

Leadership Development in High-Need Schools: A Case Study

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It is widely acknowledged that new standards and expectations at all levels—national, state, local—have shifted accountability for learning to the school level (Hess & Kelly, 2005; Roza et al., 2003). This, in turn, has dramatically altered principals' responsibilities, to the extent that districts now seek candidates with qualifications that are not always emphasized in conventional principal preparation programs (Hess & Kelly, 2005; Roza et al., 2003). School district administrators have long reported difficulty filling principal positions; this task has become even harder, especially in high-need communities. But one promising approach to expanding the pool of qualified candidates is for high-need schools to focus on teacher leadership development.

One of the most significant changes in schools over the last 20 years has been the emergence of opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles in critical areas such as curriculum development, instruction, mentoring/coaching, and governance. A new and more effective pathway to the principalship is possible if on-the-job learning opportunities are systematically used to develop skills for leadership responsibilities specific to high-need schools. This approach builds leadership from within, and at the same time provides professional development relevant to the community's issues (Bo-

ris-Schacter & Langer, 2002; Browne-Ferrigno, 2007). To explore the effectiveness of this promising new pathway, this study investigates the culture and practices of one particularly successful school, where strong student achievement is matched by an impressive number of teachers assuming leadership positions in high-need schools. Given the continuing need to recruit principals in high need districts (U.S. Department of Education, 2008), this in-depth study provides valuable new insights about partnership work in conjunction with teacher leadership development in high-need communities.

Background

The National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER), in collaboration with the University of Washington Bothell, conducted a three-year (2005-2008) federally funded project to prepare future school leaders to work effectively in high-need communities. Participants were 43 teachers from partner schools (schools actively collaborating with universities) across the country.

Leaders for Teacher Preparing Schools (LTPS) was designed to build a *community of learners*. A collegial support network nurtured the aspiring leaders' commitment to serve their school communities and enhanced the skill development needed for early success in any school leadership role—in particular, for leading in partner schools in high-needs communities. For the teachers, all of whom were in principal licensure programs, the project supplemented existing programs with specific focus on the leadership demands of partner schools.

As part of the overall evaluation, a case study was conducted to learn about the value and role of partner schools in developing future school leaders. Benjamin Franklin Elementary in Newark, NJ, was selected as the subject of this study. Franklin is an exception to the kind of turnover afflicting most high-need schools. Teacher turnover has been minimal over the past six years; and the principal has remained at the school for over 12 years. With 62 instructional staff, Franklin lost just three teachers at the end the 2008-09 school year: one bilingual teacher retired for health reasons after 34 years, and two elementary certified teachers took maternity leave.

Over the course of the three-year LTPS project, five teachers from Franklin Elementary completed the program. Of these, three became principals or assistant principals, and one became a school psychologist. The fifth teacher accepted a central administration role in a neighboring district and returned to Franklin after one year to teach and pursue a leadership role. Three additional teachers from Franklin are enrolled in principal licensure programs.

The School

Benjamin Franklin School is a comprehensive K-4 school offering a rigorous program within a caring and nurturing environment. While engagement and respect define the social context of the school, Franklin also demonstrates strong commitment to academic achievement. Results on the New Jersey State assessments show continuous and steady improvement by Franklin students. Ten years ago 13% of fourth-grade students reached proficiency in literacy and 17% in math. In 2006-07 on the same assessments, 72% demonstrated proficiency in literacy and 68% in math. In 2007-08 the school achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) in all 41 sub-groups, with fourth graders achieving 87% proficiency in literacy and 83% proficiency in mathematics.

Located in a predominantly Hispanic community in Newark's north ward, Franklin houses one of the largest bilingual education and dual language programs in the district. It is the recipient of a Title VII, five-year Compensatory Education Grant for a dual-language program which helps to foster and maintain bilingualism/biculturalism for all of Franklin's students and meet the world languages component of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards. This program includes daily "two-way" immersion experience for K-1 students. In addition, the school provides a comprehensive bilingual and ESL program for second language learners.

Franklin is distinctive for other reasons. Franklin has five self-contained special education classes. Most of the time, the teachers and/or teacher aides work with students on an individual basis. One of the main thrusts at Franklin School is to bring technology into every classroom. It has a large computer lab with two full-

time computer teachers; and 17 classrooms are networked into the computer lab, allowing immediate Internet access. Franklin School co-sponsors an after-school program in conjunction with La Casa de Don Pedro, a community organization. Sixty students are eligible to attend this program. In addition, all third- and fourth-grade students are eligible to attend the ASK Academy which focuses on sophisticated test strategies aligned with state assessment content. A strong parent support network helps in classrooms and assists the school in implementing programs for improvement. Franklin views itself as an extension of the home; thus, the parent-home school connection is a cornerstone of its instructional program.

University Partnership. A unique factor contributing to the success of Franklin's current students and demonstrating lasting commitment to future students is the school's partnership with Montclair State University, the Partnership for Instructional Excellence and Quality (PIE-Q). Franklin and Montclair faculty and staff demonstrate exceptional collaboration to educate future teachers, while at the same time supporting them throughout the span of their teaching careers, which nurtures skill development and promotes the leadership necessary to create a community of learners. Working together, Franklin and Montclair develop programs and curricula for public school and university students, provide inclusive evaluation processes, and conduct inquiry into practice, at the same minding the practical matters required to make this complex partnership successful. Faculty in the Colleges of Education and Arts & Sciences support and learn from public school colleagues, and all work with preservice teachers to help their development.

Franklin hosts and mentors approximately 6-8 preservice teachers each semester. University students come to the school at various stages of their teacher preparation program. In addition, school and university traditional roles overlap and interactions between the two institutions support public school and university students, P-12 educators, and university faculty. Embedded in day-to-day collaborative practice, leadership development extends beyond the classroom, i.e., renewal of pre-service course work, teacher in-ser-

vice, events and interaction between mentor sites and the university, which benefit individuals and institutions. Particularly noteworthy is the emphasis on shared responsibilities, benefits, and equal roles for both partners.

Methodology

A case is typically understood to be “a bounded system,” as described by Stake (1995), who continues to differentiate the case from other units of study by describing it as “an integrated system... likely to be purposive” (p. 2). Further, case study methodology recognizes that a particular case may be unique and studied for those characteristics that contribute to its uniqueness and seeks to learn from these aspects of the system. Finally, fundamental to defining and conducting case study is the recognition that investigation of any phenomenon is conducted within the larger related context.

Site Visit

The case study is based on data collected during a three-day site visit to the school by the researcher. The visit was structured to learn about what cultivates the teacher development exhibited by the Franklin LTPS participants. That is, what aspects of the school culture contribute to the atypical number of teacher leaders who demonstrate sophisticated levels of competence in the multidimensional skills required of school leaders *and* show a strong disposition to lead? The visit included *interviews, informal interactions, artifact collection, participation in school activities, and observations*. Fundamentally, the study occurred at the confluence of the partnership—studying where and how the university and school missions come together.

Interviews: Nine on-site interviews ranging from 45 to 75 minutes were conducted with teachers, paraprofessionals, school and district-level administrators, university faculty, and university students. Teacher interviews included four of the LTPS participants and others aspiring to assume school leadership roles. Interviews were recorded and extensive notes taken. Over the period of time spent at the school, the interviewer engaged in conversations with

parents, other family members, elementary students, and school support staff.

Observations: Classrooms/School Activities. The researcher engaged in informal class visits and participated in school activities as part of data collection. These included observing the Vertical Team, English Language Learning sessions, various grade level classes, Art Back Pact, the Community Closet, a university-taught program, and team meetings. Interviews were recorded, notes taken throughout the visit, pictures were taken of displayed student work, and artifacts from the school and the neighborhood activities and services were collected.

Triangulation: Data from the interviews and observations were organized into analytic categories then interpreted. Conclusions were drawn by cross-checking the content with members of the groups from whom the data were originally obtained. Typically, this type of member checking is viewed as a technique for establishing the validity of an account or interpretation in qualitative research. Member checking was completed both formally and informally during the normal course of observation and conversation, consistent with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) member-check process. The interviewer asked clarifying questions and cross-checked summary notes for accuracy.

Trustworthiness: A draft of the case study was read by key members of the school community to assure that the content included is critical to the case's purpose as well as an accurate representation of the school. In this study, trustworthiness addressed whether or not the findings represent a "credible" conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants' original data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296), which provides a foundation for examination of transferability beyond the boundaries of the case. Trustworthiness was further established through repeated and varied data collection, seeking wide-ranging perspectives on the nature and effect of the school culture on teacher leadership. With similar themes emerging from multiple sources, there was increased confidence that they accurately described the school culture, were in fact trustworthy, or as noted by Johnson (1997), were "defensible."

Aspects of school culture may appear straightforward and transparent in a list; nonetheless, they are subtle and complex. As Kent Peterson (2009) observes:

School culture, as Terry Deal and I define it [in *The Shaping School Culture Fieldbook*, 2002], is kind of the underlining set of norms values, beliefs, rituals, and traditions that make up the unwritten rules of how to think, feel and act in an organization. Every organization has a conscious, predictable part of the rules and procedures and so forth, but the school's culture is often below the stream of consciousness and is really what affects how people interact in an organization. (<http://www.smallschoolsproject.org/PDFS/culture.pdf> retrieved April 5, 2010)

Culture of Leadership Development at Benjamin Franklin Elementary School

Collection and analysis of data yielded six themes demonstrating how a healthy and vital school culture can support individual leadership growth and success and contribute to overall development of a healthy community. These themes include: (1) opportunities for teacher leadership; (2) comprehensive support; (3) pervasive discussion of and agreement on values and goals; (4) multifaceted and ongoing communication about the work of core teaching and learning; (5) aligned, relevant, and abundant professional development; and (6) helping emerging leaders build professional networks.

Creating Opportunities for Teacher Leadership

A prominent characteristic of Franklin's program is the range and variety of opportunities that teachers have for assuming new responsibilities. Leadership development studies have shown for some time that such new responsibilities can serve as "developmental job assignments" that nurture skills, expand perspectives on the organization, and make results more visible (McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988; Wick, 1989).

Franklin teachers have opportunities to serve as clinical faculty at the university. And, as one participant noted, “Our relationships increase our impact and resources, open doors for new opportunities.” With multiple programs operating simultaneously, the need for communication and support is critical and evident as teachers have options to work in a vertical team, a dual language program, or traditional grade level configurations.

Teachers frequently used the word “empowered” when describing their own opportunities. One interviewee explained that there are ample opportunities to engage in school-wide leadership roles largely because the principal nurtures programs—she is quick to identify others as catalysts and leaders while ensuring that they have a web of support.

Regardless of where or with whom they began, programs that shape the inclusive school culture are plentiful and supported. Teacher leadership opportunities are embedded in a wide range of school programs and activities, including: the Classroom INQUIRY project, action research, PTO meetings, the Community Closet, PIE-Q, Thanksgiving baskets, parent breakfasts, and the Art Backpack program. In all cases, the activities expand and support the school’s academic mission. Outreach and communication with parents, support for families, and extended activities that motivate students all depend on teacher leadership to be effective.

In their interviews, teachers described leadership roles as challenging and new; people moved beyond their comfort zones to stretch and develop a wider range of leadership experience. For example, teachers who enjoy providing in-service for colleagues also had opportunities to meet with parent groups addressing external problems—a task that requires very different skills from facilitating a content-based in-service for peers. Growth is sustained through a complete circle of opportunity, feedback, reflection, and continual improvement.

Comprehensive support

Developmental job assignments provide a foundation for emerging leadership, but the support needed to succeed in these new roles

is equally important. For example, when immediate supervisors understand individual strengths, new assignments can be tailored to provide reasonable challenges. They can also encourage teachers to take risks associated with new responsibilities; offer frequent feedback on performance; and support a culture of collegial support for individuals assuming new roles (Barrett & Beeson, 2002).

When examined holistically, support as a factor in leadership development could be described as the taproot that nurtures the complex ecology of the school's culture. Interactive, reciprocal, and circular in nature, support is ubiquitous throughout the school. Thus, the following description derived from the interviews offers common ground for the variety of supportive contexts. Interviewees consistently made clear the reciprocal nature of support. Further, they described specific and detailed examples. These include receiving needed support ranging from a helping hand for a project to critical feedback on classroom strategies, a presentation, or a grant proposal. It is noteworthy that support is an overt expectation, that interviewees' awareness of the need to be supported and to support others and the school at-large was pervasive.

Critical Role of the Principal

In interviews and conversations, the principal repeatedly was identified as central to supporting teacher leadership development. Examples abound. The results included strong commitment to the school, raised awareness of strategies that serve all students well, and pervasive, effective professional growth. The principal encouraged and provided opportunities for teacher involvement in areas of interest, participation in professional organizations, district professional development, and university roles. As one interviewee observed, "It's never dull—activities focus on school needs and promote appreciation and positive energy, not fragmentation."

To support risk-taking required for leadership development — which many interviewees described as a key factor in shaping Franklin's vibrant work environment — the principal listens to innovative ideas from teachers, probing for details and implementation specifics. As one interviewee observed, "Whenever any of us

suggests something, has an idea we want to try, she poses questions that stretch our thinking, and these questions always seem to lead to richer concepts and successful implementation, not changing our ideas but making us think about them from all aspects and then moving forward with a thoughtful plan.”

The principal herself is always looking for opportunities to engage teachers with new ideas. Her efforts to make sure the teachers received information about the LTPS program and to encourage them to apply resulted in five participants and serves as a notable example of her advocacy for teacher leadership development. The principal takes initiative to seek out and communicate possible resources that add value to the work at Franklin and align with its mission and goals. By actively and continually searching, being on the alert for possible funding opportunities, the principal continually expands school resources to support teacher development and classroom work. While the daily demands of leading an urban-centered school are immense, seeking and encouraging the use of external funds is an ongoing part of the principal’s leadership. On the lookout for professional development opportunities that match teacher interest and needs, she finds ways to include teachers in these opportunities whether they are nearby or require travel. One teacher reflected, “She guides us, her door’s always open, we feel appreciated, she reaches out to other schools, the district, connects us with the larger school community, she helps us build skills and has confidence in us, trusts our competence and we follow-through because of the trust.”

An important characteristic of the principal is her successful balance of delegation and support. As noted in the interviews, teachers’ ideas are sought when there are problems or issues at the school—from lunchroom procedures to improving results on the state assessments. And critical to professional growth, when ideas are sought, they are given serious and respectful consideration. One teacher noted that conversations on possible changes or solutions to emerging problems “include shared knowledge so that everyone can learn and be successful. And she (the principal) seeks multiple solutions and/or ideas. And the bottom line is that we are all accountable for

good decisions and good follow-through. Feedback disagreement doesn't escalate because we are in constant conversation."

In relation to the comprehensive culture of support, it was noted by faculty and university colleagues that faculty support one another and feel supported and respected by university colleagues. The supportive school culture is also evident beyond the school staff. Parents and other family members come and go throughout the day visiting, observing, volunteering, bringing children to school, stopping to talk to staff, attending classes, meetings, or social events, and working with teachers to support the children's learning and school experiences. Support, multifaceted and deeply embedded, is at the core of leadership development at Franklin.

Pervasive discussion of and actions that align with goals and values

One of the first critical tasks facing principals and other school leaders is to develop a shared school mission and a vision that fully engages and motivates staff, students, and families (Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2006). The ability to lead conversations about organizational purposes and values is central to this leadership responsibility (Bellamy, Fulmer, Murphy, & Muth, 2007).

At Franklin, understanding of and support for the school's academic goals and values prevails. School and university partners meet regularly to ensure continued alignment and implementation of goals. As a result, social and professional activities are developed with assurance of underlying agreement on the school's purpose and alignment of activities with that purpose.

Values are best defined through day-to-day interactions within a school community. At Franklin, the culture is inclusive and consciously so; "family" was often used to describe school interactions. Interviewees said that they felt accepted and at the same time encouraged to be the best they can be. Franklin staff members noted the frequency of celebrations for personal milestones and accomplishments, including engagements, weddings, birthdays, advance program completion, and births. Additionally, the school regularly sponsors and co-sponsors with other community groups dinners,

breakfasts, and other gatherings for the whole community. One interviewee noted that everyone knows each other by name. It was common to hear teachers greeting students and volunteers in the hall, stopping to talk to parents and caregivers, asking about family and events. People “pitch in” as one person pointed out, making school-wide endeavors truly collaborative. For example, teachers make time to organize Community Closet.

Some background on the Community Closet further illustrates how the school functions as family. The project began when Montclair State University students observed that many Franklin students needed winter coats; many came to school in coats too small or worn out, and also lacked other winter items such as mittens, socks, and scarves. In response, the Montclair students designed their community service assignment to address this concern. Begun as a course assignment, the project—thoughtfully and inclusively developed—was so successful that it is now an integral and anticipated school activity where school, university, and broader community members contribute to a much expanded clothing distribution process. The “closet” includes a generous supply of new and well cared-for used clothing for adults, children, and infants. The university, as this event illustrates, has become an integral part of the Franklin family and contributes to the depth and richness of the school’s services.

The school’s goals and values, as observed in informal, social, and formal contexts, also guide the school’s classroom practices. Consistency of social and academic expectations is a strong indicator of commitment to a set of goals and values that promote those goals. At Franklin, conversations throughout the school focused on students’ academic and social well-being. From observations, conversations, and interactions with students, the researcher noted that throughout the school teachers attend to students’ ongoing and changing academic, social, emotional, and safety needs; serve as stewards of the immediate environment by meeting complex system requirements; *and* contribute to the larger school community.

Teachers explained that their desire to lead on a school-wide level was in part motivated by their experiences working with other teachers and the larger school community to ensure that students

are at the center of all school decisions. Franklin's true student-centered culture was an important factor identified by teachers as key to their loyalty to the school. They emphasized the school-wide options for students and understanding that the best approaches to learning are found in a collegial environment rather than in isolated, closed-door classrooms. Summarizing this, one interviewee said, "Kids are central, and all of us, including the university partners, know all the kids." Teaching is "transparent," so accountability is clear and shared.

Multifaceted and ongoing communication about the core work of teaching and learning

Ability to provide leadership for the school's instructional program has long been identified as important to principal development. This ability has received even greater attention as schools strive to meet current accountability demands (Elmore, 2000; Halverson, Grigg, Prichett, & Thomas, 2007). Research on how principals influence learning emphasizes the importance of instructional knowledge and leadership (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). This extends well beyond traditional models of supervision and evaluation to include using knowledge of instruction to select and support teacher instructional leaders, create structures in which teachers share instructional expertise, and align instruction with curriculum goals (Portin et al., 2009). While such leadership requires broad knowledge of teaching and learning, it also depends on a well-practiced ability to discuss issues of teaching and learning with others in the school.

While good communication is the foundation of a healthy school culture, multifaceted and effective communication at Franklin warrants comment. Looking below the surface at the channels of communication reveals many facets—verbal, written, electronic, informal, and individual communication—all of which interconnect to form the infrastructure of the school culture.

At Franklin, interviewees repeatedly identified communication from and with the principal as the bedrock for the positive school culture. Not only is her door literally always open, her open-mind-

edness promotes new ideas and encourages people to grow and learn. People described conversations with the principal as grounded in thoughtful deliberation. “She supports ideas, no matter how risky, that benefit students, and she always asks probing questions to be sure we have thought through the idea thoroughly. After several conversations and more exploration, the original idea is always better, stronger and positioned to succeed.”

The mark of quality communication is trust. It was repeatedly observed that trust prevails throughout the school. Critical to the school’s mission, the university partner relationship is founded on trust built over time, and that trust continues to get stronger, making it possible to have candid conversations. As one respondent noted, the long-term university presence and student teaching seminar held on the school campus have led to “honest, no-secrets, gut-level conversations, and these lead to improvements.” Trust borne of experience was viewed as key to the honest and constructive interactions that contribute to growth for Franklin students and teachers and their university partners.

Aligned, relevant, and abundant professional development

More formal learning experiences are an important supplement to the on-the-job leadership development that occurs through developmental job responsibilities. Well-designed programs can provide background knowledge to help emerging leaders understand new challenges and diagnose organizational conditions, practice new skills, and support enculturation into the organization and profession (Day, 2001).

Franklin interviewees offered wide-ranging examples of personal growth opportunities; professional development tailored to their career paths expanded their leadership roles and enhanced their classroom practice. Groups and individuals received support and encouragement to attend workshops and summer sessions that provided background for their instructional practices and class and grade-level configurations. They noted that in-school follow-up and ongoing support for their learning communities promoted a “culture of improvements.”

Much further reaching than the traditional or formal model of professional development, teachers said that they were encouraged to reach beyond the typical venues for growth. Examples of such expanded leadership experiences include writing school plans and grant applications, leading funded grant projects, initiating class activities (in and out of school), and leading PTO meetings.

In short, versatile and individually tailored professional development continues to encourage individual initiative, stewardship beyond the classroom, and reflection on effective classroom performance. Effective professional development is clearly interwoven with support and focus on students. Two areas of connection—PIE-Q and the shared values and goals—ensure that professional development maintains and supports teacher leadership, while keeping students at the center of the work. The partnership was viewed as serving a vital role in providing a more comprehensive range of professional development leadership options than would occur without the relationship with the university. And at the same time, it was emphasized that the shared values—within the school and with the university—ensured that, while many options for leadership development were readily available, those options were aligned in purpose.

Helping Emerging Leaders Build Professional Networks

Literature on social networks and social capital emphasizes the importance of a wide base of relationships for effective leadership and influence. In particular, individuals who can connect their colleagues with different groups and new sources of information are in stronger positions to influence decisions and actions (Burt, 2000).

The partnership structure described earlier offers many ways for teachers to expand their professional networks—across grade levels; with university faculty and students, with community groups; with community social services; and with district staff. This structure was cited as the core contributor to professional development. The added dimension of university collaboration was seen as strengthening the separate aspects of the school's work and culture. Significantly, the university and school philosophies are aligned, resulting

in opportunities to work across the boundaries of the institutions. The student teacher seminar is taught on-site allowing teachers, parents, and administrators to meet with the students. As one interviewee said, “Thinking about the school in relation to student-teachers’ needs and reflecting on the school’s purpose and organization, in general, broadens understanding of the total school culture.” As an example, Franklin staff work with parents as partners in preparing student teachers to be successful members of the school culture. School staff have become authentic clinical faculty for the university; experienced and new teachers conduct seminar sessions; all have leadership opportunities—learning from and with one another. Ongoing and nurtured relationships with university colleagues result in deeper and more productive conversations about all aspects of schooling. They also encourage innovative classroom practices; allow challenges and frustrations with specific classroom situations to be addressed from multiple perspectives; and lead to changes in university course content based on input from school personnel.

Cross-institutional collegial conversations provide a critical teacher leadership development opportunity. Participation in PIE-Q activities where problems are solved, structures are examined and changed adds breadth to school leadership experiences. Interaction that addresses the sometimes competing demands of two institutions is not often available to public school teachers. This expanded leadership development was repeatedly noted by teachers as critical to their administration preparation. They noted that school leaders are expected to work across many boundaries. They noted that learning to look at situations from others’ perspectives enhanced their ability to understand that problems and solutions are complex and require careful attention to all points of view. Several interviewees said that these experiences helped them also to work within the school community, improving their communication and collaboration with parents and other faculty members.

Teacher candidates expect to have high quality experiences in the school, i.e., experiences that would advance their skills beyond the traditional student teaching model. This presses teachers to examine their practices, ensuring that quality learning and mentoring

are occurring at all times. The principal taught in a partner school prior to becoming Franklin's principal, and as a result understands the work and workload from multiple perspectives. This long tenure with partner schools contributes to the school-wide commitment to nurture future teachers.

Living a Culture of Leadership Development

While at the school, the interviewer saw the Community Closet, described earlier, in action. One of many noteworthy activities in the school partnership, it serves to describe the school as an integrated and purposeful system. It has since become an annual school and community event.

Weeks before the actual event, the school and larger community set preparation plans in motion. Churches, other community agencies, Franklin, and Montclair State University colleagues gather clothes and shoes for all ages, and other articles for infants and children—all in good condition, neat and clean. On Community Closet day, the gym, converted into a welcoming “shopping” area, with coats, dresses, blouses, and jackets displayed neatly on hangers and sorted by size and gender, comes to life. Shopping bags are provided. Some school community members are encouraged to come early to get needed apparel; paraprofessionals and teachers bring students to shop. Once the Closet officially opens, the eager shoppers try on boots and coats, smile at the new purse and bright pink head-bands they tuck into shopping bags. There is much joy in finding the perfect boots or mittens and scarf for the Newark winters. Franklin staff help and greet the shoppers, offering to drive a grandmother home with her bags of needed clothing. People are encouraged to take what they need; there are no limits. Staff and community participants engage in conversation about family and life events confirming deep connections far wider than the usual school-based conversations about student performance.

At the end of the day, Franklin staff are tired and energized at the same time; they recount the many positive conversations and the perfect finds that people celebrated. They reflect on the smiles and words of appreciation. They also continue to work, taking down

the tables and racks, returning them to rental agencies, cleaning up, and pitching in. The long-view effect of this event is impossible to measure; but as children arrive the next day wearing new clothes and warm coats, smiling while accepting compliments on their new apparel, and parents and caregivers stop by to say thanks, the boundaries between school and community are quickly blurred. The event and its spirit are integral to the school culture, illustrating the deep and reciprocal nature of the Franklin partnership and, in particular, the enduring collegial relationship with Montclair State University. This, as with other community engagement efforts, is not seen as an added responsibility but as embedded into the daily business and events of the partner school.

All six leadership development themes identified in the Franklin case study are evident in this one activity. Teachers take the opportunity to provide leadership for various aspects of the event, working students, families, interns, and other teachers to ensure focus and coordination. The energy underlying the activity shows the clear commitment to shared values among teachers and the way those values are enacted in communication and collaboration about the event. While clothes are the immediate focus, there is no question that student well-being and learning are the underlying goals. The activity brings university, community, and school members together in different groups and relationships than occurs in the normal school day, and this helps participants build expanded networks for support. To understand Franklin's culture of leadership, imagine how teachers' opportunities continue to expand as similar strategies are used across all of the school's work.

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