Elementary as just a high achieving Title I school. I think it is one of the premier Title I schools in the district. I have to attribute it primarily to high performing veteran teachers. The teachers are outstanding here. I do not have to second guess them; I do not have to worry that they are not standing in front of students teaching all day long. That is the culture of the school. The adults are professional, and they expect students to learn, and they will not accept anything less. What happens is the students rise to the occasion. It is a high poverty school and a high performing school. That is the strongest variable that impacts student achievement. Its success is due to the people

standing in front of students for eight hours a day. That is how I would describe David Walker Elementary.

Interviewer – Are there any symbols that represent David Walker Elementary?

Ms. Boss – The symbol that comes to mind is being a National Blue Ribbon school. The first thing seen entering the door is the Blue Ribbon display. We received this five years ago, but, we have been able to maintain a level of success that makes that still applicable and relevant. We are still a National Blue Ribbon school because we still perform like one.

Interviewer – Do parents or the community speak of this being a Blue Ribbon school?

Ms. Boss – Yes, I hear it when people walk in, and I do not know if it is because they see the symbol or there's a sign on the highway that says it too, but I do hear it. In fact, I just heard it the other day from an officer doing a walk through.

Interviewer – Any regular rituals at David Walker Elementary?

Ms. Boss – Every morning when we do the broadcast, I come on first, and I do my morning announcements. Then I defer to the broadcast, which the fifth graders run. They recite the David Walker Elementary belief statement every morning.

Interviewer – Which is?

Ms. Boss – "We the students of David Walker Elementary School believe that we should always be responsible for our own actions, treat others with respect and dignity, and strive every day to be the best that we can be." They say it daily, and it becomes who they are. During the course of the day if I encounter somebody who is not making good choices, "Now did you do the best that you could do?" "Is this the best you could have done?" Remember what we said this morning in the belief statement that we would strive

to be the best that we could do, and once we have done that I could not ask for anything else. Many times they could admit to me, "this is not my best."

Interviewer – Are there any annual ceremonies at David Walker Elementary?

Ms. Boss – I think it is worth mentioning that I run the school like a tight ship. We are not big on assemblies. Anything that takes away from instructional time, I'll say no I cannot do it. There are plenty programs that people want to come into the school and do. We do not do assemblies, fundraisers, or anything that is going to take away from core teaching time. There is one thing that we do every year after state testing, and that is a huge reading celebration. This is in conjunction with the districts 25 books, the minimum goal of reading 25 books a year, and kids far exceed that goal, but that is the minimum. Every kid that meets that minimum goal can participate in this reading celebration. It is a big deal. Everybody is in uniform in that I provide a reading celebration tee shirt for every kid. This is one day that they get to dress down. Every day is a uniform day at David Walker Elementary. We do not have the jean day because they get distracted. That is one day they get to dress down, and we have puppet shows, storytellers, magic shows, a book fair, a jump-castle, cotton candy, snow cones, etc. *(Interviewer – a carnival?)* Yes, I have been here three years, and that aligns with the district's goal of increasing literacy, the school's goal of promoting literacy and that is the school's way to celebrate literacy. That is the school's one big event. We have the parents here, the Chick-Fil-A Cow, the Piggly Wiggly Pig, the Grimace from McDonald's, and it is just a day of fun.

Interviewer – Is the community involved?

Ms. Boss – It is a big event and everybody gets to participate, be engaged, and enjoy it.

In the past, the school also played an integral role in the solidifying African-American communities (Morris, 2004). The school was a focal point in connecting the community and the church. School legitimacy cannot occur without a close connection between the school and the outside social structure of the community (Erickson, 1987; Ladson-billings, 1995; Morris, 2004).

Teachers – What does the school do to help the society or community where it exists? Ms. Smith - I have seen changes in the neighborhood, but we have more neighborhood children coming to school. The majority of them go to a private school. I do not know why because we are a great school. Most of the kids come from Crenshaw, and that is over there on 17, it is a pretty rough neighborhood. Lighthouse Church uses the school in the summertime for their Nick at Night program. They use the school for about two nights during the summer. The kids use the playgrounds to play sports. We have a garden. Third graders plant the garden and take the vegetables home. Community Rush Restaurant on Savannah Highway come to the second graders and they teach nutrition cooking lessons. We do not go into the neighborhood. We used to do a march around the neighborhood during Red Ribbon Week. We got the kids, and the police blocked the streets, and we go out in the neighborhood and say no to drugs. Ms. Boss said that takes away from instructional time, so she stopped it. She does not like anything that gets too crazy.

Ms. Jones – To help the community, just when we release the kids, we trust them to be good citizens. We talk about that a lot. So the PBIS that we are doing in the classrooms we are hoping it is spilling over into the community. We hope to hear "thank you", "please", and "you are welcome" more from our kids. The biggest thing we have

with a lot of the kids is they will not look us in the eye. I'm hoping that what we are teaching here is relating to the community. As far as what we do to help the community, I think just putting the kids out there to make them good citizens in the community.

Interviewer -Is the school making an impact on the community?

Ms. Jones – I think it is. I think parents who are selling homes show the school scores. We have a friend that bought a house, and one thing he looked at was what David Walker Elementary could provide for his child. Parents that live in this community and are selling their house will show the school's test scores. Any parent that wants to move in here will look at the scores. Unfortunately, we live in a testing world, and they are going to look up the scores, and they are going to look at David Walker Elementary and what we offer. I think that is positive, for most parents. Now some parents, no matter what happens it is not going to be positive for them. It just depends on the dynamics of the school, and that might not suit their taste. For the most part, I think we do a good job with that.

Ms. Williams – I hope so, I hope that is the whole mission of democracy. This is the reason why I became a teacher. I do not believe we can have a civilized nation especially with as much diversity as we have. We are not a small homogeneous group of people. We are a huge country. Without any educated citizenry, we will be in very bad shape. Things we teach here at school go beyond reading and writing. Things like recycling, keeping the garden, PBIS, modeling for children and expecting children to treat each other civilly. We emphasize things like showing up for work on time, working while at work, not taking Fridays off, or not taking your birthday off. I am preparing my

children for middle school. I hope I am also preparing them to be contributing members of society. Otherwise, we are going to be bankrupt morally and financially.

Parents – What does the school do to help the society where it exists? Ms. Love – We have a school that does not have much absenteeism. When students are here every day, they learn more. When they go to middle school, they know what to expect.
The same expectations will keep them going on to high school. When parents start off with their child in school, elementary school, knowing what need to be done, they go with them to middle school. A lot of the parents just do not drop them off in high school. When I go to Peterson High with my grand, former students speak to me. They say things like, we are so glad to see you and things like that. We still have the parent flow until the next level of schools. I can only know that because I see them there and they have not let the children go by themselves. We had a lot of children go to Blackburn Middle, and some go to C.E., mine went to Blackburn (laughing) (both laughing) I know the difference.

Ms. Butler – They have an open door to the parents. Either come to the PTA meeting or come to the breakfast. I forgot they also have dinner time too. The PTA, I love the fact that even if I cannot make the meetings, I can have a one on one talk with the principal herself or the principal and teacher. There must be a time that is reasonable for both. I just love that they have the open door policy. If anything is going on or if we have concerns or anything, we can go and talk with them. That we are not going to be shoved off to somebody else. They will find out right then what we going to do.
Interviewer – Are there aspects of the school's work that seek to change society?

Ms. Butler – Are there aspects of the school

Interviewer – That seek to change society. Is there anything in school that seems geared to making society better for students, constituents, or stakeholders?

Ms. Butler – *(very long pause as if confused by the question)* I think... *(Long pause)* I do not know what... I guess maybe just piggy back on things that I already said.

Interviewer – Does the school have a role in what goes on in the society where it exists?

Ms. Butler – umm, I mean a role other than just communicating with the parents, they strive to communicate with the parents a lot. That is all I can say. If there is not communication, there is a problem. Communication is a very big thing. We need communication, proactive parents, and proactive teachers. I mean, eventually, showing up, is proactive, because finding out what is going on is showing proactively. We want the best for your children, and that is what the teachers want for them.

Principal – What does the school do to help the society or community where it exists? Ms. Boss – We help the community and society at large by what we do here. For example, we may have different expectations and rules of engagement than the home sometimes. What we do here and what we understand here is that the primary business is teaching and learning. That cannot happen without some core value instruction or some just life skills. So I think it is the charge and responsibility of the school to teach those. I think we have to teach kids what we want from them. We have to teach them how to enact, to interact, how to be engaged, how to disagree, how to be upset, how to argue. I think that is the role we play in teaching what is acceptable what is unacceptable, what is appropriate and what not appropriate, and that does not stop at school, it is for life.

Interviewer – Give examples where you might have seen something that the school taught or have been doing to change society or with parents or students where you can see what you have been doing in making an impact.

Ms. Boss – I cannot say I can give a quantitative measure, but one of the things that is important to me is being on time. That is adult and that is children. We have an issue with folks bringing their students to school late. So we try to do things like promote no absences, no tardies, and no early outs. So we are celebrating entire classes. For a week this class has not had anybody late, has not had anybody leave early, and has not had anyone absent. I think that these are life skills. These skills should transfer into how you maneuver yourself through life when you go to work, and you try to secure a job, coming late is unacceptable. These are the things that we try to instill and teach here that will transfer into life skills.

Interviewer – How do you believe parents accept those values coming from the school?

Ms. Boss – It is not always easily accepted because adults are adults. They do not always change easily, and I just had that conversation this morning. We have to keep instilling them; we have to keep saying this. It does not always take the first time.

Interviewer – Tell me about this morning.

Ms. Boss – I have a faithful and dedicated grandmother, you will probably meet her, and so what she does every morning as if it were her job, she reports to car rider duty. Then after car rider duty is over, she stays and helps the tardy kids make it to class on time. She and I both are often having conversations with parents who have a pattern of lateness, saying to them, you have got to get them here on time. You got to wake up a little bit earlier to get them here on time, or if you see the bus has not come by seven

thirty, I need you to get them here by seven forty-five. We had this conversation that we have year after year after year, but it is needed. We cannot stop having the conversation; we have to continue to stress what is important to us. That is what we talked about this morning.

Interviewer – How do the parents receive that conversation?

Ms. Boss – Well it is not the same parents year after year, it is different people, same conversation.

Interviewer – Is it getting across to some of them?

Ms. Boss – Yes, to some. I think most people want to do right by their kids. Sometimes it takes us bringing it to their attention. Do you realize that you have been tardy three times this week? Then that get their OK, I need to do better. I need you to do better is usually what I will say. I need you to work on this. I need to do the same thing when working with adults. I had a teacher with this issue. I told her, I need you to be cognizant of it. I do not know if you are aware that you have been tardy this many times. I need to put this in black and white for you so that you can reflect on it, and try to make a different decision.

Interviewer – When talking to teachers about this, how is it received?

Ms. Boss – Sometimes, teachers are defensive, and try to explain away, what is what.

Interviewer – For example, the traffic had them held up.

Ms. Boss – Right. *(Laughing)* There is always a reason, which I am not interested in. I am not interested in why you have a pattern of tardies; I just need you to work on it.

Sometimes it is received easily, and sometimes, you know, it takes a little massaging...this is what I need kind of thing.

How does the school staff help to construct trust among its clients in a local school?

To answer this second question, I asked teachers, parents, and the principal five questions. Discuss how trust in relation to parents, students, and community is important in this school? How is discipline maintained? How do parents and students accept the authority of the school, and are they willing to submit to the school's authority for the academic success of the students? Do the students, parents, and community believe this school belongs to them? Describe the school culture?

Trust is the foundation of school legitimacy (Erickson, 1987, p 345). The emergent level of collective faculty trust is not the product of a single story or the experiences of a single teacher, but rather is negotiated as various bits of information, interpretations, and feelings are recounted over time during the day to day social exchanges among teachers (Forsyth, Adams, and Hoy, 2011, p.32). The institutional legitimacy of the school is affirmed (established) existentially as trust in face-to-face encounters between school staff and students and their parents. In short, the relationship between school staff and clients establish the culture of the school, i.e. – its institutional legitimacy (Erickson, 1987, p. 344).

Teachers - Discuss how trust in relation to parents, students and community is important in this school? **S**mith – I think it is important in our school between parents, teachers, and students because you got to have the relationship with the parents and also the relations with the student in order to have the support that you need to help the child succeed.

We try to contact parents at least weekly in our school. We contact them through test and assessment folders that we send home every week. They have comments in there about behavior and about how they are doing academically. Phone calls are important, and parents feel pretty comfortable about calling teachers at our school as do the teachers calling parents. Some parents who have the capability of email will converse via email.

We send home positive notes. We have post cards, and we make it a point that each child gets at least one for the year. Sometimes there is more. We have positive referrals. I guess that is another way of corresponding with the parents. We recognized kids for doing something over and above, and parents are supportive of that. If a student gets a positive referral for the month he or she is invited to a luncheon at the end of the month. I think that a note goes home to the parent. We have a blue ribbon for character that we do monthly. We recognize one child from each class and they go on the morning news, and that also goes home to parents. I think the teachers support the student but also the parents support the teachers.

Ms. Jones – I think trust is very important. Without trust between the parents and the students and I, I do not think we can get them to where we need them to be. The bottom line is I have to get all my parents to trust me, and if they do not they will come in to see me. I have had incidents where the parent and I had to have a conference with Ms. Boss. It was just to get them on board with me, and Ms. Boss went above and beyond trying to help me do that.

I think as time goes on and as I do my reports, my weekly calls, and as I do my weekly folders, they learn to trust me. They see what I'm about, and I make phones calls if I do have problems, and the parent learn to trust me because I do not want to do referrals unless I talk to the parents, and that way I get their trust.

Interviewer – Give me an example of what you are talking about.

Ms. Jones – I had a parent come in this year, she did not trust me at all. Her son got into trouble, and I wrote her a letter. Finally, after a couple of days the letter got to the parent. The parent came in, and I was told by certain people that she was very boisterous

with her body language, and that would tell me that I need to back off. Well she came to my door and even though I was in class, I said, let me get me kids busy, and then I will talk to you. After talking to her, and telling her what I am about, I do not think she did not trust me, she had not trusted the teacher before me. Her son was constantly being written up, and she was not being contacted. What I did was, I promised her that I will never write him up on referral unless I contacted her first. From that point on he did a complete turnaround; he is one of my best behaved kids now whereas before he was unbelievably belligerent, talked back to me and was very aggressive with the other students. The last couple of weeks he did a complete turnaround. This year I have gotten her on board.

Ms. Williams – It is very important, our parents send us their children. If they do not trust us to do the best for their children, then they don't have confidence in what we are trying to do. When I have a problem with a child, I go to the parent. Most of the time, I get that they trust me feeling. Occasionally you get parents that you know do not, but I know that that is rare at David Walker Elementary. I guess I can think of incidents where they will sometimes share things that are going on in their personal lives or experiences that their child has had in the past. Sometimes it is something that is a natural part of life, you know, the death of somebody like and elderly relative. Sometimes it is something very traumatic, like being evicted, or having a bad experience with an adult. Like last year, I was told about a child who was molested. Things like that.

You have to have the relationship. You cannot get the academics unless you got the whole package. The kids trust you. It is difficult to get kid buy-in, but if you get the parents support, it helps. I was thinking, this year I have a couple of parents who are new

to David Walker Elementary. They are either foster parents or getting ready to adopt, and they are bent on having their child evaluated for a disability. We are not against that if that is what you as a parent wants to do. I was telling them about all the strengths that I see that she has. It was nice that the psychologist came back to me and said, "I do not know what you said to them, but they want to hold off on the evaluation until after the nine weeks." That statement made me feel good. I am not sure what I said to them, but that is an instance of them listening to my professional judgment.

Parents – Discuss how trust in relation to parents, students and community is important in this school. Ms. Love – Trust is noticeable with the parents and students because if there is any problem or anything, the parents can come in and talk. If we are on the outside and they have anything they want to say, most of the time the principal is out there with us. The principal can talk to them, or they can come in the school and talk. It is not necessary to set up an appointment. It is a family affair. Normally, I am here making sure parents come and talk with the teachers at a certain times or answer questions. I also can tell them what they need to do if their child is not getting to school on time.

We have had some parents come in high-spirited, and we have to get them calm. I told a lot of them that if you are coming to talk to the principal or the teachers, *(Interviewer – you told them that)* Yes. If you are coming to talk with the principal or the teachers, do not come in real aggressive. So by me getting that over to them first, by the time they get there they are calm down.

Interviewer – Do you think if you let the teacher know what the parent wants, she is going to handle it appropriately?

Ms. Love –when I walk in a room and let them know, for instance, every morning you got the same parents coming late, so I tell them please have the kids here no later than eight o'clock (*Interviewer- You tell them that!)* I can tell them that. I'm a parent, so they know that I'm out here and I'm concerned about them getting to school on time. (*Interviewer- So they trust you!)* Yes they do trust me, and they trust the teachers too because they know that (*Interviewer-How do you know they trust the teachers?)* When I go into the classroom, I walk in the classroom, and we all hug. It is not just, hi in the hall or hi when you see the teachers or whatever, no in the morning we just hug. (*Interviewer – Y'all sound like church).* We all hug, if anything goes wrong, we rally around that person who has a problem. We had two deaths, teacher's husbands, we rallied around them.

We start the day with Ms. Boss coming on with our early morning announcements, she stresses a word every day and the meaning of the word. If the child is not here, have not heard that word, then they will not know the meaning. The children do the morning news, and they have other little things they do, so if students are not on time they missed out on that portion of the day. If the teachers have already started teaching and they come in late, they have to go over the material again with the late child, and that takes up instructional time. So that is why I stay here as long as I do in the morning.

I think the trust comes in when you see the same parents come into the school, and they are talking to teachers and bringing the kids. We have fathers who bring children and mothers who bring them. The fathers talk to the teachers. We see them every morning and the way they react with their children, that is the trust. We do not do

anything different because we know who they are. They are mothers and aunties also that come in and drop kids off.

Ms. Butler – Trust is very important at David Walker Elementary. I can go and talk to the teachers at any time. It does not matter if the issue is with them or with my son. It is the communication is there with Ms. Boss and every teacher that I have ever had from CD4 until now (*her son is in third grade now*). I have always had good communications with the teachers. If I had an issue, we can talk, I never argued. They are easy to talk to, and they would make time for me. They always make time if a parent has concerns. Ms. Boss would go out of her way to making time for me and anybody else. Ms. Boss would say, "Can we talk, let's go into the office." That is real important to me. I can to talk to the principal. I do not have to talk to the assistant principal, and I do not have to talk to someone else before I can talk to her.

Ms. Butler – How is trust important to the school? It is important. This has to do with how parents and the teacher are communicating with each other. With trust, we can find out what is going on with the children if they have a need, or what problems they may have with learning. We can look at whatever subject they may have or how they take care of our children when we are not there. We send our kids to school one way do they come home differently? My son came home one day with different pants. They were uniform, but I knew they were different. He had an accident at school, and they gave him another pair of pants, they sent a letter home letting me know what took place at school, and they did not have to call me. They took care of it just like a parent should. They did not send him home because He wet his clothes. They took care of that and sent him back to class, and he got an excellent for the day. He got an excellent.

Interviewer – You believe your child's teachers are like his parents?

Ms. Butler – Yes I do, and yes they are.

Ms. Nice – Yes, it is important because when my son was here, the teachers use to be afraid to discipline him. I told them that when he is in your class you are responsible for him. I'm the parent, and I work here, but I am not responsible for him at school, you are. Once he is in your class, they were afraid to discipline him, but once I told them that, I did not have a problem anymore.

Interviewer – Well talk to me about it and give me example.

Ms. Nice – When the teacher was afraid to discipline him she came to me. I told her how to talk to him, and I told him, if I have to come down here again, it is going to be trouble. (*Interviewer – Trouble between whom?)* It is going to be trouble between me and my son. *(Interviewer – ok),* I work with teachers and the teachers work with me, and we work on him. Teachers have permission to discipline him in class and to do what they need to do. When they do that everything goes smoothly.

I hand pick my son's teachers. He needed me to do that. He was not a bad child, but I knew he could be mischievous and hard to deal with sometimes. Some teacher would be afraid to challenge him, so I had to have someone who can discipline him.

Principal – Discuss how trust in relation to parents, students and community is important in this school. Ms. Boss – Trust is very important. I think that it is important in all relationships but particularly and specifically in school relationships. I've found over the years at David Walker Elementary and at other schools that I have served that relationships are key. I base relations on trust, a mutual give and take. I trust you as a parent doing what is in the best interest of your child and you trust that I'm going to do

what's in the best for your child as a school professional or school leader. David Walker Elementary has many veteran staff members, and what happens over the years is we develop relations in trust because the cycling through of children of the families. I had a big brother five years ago and now his little sister is here. We get the opportunity to know our families well. The small school structure also lends itself to building relationships. Parents know that when they get a phone call from the principal or a teacher about something that has happened, they can be assured, because of the relationship that developed that what we are calling to say is factual and is valid. Once a relationship is formed through trust, we are made more creditable, and the message is received better. Particularly with discipline, when I have to call to deliver a tough message, it goes across better to someone who knows me. They know who I am, and they know what I am saying to them is creditable.

Interviewer – Give me a situation or story where trust is manifested, and because the individual had trust in you as a school it went over better.

Ms. Boss – Ok, I had a parent come in just yesterday. The parent of a fifth grader came in yesterday upset that her children had homework over the weekend. Her position was that weekends are for them to have fun. My family goes hunting on Fridays, and we do not come back until Sunday. We do not have the time to commit to weekend homework. Traditionally homework has been from Monday through Thursday, so she was a little put out. She wanted to talk to the teacher right then and there. She said, I am thinking about coming to the PTA meeting tomorrow and bring it up. I said mom, now you know that I am here. You know you can call me and talk to me about his matter, and she instantly, instantly calmed down and smiled and said, yeah I know I can call you, I

know I can talk to you about the matter. It was rectified in the office, and did not get to where she thought she needed a sit down conference anymore. Because she knew, if I say to her, I'm going to handle it, I'll address it; we will touch base with the teacher to find out exactly why she gave homework on the weekend. That is just from her knowing me for the last four years. If I tell her that I'm going to do something, she knows I'll follow up; I will follow up with it.

Ms. Boss – With parents, parents have to know, they have to know, when they send their kids to school, that the people here have their best interest at heart. That is during school hours and after school hours. That is the only way I know to develop trust is through experience, is through the day in and day out interactions. That is the only way to do it, have integrity, and be transparent and honest. Over time trust builds with parents and students.

Children and adults alike, everybody believes in fair. Well that was not fair. Anybody can recognize, feel, and gage what is fair. That is the same level of trust you have to establish with children. If we expect something on Monday, then we should expect the same thing on Wednesday. If we expect it from John, then we should expect it from Jane. That is how I think we can develop a trusting relationship with children. They know what to expect from us, from being consistent. There is an important quote that I cannot remember exactly how it is worded but the gist of it is, when your are consistent, it eliminates fear. When you come to David Walker Elementary, this is what is going to happen first, this is what going to happen in the middle of the day, and this is how it going to end. You get a level of comfort and a level of trust knowing that I know what to expect when I come to school. I may not know what to expect at home, I do not know

what I'm going to get when I walk through the door at home, but I know what to expect when I come to school. That goes for students, parents, and the community.

I think community members want to reach out and support a school or whatever the entity is. I think they have to know that whatever they are investing into the school, the school is using it for the correct purpose. They can see the fruits of their labor when donating prizes, sponsoring field trips, or whatever they are doing.

Interviewer – The community sponsors field trips?

Ms. Boss – We have a partnership with Number One Realtors.

Interviewer – How did you develop that?

Ms. Boss – They reached out to us.

Interviewer – Tell me about that.

Ms. Boss – My guidance counselor has been here for a long time, and she have a lot of connections with the community. They reached out to us. I think what happens most times, if you are in their neighborhood, they will say this is the school around the corner from us, so we want to do this for your school. We got a call saying that they wanted to help us out. So one need for us, because our families cannot always afford the field trips, we said you guys can sponsor some grade level field trips. That is what they did. I cannot remember off the top of my head how many trips they sponsored, but we were able to send kids on meaningful and worthwhile experiences through that partnership.

*Trust: that my identity will be protected**.** One way the schools become legitimate is through the essential element of trust. Students must trust that the school authorities care about their cultural identities (Erickson, 1987). Without this sense of trust, students will not assent to the authorities, and generally they become discipline problems. Schools with excessive discipline problems are generally failing schools. The disciplinary system*

of the school illustrates how race and gender identities of preadolescent African-Americans boys are shaped through punishment in school (Ferguson, 2000, p. 40). "Culturally relevant teaching is one way to develop a "relevant black personality" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p.17). Students need their own identity to be protected and must trust that, within the school, their identity is not recreated. "Culturally relevant teaching fosters a natural cultural identity that empowers students to live successfully in society" (Osborne, 1996). Trust in the protection of identity is the first leg of Erickson's elements of school legitimacy.

Teachers – How is discipline maintained? Smith – Penny Knowles turned the school around. I mean just literary. I mean she just weeded out the children that were not within the school zone and sent them where they need to be. She called parents in and just tightened up. She ran a tight ship, and I think she turned the school around, and I saw that transformation. I think that because she did that, there are a lot of teachers that were here under her tutelage that are still here. I think we had some good administrators; we had Ms. Knowles, Ms. Farmer, and now Ms. Boss. Teachers know the limitations that we have, and we know that when we are at our wits end with a child, we can go to Ms. Boss, or Ms. Farmer, or Ms. Knowles for support. We do PBIS and try to go for the positive behaviors. I think the behavior is handled. I think most teachers try to handle it in their classes. I think our communication between and among classroom teachers and the office staff and support staff is just real good. I think that we do not allow kids to get out of hand; we do not allow things to escalate in the classroom.

Ms. Jones – I think it is very effective. We do the PBIS and all that. I'm a very big disciplinarian. I believe that if a child is fooling around he is not learning and I believe it is not fair to the other kids in my classroom. School-wide we have incentives. The students get tickets on Friday if they have gotten excellent for the week, but parent have

to have signed their daily behavior sheets. On Fridays, they get tickets and we reward the tickets with prizes from the cafeteria.

Ms. Williams – We are a PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) school. I feel it is effective at times. I feel it is a process. I think we have done a good job moving the middle of the road kids.

Interviewer – Do you think the PBIS process contributes to trust that the students might have? Ms. Williams – I hope so. We try not to hone in on the negative. It is common sense, but it is almost sometimes we need to be reminded of the common sense that is so easy to snap off at what is annoying you as opposed to taking the time to go over and quietly speak to a child. That is treating children with dignity.

Interviewer to Teachers – How do parents accept the way you handle discipline?

Ms. Smith – I think that parents know the school's expectations and the consequences. I think they are supportive of that. I went from second to fourth grade, and I never had a parent who said, "I just do not believe in your system, or I do not believe in what you are doing."

Ms. Jones – Sometimes some parents will back off. Sometimes if I see them getting uncomfortable on the phone, I'll say ok why do not we come in and have a conference. You sit next to me, and let's talk about your child. Sometimes they come in very mad, sometimes their body language say I know I do not want to be here, but you are making me be here. Usually I try to do a couple of positive things. Look I love your child. I know your child is so smart. Your child can do it, but he or she is not doing it. Let's you and I work together to get your child to where he or she need to be. Usually once I say a couple of positive things, I can see them starting to melt down, and to be

more accepting. I have not in a long time had a parent leave me very upset. I think something I have learned to get around.

Ms. Williams – I think I have not had any complaints. I mean, they like the positive note, they like the positive phone calls, and everyone wants to hear that your family members are a credit to you. I mean whether it is your spouse or your brother or sister; I think that it is human nature. I think that has been a plus and a positive for us.

Parents – How is discipline maintained? Ms. Love – Teachers give the students two chances before they call their parents. They find out what the problem is, teachers talk to the parents, the principal and teacher talk with the parent, and they all talk to the student. They solve the problem because everybody gets together and they know what to expect and what needs to be done.

Interviewer – Do parents know what to expect concerning the discipline of the children?

Ms. Love – In the classroom they do. (*Interviewer- In the classroom)* They are on board. We have to sign those papers at the beginning of the year (*Saying you understand the discipline policy).* If parents say they are not aware, we can give them a paper that says you are. We do not have suspensions and kids getting put out of school. One might have to go home for a half a day or something, and they come back.

Teachers will call the parents and the parent will come in and talk with the teachers. When that happens, the student had received about three chances. We have had students in the past that said they felt like killing somebody, but I had to explain that to teachers. The parents say that to the children. "If you do not sit down over here I'm gone do so and so. You know, I'm just going to kill you." But, they do not mean killing you, they going to beat you if you don't do this to that. So when teachers hear children say

they going to kill so and so. I say no, that's not what the root meaning is; they get that from the parent. So we talk to the parents, and tell them not to use those kinds of words because the kids bring it to school.

Ms. Butler – I can only speak concerning my child. I know that there is a student in my son's class, and he is a problem child, but they still work with him. They did not give up on him. That is a good thing. Before any teacher put him out the class, they would put him by the door, so he did not disrupt the other children. I know they placed him with another teacher who did not have a class. He is not getting suspended or getting put out of school, but he is some place by himself. That way he could meet his goal. Of course, you do not want to put him out because then he is not getting his education. So he is still there, getting his education, but he is by himself so he will not disrupt other children who are paying attention. He is with students who sit in the class behaving themselves getting an education. But, for him, I have never heard of him getting suspended, other than just taking him out of the classroom for disrupting other children.

Ms. Nice – Well the kids here are not bad. We do not have much discipline problems here, and the few that we have discipline problems with, they put them in a little area to calm down, a little time out area, or send them home for a day. Other than that we do not have discipline problems here.

Interviewer – So what system do they use to discipline or is there a system?

Ms. Nice – The only system we use is putting them somewhere quiet. If there is nobody in the library, they will put them there to calm them down for a few, then about

five minutes or so they send them back to class or send them to the principal's office.

Well I never see any parent fuss about teachers in my presence, so I do not know if they fuss with the teacher on the phone or come back to the meeting and fuss. I have not seen it in my presence.

Principal – By what process is discipline maintained in your school and is it effective? Ms. Boss – What is the process for discipline?

Interviewer – By what process is it maintained?

Ms. Boss – We use a progressive discipline plan. We use Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) which most of the schools in the district use, and we found that a positive approach to discipline is best, and one that involves parents. We cannot rectify situations without parent support and parent buy-in. So a big part of the school-wide discipline is making sure we focus on the positive, keeping parents informed and in the loop, and it is progressive, it is steps. You do not come in my office for an offense and get suspended. It is a progression that our policy and our system follow. That is what it is.

Interviewer – So how effective is it?

Ms. Boss – We found it to be effective in that, everybody knows what to expect. Teachers know that when they write a referral, here's what is going to happen. Parents know that when I get a second or third referral here's what going to happen, and I do not have to guess when kids come into my office I do not have to guess what I am going to do today. It is prescribed; this is what happens with a first referral. You get timeout and a phone call home. Here is what happens with a second referral, a sit down parent conference and removal from the classroom. The third offense is a core referral and parent contact. A fourth referral and its systematic, it is step by step.

Assent to the exercise of school authority involves a leap of faith. That is trust in the legitimacy (institutional and personal) of the authority and in the good intentions of those exercising it, trust that one's own identity will be maintained positively in relation to the authority, and trust that one's own interests (economic)will be advanced by compliance with the exercise of authority. A sense of trust involves a sense of risk. (The choice to trust can be made reflective or intuitively.) (Erickson, 1987) Those who trust make themselves vulnerable to others in the belief that those they trust will act in ways that are not harmful or detrimental to them; trusting, individuals have a positive expectation in the actions of those whom they trust. Vulnerability and confident expectations of outcomes are crucial aspects of trust. Risk is another element of trust. Without some vulnerability there is little risk. Both risk and vulnerability create and opportunity for trust (Forsyth, Adam, & Hoy, 2011, P. 17)

Teachers – How do parents and students accept the authority of the school, and are they willing to submit to the school's authority for the academic success of the students? Smith – I know they respect Ms. Boss. Most parents respect the majority of the teachers that are here. I cannot name a single teacher that has had a problem with a parent over a student's behavior that the parents did not respect the teacher's decision.

Ms. Jones – I think Ms. Boss is a wonderful leader, and she can get the parents on board. She is African American so a lot of the parents right away look at her and accept her whereas previous principals were not. I think just the way that she can relate to them and talk to them, she is amazing. I think because I have been here so long parents know me so they can trust me. I was not this way in the beginning. Now, since I stayed they trust me. I know you should not look at her as African American, but I think some of the parents do. I think some of our parents have made a big improvement in their relationship with the school. Some parents in the past that had kids in the school like maybe fifteen years. You can see a difference from whenever their first child was here ten years ago to what they are like now. In some ways, they have turned around. So I

think she is personable, and I think they know that education is the top priority here. She will say education and getting your child **where they have to be** is our primary focus.

Ms. Williams – I do not know that sounds heavy. *(Interviewer – Take a piece at a time)*

Interviewer – Ok - A piece at a time. How do the parents and students accept the authority of the school?

Ms. Williams – They do. The first year I was here. I think whenever you are the new teacher you do get scrutinized. They can come at you with guns blazing if things are not going well. The longer you are here, and the more nieces and nephews and next door neighbors you get, the better it becomes. I mean it is funny that a child that I thought gave me fits six years ago will tell a younger sibling or a younger family member, she is ok, she is real fair. Really? So now I'm fair. You get that reputation. The parents certainly respect Ms. Boss, our principal. I think it is her third year. *(Interviewer- fourth year)* Oh, fourth year. They should respect her because she is straight forward. She has no hidden agenda. She said what she means, and she means what she says, and her authority that is solid. I think that I am not unreasonable, and so when I do have the consequence for a child or I do have demands for a parent, I need the principal to reinforce those for me.

Interviewer – Give me an example when you have done something like that.

Ms. Williams – I have made accommodations, and the child is making a 10 on the

spelling test this year. This will be an example, and mom says they cannot do the spelling. She is lovely but she is a working mom, and she has a lovely child and he goes hunting with his dad. She just cannot do it all. So I said if I gave you the spelling list on

Friday instead of the Monday, which gives two extra days, could dad do that while he is hunting with his dad. I do not know if that is a good example or not. I'm not a very pushy person with parents.

Interviewer – So, how did it end? Ms. Williams – We find out tomorrow *(Interviewer – laughing)* when he takes his spelling test. It is only the third week of school. Remember, you just said that.

Interviewer – Are parents willing to submit to the Principal's authority?

Mrs. Williams – Very well, they admire her. She is so consistent. You know children like boundaries. They like safety, security, and knowing exactly where they stand. There is no muttering or rolling of eyes. They are very respectful. I think it is genuine. I do not often have an office referral. This was an incident I had last spring, I had a young lady who had a meltdown, and I asked her to move to another desk, and she point blank refused. You were asked nice to do something you need to do it. So I wrote it up sent it to the office, And three minutes later, the intercoms on, it is her voice, please send so and so to my office. That immediacy. She knows that we do not run to her with every little thing. So when we do, she got our back 100% and the kids know that.

Interviewer – How do the parents feel about that?

Ms. Williams – Well probably the frequent flyers do not like it. (*Interviewer-laughing)* The other parents, I think they respect it. Parents are very pleased with it. Most of my parents do not want nonsense in the classroom. If you have someone interrupting the learning environment, setting a poor example for students and getting away with it, as a parent, that is not going to make you very happy.

Parents – How do parents and students accept the authority of the school, and are they willing to submit to the school's authority for the academic success of the students? Ms. Love – They accept it. Parents know their children. I do not care who the child is they will do something they should not be doing. I can give you the example of my daughter.

Ms. Love – it is a difference when you can hug a parent, and they can come and hug you. The children hug the teachers and the teachers hugging them back. When they get out of the carpool, the first thing they do is hug everybody that is standing. It is about four of us most of the time. They get out the car and will come and give everybody a hug. We are a loving school.

Interviewer – That is a culture practice, hugging the kids every morning.

Ms. Love – We have other things like involving children in their Sunday school and churches. (*Interviewer -What do you mean Sunday school and churches?*) When the kids and parents go to church together, their actions are different. Although the kids may act up sometime, it is different when you got your children going to church. It is different when you have your children going to the different affairs. They have the Moja Festival going on now. The parents will have to take the child with them to that. Parents take the kids, I take my grandchildren. When you do stuff like that, it motivates your children to know what is going on.

Ms. Butler – I take it as constructive; let me know the tools that I need to get my son to where he needs to be. I might not like the tools, but I'm going to work with what

Ms. Butler – I take it as constructive; let me know the tools that I need to get my son to where he needs to be. I might not like the tools, but I'm going to work with what you give me to get him there.

Interviewer – So you accept that authority?

Ms. Butler – Yes.

Interviewer – Do you believe teachers are doing what is best for you child?

Ms. Butler – Yes.

Ms. Nice – Yes they accept it fine. I'm thankful for everything done for my son. He met all the standards he was supposed to meet. The kids here are doing the same thing. They accept it, (*authority*) and the parents accept it. Parents accept it, and I do.

Principal – How do parents and students accept the authority of the school, and are they willing to submit to the school's authority for the academic success of the students? Ms. Boss – When you say authority?

Interviewer – When I say authority of the school, I mean your position as principal and the teacher's position as teachers when you say this is what we need or this is what students need to do. Do parents and students accept the fact that the teachers have the authority to say this is where we are going? Do they accept that and move forward?

Ms. Boss – For the most part they do. Now nothing is absolute. *(She Laughs)* We may get challenged here and there. I just described a situation with the homework there was there was a good reason for homework on a Friday, but we had to get to that place, but for the most part parents and students alike accept that we are professionals in this regard and if we say we need you to read a minimum of twenty books this year they know that there is a reason we are asking for that. If we say that we have the PGA

program (Primary Grades Academy) and your students are struggling with reading, we want to provide this early intervention, we do not get questioned on that. So for the most part they know that our concerns are real. We have reason to have a concern in an area. We have a reason to recommend a certain program, and so for the most part the parents and the students accept that this is what we are prescribing. Here is the diagnosis and here is what we are prescribing.

Interviewer – Whatever the school suggests for stakeholders they are willing to accept. Have you ever had a situation where they decided or that they thought that you did not have their best interest and bucked against it?

Ms. Boss – I am thinking. I am trying to think of an instance where somebody may have said I do not agree with the...usually it is not academic. There may be some extraneous extracurricular thing in which all will not agree.

Interviewer – Those things are choices. They do not have to do those.

Ms. Boss – Yes, but with academics parents are on board.

Interviewer – They trust the teachers to do the best with it?

Ms. Boss – Yes.

School faculties and administrators must have connections to the community (Erickson, 1987, Erickson, 1996, Morris, 2004). These connections enable students, parents, and the community to believe the school is their school.

Teachers – Do the students, parents, and community believe that this school belongs to them? Ms. Smith – Students and parents? Personally I believe the school belongs to all of us, not just to them. Because we are a school family, but I think that I would not say 100% of the parents. I would say the parents that truly believe that the school is theirs are the parents that are most involved. That would be the same anywhere.

If a parent supports their child, then they are going to be involved in what their child does, the child's learning, the child's classroom, the child's teacher, and it goes on. There are some parents I think that would send their child to school because they know this is where they have to be. I mean this is the law; they have to be in school. They might send them on the bus at 7 o'clock in the morning, and sometimes they attend Kaleidoscope until six o'clock. Sometimes they do not want their children home. I think we have children that fall in that category. Where the parents probably could care less about the school, they just know that their children have to be here. That is just being totally honest.

Ms. Jones – Yes I think they do. I think in some ways when they have to sign in and get badges we have scared some away. But, that is security. They do come around, or they see us going around doing things and they always ask if I see parents. Sometimes some of us will walk around the school, laps after school, and some of those neighbors will ask us, what's going on. So we have positive influences there.

Interviewer – How do you know that parents have a vested interest in the school? How do you know that they are proud of the school? What evidence do they provide?

Ms. Jones – I just think how they talk to their neighbors and how they will give us glowing recommendations at the time, or suggest what classroom they want their children. I think when we have David Walker magnets. We still have them, and a lot of parents have them on the back of their car. If you did not trust the school, I do not think you would put them on the back of your car. I think just the way they respond to us; I think there is a lot of trust.

Ms. Williams – I think so. They are pretty comfortable here.

Interviewer – How do you know that they have a vested interest in the school, and how do you know that they are proud of the school?

Ms. Williams – The car rider line is very long. We have a lot of parents who work in the area or have a family member in the area, but they live in Hollywood or North Charleston. They make arrangements for their children to come here because their cousin came here their mother came here. It is very rare that we have a child that does not have some connection with other people in the school, and sometime we do not even know it. The auntie will show up to the PTA, and you will say oh, and you can see that she belongs to that child and that child and she is the grandmother of that child. I'm always surprised when I find out that or where my kids live or where they live on the weekend.

Interviewer – So you would say that the parents believe the school is theirs in that, not just their children but their nieces and nephews and grandchildren, and everybody comes to this school, because this is my school?

Ms. Williams – They are pleased with what we do for their children. The parental support is our culture. How many have been here for CD and kindergarten. The vast majority of my kids have been here at least three years. I hope it feel like home. It feels like their school home.

Parents – Do the students, parents, and community believe that this school belongs to them? Ms. Love –Yes, because they are here every day, they attend the PTA meetings, they go on field trips with the children *(Interviewer -you get parent volunteers to go*) they participate with their children when they are doing things. I mean, everybody loves David Walker Elementary from what I see. *(Interviewer – How do you*

know they love it?) I know because I see them smiling every day. If you see somebody without a smile, by the time you get through with them they are smiling.

They all say good things about David Walker Elementary, when they have to school. They love the teachers, and the teachers are doing a good job. My child is doing well here at David Walker Elementary. I look at how much he has achieved and learned since he has been coming to David Walker Elementary. The students do not transfer out; they are in David Walker Elementary from CD4 until after fifth grade. They only time they would move is if they are moving out of town or they are they moving to another district that is far off. Let's say they are moving to North Charleston or Summerville. They have to transfer the children because it takes too long to come this way.

Ms. Butler – Yes I would say that they believe it is their school.

Interviewer – Discuss how you know they (students, parents and community) have a vested interest in the school and discuss how you know that they are proud of it.

Ms. Butler – The number one priority in the school, is the children. Their safety and their education is our concern. If you have any issue at any time, and I do not care how big or how small it is, Ms. Boss is going to listen to you. We are going to all be on the same page. I am so glad that Ms. Boss is one of those proactive principals. I had never seen a principal in my life that does so much for her students and the teachers. That is what I love so much about this school. The teacher and principal also love David Walker Elementary. I was so happy with my son's teacher because she is a very stern teacher, she's not a mean teacher, but she lets you know that, I am the boss of the class, and we are going to learn, and that is all we going to do. We are going to have our fun, but learning is most important.

Ms. Nice – No – the school belongs to everybody.

Interviewer – Tell me how do you know that parents and students have a vested interest in this school?

Ms. Nice – Well, if you are not in your district you have to get a letter signed from your home school and your district office, giving you permission to leave and come to this school. We have a lot who do that. *(Interviewer – You mean school zone.)*

Ms. Nice – It is a disciplined school. It is very disciplined. The formal principal, when we had the kids that were out of zone (*Interviewer – who was the formal principal?)* Ms. Knowles. If the kids were out of (*Interviewer – wait a minute, that was years ago*.) yes, I was here then. She would let the kids come from out of their zone, but if they were acting up and giving her trouble, then she would send them back to their home school. That is what I like about her. She never had a problem with them coming here, but if she had to keep on talking to them and disciplining them, she sends them back in their home school, and I like that.

Principal – Do the students, parents, and community believe that this school belongs to them? Ms. Boss – I think they do feel like the school belongs to them, and I think an indication of that is that generation after generation after generation come to David Walker Elementary. I have parents right now who attended David Walker Elementary. It is often. The teacher you met a few minute ago, Ms. Vickie Jones, we have people who come all the time, saying is Ms. Jones still here, is Ms. Smith still here.

Interviewer - (laughing and they have got to be in their 40's.

Ms. Boss – I think when former students come back to a school, and they feel good enough about the school to send their child there, then you are doing something

right. You are doing OK because parents have choices now. They do not have to come to the traditional neighborhood school, which David Walker Elementary is. We do not have the bells and whistles. We do not have that magnet this or charter that, and we are a traditional neighborhood school. I think every school has its place. Everything has its place, but they choose to come here. So I think that represents the pride they have and the ownership they feel to David Walker Elementary.

Parent Focus group

How legitimacy is constructed.

"High performing predominantly minority and low income schools possess excellent principals, devoted teachers, love of African American students and a strong connection to the school community. The relationship of each school and its community develops out of the schools and the communities shared history" (Morris, 2004, p. 104).

Parents – Do parents trust the authority of school? Ms. Butler – I can only speak for my best friend because our kids are together. I accept the authority of the school. Ms. Boss (the principal) and I have the same goals for the children. If my son does something wrong, because I know, and every parent should know their child. You know when you have a bad child; you know when you have a good child. You have some parents, that even though they have bad children, they still back them when they are wrong. I do not do that to my son. I know how he is, so if the teacher tell me that he did something wrong, I am going to find out why he did this. What made him do that, because I know my child? He is not a child that fights other kids. So if he does fight, then I believe that child had to have done something to my son. I want to know what happened. I going to take what the teacher says because, obviously he was doing something he should not have. We want to sit down and talk. I'm not going to come to

school and act all "ghetto" and want to know why this child hit my child. We are going to talk about things so it will not escalate to be something crazy. We can just handle it as adults. So I trust Ms. Boss and the teachers.

Ms. Love – If you do not care about somebody else, you are not showing love. When the parents bring their kids late, I will walk them to class. I still have to let them know what time school starts and what time school ends. You cannot bring your child in at this time. Every day is the same thing. I tell them that you cannot do that. Bring them in before school starts it starts at 7:40, you got till 8:05 to get them here before that bell ring in 8:10. You know we have to nip that in the bud somewhat. They do not say, well it is the kids, or do not worry about that. They understand we have to bring them in at the right time. Like I said, this is a loving school.

Ms. Nice – I agree with what they said.

Interviewer – Do you think the students trust the teachers?

Ms. Nice – Yes, cause they pushed my son. He achieved on His MAP, PASS, he is in the magnet program with high scores, and when he graduates he will take what he learned to middle school and high.

Ms. Love – They appreciate the teachers. When I am with my grandchildren and their teachers see them, they come over to see the kids. My oldest grand in now in high school but she went to school at David Walker. When they see her they say, look at her, she has gotten so big, and they hug and talk, my grandchildren love the teachers. I'm going back to the same thing. We are a loving school.

Ms. Butler – My son get out of the car running to the Principal. So they love my son as much as he loves them.

Interviewer – Let'stalk about Discipline.

Ms. Love – If they are doing something they do not have a right doing, the teacher will call them out. My grandson did something last year, so he had to be called out. He had to talk to Ms. Boss, and they called. They did not have to call me, they call his mom. When they called he begin to cry because he knew he did something wrong. So the principal will call, and let them know. She nips things in the bud, so kids do not get suspended.

Ms. Butler – They do a good job with discipline even with helping my son. I never seen a child transferred from this school because of behavior. I have seen them transferred to another class, say the whole day. He was still in the school, but they place him somewhere else because he was being disruptive in the class. They will put him someplace else so he does not disrupt anybody and his work can still be done within the school. When it comes to discipline, they do a very good job here, even with helping me discipline my son. When my son was in kindergarten, he was acting up. I told Ms. Boss that I came to school to take his recess. I came every single day and made him sit on the bench. I'm going to do it this week. I'm going to take his recess from him.

Interviewer – So you help with discipline.

Ms. Nice – The fifth graders are good compared to three years ago.

Ms. Butler – We have a proactive principal, proactive teachers, and proactive parents.

Interviewer - How many black teachers in the school?

Ms. Love – (*could not think of teacher's name)*

Ms. Nice – *(could not think of teacher's name)*

Ms. Butler – *(could not think of teacher's name)*

Interviewer - Do you think the kids ever feel picked on when it comes to discipline?

Ms. Love – No, because they know they did something wrong.

Ms. Butler – Well I can say that I think my son thought that his teacher was picking on him the other day last week. He got in the car angry. I said what's wrong, and he did not tell me hi, and I do not play that. Do not get in my car and do not tell me hi, because you can get out. (*Gathers laughing*) I said what wrong with you. He said I got a satisfactory. I said what you did to get a satisfactory. He didn't know the guy who was in the restroom, and the guy scared him, so he started yelling. His teacher is not in the restroom, but she heard yelling and whatever they were doing. She thought they were playing, so she told my son he gets a satisfactory for playing in the bathroom. So I told my son that she was not in there, to say that you were or was not playing, but I cannot tell what she thought that you were doing. I asked did the other little boy get in trouble. He said no. I said, you allowed him to get you in trouble. He could have corrected that and said, teacher, I scared him. I said, if you knew he was in there playing, you should have come out and said Ms. Teacher, I think so and so is playing in the bathroom, and I do not want you to think that of me. That is what the little child was doing and scared my son and my son started yelling. The teacher thought my son was in there playing. Now granted, you hear kids in the bathroom; you will think the same thing too. I would not be mad because that is what you think when you hear people yelling and playing in the bathroom. They need to get in trouble. I told my son that the next time that happens, you need to come straight out of that bathroom, or if you see them playing in the bathroom you come and tell the teacher, such and such is playing in the bathroom. They might

think that you might be telling on them, but you know what, you are going to keep yourself out of trouble. Because he could have helped you and said to the teacher, I made him do that, but he did not say that.

Interviewer – He did not want to get in trouble. (Exactly) I can understand it, but that does not make it right. So you just taught your child or tried to teach your child how to reason.

Ms. Butler – It was not necessary to say to the teacher, my son was not playing in the bathroom, because if I was there, than I would have thought the same thing.

Ms. Nice – No response.

Interviewer - Does anybody know anything about PBIS?

Ms. Butler – PBIS?

Ms. Love – I heard of the term

Interviewer - Explain how the school looks out for the interest of the students.

Ms. Love – they make sure those children who have not had breakfast, get breakfast. Some parents do not watch for kids that is why we have to stand there *(car line*). I know we make sure children who have not had breakfast in the morning, get their breakfast. We make sure the ones who come in late they get their little bag and take it to the classroom. I would ask the parents have they eaten yet. If they say no, I make sure they get a bag breakfast and eat. If there is anything going on in the family that we know about, then we take care of it. So it is not like you have a family here in need for something and no one does anything about it. We do something about it.

Ms. Nice – I agree

Ms. Butler – I love the fact that they do not allow the child to open the car door. When the cars come up to let students get out for school.

Interviewer -What do you think about the community not attending this school?

Ms. Love – This is an old community, and the children are not really in the community. You do have some going kids that go to private school.

Ms. Butler – No

Ms. Love – We have a lot of children and not a lot of children.

Interviewer – now not a lot of the children come

Ms. Love – we have several from over there, we have some that walk from the Wipple area, and so we do have some in this area.

Interviewer – we do have some in the area.

Ms. Love – But the majority of them come from the other areas.

Interviewer - Right. I have your school statistics. You have an A rating this year. I see your third, fourth and fifth grade students. You have approximately 150 of them, not counting CD, kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade. You have 150 kids in third, fourth and fifth. How many of those kids come out of the surrounding community?

Ms. Love – It is six or seven.

Interviewer – What do you think about the community not attending this school?

Ms. Love – This is an old community, and the children are not in the community.

Interviewer – I understand, and I'm going to ask you about that next, but right now what you think about the school. Because you see what has happened if I'm not mistaken, this is another reason why I selected this school. This school used to be a totally white school

and now it is a predominantly black school, but the community around the school had not changed.

Ms. Love – Well you still got some black folks sitting up in the area.

Interviewer – You do have some, but the community still is a white community.

Ms. Love – Older, older, and they do not have children now.

Interviewer – Well some of them do not have children.

Ms. Love – You do have some of them going to private school.

Interviewer – You do, but the ones that live in the area that have children go to private school.

Ms. Love – They go to private school.

Interviewer – What do you think about that?

Ms. Love – I do not know because we used to see a bus at one point that pick up kids, but they do not pick up kids off that corner down there, so they do not have those children in the area now.

Ms. Nice – NO, they are still here, but they pick up from the other end now. They pick up in the morning time. You have to come early.

Ms. Butler – So you want to know about the people who children go to private school?

Interviewer – I want to know (Ms. Love – why their children do not come here?) what do you think about a school like this, a Blue Ribbon School (Ms. Love- I think it is great.) yet the population does not (Ms. Love – I think it is great.) choose to come school here? Tell me about that.

Ms. Love – I think it is great because our children are learning, period. I do not see the white kids or whatever school they are going to, it is just that our children are learning. They are being taught. These things stay in their head when they go out of this school to go to another school. Their reading skills are good, and their math skills are good, and it has been that way for a while. You cannot charge the community because the kids do not come. They just did not want their kid coming to the school. I guess because it became total black. By that time there was no children in the community. We are just starting to get children coming out of the community that has moved in. Once the people die off, they sell their house or they rent the house. So their kids come right here because they walk. I do not know; it is not a bus load of kids that leave here and go somewhere else.

Ms. Butler – I know a lady that just started working on my job with me. She works at the hospital with me and she recently moved into this area. I overheard her talking about David Walker Elementary. She is Caucasian and said she read where we were a passing school. I'm thinking the school could be a passing school but what about your child passing to keep that school a passing school. You can take your child to a failing school, and you child can be A1. It is all about what you install in your child. I told her, it is a passing school. She said, "I do not know, because of the other neighborhood, they are a bad neighborhood". I stop her right there, I said hold on, the neighborhood has nothing to do with that school.

Interviewer – What neighborhood was she talking about?

Ms. Butler – She thought Crenshaw (Ms. Love) she thought Crenshaw was a, my God, is the worst. I said, Amore is a rough neighborhood, but the majority of the students do not come from there. (Ms. Love- that is right.)

Ms. Butler – they split them up, because my son has an aunt and uncle that live in the neighborhood, and they could not come here. They had to go *(Ms. Nice and Ms. Love – to Blackburn Math and science)* exactly.

Interviewer – Matthews Science and Math. (Ms. Butler and Ms. Nice – No, no no Blackburn Science and Math.)

Ms. Butler - They split up the neighborhood.

Ms. Love – The reason the split the neighborhood is they made Peterson Middle School a single gender school.

Ms. Love – They split up. They use to come from Crenshaw. Let me tell you the reason why they did that.

Interviewer – Well, what's the reason?

Ms. Love – The reason they did it is because they opened Peterson Middle school as a single gender Math and Science school. During this time, I did not have anybody in middle school. My children were gone, but they came back. A friend asked me, what school I was going to let my granddaughter go to for middle school. I said she will be attending Peterson Middle. She said she will not be able to go to Peterson Middle because they redistricted the area and that whole area, and some of the other areas could not go there but had to go to Blackburn Middle.

Ms. Love – Since they redistricted – I was wondering why the children who live in the area could not go to the school across the street from them. They brought

everybody from down Hwy 61. A lot of them use to come here. They change it to Peterson. If you did not get that signed paper to let your child attend that school before the time, you have to go to the redistrict school, which was on the Middleton campus. They still kept Middleton, but the campus was 6th 7th and 8th grade. Everybody from this area, that live across the street from Blackburn, but the bus used to come and pick them up and take them to Peterson Middle on Middleton campus.

Interviewer – So who goes to the school across the street?

Ms. Love – Blackburn Middle, those down 61.

Interviewer – Ok, I'm a little bit confused, but y'all are going to explain it to me.

Ms. Love – You see because that school (St Andrews Middle) was single gender.

Interviewer – I know, but it is not now!

Ms. Love – But they still cannot go there.

Interviewer -I know

Ms. Love – They are single gender, and they wanted those kids to be math science students.

Interviewer – That means it is a partial magnet.

Ms. Love – Right, so you did not have our children in there, like they could not understand. At least that is how they portrayed it, but I made sure my granddaughter got there. I was not going to take her down the way when there is a school right there *(Interviewer – right there)*. I started telling parents, but I guess they did not understand it is what you got to do because you still got to do it this year when the kids get out of fifth grade. Although we had a child there we will legible to put another child there but it must be at the same time. Sometime I hear of teachers saying "oh those are the kids from

David Walker". (*Interviewer – oh*) And I tell them it is nothing wrong with the kids from David Walker, (*interviewer –you tell them that?*) Yes I show did, it is nothing wrong with the kids from David Walker, it is your teachers. Just because you think they come out of the neighborhood where people do not control their children, you think you can do anything with them. That is just not true.

Interviewer – Well that is probably what I was trying to find out, of course Blackburn Middle is not the school we are talking about.

Ms. Butler – I say that Ms. Boss along with the teachers here, they care, and they are not giving up on the students. I could relate to when I was in school. They called it zero tolerance. If you did not do something, you already getting put out, you already getting written up, you already getting ISS, it is no tolerance. They give them that tool to use, like "I do not have to deal with you and put you out my class." Now here, if you got an issue, let us find out what's your issue is so we can get you on the right track, versus "you know what, go to the principal's office."

Interviewer – Yeah, I know, but you see you just in elementary school, and you are talking about a middle school.

Ms. Butler – It is the same thing, I'm talking about elementary school. When I got in trouble, they said you go to the principal office.

Ms. Love – That is something we do not do. You go to the principal office, but she is going to talk to you, call the parent in, and talk to the parent, talk to the teacher and parent together to see.

Ms. Butler – Just coming up, I remember a whole lot of things coming up when I was in elementary school, middle school, high school. Now I am seeing all the things

that I had seen coming up. I know that if I had a child I want things to be different. I had a math teacher in middle school in eighth grade. He was a science teacher, but he was teaching us math. I said Mr. Major, how come every time we come in here you just us just do, do the work do work. This man tells me, (I probably should have told my mother, but I did not) that he is a math teacher he is not a science teacher. So I know I do not want any teacher like that for my son. That is why I am super proactive. Because if that is how they are, you know what, my son is not going to be in their class. As a matter of fact, I do not know why that teacher is in this school. If you do not care for my son we have an understanding, that you are not the teacher for my son. Maybe you here for the school, but we need people that care.

Interviewer – What do you mean by that "maybe you are the teacher for the school."

Ms. Love – To make some money.

Ms. Butler – What I mean by you not a teacher for the school? This is a caring school, and we need people who care about these children. We need people who care and also need the parents. I know I do not want that for my son. Maybe my mother worked too much, that she could not figure it out, why part of the reason I was mouthy with teachers was because they told me all things, so I told them all kinds of things back. I know that I'm my son's mouth piece, so that if you do not want to help my son, I promise you somebody else will, and he is not going to be in your class. I'm sorry for the other parents who are not interacting with you. So far in this school, every teacher I have had was good teachers.

Interviewer – In five years.

Ms. Butler – yes, so far. I'm going to be so sad when my son leave here. Ms. Boss and the teachers here, they care, and they are not giving up on the students. It is the same thing today. If you are not a caring teacher, you are not a teacher for this school. I let my son know that the teacher and I are on the same page. He is either on our team, or he is against us.

Interviewer – Do parents believe the school belong to them, and are they proud of it?

Ms. Nice – yes, I am proud. It is a loving school. I normally put my child in class, I been around the school long enough that I know who I want to teach my child. I made sure I put him in a stern teacher class. And if something comes around, they come to me, but I tell them you are responsible, I am not. This is a loving school, like the statement Ms. Love made, this is a loving school.

Ms. Love – They know the school belongs to them.

Interviewer – Does this school work on trying to help the community in any form or fashion?

Ms. Love –We are helping the children. We are helping children and the parents when they come.

Ms. Butler – I think I had trouble answering that question because, I do not think the question has anything to do with the school itself. That is the reason why I think I had a hard time answering the question of helping the community. My thing is that the school is here for the children that come here. We do have some children that come from that (Castle Groove) community. That is the help right there. So far as going reaching out and going, we do all while they are here; the parents, the teachers, volunteers are doing what they suppose to be doing right here. I do not know, you let me know what other schools

you know of, that are going into the community having (oh Jesus) (*Nice laughing*) probably, having blood runs, doing things in the community. I do not think that question have anything. That is my opinion. (*Interviewer – well you entitled to your opinion Ms. Butler*) (*Ms. Nice - laughing*). The question has nothing to do with the school. What you are saying about the community because we are helping them right here. What more other than helping them here; letting them know they have Kaleidoscope after school? That they can stay after school? I'm pretty sure that it is a reasonable price for people to pay if they want to pay.

Ms. Love – We have people on the streets in between Captains Ds at Shelby across the community. So it is not the community itself. We have people on the other side and this side that bring the kids to school. We have buses to bring the kids to school.

Ms. Butler – And to piggyback on that, I guess I could say this is how the school help the community. It shows the children who come here from the community. A lot of people say, I am going to get my child to David Walker Elementary. I say you better hurry up and register quick before they start to full up. That is all I could tell them. Someone that has a two year old and they see their four year old already go here, the people in the community can already see the impact on that child who is in the community. They say I want my child go to the same school as your child goes. So I think that is how we are showing them and people who are in the community who have smaller children who already coming to the school. They say, Oh I am going to get my child in that school.

Ms. Love – I see another thing is we have grown children in the community that have children and guess what? They went to this school. So their children go to this school because they are still in that community.

Ms. Nice – Then a couple of years ago. The kids from Crenshaw now, on the bus are better now, because a couple of years ago, the teachers had to ride that bus home and drop the kids off and then bring them back to school.

Interviewer – The teachers rode the bus?

Ms. Nice – Yeah, had to ride with the kids from Crenshaw. That is how bad the kids were.

Ms. Love – I do not think they were bad. I do not think they were bad.

Interviewer -Well you all do not have any problems with the school having white teachers and kids all black?

Ms. Love – We do not have no problems, you might have two or three acting up.

Ms. Nice – The majority of the teacher are national board certified.

Interviewer – Yeah the majority of your teachers are.

Ms. Butler – I do not know. Ms. Boss, do whatever she do, I see the ones who been here, she should keep doing it. Good Job.

Ms. Love – Are you from the Charleston area. (Ms. Butler – *laughing hysterically*, no he's not)

Interviewer – Ms. Butler, you cracking on me.

Ms. Love – He is not a Burke high school graduate, He is an out of Towner.

Interviewer – I want to thank y'all first of all, Ms. Butler, you are all right with me, Ms. Love, Ms. Nice, and you guys are alright. I do appreciate it, and this is going to conclude the interview. (*Ms. Nice – What about our fee? (Laughing))*

Interviewer - She put that on the tape. Strike that last statement.

Teacher focus group interview

Building trust by inviting and encouraging parents to attend functions and work with teachers in school and not waiting for parents to participate is an example of Agency. (Morris, 2004, p.89) Agency is developed by cultivating the relationship between the African-American parents, community, and the school. "Agency is constituted by collective actions of African-Americans to positively influence the schooling of African American children (Morris, 2004). Educators in high performing low income African American schools demonstrated Agency in ensuring the black children learned about their cultural and historical heritage. (Morris, 2004, p. 93) Educators made classroom lesson related to students' everyday experiences (Morris, 2004, p. 93)

Interviewer - Do parents really trust the authority of the school? If so, give me an example that demonstrates that. (*All the teachers laughing)*

Ms. Smith – I think yes, I think yes, I think parents do have, collectively I think they do trust the leadership here. I think they do, I just think because we work as a team. I think Ms. Boss stands behind. She is very supportive (*Ms. William- Yes*) especially of her teachers. (*Interviewer – that is important*) It is important. Rather than siding with, where as in the past maybe, some principals did not have the spine to stand up to parents and were not as supportive. (She *does*)

Ms. Jones – But we have a lot of kids that are out of district. They come here because the parents trust us. So we got a lot of those kinds of kids. (*Interviewer – you mean out of the zone*) yeah out of zone. So they are coming here, some come from North Charleston. (*Interviewer – how do they get here?)* Parents bring them.

Ms. Smith – Or people drop them off in the neighborhood, and they catch the bus,

like at their grandmother's house or aunt's house.

Ms. Jones – I think we have gotten that trust a long time ago so parents, even though they have moved, still bring their kids here.

Ms. Williams – I feel a little indiscreet though because I do not want to name children, when we have the girls squabbles (*Ms. Smith – I had squabbles with girls*). Some girls squabble in the neighborhood and then come the school on the bus into the classroom and the bathroom. Initially the mothers will be very upset, they on their daughter's side, their daughters have been wrong. Da da. They do then sit back and listen to what the teachers say, what Ms. Boss says, and to see that de-escalate from the amount. This week (Tyshun) got a referral from me, and I said what he had done was mean-spirited. His mom, she was hot, because I said, mean-spirited. She wrote me back saying my son is not mean-spirited da da da. I said well what he did was mean-spirited. That is (*Smith -for his actions were mean spirited*) his actions were mean-spirited. I do not know, there are some schools that I have taught in and I have friends who teach or my husband's school, where the parents will not let go of things. Once they decide that you have done something wrong, they then are on you looking for, and here we do not get that. We do get parents who are upset, and then they listen. We listen. (*Jones – exactly, we all do*) I mean we listen to what they have to say.

Ms. Jones – If we have problems, Ms. Boss is good about coming in here and she will help us get our thoughts to the parents and to get the parents to understand us. She is good about facilitating. (*Williams – She is a good facilitator*) yes, she is a good facilitator. (*Smith – She can turn a parent around. You know when she is talking to them, she got good skills in that sense*) Yes. She got great skills (*Williams – I see her in the*

court room she would have been a great attorney) it does not happen a lot, but sometimes we need her in a meeting.

Ms. Williams – She is quick to do it. I mean, all you have to do, she will ask, do you want me there.

Ms. Jones – Or if she thinks a parent comes in to hot she will just follow them down to the classroom to help us, good about that, and that have turned a lot of parents around.

Ms. Smith – Right, or come to the door and knock on the door, but that does happen sometimes.

Interviewer – So what you are saying, parents are people. They can get their dandruff up but sometimes but when they come, and you talk, they, cool down, (Smith – most of the time) most of the time, sometimes they do not right? (Smith – sometime they do not) and when they do not, what do you do?

Ms. Williams – Ms. Boss handles it. (*All teachers being laughing*)

Interviewer - Let's talk about behavior for a minute. Because I know you are a PBIS school, and when it comes down to ***discipline,*** *do the parents collectively, do they think you are fair with their children? Talk to me about that. Because I know somebody said you did not do my son right or my daughter, or why y'all treat them like that?*

Ms. Jones – I depends on the situation. Some parents will come in mad, and when I explain my side, they can accept it or not. Sometimes I even gotten the kids in front of me and their parents, and say now you tell your mom what happened and it is amazing how the story changes. So that happened. So...lost my train of thought. (*William. and Smith laughing*) (*Interviewer- no you are doing fine someone will piggy back on*

what you are saying) and we leave messages, I left one day because I was mad at the son, now she may come in tomorrow mad at me, or she may make a phone call, but once I tell my side and get him to open up to her because she been in before and tell her what happen. Hopefully she is going to understand my point of view. Some of these kids love to go home and tell a different story. (*Smith and William. at the same time, um hum*)

Interviewer – Most kids do.

Ms. Williams – The emphasis that I try to give to the parents, is that I want their child to be academically successful (*Jones – exactly*), and I need for the other children in the room to be academically successful. So that is when we get to behavior. If your behavior is keeping you from being able to do your job, or if it is keeping other people from doing their job, we have a problem. Parents, they can respect that. They do respect that. They understand it, and they usually back me up.

Ms. Smith – I think on a fifth grade level kids understand it more, and the parents.

Ms. Williams – It is usuallyIt's not their first rodeo. I'm not the first teacher to call, I'm not the first, you know, they know who their children are.

Ms. Smith – They do, but some are still in denialbut they do know.

Let me tread lightly. You are three white teachers, (Smith -Yelp) your students mostly African Americans so are your parents, most of them. Do you ever get anything that tends to be racial how you are treating your children, their children, and yours too? You know they are yours while they are here.

Ms. Jones – I think the biggest compliment one of my parents gave me is you may be white by you have a black background (*Other teachers laughing*). One of my kids said. I had a couple different saying, I have always taught in predominantly black

schools, and I love African American schools. I have had some parents say your skin might be you know light and yet you still think like us, you do not try to get our child to see your way, I am not being, how do you say it, I guess I should have thought(*Interviewer laughing*). You know, it does not matter what color, I do not see black and white, I do not when I'm looking at my kids. (*Ms. Smith – You're right you do not see color*) so many people have asked me, how many white kids you have this year. (*Ms. Williams – you do not get to sit down and think about it*) Yeah, (*Ms. Smith – you do not know*) I do not know. (*Interviewer – you just have kids*) I just have kids, which all what I tell them. I do not think parents understand that sometimes how we do not see that, but you don't when you been in a school you do not see color. That is what is great about David Walker Elementary. You do not (*Ms. Smith – you do not*) You do not (*Smith- you see the kids*) *(Interviewer – you do see color but it's like I do not want put words in your mouth, it's not something that you are conscience of, all you see are students, whether they be black or Hispanic or any other nationality, you are saying that you just see students)* I just see student, I do not see the color, and I never have, and maybe that why we have been successful. I think every teacher here can abide by that. You do not see that.

Ms. Smith – I do not think, I cannot, I mean I can think of instances, and this has been years ago, whereby some second grader told me that I was racist. *(Interviewer- Did you believe this?)* No. *(Interviewer and Williams, – laughing)* they had problems with it than we do now. Way back.

Ms. Jones – That was way back. I have not seen any of it lately.

Ms. Williams – No, *(Jones – I trying to think we have not)*. You know if you

think about, the teacher that I partner with is African American and the kids are always calling us by each other name, For me it is kind of great and I tell them I say, I don't mind, anytime you call me by a younger woman's name (*all laughing*) you can do that. But I think that it is cute. I do not think they are seeing it either. I do not think they are saying she is the white teacher and she the black teacher. They are like the teacher for teacher. I do not know I feel like.

Interviewer – You do not think that students pay or have any sense of it; they just say this in my teacher. They do not think this is the white

Ms. Williams – I do yeah, I do not. They are something like baby ducks; on the first day of school you imprint them. (*Interviewer- they could be a swans. laughing)* Let me do this, tap you on the head.

Ms. Smith – I mean there is not, I mean way back in the day I been call names.

Ms. Jones – But that maybe 10 -15 years ago, we had a lot more problem than we had now.

Ms. Williams – I was thinking, the last time I had something was from student, and he said, "I hate white people" a smart boy, and I said that is too bad, there is a lot of us. (*Smith- I know what you are talking about.*)

Interviewer – Where do you think he got that from?

Ms. Williams – From his environment. He was angry, and he needed something to say, and that is what he came up with.

Interviewer – That is how you reasoned through it because it wasn't him he was your student right. How was he by the end of the year? Did he always maintain that attitude?

Ms. Williams – He was a hot head; he was a very smart child who would throw

rocks at birds, not a very happy child.

Interviewer – Do you think the community would feel the same about you, or can you assess that, I know the community is apart from the school here. When I say community I mean the school community where the students come from. You think they feel much the same about you?

Ms. Smith – I think they do, (*Ms. Jones – yeah*) I mean, Yeah, I been in many homes, especially in the last (*Interviewer -especially the area called Crenshaw*) Crenshaw. Ummhuh. I'm out taking kids home; go in to their home, when there were guidance counselors to do some home visits. Penny Knowles use to have the end of year Caravan. We would get in our cars and drive around the neighborhood with new teachers years ago. What the county did this year, but they did not drive around our area this year.

Interviewer – Why do you think that's the case?

Ms. Smith – I do not know they should have. They had teachers that were from Oakland, Peterson School, Blackburn Math and Science that would have pulled for the area within Rain Wood Forest, they went into Shadowland. If you are brand new teachers to CCSD, you suppose to be riding through all the neighborhoods.

Ms. Williams – I pretty happy, it is the best, it is the best faculty I have ever worked with. (*Jones- I* second that, Smith – I third it, Jones laughing) since Ms. Boss came that was the finishing touch on the faculty. The teachers here have always been awesome; there has never been anybody here that never pulled their weight. I said the leadership, the peace when Ms. Boss came, it was like, ok, and that is perfect. So (*Jones – She brought full circle I think*), She allows us to be effective, and she expects it. I mean, we do not want to disappoint her, (*Smith – that is the fear she puts in everybody. (All*

laughing and agreeing) It is weird because I'm like, she younger than I am, but I'm just like, I want her to be happy with my performance and my students. She's great. She is tactful and she let you know. She is not afraid of...

Ms. Smith – Fling your thing out there public. We had that before, where your failure is made public. She is very tactful.

Ms. Williams – She is very professional also.

Interviewer – How does the school look out for the best interest of the students? You might have heard that question or something similar before, how does the school look out for the best interest of the students? I want to add an element to it.

Ms. Smith – When you say the school. The school

Interviewer – when I say the school I mean the teachers and principal in particular. Parents send their children; they want you to do the best for them. You as a faculty you want to do the best for all students, whether they are fifth, third, second, and all the students. I want you to tell me about the school interest, in making sure we want what is best for these students in every area.

Ms. Williams – I think I seen in the past we have tried to put families who been in crisis or in need in touch with mental health or with agencies that could assist them and used the school to help facilitate that. Doctor's appointment, medications (*Smith – use our nurse a lot*), eye glasses, clothing, you know, we get new kids who do not have uniforms, you get to go shopping to buy them uniforms. (*Smith – we had one little girl when she first came in, said I do not have any money to buy uniform, so I took the Target card and went to target and bought the uniform)(Interviewer - Where did you get a Target card?*) *(Ms. Smith -It was Ms. Boss's, it was a gift from Target.)*

Ms. Jones – She is shy, but she is so smart. I hope they stay, there are living arrangements made for them.

Ms. Smith – Yes there was (*Jones -ok, so they will be here at least to the end of the year*) I think we look at our kids, you know, we have two teachers that greet the kids when they get off the bus, we have four people out front that greet the kids coming out of cars. You can see their effect, when they get out of the car, whether it is a good morning or bad morning. For example, this morning, we had an incident. A young mother has three children one in fifth grade, one in fourth, and one in first. I always think she does something to one child to make her life miserable, and she is young, and the two older ones got out the car, and she was yelling at the top of her lungs in our car rider line "get out of my car". This child climbing in the back seat balling his eyes out, a little first grader, because he did not want to come to school. I told her to pull over. I know her, (*Jones and Williams – I know who you talking about*) she came here, and we know her kids, we all know all the kids, you have one of them (Jones) you have one (Williams). The little first grader climbed over, and I said, come on get out the car, so Ms. Boss got him and said come on to the office and eat some breakfast. He calmed down, and he was fine for the rest of the day. That is just one incidence. Yelling at the top of her voice, I felt so bad for him because that embarrassed him. Whatever set him off; he did not want to get out of the car.

Ms. Williams – I think sometimes we are not afraid, and maybe we should be. My husband teaches school sometime, and I tell him things that we say and do. I said, just open the book bag and take the phone out. I said sure, I have a legal right, I absolutely do, He said I do not know. (*Interviewer –he is right you do not*) Too bad, (*Interviewer*

laughing) (*Jones- I checked a book bag today*) but Thursday, I have a conference with a parent, and I will be discussing allergy medicine, but this child come to school every day and he is just miserable, he is blowing his nose all day and he is miserable. Do not all teachers do that, all teachers notice these things.

Ms. Jones – I think new parents that came today, they came with my new child today. The two parents came with, the aunt and uncle, the older sister and a younger sister. He was very nervous, crying his eyes out, for some reason they took him outside and brought him back. He tried to hold on to his dad, the dad grabbed him, and I said, you know what sir, let me try to help him have a good day. He is brand new to the school so I brought him in the room and got him away because I feared it would escalate. So I think those parents found out that, ok what we are trying to do is for the good of the child. I worried that this child would really act out. Once I got him in my room, it took him about a good hour to turn around and try to be with the group. I think the parents saw that, but that situation should be dealt with from home. I needed him to come in the classroom right now; I did not need parents to get him served up. I think that group saw what David Walker Elementary is about. So I do not know. That is the way we always been. Another parent can in with Stephen today, and sort of just stand there. We help each other out just to make sure that if a parent does go off (*Smith – Somebody's there, they may pop in and say, need some help*) Yes. I know she can be pretty rough, and I knew from the past the first time the teacher across the hall from me met her. So with my presence, Paula (*new teacher*), she was a little bit more comfortable talking to the parent. We just do that all the time.

Ms. Smith – We have parents that sign in as if to visit anything. One of them

walked, I know to second grade a couple of weeks ago. Ms. Boss, told me, "Go down there and walk in the room and just sit there". Cause the mom is another one that might, become a little verbal at times in front of kids and stuff. I think we all support each other like that.

Ms. Jones – Yeah it is a good school for that. We do.

Ms. Smith – Even when you are out Never mind

Interviewer – We will get to that later (quiet laughter). Let me tread lightly again. You are a predominantly white staff and a predominately African American student population. Concerning their blackness, their being African American, do you ever feel or do students ever give you the impression, or even parents, that you are trying to take their blackness or change who they are?

Ms. Smith – No. (*Others, NO*)

Interviewer – OK, do you feel or think that there are times when you need to help them understand, you are teachers, more about their own culture, their own selves, their own blackness?

Ms. Williams – their historical culture (Interviewer – absolutely) I think we do a good job with that.

Interviewer – Well, talk to me about that.

Ms. Williams – Well, I think living in Charleston we do a lot. Teaching fifth grade social studies, we begin with reconstruction, and we go through the hardships of the southern blacks, and the Jim Crow last until the 1950s. We also pride in groups that have done things, like the Exodusters. I think we already do a pretty good job with that. Sometimes we do not. I do not have any Hispanics student or Asians students; that

balance is pretty easy since most of my students are African American. We deal with that, and then also they live in a pretty good time. We had a black history month thing a few years ago, "a leave a message at the sound of the beep". They will pretend and say, oh you have not reached me because I am out in the lab trying to find a new way to use peanuts, and the kids had to guess who it was, and all the kids had to write one. I cannot remember, I can see her, a smart little girl, she wanted to do Benjamin Franklin, and I said he is not African American, but She said, that should not matter. I thought, you know what, I think we adults need to take a step back (someone- *yeah*) because the children are leading the way. (S*omeone – umhum*) I mean she said, I want to do him, he is my favorite American. (*Someone -exactly*) We will tell her NO, and I thought, good for you. Now we make bigger deals out of things. I do not know. (*Interviewer – I appreciate your sharing. Because you teach (looking at Jones) you are third grade also)*

Ms. Jones – Right, we used to do the African American month in February, and we do some things but not as much as we use to do. I do not think you have to do that as much anymore because that time is going further in the past. With the civil war in all that our energy on slavery and all that, and I bring in books and read about it, and the kids are like huh, did that really happen? In the meantime, I tell them of my own experiences. I grew up in predominantly white neighborhood. When the first black married couple moved in; fifty people put their house up for sale. So I talk to them about what I went through. The white schools, the black schools, now when we integrated, it was amazing. I think sometimes they hear this for the first time through me. I do not think it is prevalent to have to do that to anymore because they are not seeing a lot of what had gone on before. I do not know how to say it.

Ms. Williams – I think it is integrated (Ms. *Smith – Yeah*) I think it is all American history (*Ms. Jones – yeah*) rather than (*Smith – African American*) so, it is, adjacent to that idea, I would like to see more teachers of color at our school. (*Ms. Jones - we did get a couple more*) We are getting there. (Ms, Jones -*We did, we get a couple more this year*).

Interviewer – So, how many African American teachers are there in this school?

Ms. Smith – The music teacher (*Ms. Jones – and guidance*) and this year, we have guidance teacher who is African American from the middle school. (*Interviewer – Is she Guidance?*) Yes, guidance, not a classroom teacher. Then we do have one teacher, Ms. Florida, who does reading, she is our PGA (Primary Grade Academy) teacher. (*Interviewer – Ok, right, classroom teachers, do you have any black classroom teachers?*) We have one teacher who was place here from Madison Elementary. (*Interviewer – What is her name?*) Maggie Sweet. She was (*all teachers laughing*) she is part of the restructuring of Madison Elementary. She is like a floater in a sense. She is in the self-contained class. She is the self- contained teacher because that teacher quit.

Ms. Jones – We have more this year than we have ever had (*Smith – yeah*).

Ms. Smith – She does the Read Well program with a group of second graders. She has one group of second graders.

Ms. Jones – There are some more African American woman that come into that special education class. I saw one and did not know her. I thought she was a parent until I saw the badge, and I said, oh I am sorry, you are a teacher. (*Smith – A lot of them come from downtown*) Yeah, at least our kids are seeing more, and I do not think they see the

difference. I just think they see us as teachers. Maybe we need to; I do not think they see that.

Ms. Smith – I do not think they do.

Ms. Williams – But they are funny. – Now this is funny. When I say, who can take this to Ms. so and so, and they will look at me and say which one. (Jones – *laughing*) So one of them said, is it polite to say that she is white. I said it is like saying someone has red hair or is blonde. They said it makes me uncomfortable to say if someone is black. We had this conversation two weeks ago. I was like, that is really interesting.

Interviewer – That is really interesting.

Ms. Williams – That is the new generation.

Ms. Smith – I am talking to this new boy in fourth grade. He is new to our school, he is white, and he is having some issues getting settled. He is new, white, and he is the only white child in the class. He has told me this several thousand times. Then he says, but I do not see color. I say it sounds like you do. We only have guidance three times a week, and he usually need someone to talk to more often than that. I met with him today, and he is still one that still sees, I think he sees color, even though he says he does not. He is from up north.

Interviewer (Softly) It makes a difference.

Ms. Jones – It does. Yeah, because when they come from the north, (*Ms. Smith – Rhode Island*) well Rhode Island, yeah you have very few. (*Interviewer – and Maine*) and Maine your do not have too many African American there, so when they come down here and they see it, I think they have a culture shock.

Ms. Smith – Peter Bond is married to one of our teachers. Peter is African American, and his wife is white. They went up to Maine for vacation and, when they came back, I said, Peter how was it? He said, "It is very white up there," (*all laughing*) that is all he said, Very white up there. But that is all it was.

Interviewer – Thank you.

Ms. Smith – You are welcome.

Ms. Williams – These answers are... This is not what you were looking for (*Ms. Smith – No).*

Interviewer -The school community is separate from the school. It is separate and apart from the school. The community directly around the school at one time they were not coming to the school. I think from what I understand, they are beginning to start coming back to the school. What do you think about their exodus from the school and do the students that are here now, do they ever consider or think about the people around the school not being a part of the school?

Ms. Smith – I mean the people that are around the school.

Interviewer – The community around the school, most of them will go to a private school.

Ms. Smith – We have (*Interviewer – some*) some. We'll have several families that live and that walk to school. Yeah. Several that drive cars that are still in the community around the school is just too far to walk. I do not know because the neighborhood around here is very quiet. You can go out and you will rarely, it is like do people live in these houses; you do not see anybody out in the yard.

Williams – You might see them fleeing from the door to the car.

Ms. Smith – You do not really see them. They are elderly, and a lot of them are older.

Ms. Williams – But the families see loading up the kids. When we are coming to school, they are usually all cleared.

Ms. Smith – Right, by the time I'm already.

Ms. Williams – That includes the only kids that I can see, those are the ones who live in this neighborhood and come to this school. They are aware of other kids in the neighborhood who do not come to our school. I was thinking of the dance last spring, and some of our students saw a group of boys on bicycles. They said, can you invite them in, they are our friends. (*Ms. Smith –No*) I said, No, they are not David Walker Elementary students. But that was the only time, you know; now I don't know.

Ms. Smith – I have been out on the playground, and some of the kids will come back over here, and they will be out there playing with kids that go to other schools, but they are all out there. I guess that is not the child's choice, it is the parent's choice and that of the community. I think in some cases to, I know that for a fact that a lot of this neighborhood is Catholic. So a lot of their children go to the Catholic School. The Catholic School is right there off the highway. A lot of their kids go there, because, and it is for pro-religious reasons.

Interviewer – Well the reason I was asking is David Walker Elementary used to be a predominantly white school. I do not know how many years ago.

Ms. Smith – My husband went here.

Interviewer – You have got to be kidding.

Ms. Smith – I am not.

Ms. Jones – All My husband friend has gone here.

Interviewer – Ok, and when it was all white it was a community school.

Ms. Smith – It was, it was.

Interviewer – But now it is different quite different.

Ms. Smith – It is, but I think, I think it is doing a gradual, I think a lot of the people in this neighborhood is older, so we do not have a lot of the young kids coming. I think it is doing a gradual turn, I see more children that are in the area that are coming to school that are within a mile.

Ms. Williams – If our facility was nicer, I think we would draw a lot of children.

Ms. Jones – So many more.

Ms. Williams – But it would. If I was a parent and I came in here, I would be a little hesitant; I guess if I was not an educator,

Interviewer – It is a 50 year old school.

Ms. Smith – It is old, and we have old bathroom, we have to run water in the media center to get the sewage smell out of there in the mornings. It is an old school.

Ms. Jones – I brought my daughter here in kindergarten, and we had no problems.

Ms. Williams – Why they did not come from first through fifth grade?

Interviewer – That is what I want to know. (Jones, Williams and Smith laughing)

Ms. Jones – Because of recreation, and wanting to be with the kids in the neighborhood, (*Ms. Williams – they were naughty and you know it.*) yeah they were, and I got kicked out. You know, my kids loved it here. It was because of their friends in the neighborhood and that Jim and I thought it would be best to put them back in their home school. They loved it here and they always talk fondly of David Walker Elementary

because the teachers were so good. They can still call on the teachers they were active with when they were here. I think eventually, if we would get a new facility, a lot of children would come back.

Interviewer – Do you believe that the parents and students are proud of David Walker Elementary and in fact because sometime they take ownership of the fact that this school is ours? Ms. Smith – We have magnets that have David Walker Elementary (*Jones – laughing*) *(Interviewer- y'all provide those.)* I was joking with that, but they are displaying their school.

Ms. Williams – When you have the parents that come here and say, you know I went here.

Ms. Jones – Or kids that we taught that are now parents say, "Ms. Jones do you remember me?" Yes, they have pride that they are bringing their kids to us, and they trust us with their kids.

Ms. Smith – Tonight kindergarten is performing at PTA, if it doesn't rain. When we have PTA or any kind of recognition ceremony, they show up. I think that they consider it their school, collectively.

Interviewer – When I say they say it is their school. I mean the school belongs to all of us. These are our teachers, our kid, our principal; you might have your principal. This is our principal, and these are our teachers. They have pride in being here. Now this question is difficult. (Jones laughing) this one is difficult. Ok. The school exists for a purpose. My question is, is there anything that David Walker Elementary does that works to change the community where the students live? Give you an example. Castle Groove from what I understand can be rough. You got children coming out of the

neighborhood, and you know parents that come out of the neighborhood. Is there anything that the school does that you think might be trying to help that community in any way whether socially, financially, or whatever, that might have some impact on making the community better as you make the students better? That might be, you know, difficult.

Ms. Smith – top of my head I cannot think of anything. I went to a meeting at the end of last year with Chief Munford downtown because he wanted to connect with families. He wanted to get police officers into Castle Groove and get involve with the families of children of David Walker Elementary. Ms. Tobin and I went with him; we met and talked for about an hour or an hour and a half and he never followed through with it. The only thing I could think of and I think I mention it before, is Seacoast Church. They do their Nick at Night during the summertime here at David Walker Elementary for two afternoons. A lot of our kids from Castle Groove, come, even though they do not go to the church.

Ms. Williams – I think it is too big for us, I think it is too big, you got to look at a long term thing.

Ms. Jones – That is a rough neighborhood. We have been on buses in there and there were gun shots.

Ms. Smith – We use to ride the bus.

Interviewer – What?

Ms. Williams – When the bus was so bad.

Ms. Smith – There was one bus that we would ride, and the teachers would take turns riding the bus in the afternoon.

Ms. Williams – The children were having a hard time on the bus.

Ms. Jones – We would ride, and I was not on the bus, but gun shots were fired.

Interviewer – On the bus?

Ms. Smith – Not on the bus but around the bus.

Ms. Jones – We had kids come out of that area that were shot. Castle Groove is just a bad area; I do not go back there unless I absolutely have to.

Ms. Smith – I cut through there all the time. I cut through there a lot, and I see kids. I see all of them, and I see the kids out there. Castle Groove is not a place I would walk through. During the day, it is alright but not at night.

Ms. Jones – The kids that come out of there are pretty successful.

Interviewer – Tell me about that. What do mean by are successful?

Ms. Jones – College, some of them have gone to college, some of them have gone the wrong way. Some are dead. (Smith – some have died) unfortunately. We had one last year that got shot. So we know a couple of them that have died, but some of them have been successful, so maybe we made an impact with some of them that are successful. We had some good kids that have come out of there, we had some not so good kids, and we have had some to turn around. When they leave here I think they get in gangs.

Interviewer- Where do they go when they leave here?

Ms. Smith – CE, Peterson, or Blackburn Middle, or they can go to the School of the Arts.

Ms. Williams – None of ours have gone to the School of the Arts. We finally got one; she went in as an eighth grader.

Ms. Smith – I saw two of ours in summer camp.

Ms. Williams – She finally got in as a seventh grader, (Ms. Smith – really?) and her mom is a secretary here for a while. China, she did not get in until seventh grade for singing. She is the first child to get in from David Walker Elementary. That makes me very sad, because our kids have talent. They just do not have the formal training tutelage that they so need when they to the auditions, or when they present their portfolios, they do not stack up; our little girls formal training is praise training in their church. They are going against kids who have been doing tap and ballet since two years old. I get very upset I feel there is a lot.

Ms. Smith – it is usually the children that are in the private schools the parent go to SOA because they do not pay tuitions. The kids finish elementary school and put them in there. The kids, who have more privileges, have more exposure than kids at our school. *Interviewer – Alright I do not want to do this again. You guys are just fantastic. I do not have any more questions for you. I appreciate you all giving me this opportunity. Ok. Thank you all very much.*

Ms. Smith – Good luck.

CHAPTER V DISCUSSING THE RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter gives a brief summary of the study, restate the problem, the purpose, and research questions. It provides a discussion of the major findings as they relate to the literature and statements of surprises from the study. The chapter concludes with implications for action, recommendations for further study and concluding remarks.

Summary of the Study

This is a study of school legitimacy. School legitimacy is a status given to a school by parents, students, and the communities (the clients) that suggest the clients are willing to accept the authority of the school. The acceptance of the authority of the school does not develop without trust. Collective trust is individual or group trust concerning the trustworthiness of another group of individual. Parents, as a group, that does not accept the authority of the school staff (as a group), stifles school legitimacy.

This study is about the developing and maintaining of school legitimacy. If clients assent to the authority of the school, they must trust that the school will look out for their best interest, maintain and protect their identity, and help in developing their economic interest. Three ethnographic studies manifested how many poor and minority schools will never reach the status of school legitimacy.

"Bad Boy: Public Schools and the Making of Black Masculinity" by Ann Ferguson provides a penetrating look at how schools unknowingly produce the identity of

"the bad boy" for African American males. If schools do not protect the students cultural or preferred identity, Ferguson suggests, the students will rebel against the school's authority. "Subtractive Schooling" by Angela Valenzuela posits that schools believe Latinos need more cultural assimilation and re-socialization to be successful. This method of doing schooling (a subtractive process according to Valenzuela) is the very reason Latino students adhere to academic failure. It is not their best interest that schools promote. These students in turn, rebel against school authority. "Ain't No Making It" by Jay MacLeod illustrates how students of poverty rarely ascend above that societal level or class structure. Education is the way out of poverty. Macleod presents how the achievement ideology stated to the poor is a myth for most students in poverty. Students that recognize that doing well in school is not going to improve their lives economically, rebel against the authority and school legitimacy cannot develop.

Jerome Morris' article entitled "Can Anything Good from Nazareth" highlights successful schools in high poverty high minority area. Morris points out functions and strategies used by successful schools in high poverty and high minority communities. Although all schools are different and have their own culture, Morris recommends that failing schools study successful schools with similar situations and apply methods that bring success. This is not as easy as it sounds. Morris, however, emphasizes in his study, many of the qualities mentioned by Erickson.

After gathering information through the literature review, I organized to test Erickson's concept in a local school. I sought a school with similar demographics and history. I used surveys, interviews, and other research to examine the legitimacy of a school. Teachers, parents, and the principal received surveys. Each person who filled out

a survey I interviewed. I interviewed parents and teachers individually and as individual focus groups. I calculated survey results, and codified and analyzed the interviews. The conclusion revealed that in 1987 Frederick Erickson had suggested a way of helping poor and minority students to be successful.

Overview of the Problem

The problem this study sought to answer is the overwhelming failure of poor and minority schools. Although there is much money spent to help make these schools successful, the majority of them are still failing. There are pockets of school that are high poverty and minority that are successful. What makes some schools with the same demographics successful while others are failures? What must schools stop doing to cease from being failures and what must they start doing to be successful?

Purpose statement and research questions. The purpose of the study was to identify the process by which school legitimacy is earned and constructed. The research questions behind this study are; how is school legitimacy constructed and maintained? How does the school staff help to construct trust among its clients in a local school?

Review of the methodology. The study looked at multiple ethnographic cases studies of school success and school failure to determine why school legitimacy was lacking in failing schools and present in successful schools. This information provided the strategies to have a successful and a school that has earned the status of legitimacy.

Major Findings

There are a few major findings from the study. The most notable was the idea that schools can acquire a status of legitimacy without following the criteria for legitimate schools outlined in the research. Legitimate schools are successful schools with high

achieving students. There are some schools, not many, that do not ascribe to the elements of school legitimacy and yet they are successful. Some Black Muslims schools, some Catholic schools, and private schools whose population is high poverty and high minority are successful. There seems to be more successful schools in the public arena that function according to the process of school legitimacy than there are the few that do not hold to the elements of school legitimacy.

To have a sustainable successful school, the school must develop and maintain a trusting relationship between school staff and clients. Building trust between school staff and clients is not an easy or quick process. Institutional legitimacy is developed after long periods of consistent and encouraging interactions between school staff and clients. Strong relationships develop into collective trust which is a foundation of school legitimacy.

Two concepts revealed in the literature were Hegemonic Practices and Habitus. Hegemonic practices create blinders on both the oppressed and the oppressor. In relation to schools and their practices, hegemonic practices allows policies and practices that are success for one demographic to be used on another demographic in which they are not successful, but are continued to be use. Teachers unknowingly use hegemonic practices thinking, if they work for one group, they will work for another. Hegemonic practices in teaching and discipline develop distance between the teacher and learner. The teacher and school are generally unaware that their practices are detrimental to the poor and minority community that they are teaching.

The Habitus is composed of the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of those inhabiting a person's social world" (Almquist, Modin, & Ostberg, 2010; MacLeod, 1995,

p.15). Habitus frames the way one sees and understands the world around him. The individual's internalized values will affect one's attitude about school. For example, a poor student, based on his attitude about school, might believe he has less chance for success than the rich student. The African-American might believe he has less chance of academic success than Whites. The Latino may believe he is disciplined more severely than others. "The structure of schooling, with its high regard for the cultural capital of the upper classes, promotes the belief among working-class students that they are unlikely to achieve academic success." (MacLeod, 1995, p.15). This belief becomes their habitus.

Findings Related to the Literature

My study is about the concept of school legitimacy taken from Frederick Erickson's paper entitled "Transformation and School Success: The Politics and Culture of Educational Achievement." School legitimacy is the acceptance of the authority of school staff by parents, students, and the community. Key components of school legitimacy are trust, assent, and legitimacy (personal and institutional). I find these concepts necessary for the academic success of poor and minority schools.

Findings from surveys – collective trust. "Trust is a state in which individuals and groups are willing to make themselves vulnerable to others and take risks with confidence that others will respond to their actions in positive ways, that is, with benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness" (Forsyth, et.al, 20ll, p. 20). "Collective trust is a group's belief that emerges through the social construction of shared perceptions about the trustworthiness of another group or an individual (Forsyth, et al., 2011, p. 22)". Collective trust is similar to school legitimacy, and like individual trust, is a crucial part of school legitimacy.

The surveys measured collective trust in the school used in the study. When comparing the results to the schools used in the Ohio State University study interesting results developed. Faculty trust had three referents: faculty trust in clients (students and parents), faculty trust in colleagues, and faculty trust in the principal. The study revealed through surveys that faculty trust in colleagues in the test school was better than 99% of the schools in the Ohio State study. Faculty trust in principal and the clients was better than 97% of the schools in the Ohio State study. This indicates the faculty as a group is willing to risk vulnerability; that is trust parents, students, and the principal to be benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open (Forsyth, et. al., 2011, p. 35). These facets of trust are highly significant in relationship to a school's academic success.

Parent trust has two referents: parents trust in the school (Faculty), and parent trust in the principal. The study revealed through surveys that parent trust in the school and parent trust in the principal in the test school was greater than 99% of the schools in the Ohio State study. These results indicate parents as a group are willing to trust the school and principal and risk being vulnerable. One of the most important components of school success is parental support of the school. The results of the parent and faculty surveys reveal a strong trust relationship between school staff and parents and parents and school staff.

Principal trust also has three referents: principal trust in teachers (faculty), principal trust in parents, and principal trust in students. The study revealed through surveys that the principal trust in parents, teachers, and students is average in comparison to the schools in the Ohio State study. With such high trust between parents and teachers I figure I would have the same level of trust between the principals and the other

referents, but that was not the case. The principal's average trust rating in the test school gave me pause when considering the importance of the position in school success.

Findings from interviews and research – assent. Assent occurs when the individual or group trust that those in authority will help their economic future, protect the personal identities, and look out for their best interest (Erickson, 1987, p. 344). Schools appear to determine the economic future of students by putting forth an achievement ideology which is detrimental to the majority of poor students (MacLeod, 1995, p.112). Schools appear to create negative identities for poor and minority students through their discipline policies (Ferguson, 2000, p. 40). Through the school traditional policies and practices the best interests of the students are not advanced (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 3). Students fail to accept the authority of school staff when their interest and identity is not protected.

Findings from interviews and research – legitimacy. Over long periods of time as the school staff demonstrates through its daily encounters with parents and students its trust (willingness to look out for the best interest of stakeholders), institutional legitimacy develops (Erickson, 1987, p. 345). When relationship between school staff and clients is positive it establishes institutional legitimacy. When relationships are negative and trust is impaired because of social and/or cultural conflicts between teachers and clients, s legitimacy is not established and school legitimacy is nullified (Erickson, 1987, p. 345). The source of school failure and success is inside and outside of the school. School legitimacy with its politics of legitimacy, trust, and assent is the fundamental factor of school success. The school must earn the perception and status of legitimacy from the community. School legitimacy is threatened when the school does not make an effort

early in the client's educational development to establish the essential "Trust" and eliminate traditional practices and symbolism. If clients believe in the legitimacy of the school, any method of educating can prove successful.

Findings from interviews and research - successful schools. Transformation from the tradition paternalistic actions of the school towards the poor and minority students to mutual trust and the development of "agency" in the school produce the acceptance of the school authority. Symbols of failing schools are changed to symbols of teachers staying at schools for ten years of more, overwhelming parental support, social events that become hallmarks for both school and community, students accepting and appreciating the image the school recognizes as belonging to the clients, and a reputation for doing what is necessary for students, produce the atmosphere for school legitimacy.

In this study I found the strong trust between parents and school staff provides the confidence for parents to submit to those in authority at school. I appears parental submission to authority is a prerequisite to student submission to authority. Ogbu's findings, though controversial, are reasonable in suggesting the attitudes and dispositions of parents concerning schools have an effect on their children (Ogbu, November, 1992). Parents with high trust in teachers will submit to the school's authority and encourage their children to do the same. See Table D.2 for a comparison of Erickson's, Morris' and Griggs' studies.

Surprises

I was surprised to hear parents in the interviews say that the school has nothing to do with the community. I was surprised to hear teachers say that they do not need to teach extensively about the Civil Rights movement, because that is so far in the past. I

was surprised to hear a teacher say that an African American student felt it uncomfortable to call someone black or white.

Conclusions

Implications for action. The most important finding that this study reveals is the importance of agency in the school. "Agency" according to Morris' study is the group of African American parents that had a part in ensuring the success of the students in their school. The group was developed through the encouragement of the school staff. How school staff assist in the development of "Agency" is fundamental to school success. A strong "agency" ensures trust in the school staff.

The development of school legitimacy is also imperative for school success. School staff must understand how to use everyday speech in a way that causes the subordinates in the school to assent to the authority of the superordinates (Erickson, 1987, p. 345). This approach calls for knowledge of failed traditional practices and detrimental school symbols (Erickson, 1987, p. 355) and transformation of those practices and symbols. This information in teachers empowers students and parents and secures their trust, that those in authority will keep their best interest, maintain their identity, and improve their economic interest.

Recommendations for further research.

Teachers

1. The teachers implied that the African American history need not be taught. A poignant story had to do with the young fifth grade girl that wanted to talk about her favorite American during Black History month. It just so happened that while all the students in the class was discussing historical African Americans, she wanted to talk about Benjamin Franklin. When informed that he was not an African American, she replied, it should not matter. We are all Americans.

2. Another interesting encounter was when another fifth grade student felt it improper to refer to someone by color. She felt she should not call someone white or black.
3. There were students according to a third grade teacher that had not heard anything about slavery before they were told by the teacher in third grade.
4. Teachers all consider themselves as teachers who do not see color. This idea needs further investigation.

Parents

1. The parents implied that the school should have nothing to do with the poor community where most of the students lived. More specifically, one parents states "we help the community by helping the students."
2. The parents had a difficult time discussing the reason why the neighborhood clients did not want to come to David Walker Elementary.
3. The parents had a difficult time discussing why the neighborhood children could not go to the school across the street from them.
4. One parent acted as a matriarch for parents, the idea of a parent having respect and authority to work with parents and the school is an idea worth studying.

Schools – Are there many schools that are successful that do not adhere to the elements of school legitimacy?

Concluding remarks. I could not imagine getting to this point in my journey for a long time. I must say that I have learned something. I have been intrigued by nearly every book that I have read since beginning this program. The study of school legitimacy has given me insight to difficult questions. The idea of school legitimacy is similar to the idea of a school that prides itself for the successes that it has produced. Legitimate Schools work with an "agency" whose goals are the success of all students. Legitimate schools through transformation of policies and practices by-pass, hegemonic practices, create positive habitus, and move pass institutional racism that is in many schools. Erickson appears to have been ahead of his times. The politics and practices of a school must relate the students and community from which they come.

I had no in-depth knowledge of the terms used in my last few sentences before I began this study. The transformation of a failing school in a high poverty and/or minority community is not an easy task. It will take, in most cases, more than just good teaching of the standards for kids in many communities to be successful. Parents in numbers are essential for a school's success.

This section is bitter sweet. I need to stop with the study, but I do not want to stop studying this subject. Ann Ferguson's, Angela Valenzuela's, Jay MacLeod's research was absolutely phenomenal. Jerome Morris's article should be required reading for every teacher who wants to teach in a high poverty high minority school. I know I am a better educator because of this study. I see people in poverty different. I know poor students and minority students can be successful.

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APPENDIX A SURVEY QUESTIONS

Teacher

The purpose of this research is to identify how school legitimacy is constructed. This survey looks at one particular part of school legitimacy, which is trust. There is no monetary compensation for the completion of the survey. You are being asked to participate in this survey because you have been a part of this school for at least three years. It is my belief that after three years you are aware of how the school functions. The survey is completely on volunteer basis and the answers are confidential. My name is Interviewer Griggs and this survey is part of the requirements for the completion of my dissertation in Educational Leadership at the University of South Carolina. The results will be recorded in the dissertation. It should take approximately ten minutes to complete the survey. Once completed, place the survey in the attached envelope and seal it. I will personally pick it up within 48 hours. If you have any questions, please contact me at (843) 856-4593 or (843) 343-7783.

Directions: Please indicated your degree of agreement with each of the statements about our school from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (6). Your answers are confidential.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The teachers in this school trust the principal.	1	2	3	6	7	8
2	The teachers in this school trust each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	The teachers in this school trust their students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	The teachers in this school are suspicious of most of the principal's acti	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	The teachers in this school typically look out for each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	The teachers in this school trust the parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	The teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of the principal.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	The teachers in this school are suspicious of each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	The principal in this school typically acts in the best interest of teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	The students in this school care about each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	The principal of this school does not show concern for the teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	Even in difficult situations, teachers in this school can depend on each o	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The teachers in this school do their job well.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	The parents in this school are reliable in their commitments.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	The teachers in this school can rely on the principal.	1	2	3			
16	The teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of their colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	The students in this school can be counted on to do their work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	The principal in this school is competent in doing his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	The teachers in this school are open with each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	The teachers can count on parental support.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	When teachers in this school tell you something, you can believe it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	The teachers here believe the students are competent learners.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	The principal doesn't tell the teachers what is really going on.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	The teachers think that most of the parents do a good job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	The teachers can believe what parents tell them.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Parent /School

The purpose of this research is to identify how school legitimacy is constructed. This survey looks at one particular part of school legitimacy, which is trust. There is no monetary compensation for the completion of the survey. You are being asked to participate in this survey because you have been a part of this school for at least three years. It is my belief that after three years you are aware of how the school functions. The survey is completed on a volunteer basis and the answers are confidential. My name is Interviewer Griggs and this survey is part of the requirements for the completion of my dissertation in Educational Leadership at the University of South Carolina. The results will be recorded in the dissertation. It should take approximately ten minutes to complete the survey. Once completed, place the survey in the attached envelope and seal it. I will personally pick it up within 48 hours. If you have any questions, please contact me at (843) 856-4593 or (843) 343-7783.

Directions: The items below permit a range of responses from one extreme on the left (Strongly disagree) to the other extreme on the right (Strongly agree). Please indicate how you feel about your child's school by circling one number in each row. Circling numbers "1" or "8" suggest more intense feelings.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	This school always does what it is supposed to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	This school keeps me well informed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3	I really trust this school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4	Kids at this school are well cared for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5	This school is always honest with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6	This school does a terrific job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7	This school has high standards for all kids.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8	This school is always ready to help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	I never worry about my child when he/she is there.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	At this school, I know I'll be listened to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Parent/Principal

The purpose of this research is to identify how school legitimacy is constructed. This survey looks at one particular part of school legitimacy, which is trust. There is no monetary compensation for the completion of the survey. You are being asked to participate in this survey because you have been a part of this school for at least three years. It is my belief that after three years you are aware of how the school functions. The survey is completed on a volunteer basis and the answers are confidential. My name is Interviewer Griggs and this survey is part of the requirements for the completion of my dissertation in Educational Leadership at the University of South Carolina. The results will be recorded in the dissertation. It should take approximately ten minutes to complete the survey. Once completed, place the survey in the attached envelope and seal it. I will personally pick it up within 48 hours. If you have any questions, please contact me at (843) 856-4593 or (843) 343-7783.

Directions: The items. below permit a range of response from one extreme on the left (Strongly disagree) to the other extreme on the right (Strongly agree). Please indicate how you feel about your child's principal by circling one number in each row. Circling numbers "1" or "8" suggest more intense feelings.		Strongly	Disagree	Somewhat	Slightly	Slightly Agree	Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The principal of this school is good at his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	The principal of this school can be counted on to do his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3	The principal of this school is well intentioned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4	The principal of this school is always honest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5	The principal of this school invites both criticism and praise from pa	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6	The principal of this school is very reliable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7	The principal of this school has high standards for all kids.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8	The principal of this school is always ready to help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	The principal of this school treats everyone with respect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	The principal of this school keeps an open door.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11	The principal of this school owns up to his/her mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	The principal of this school knows how to make learning happen.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
13	The principal of this school is always there when you need him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	The principal of this school is trustworthy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15	The principal of this school likes to talk to parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Principal/Parent

The purpose of this research is to identify how school legitimacy is constructed. This survey looks at one particular part of school legitimacy, which is trust. There is no monetary compensation for the completion of the survey. You are being asked to participate in this survey because you have been a part of this school for at least three years. It is my belief that after three years you are aware of how the school functions. The survey is completed on a volunteer basis and the answers are confidential. My name is Interviewer Griggs and this survey is part of the requirements for the completion of my dissertation in Educational Leadership at the University of South Carolina. The results will be recorded in the dissertation. It should take approximately ten minutes to complete the survey. Once completed, place the survey in the attached envelope and seal it. I will personally pick it up within 48 hours. If you have any questions, please contact me at (843) 856-4593 or (843) 343-7783.

Directions: The items below permit a range of responses from one extreme on the left (Strongly disagree) to the other extreme on the right (Strongly agree). Please indicate how you feel about parents in your school by circling one number in each row. Circling numbers "1" or "8" suggest more intense feelings.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The parents at this school are well intentioned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	The parents at this school are always honest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3	The parents at this school are very reliable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4	The parents at this school want the best for their kids.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5	The parents at this school are always ready to help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6	The parents at this school treat everyone with respect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7	The parents at this school own up to their mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8	The parents at this school are always there when you need them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	The parents at this school are trustworthy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	The parents at this school like to talk to the teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Principal/Teacher

The purpose of this research is to identify how school legitimacy is constructed. This survey looks at one particular part of school legitimacy, which is trust. There is no monetary compensation for the completion of the survey. You are being asked to participate in this survey because you have been a part of this school for at least three years. It is my belief that after three years you are aware of how the school functions. The survey is completed on a volunteer basis and the answers are confidential. My name is Interviewer Griggs and this survey is part of the requirements for the completion of my dissertation in Educational Leadership at the University of South Carolina. The results will be recorded in the dissertation. It should take approximately ten minutes to complete the survey. Once completed, place the survey in the attached envelope and seal it. I will personally pick it up within 48 hours. If you have any questions, please contact me at (843) 856-4593 or (843) 343-7783.

Directions: The items below permit a range of responses from one extreme on the left (Strongly disagree) to the other extreme on the right (Strongly agree). Please indicate how you feel about your teachers by circling one number in each row. Circling numbers "1" or "8" suggest more intense feelings.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The teachers at this school are good at their job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	The teachers at this school can be counted on do their job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3	The teachers at this school are well intentioned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4	The teachers at this school are always honest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5	The teachers at this school invite both criticism and praise from parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6	The teachers at this school are very reliable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7	The teachers at this school have high standards for all kids.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8	The teachers at this school are always ready to help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	The teachers at this school treat everyone with respect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	The teachers at this school keep an open door.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11	The teachers at this school own up to their mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	The teachers at this school know how to make learning happen.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
13	The teachers at this school are always there when you need them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	The teachers at this school are trustworthy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15	The teachers at this school like to talk to parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

APPENDIX B LETTERS OF CONSENT

School Legitimacy Study

Dear Principal,

My name is Interviewer Griggs. I am a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Policy Department at the University of South Carolina. I am conducting a research study this fall as part of the requirements for my degree in Educational Leadership, and I would like to use your school in my case study.

I am studying the process by which school legitimacy is earned and constructed. School legitimacy is a status acquired by a school through the acceptance and approval of the school's authority by its stakeholders. If you allow me to use your school; I would need you, three of your teachers, and three parents to complete some surveys about trust and your relationship to school stakeholders. You will be asked to meet with me for an interview. Your teachers and parents will also participate in an interview and a small group discussion about School legitimacy (you as the principal will not be in the small group discussions). You will be asked questions about your relationships with parents, students, community, and school practices that ensure academic success. The meeting will take place at your school at a mutually agreed upon time and should last no longer than 90 minutes. The session will be audio taped so I can accurately reflect on what is discussed. The audio tapes will only be reviewed by me and possibly one professor who will help me transcribe and analyze them. They will then be destroyed.

The questions should not make you uncomfortable; however, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to. You will probably benefit personally from participating in this study and so will your school. Our desire is that others school and communities benefit by from our study, also.

Participation is confidential. Study information will be kept in a secure location at the University of South Carolina. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but your identity will not be revealed. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have about the study. You may contact me if you have study related questions or problems at my school office (843) 856-4593, my cell phone (843)343-7783, or by email

Interviewer_Griggs@charleston.k12.sc.us. You may also contact my faculty advisor Dr. Zach Kelehear. His phone number is (803) 777-2822 and his email is Kelehear@mailbox.sc.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance at the University of South Carolina at (803) 777-7095.

Thank you for your consideration. If I am able to use your school, please sign the bottom of this document and send it back to me. I will return your correspondence with the next step in the process.

With kind regards,

Interviewer Griggs
(843) 856-4593
Interviewer_Griggs@charleston.k12.sc.us

You should know that the Charleston County School District is neither sponsoring nor conducting this research and there is no penalty for not participating. You should also know that if you decide to participate you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

I give consent for my school (Elementary) to be used in the case study being conducted by Interviewer Griggs.

Principal _____.

I give consent for my school (Elementary school) to be used in the case study being conducted by Interviewer Griggs.

_____.
School Legitimacy Study

Dear Teachers,

My name is Interviewer Griggs. I am a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Policy Department at the University of South Carolina. I am conducting a research study this fall as part of the requirements of my degree in Educational Leadership, and I would like to invite you to participate.

I am studying the process by which school legitimacy is earned and constructed. If you decide to participate you will be asked to complete some surveys about trust and your relationship to school stakeholders. You will also be asked to meet with me for an interview and participate in a small group discussion about School legitimacy. School legitimacy is a status acquired by a school through the acceptance and approval of the school's authority by its stakeholders. You will be asked questions about your relationships with parents, students, community, and school practices that ensure academic success. The meetings will take place at your school at a mutually agreed upon time and should last no longer than 90 minutes. The sessions will be audio taped so I can accurately reflect on what was discussed. The audio tapes will only be reviewed by me and possibly one professor who will help me transcribe and analyze them. They will then be destroyed.

The questions should not make you uncomfortable; however, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to. You will probably benefit personally from participating in this study and so will your school. Our desire is that other schools and communities will benefit by our study.

Participation is confidential. Study information will be kept in a secure location at the University of South Carolina. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but your identity will not be revealed. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. In the small group discussion (three in a group) others will hear what you say, and it is possible that they could tell someone else. Because we will be talking in a group, we cannot promise that what you say will remain completely private, but we will ask that you and all other group members respect the privacy of everyone in the group.

I will be happy to answer any questions you might have about the study. You may contact me if you have study related questions or problems at my school office (843) 856-4593, my cell phone (843)343-7783, or by email Interviewer_Griggs@charleston.k12.sc.us. You may also contact my faculty advisor Dr. Zach Kelehear. His phone number is (803) 777-2822 and his email is Kelehear@mailbox.sc.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance at the University of South Carolina at (803) 777-7095.

Thank you for your consideration. If you would like to participate, please send me an email stating your wiliness or call me on either of my phone numbers. I will return your correspondence with what we will do next.

With kind regards,

Interviewer Griggs
(843) 856-4593
Interviewer_Griggs@charleston.k12.sc.us

You should know that the Charleston County School District is neither sponsoring nor conducting this research and there is no penalty for not participating. You should also know that if you decide to participate you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

I will participate in the case study being conducted by Interviewer Griggs.

Teacher _____.

Dear Parents,

My name is Interviewer Griggs. I am a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Policy Department at the University of South Carolina. I am conducting a research study this fall as part of the requirements of my degree in Educational Leadership, and I would like to invite you to participate.

I am studying the process by which school legitimacy is earned and constructed. If you decide to participate you will be asked to complete some surveys about trust and your relationship to school stakeholders. You will also be asked to meet with me for an interview and participate in a small group discussion about School legitimacy. School legitimacy is a status acquired by a school through the acceptance and approval of the school's authority by its stakeholders. You will be asked questions about your relationships with parents, students, community, and school practices that ensure academic success. The meetings will take place at your school at a mutually agreed on time and should last no longer than 90 minutes. The sessions will be audio taped so I can accurately reflect on what is discussed. The audio tapes will only be reviewed by me and possibly one professor who will help me transcribe and analyze them. They will then be destroyed.

The questions should not make you uncomfortable; however, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to. You will probably benefit personally from participating in this study and so will your school. Our desire is that other schools and communities will benefit by our study.

Participation is confidential. Study information will be kept in a secure location at the University of South Carolina. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but your identity will not be revealed. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. In the small group discussion (three in a group) others will hear what you say, and it is possible that they could tell someone else. Because we will be talking in a group, we cannot promise that what you say will remain completely private, be we will ask that you and all other group members respect the privacy of everyone in the group.

I will be happy to answer any questions you might have about the study. You may contact me if you have study related questions or problems at my school office (843) 856-4593, my cell phone (843)343-7783, or by email Interviewer_Griggs@charleston.k12.sc.us. You may also contact my faculty advisor Dr. Zach Kelehear. His phone number is (803) 777-2822 and his email is Kelehear@mailbox.sc.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance at the University of South Carolina at (803) 777-7095.

Thank you for your consideration. If you would like to participate, please send me an email stating your wiliness or call me on either of my phone numbers. I will return your correspondence with what we will do next.

With kind regards,

Interviewer Griggs
(843) 856-4593
Interviewer_Griggs@charleston.k12.sc.us

You should know that the Charleston County School District is neither sponsoring nor conducting this research and there is no penalty for not participating. You should also know that if you decide to participate you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

I will participate in the case study being conducted by Interviewer Griggs.

Parent _____.

APPENDIX C UNIVERSITY APPROVAL LETTERS

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

July 22, 2013

Mr. Michael Griggs
College of Education
Education Leadership & Policies
Wardlaw
Columbia, SC 29208

Re: **Pro00027615**
Study Title: *An Analysis of Erickson's Concept of School Legitimacy In Relationship to School Success and Failure*

FYI: University of South Carolina Assurance number: FWA 00000404 / IRB Registration number: 00000240

Dear Mr. Griggs:

In accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(**2**), the referenced study received an exemption from Human Research Subject Regulations on **7/22/2013.** No further action or Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight is required, as long as the project remains the same. However, you must inform this office of any changes in procedures involving human subjects. Changes to the current research protocol could result in a reclassification of the study and further review by the IRB.

Because this project was determined to be exempt from further IRB oversight, consent document(s), if applicable, are not stamped with an expiration date.

Research related records should be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the study.

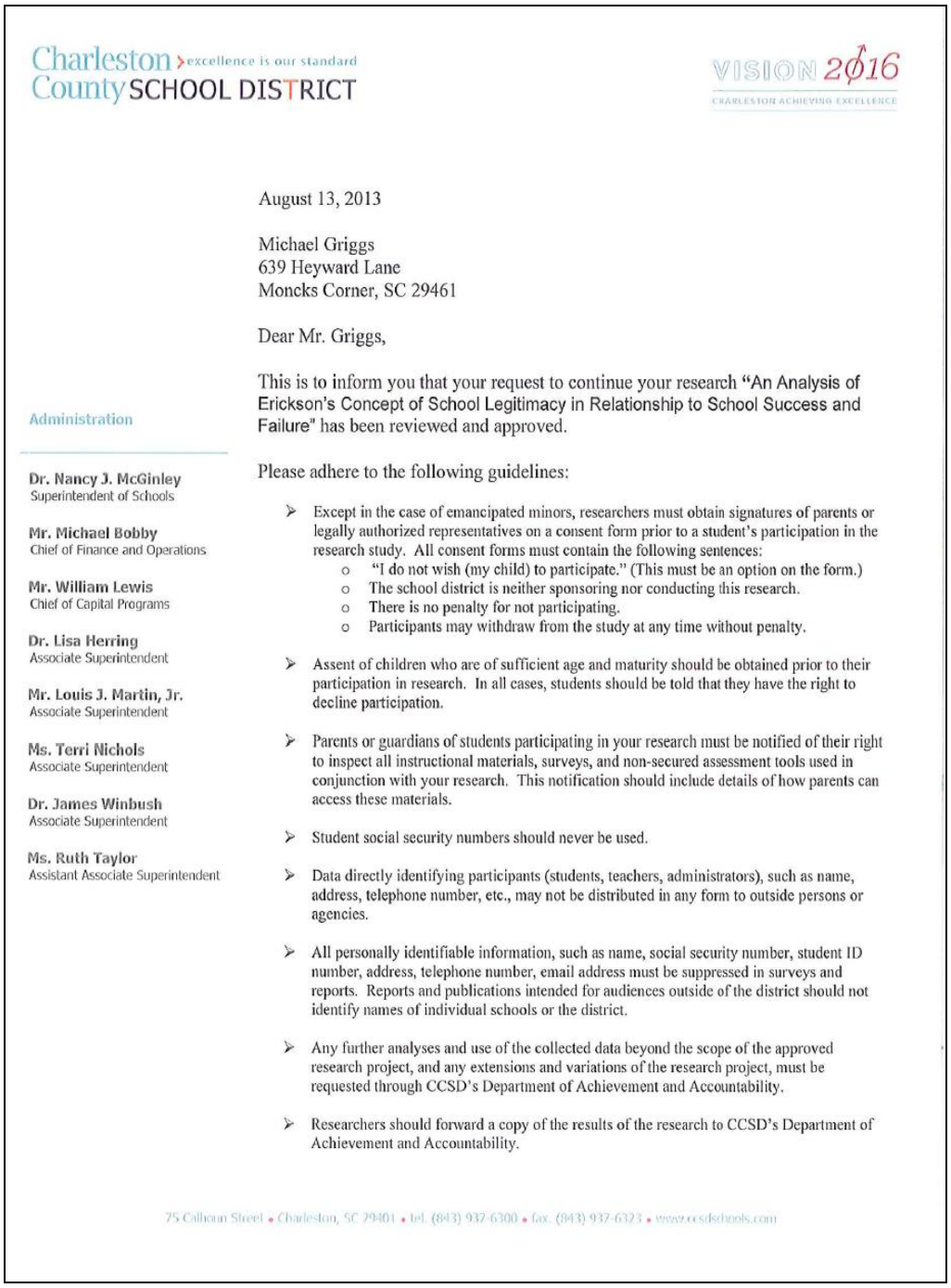
The Office of Research Compliance is an administrative office that supports the USC Institutional Review Board. If you have questions, please contact Arlene McWhorter at arlenem@sc.edu or (803) 777-7095.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Johnson
IRB Manager

cc: Zach Kelehear

APPENDIX D CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVAL LETTER



Charleston County SCHOOL DISTRICT
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VISION 2016
CHARLESTON ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

August 13, 2013

Michael Griggs
639 Heyward Lane
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

Dear Mr. Griggs,

This is to inform you that your request to continue your research "An Analysis of Erickson's Concept of School Legitimacy in Relationship to School Success and Failure" has been reviewed and approved.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Except in the case of emancipated minors, researchers must obtain signatures of parents or legally authorized representatives on a consent form prior to a student's participation in the research study. All consent forms must contain the following sentences:
  - "I do not wish (my child) to participate." (This must be an option on the form.)
  - The school district is neither sponsoring nor conducting this research.
  - There is no penalty for not participating.
  - Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
- Assent of children who are of sufficient age and maturity should be obtained prior to their participation in research. In all cases, students should be told that they have the right to decline participation.
- Parents or guardians of students participating in your research must be notified of their right to inspect all instructional materials, surveys, and non-secured assessment tools used in conjunction with your research. This notification should include details of how parents can access these materials.
- Student social security numbers should never be used.
- Data directly identifying participants (students, teachers, administrators), such as name, address, telephone number, etc., may not be distributed in any form to outside persons or agencies.
- All personally identifiable information, such as name, social security number, student ID number, address, telephone number, email address must be suppressed in surveys and reports. Reports and publications intended for audiences outside of the district should not identify names of individual schools or the district.
- Any further analyses and use of the collected data beyond the scope of the approved research project, and any extensions and variations of the research project, must be requested through CCSD's Department of Achievement and Accountability.
- Researchers should forward a copy of the results of the research to CCSD's Department of Achievement and Accountability.

Administration

Dr. Nancy J. McGinley
Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Michael Bobby
Chief of Finance and Operations

Mr. William Lewis
Chief of Capital Programs

Dr. Lisa Herring
Associate Superintendent

Mr. Louis J. Martin, Jr.
Associate Superintendent

Ms. Terri Nichols
Associate Superintendent

Dr. James Winbush
Associate Superintendent

Ms. Ruth Taylor
Assistant Associate Superintendent

75 Calhoun Street • Charleston, SC 29401 • tel. (843) 937-6300 • fax. (843) 937-6323 • www.ccsdschools.com

Charleston County SCHOOL DISTRICT
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CHARLESTON ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

Please note that this district-level approval obligates no school or employee to participate. Final approval, consent to participate, and cooperation must come from the school principal or administrator of the unit involved. Please show this letter to the school principal or administrator.

Respectfully,

Laura Donnelly, Ph.D.
Director
Assessment and Evaluation

Cc: Dr. Nancy McGinley

TABLE D.1 ACTUAL SURVEY DATA

Teacher Survey Data

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Average
1	6	6	6	6
4	6	6	6	6
7	6	6	6	6
9	6	6	6	6
11	5	6	6	5.7
15	6	6	6	6
18	6	6	6	6
23	5	6	6	5.7
2	6	6	6	6
5	6	6	6	6
8	6	6	6	6
12	6	6	6	6
13	6	6	6	6
16	6	6	6	6
19	5	6	6	5.7
21	6	6	6	6
3	6	5	6	5.7
6	5	5	6	5.3
10	5	5	5	5
14	4	4	5	4.3
17	4	5	5	4.7
20	5	5	4	4.7
22	5	6	6	4.5
24	5	5	4	4.7
25	5	5	4	4.7
26	5	2	6	4.3

Parent Survey Data

	Parent A	Parent B	Parent C	Average
1	8	8	8	8
2	8	8	8	8
3	8	8	8	8
4	8	8	8	8
5	8	8	8	8
6	8	8	8	8
7	8	8	8	8
8	8	8	8	8
9	8	8	8	8
10	8	8	8	8
11	8	8	8	8
12	8	8	8	8
13	8	8	8	8
14	8	8	8	8
15	8	8	8	8
16	8	8	8	8
17	8	8	8	8
18	8	8	8	8
19	8	8	8	8
20	8	8	8	8
21	8	8	8	8
22	8	8	8	8
23	8	8	8	8
24	8	8	8	8
25	8	8	8	8

Principal Survey Data

	Principal	Average
1	5	
4	5	
6	5	
8	6	
9	6	
12	5	
13	5	
17	5	
18	5	
TL	47	5.2
3	5	
5	5	
7	4	
10	5	
11	5	
19	5	
TL	29	4.8
2	5	
14	5	
15	5	
16	4	
20	5	
TL	24	4.8

TABLE D.2 COMPARISON AND SYNTHESIS OF ERICKSON, MORRIS, and GRIGGS

Successful schools, according to Erickson and Morris, maintain and develop a staff who understands and appreciates the culture of the students they teach. To be successful and effective, schools must actively be a part of changing the outside social structure and cultures of the communities where they exist. The clients recognize the school and the teachers have their best interest at heart as well as their economic interest in mind.

	Erickson	**Morris**	**Griggs**
1.	To consider school motivation and achievement as a political process, we must consider the nature of the symbolic discourse through which the issues (legitimacy, identity, and interest) are understood by teachers and students in their community and school.	Six of the teachers at one of the successful schools taught there for over thirty years. Most of the teachers received their certification from all black colleges. Parents were satisfied with the education their children received. Both schools went from predominantly white to black with 94% of the students qualified for free and reduced lunch. Teachers at both schools had strong connections to the school and surrounding community.	Teachers and parents have a close relationship with each other in the test school. Communication is important and parents feel they can always talk to teachers at any time. Mutual respect is evident in daily interactions.
2.	Assent to the exercise of school authority involves a leap of faith. That is trust in the legitimacy (institutional and personal) of the authority and in the good	Both successful schools had parents, teachers, and students who believed in their school. Parental belief in school produces students who are willing to work harder at being	Parents, teachers, and the principal expressed sentiments that the school belonged to all of them. Parents noted that the school was their school. Teachers express belief that

	intentions of those exercising it, trust that one's own identity will be maintained positively in relation to the authority, and trust that one's own interests (economic) will be advanced by compliance with the exercise of authority. A sense of trust involves a sense of risk.	successful, have the highest attendance, and outperform other schools. School legitimacy cannot occur without a close connection between the school and outside social structure of the community. The connections enable students, parents, and the community to believe the school is their school.	the parents feel this is their school. Student identity and economic interest was not a concern between teachers and clients in the test school.
3.	Legitimacy, trust, and interest are institutional (related to the school and associated with culture – social structure and patterns of role relationship that occur over long time spans and allocated according to monetary capital and cultural capital) and existential (existing in time and experience - continually negotiated within the intimate circumstances and short time scale of every day encounters between individual teachers, students, and parents). The institutional legitimacy of the school is affirmed (established) existentially as ***trust*** in face-to-face encounters between school staff and students and their parents**.**	School legitimacy cannot occur without a close connection between the school and outside social structure of the community. The longevity of teachers in a successful school establishes institution legitimacy. The everyday connections and interactions enable students, parents, and the community to believe the school is their school.	The relationship between the teachers, parents and community in the test school were developed over the many years the teachers remained at the school. The daily interactions between teachers and parents portray mutual respect and consideration of each other and established the close relationships in the test school.
4.	The trust is impaired when there are social and cultural conflicts between	African American educators, communities, and schools affirmed	The test school teachers maintained a close relationship with parents

	teachers and clients and school legitimacy is nullified. To find the roots of school failure and success we must look inside and outside of the school.	African American culture, giving students a sense of pride in who they were. African American teachers once helped to change society, uplifted the culture of African Americans, shaped the schooling practices, and help shape the political experience of African American students. African American educators, schools, and the community once collectively worked to improve their children, families, and communities, within an oppressive social structure.	and students at school, but the relationship to the outside community is nearly none existent.
5.	If clients believe in the legitimacy of the school any method of educating can prove successful. Not just culturally responsive pedagogy.	Nothing mentioned.	The test school was successful with the use of cultural responsive pedagogy.
6.	The politics of legitimacy, trust, and assent seem to be the most fundamental factors in school success.	In the past, the school also played an integral role in solidifying African American communities. "Agency" is constituted by collective actions of black people to positively influence the schooling of black children. School was the focal point in connecting the community and the church. Teachers taught students how to deal with life issues, racism in society, and intra-racial inequalities.	The test school did have an aspect of "Agency". Agency in the test school looked out for the well-being of the students, but it did not tie students to the community where they lived. Teachers had a role of teaching students, but they did not deal specifically with their home life and community problems.

7.	The school must earn the perception of legitimacy from the community. School legitimacy is a status earned by the school from the community.	In both successful schools, all school policies and practices considered the culture of the stakeholders. Instead of transforming the culture, legitimate schools accept the culture and the cultural identity of its population.	Although the students' culture was considered, it was not a strong aspect of what the school did to earn the status of legitimacy.
8.	The status of legitimacy is earned when there is a shift in the daily practices and symbolism from hegemonic to transformative. School legitimacy is threatened when the school does not put forth an effort early in the client's educational development to establish the essential "Trust" and eliminate hegemonic practices and symbolism.	The school and the community worked interdependently to meet the social and educational needs of the students. The parents and the teachers valued their relationship. Teachers did not wait for parents to participate; they welcomed parents into the school. School personnel at both schools enthusiastically celebrated African American historical and cultural celebrations.	The test school was close to a traditional school with typical practices. The annual reading celebration and the relationships between school staff and clients that developed over time appear to be responsible for the status of legitimacy.

1.	The test school went from predominantly white to predominantly black with over 94% of the students on free and reduced lunch. Erickson and Morris suggest the discourse between teachers and clients and addresses issues of legitimacy, identity, and economic interest. The test school teachers and clients had good relations; however the community was not involved.
2.	Erickson suggests the trust involved in clients assenting to authority must be necessary for school legitimacy. Morris' research demonstrates how Erickson's concept of trust was portrayed in successful schools. Griggs' test school exhibits strong trust in legitimacy, both personal and institutional, but was weak in Erickson's concept of identity and interest.
3.	The institutional legitimacy of the school was demonstrated as posit by Erickson and was demonstrated in Morris research and Griggs' test school.
4.	Erickson states that one can find the roots of school failure if there is social and cultural conflict between teachers and clients. Morris' research verifies strong social and cultural connections between teachers and clients can produce successful schools. Griggs' research implies a school can be successful without strong social or cultural connections. Schools must, however, have strong relationships between school staff and clients.
5.	Erickson mentioned exceptions to the elements of school legitimacy where schools (not many) were successful without culturally responsive pedagogy or school connections to the community. Griggs' research concurs with Erickson. Morris mentions no such exceptions in his research of successful schools.
6.	Erickson's elements of the fundamental factors of school success were strongly displayed in Morris' research and partially displayed in Griggs' research.
7.	In Morris' research, the successful schools earned the status of legitimacy according to Erickson's definition. Griggs' test school had a status of legitimacy, but without strong consideration of the student cultural identity and interest.
8.	Erickson suggests for legitimacy to take place there must be a shift in the daily practices and symbolism from hegemonic to transformative. Morris' "Agency" assists in transforming the school culture and symbol systems through teacher stability, using the outside community to build a sense of school community, and helping the school build a reputation for meeting the schooling and social needs of the students. Griggs' research revealed strong teacher stability and school staff and client relationships. Griggs' research also showed strong community support, but the support was not from the community where the students lived.