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COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM: A STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK PROGRAM IN TEXAS

by

KIMBERLY M. IRVING-CONAWAY, BA, MA

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the University of the Incarnate Word
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD

August 2015

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COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM: A STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK PROGRAM IN TEXAS

Kimberly M. Irving-Conaway

University of the Incarnate Word, 2015

This mixed methods, sequential explanatory research study evaluated the effectiveness of a comprehensive school reform program titled High Schools That Work (HSTW). High schools were tasked with having students meet passing standards on high-stakes assessments or face sanctions. This study was necessary because, as Herman et al. (2008) said, “unfortunately, the research base on effective strategies for quickly turning around low-performing schools is sparse” (p. 4). Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to determine if schools improved after the HSTW program was implemented.

First, Academic Excellence Indicator System reports on Texas HSTW program schools were downloaded from the Texas Education Agency’s website. At least 3 consecutive years of data from 2005–2012 was needed. Demographic and performance data were used to determine which schools to include. Second, administrator and teacher surveys were distributed online to participants. Third, a basic interpretive and descriptive qualitative study was conducted in which 5 administrators were interviewed regarding HSTW experiences. Data from all 3 sources were linked and conclusions were drawn about HSTW implementation and its impact on students’ academic performance.

Results from the study yielded positive results for the HSTW program. On average, 10th-grade students’ academic performance improved in the areas of English language arts (ELA) and

mathematics for all students and for subpopulations in Year 5 after implementation. Limited English proficient and economically disadvantaged subpopulations' scores improved, but the special education subpopulation demonstrated the greatest increase.

6 of 10 HSTW key components assessed from surveying administrators and teachers included guidance, keeping score, teachers working together, academic studies, program of study, work-based learning, and students actively engaged. Administrators, teachers, and parents were committed to implementing HSTW. High levels of collaboration with peers and tri-level support (school administrators, district administrators, and HSTW staff) resulted in increased buy-in.

5 administrators were interviewed and the following themes emerged: implementation, support for implementation, change culture, structure and preplanning, monitoring and feedback, and data gathering. 4 of 5 administrators had positive experiences with implementing HSTW. Responses from interviews were similar to survey responses indicating that a high level of support and collaboration was instrumental in program effectiveness.

Connecting themes revealed convergent patterns that emerged from collecting multiple forms of data. Results suggested that HSTW was an effective comprehensive school reform when implemented with fidelity. HSTW was most successful in closing achievement gaps between special education students' average assessment scores and *all* students' scores. Administrators and teachers collaborated and received tri-level support creating experiences that led to commitment to the program. Relationships fostered buy-in to implementing the program, inevitably leading to program success. Replicating the current study is feasible for evaluating the effectiveness of other Comprehensive School Reform programs.

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Chapter 1: Education Reform Efforts

The foundation of U.S. society was built on the belief that equality was not possible without education. There persisted an underlying American perspective that education was paramount in sustaining our economy. The importance of education can be traced back to the United States' inception. The founding fathers viewed the role of education as a prerequisite for growth into an independent nation. The value of education was instilled in U.S. society as an underlying perspective that education was extremely important. Today, global competition creates an even stronger need to better educate our students.

Context of the Study

School reform efforts have been a topic of debate since formal education began. During the 1960s and 1970s, the United States underwent important political reform as the nation concentrated on the problem of educating all people in a country claiming "liberty and justice for all" but with a strong history of prejudice and racism. Historically, the United States had found it important to educate only white children. As times have changed, the political agenda for education has grown to encompass educating children of all ethnicities. In the 1960s and 1970s, the federal government enacted programs and policies to improve educational equity for minority children, poor children, children with disabilities, children with limited English proficiency, and girls. President Lyndon Baines Johnson implemented the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (Public Law 89-10, April 11, 1965) to address the problem of educational attainment for all the nation's children.

The ESEA of 1965 ushered in the federal government's official role in public education. Enacted as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, this act prioritized closing the achievement gap between ethnic groups by providing resources to increase equity and excellence

in education. The ESEA of 1965 was enacted to ensure that children living in poverty in our nation were afforded an education equivalent to those of students who were not impoverished. Billions of dollars for public education were distributed to states to provide for schools with high numbers of economically disadvantaged students. Programs sprang up during the 1970s to offer students of various backgrounds and multiple interests opportunities to attend nontraditional programs such as magnet and charter schools.

Title I schools. Under the ESEA of 1965, the Title I Act was established as funding for districts in high needs, impoverished areas. Being identified as a Title I school meant that a school with a poverty rate above 40% could receive federal funding to assist students. Title I funds were provided to schools that participated in the Title I program. These schools were provided with funds to begin initiatives that would help support students to ensure that schools met rigorous federally mandated academic standards. Some examples of expenditures include before and after school programs, pre-kindergarten programs, and free and reduced lunch programs.

All schools had to meet accountability standards, but those schools that were part of the Title I program and used Title I funds faced sanctions if they did not maintain the passing standards. Schools identified as Title I schools with high enrollments of impoverished students had to have interventions in place to ensure that diverse groups' needs were met.

Data gathered from the 2012 EdFacts State Profile provided information about characteristics of public schools in Texas for a three year period. This document profiled comparisons from school years 2008–2009, 2009–2010, and 2010–2011. During 2010–2011, there were 1,239 school districts and 8,551 public schools. Of that total number of schools, 5,979 were Title I, economically disadvantaged schools. During the same school year, 4,935,715

students were enrolled in school. Of that enrollment, 31% were White, 13% were Black, 50% were Hispanic, and 3% were Asian Pacific Islander. Of all students enrolled during 2010–2011, 50% were economically disadvantaged.

A nation at risk. Multiple reauthorizations of the ESEA of 1965 have occurred since its first enactment. *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* department of is a 1983 report of President Ronald Reagan’s Commission on Excellence in Education. The report highlighted failing schools and the United States’ struggle to maintain a leading position among other nations. Richard Elmore, author and professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, commented on the impact the report had on the nation. “*A Nation at Risk* did legitimize an already growing political movement that had begun in southern and border states, like Florida, South Carolina, and Kentucky, and in time, gradually spread to virtually every other state” (Elmore, 2004, p. 214). *A Nation at Risk* enlightened U.S. citizens on the condition of education in this country. The report discussed the need to improve education for all students.

All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 8)

No Child Left Behind Act. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, a reauthorization of the ESEA of 1965, used standards based education reform measures to hold states, districts, and schools accountable for student learning. Former President George W. Bush commented on the necessity of the NCLB Act explaining the need to be responsive to better educating students.

We must address the low standing of America’s test scores amongst industrialized nations in mathematics and science. . . . We must focus the spending of federal tax dollars on things that work. Too often, we have spent without regard for results. (NCLB, 2001).

To receive Title I federal education funding under NCLB provisions, states had to develop assessments to measure student performance gains. Texas developed the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) which served as the state mandated test from 2003 to 2012. Between 2012 and 2014, the TAKS was entirely phased out and replaced by the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness.

The country has undergone rapid educational change to satisfy the NCLB Act mandate. All groups of students in all schools were to meet 100% proficiency on state standards by February 13, 2014. This well-intentioned goal was a bit ambitious considering the struggle the country has had with aligning multiple states' standards to get an accurate account of how students' performed nationally (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

Research Problem

Too many school reform options create a problem for school leaders who are seeking research-based reform programs that are proven to work. Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) programs were developed to help low-performing schools overcome some of the most common obstacles to effective school reform. The CSR programs require that schools focus their reform efforts on the entire school, rather than implementing isolated, piecemeal programs. CSR requires that schools use comprehensive school improvement programs that are proven effective by scientifically-based research. CSR requires that these programs provide schools with support and training for all stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, parents, and school staff. CSR is a lucrative business as millions of dollars in state and federal grant funding are made available to low-performing, Title I schools. The lack of quality and support creates a problem for implementing and sustaining systemic reform.

To improve low-performing schools, school reform programs arose to offer various approaches to assist academically unacceptable schools. According to Frederick M. Hess (2010) the “default response has been decades of frenzied tinkering. The result is a wealth of clumsy, half-baked reform proposals that ask schools to do the same thing they’ve always done, except to do more of it and do it better” (p. 1). Proponents of these reform programs made great claims of their abilities to improve students’ academic performance, but there was a lack of evaluative research to support the claims. Herman et al. (2008) said that studies to evaluate the systemic impact of a comprehensive reform effort were rare.

Unfortunately, the research base on effective strategies for quickly turning around low-performing schools is sparse. The panel did not find any empirical studies that reached the rigor necessary to determine that specific turnaround practices produce significantly better academic outcomes (Herman et al. 2008, p. 4).

Monitoring and evaluation tools that provided feedback on the quality of school reforms had been informal.

Past studies on CSR programs supported that some actually do work if implemented properly. These studies featured various topics that fit under the umbrella of school reform. School reform studies were all encompassing, ranging from a very general and broad array of issues to very specific ones. “Despite the many studies on individual reforms, there is no clear research-based consensus on the most effective emphasis for reform initiatives targeting historically underserved students” (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 286). The evaluative piece of monitoring the results or impact of CSR programs implemented at low performing schools had been limited.

The need for CSR is evidenced by the number of failing schools and the amount of funds provided for school turnaround. Because Title I schools are provided with funding, oftentimes, these schools have the resources but have not invested time in researching appropriate and effective programs. Local leaders who are dealing with the daily tasks of running schools need support in choosing, implementing, and sustaining reform.

Even though available literature on school reform is not lacking, the vast quantity and broad scope of information makes it difficult for one to determine what is needed and what is not needed to implement effective education change. Mentally stressed school leaders who face a myriad of sanctions including school closure may have difficulty sorting through school reform programs to eliminate those that boast false positives. To prevent a school from receiving even more sanctions for not making AYP, school leaders look for immediate solutions. “When the quick fixes fail to work as advertised, both the solution and the underlying insights are written off amidst the backlash, and would-be reformers rush off in another direction to identify a new flavor of the month” (Hess, 2010, p. 29). School leaders are looking for packaged and proven remedies to fix low performing schools quickly. Moreover, school leaders grapple with finding monitoring tools that provide feedback on the performance of new or ongoing initiatives.

Desperate school leaders are looking for concise directions to implement immediately and begin tomorrow to change their schools. An in-depth analysis of one CSR program at a time may be necessary to get to the nature of what matters for school improvement to take place.

High Schools That Work. High Schools That Work (HSTW) was developed in 1987 by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). SREB is a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization comprised of sixteen governors and legislatures. The board works with education agencies to inform and promote policies that support student achievement. HSTW is the nation’s

largest school improvement initiative. It was designed as a premiere program to increase academic performance of career-bound students. Its core belief is that most students can master the rigorous content necessary to attain career and technology skills if supported by an environment in which teachers and school leaders believe in the students.

HSTW was initially only popular among southern states, but by 2002, more than 1,000 schools from 26 states were using the program. The program objectives are to integrate advanced mathematics, English, and science into vocational track programs.

Schools that invest in HSTW have to be flexible enough to implement the systemic reform that the program offers. District and school administrators must share a common vision and commit to integrating key components of HSTW into their schools. HSTW program designers believe that with their continual guidance and support, schools that implement this program with fidelity will succeed. An HSTW assessment published by Educational Testing Service, drawn from a battery of tests from the National Assessment of Education Progress, is used by HSTW schools to gather evidence of the impact of this program on participating schools.

Texas has had schools participating in HSTW since its inception in 1987 when only 28 schools across 13 states were part of the consortium. Based on 2012 data from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), over 150 schools in Texas have used HSTW since the program began. In 2005, the TEA and SREB partnered to implement the enhanced design of the HSTW reform program. Between 2005 and 2010 about 50 schools in Texas joined using the enhanced program. With the enhanced program, TEA grant funding was made available along with a full time HSTW state coordinator. The state coordinator, housed at Education Service Center Region XIII in Austin, served as a liaison between schools or districts and the HSTW organization. Schools in the current study are all a part of the HSTW enhanced design.

Why High Schools That Work? The American Institute for Research (1999) reviewed 24 of the nation's CSR programs. "Of the 24 models assessed by AIR, three demonstrated strong evidence of 'positive effects' on student achievement—Direct Instruction, High Schools that Work, and Success for All; (*sic*) showed promising effects, and the other 16 had little impact" (Fullan, 2009, p. 105). HSTW has been evaluated as an effective CSR that improves student achievement. Case studies published by SREB have been written on successful HSTW schools, but no case studies were available on HSTW schools that showed or discussed unsuccessful results.

The researcher used judgment in selecting HSTW based on a large, one-time study conducted by the Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (2006) to rate the quality of reform programs. HSTW appealed to this researcher because of the accessible literature about the program, the reputability with organization affiliation, and the existence of case study and organization assessment results. HSTW provided a frame of reference for this researcher to review a reform that was an original CSR program. Results were analyzed to further generalize methods that can be used when evaluating other CSR effectiveness.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to compare academic performance data at HSTW schools before and after implementation, while taking into consideration the level of perceived fidelity to which HSTW had been implemented.

Research Questions

The current study was guided by the following research questions: Research Question (RQ1) What is the difference in academic performance of schools before and after HSTW was implemented? (RQ2) Was HSTW implemented with fidelity to the program? (RQ3) What are

district and campus administrators' perceptions of levels of teacher, district, and HSTW program support during HSTW implementation?

Research Design

The current study used a mixed methods sequential explanatory research design. Creswell (2007) stated that this method is “practical because individuals tend to solve problems using both numbers and words, they combine inductive and deductive thinking, and they employ skills in observing people as well as recording behavior” (p. 10). Data were collected in several distinct phases to support an effective analysis at each stage. RQ1 was answered by reviewing Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports over a five year period. RQ2 was answered by surveying administrators and teachers. RQ3 was answered by interviewing administrators.

Predetermination for selecting the sample. Certain criteria were used to determine the eligibility of schools to be a part of the current study. A “predetermination for selecting the sample” stage was established to review reports from the SREB and from AEIS reports. SREB reports were used to identify a listing of Texas HSTW schools that had been implementing the program for at least three years. A timeframe from Fall 2005 to Spring 2012 was determined for when schools had begun implementing the HSTW enhanced model in 2005 to when assessment data for the TAKS for grades nine through 12 was recorded on AEIS reports. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) ratings were determined using data from 10th-grade students' performance on TAKS in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. The current study analyzed TAKS performance of Texas HSTW schools to determine the program effectiveness of HSTW. Once Texas HSTW schools had been identified from SREB report listings, AEIS reports were pulled to determine if schools had been rated as meeting or not meeting AYP. Schools that were newly opened were not rated. Schools were reviewed to determine enrollment numbers and were

categorized to consider the possibility for future comparison. These criteria had to be identified before moving on to Phase I in which AEIS reports were more thoroughly analyzed to answer the first research question regarding the results of academic performance of high schools before and after implementing HSTW.

Data collection in Phase I. Research Question 1, “What is the difference in academic performance of schools before and after HSTW had been implemented?” was answered using five AEIS reports gathered for 32 schools in the sample. AEIS reports for two years immediately before HSTW was implemented referred to Year 1 and Year 2, and then AEIS reports for the first three years of implementation referred to as Years 3, 4, and 5 of implementation, were downloaded. AEIS reports for Year 1 were downloaded for comparison with Year 5. These data from the five AEIS reports were recorded using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to manipulate and analyze data. This strategy for accessing reports was established to provide consistency from schools which had joined the HSTW program at different times during the Fall 2005 to Spring 2012 timeframe.

Data collection in Phase II. In Phase II, surveys were distributed to teachers and administrators who provided feedback on the effectiveness of HSTW. Separate teacher and administrator surveys were developed for the purposes of gathering information related to differing roles and capacities of the participants. During Phase II, Research Question 2, “Was HSTW implemented with fidelity to the program?” was answered.

Because AYP is determined by 10th grade ELA and mathematics scores on the TAKS tests, only ELA and mathematics teachers met the criteria to participate in the study. However, ELA and mathematics teachers from grades nine through 12 were included as vertical alignment of curriculum was a factor in how well students performed.

The sample for the study was narrowly determined to ensure that survey respondents provided feedback for the specified timeframe for each school. Administrators and teachers in the study had to be present during the time of implementation to provide insight into the effectiveness of HSTW. Surveys were collected only from teachers and administrators who were at least present during years four and five of the current study.

Data collection in Phase III. Phase III data collection was in the form of conducting administrator interviews. Research Question 3, “What are district and campus administrators’ perceptions of levels of teacher, district, and HSTW program support during HSTW implementation?” was answered. Interview questions were written to gather specific qualitative data not assessed by the surveys. Additional clarifying questions were formulated as a result of survey feedback. Only administrators participated in interviews. This decision was made as administrator level participants such as principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, HSTW liaisons, and district level personnel have the authority and responsibility for leading change that occurs at schools. The third research question about district and campus administrators’ perceptions of levels of administrator support during HSTW implementation was best answered by individuals at the administrator level who were the primary points of contact with firsthand information. Principals, instructional coaches, and district staff members participated in interviews for the current study.

Theoretical Perspective

HSTW was analyzed using the tenets of change theory as the framework. Michael Fullan is an educational researcher and former dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Michael Fullan’s complexity theory for educational change was the perspective used to consider if successful change had occurred as a result of HSTW.

Fullan's complexity theory on educational change is based on his belief that humans participating in the change process are also a part of that process. He believes that all participants have roles to play, and, if participants implement appropriate strategies, desired change will occur. Given that each participant is viewed as a change agent, Fullan believes that these individuals have the power to build coalitions with other change agents within and across multiple groups of a larger organization (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Fullan explains that there are four phases in the change process. The *initiation* phase, the *implementation* phase, the *continuation* phase, and the *outcome* phase are part of the cyclical process that leads to change.

During the initiation phase, change must be advocated by both administrators and teachers. External change agents must be available to support and advocate for change, as well. It is imperative to have access to quality innovations during this phase.

The second phase is implementation. At this stage, characteristics of change are identified. Local factors are comprised of the school district, school board, parents, teachers, and administrators; while external factors include the government and other agencies (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Characteristics of complexity theory include the need for change, the clarity of goals, the complexity in implementing change, and the quality and practicality of the change.

The third stage of change is the continuation phase, which requires decision makers to determine if the innovation is worthy. The innovation must be embedded practically, fit structurally into the organization, and be supported through policy. All key stakeholders must invest in the innovation and be committed to implementing and sustaining change.

Outcome, the last phase in Fullan's change process, involves reflecting on the previous three phases. District and school administrators and teachers must consider the results of the

practices and activities put in place to determine whether there is a need to continue or make adjustments. Change agents must be persistent and flexible to create positive results.

Significance

HSTW had previously been evaluated using a tool developed in a contractual relationship with an assessment publisher, Education Testing Services. The significance of the current study is that it used an evaluation tool that was external to the reform program. A more in-depth analysis of a nationally recognized reform program provided a model applicable to other reforms. Evaluating HSTW and providing results in a clear context and mode can help district and campus leaders make informed decisions.

A study of HSTW was important for several reasons. The research provided valuable insight into what low-performing schools that have persistently struggled with improvement could do to meet state academic standards. The current study highlighted goals and objectives of HSTW. Mixed methods used to evaluate this program served as a tool to evaluate other CSR. The current study provided an opportunity for school leaders to evaluate progress or effectiveness of the program at their campuses.

The research can help improve practice by providing an example of how to manage and monitor the change process. It can help programs reflect on interventions and activities that provided good results. Results from the current study can inform current policy and possibly create consideration for developing alternative CSR program monitoring systems. The current study may have shed light on the need for more bureaucratic control over expenditures from the federal and state level to districts and schools for CSR programs.

Limitations

Although the research was carefully structured, research limitations were unavoidable. Interviews have drawbacks because the researcher's views may have led to biased interpretations of responses. Because this researcher is a high school administrator who has had experiences with the process of reforming low-performing schools, the researcher might have drawn biased conclusions about school performance outcomes. For this reason, the researcher designed a specific set of questions used consistently for each interview to minimize the possibility of biased interpretations. Interviewees' interpretation of facts are often skewed by their schema. Another limitation of interviews is that interviewees were not equally articulate across different sites of the sample. Multiple interviews were conducted at different sites to counteract this possible issue.

A limitation of the current study comes from the use of convenience sampling to conduct a research study on Texas HSTW programs. Convenience sampling may lend itself to bias as participants may have given responses based on personal reasons, such as employee dissatisfaction. Also, data from a convenience sample cannot be extrapolated to the target population as the sample is typically not representative. However, relationships in the sample can be representative of relationships in the population.

Although shortcomings did exist regarding the design of the study, the mixed methods sequential explanatory research design had its benefits. This design approach was straightforward because phases were distinct, concise, and easy to describe. Interviewing may have had its limitations, but there were some benefits in using the interview strategy for data collection. Interviews can be convenient because they can be conducted in person or on the phone using available technology. Because the current study is based on past performance data,

possible memory loss may have posed a problem. Because Texas adopted a new state assessments beginning in 2012, data from two different tests would have yielded unreliable results for comparisons. Interview and survey respondents had to reflect on what they thought and felt about the first years of the HSTW enhanced design implementation after several years had passed. Interviewees can provide information for further justification. This was especially useful for clarifying what was meant when the interviewer was trying to understand what was not being clearly articulated by the interviewee.

Delimitations

The current study revolved around stipulations from NCLB guidelines regarding students' academic performance behavior. The current study confined itself to Texas high schools, grades nine through 12 which were members of the HSTW network. Schools that were researched in the current study had implemented the program beginning no earlier than the 2005–2006 school year and no later than 2009–2010 school year with at least five years of consecutive data. Because schools in the program vary widely in size, the current study evaluated schools with enrollment of at least 150 students. Schools were categorized by small, medium, and large enrollment. This research study utilized data from AEIS reports to gather TAKS, attendance, enrollment, and subpopulation information.

The current study delimited itself to Texas HSTW. A larger study would have necessitated a larger team of individuals to judiciously complete the task.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this research was to compare academic performance at HSTW schools before and after implementation, while taking into consideration the level of perceived fidelity to which HSTW had been implemented. This literature review provides detailed information about education transitions in history, educational change, accountability, CSR programs, and the HSTW program of study.

Education Transitions in History

Continual education reform for public schools has existed in the United States since the Colonial period in American history. Constant evaluation and reengineering of the curriculum and structure of K–12 education in the United States has led leaders, policymakers, and decision makers on a never-ending quest to perfect the country's school system.

According to Donald H. Parkerson and Jo Ann Parkerson (2001), authors of *Transitions in American History*, the United States has undergone two educational transitions (p. 2). These educational transitions came as a result of change in American society. The first educational transition is marked by the American Revolution (1765–1783) and the Market Revolution (1793–1860) in which the common school system flourished.

During the American Revolution (1765–1783), parochial schooling became less popular. American citizens recognized the value in teaching students about patriotism for American leaders believed that love of country was necessary to sustain the new government. Leaders also realized that students needed to be able to compete globally and that curriculum and instruction needed to be revised.

During the Market Revolution (1793–1860), the structure of schools and teachers' credentials were considered outdated and unscientific. The common school system was governed

by local committees and funded by local property taxes. This school system was offered only to white children and tuition was free. The common school system ended around 1900 because of the Civil War, an influx of immigrants, and diverse religious factions. The common school system was re-orchestrated to match the modern face of America.

The second education transition took place during the Urban Revolution, the Corporate Revolution, and Modernization. This education transition occurred as a result of mass migration of citizens from rural areas and European emigrants moved into American cities.

The Urban Revolution (1860–1900) is remembered as an era in which mass migration, liberty, and industrialization created an atmosphere of blending people of different cultures into one community. Teaching was predominantly a male profession until the advent of urbanization. As diverse and less affluent people populated cities, opportunities for women to become teachers increased. Women, who dominated the teaching profession in cities, held up to 90% of teaching roles during the urban revolution (Parkerson & Parkerson, 2001, p. 74).

During the Corporate Revolution (1900–c.1929), the grade school became a model of corporate America. The large population of diverse, school-aged children created a need for a hierarchical or corporate structure. A corporate structure provided a means for workers from around the United States to be managed through tiers of supervisors, middle managers, and executives. This infrastructure was established to maintain a school network necessary to educate millions of diverse school-aged children in the country.

During the era Modernization (1930s) an influx of intellectual thinkers altered the course of the education curriculum in the United States. Optimistic citizens viewed the future of America through rose-colored lenses. “Modernism can best be understood as an optimistic belief that all our problems (social, economic, political, medical, educational, etc.) could be solved

through the coordinated efforts of science, technology, and government” (Parkerson & Parkerson, 2001, p. 17). Through a highly constructed curriculum, students were educated in reading, writing, and arithmetic; but reforms in science education were also underway to ensure that the United States remained the international leader in education.

Education reforms in the 1950s and 1960s. Initial reforms to education in the United States began in the 1950s due primarily to science innovations produced by the Soviet Union. Elmore (2004) states that “What is most interesting about the progressive period, as compared with other periods of educational reform, is that its aims included explicit attempts to change pedagogy, coupled with a relatively strong intellectual and practical base” (p. 7). With the Soviet Union’s 1955 publication of the book *Soviet Professional Manpower*, their detonation of the hydrogen bomb, and their launching of a satellite named Sputnik into outer space, the United States was embarrassed for lagging behind. “One doesn’t have to believe that Sputnik was the literal cause of large-scale reform in the United States post-1957, or that all education innovation started in the 1960s to know that something very different was in the air” (Fullan, 2009, p. 102). The United States responded to the Soviet Union’s accomplishments with a renewed sense of nationalism. The failure to be first in space was the catalyst for a renewed emphasis on education reform in the sciences to regain lost ground. Global competition has been a common factor in school reform efforts in the United States ever since.

After this initial education reform movement, many efforts were geared toward implementation of new concepts to close the achievement gap between our nation and other nations. Each era for school reform defined specific criteria for student achievement. “The U.S. federal government launched a large-scale national curriculum reform series of initiatives in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s. Huge sums of money were poured into major curriculum

reforms” (Fullan, 2007, p. 5). The ultimate goal for the United States was to maintain first place in education among all nations.

Much of the curriculum and infrastructure of schooling had remained the same from the 1950s and 1960s. Major political movements during the 1950s and 1960s that stressed educating *all* children equitably were crucial. Concern grew regarding segregation of schools and unequal allocation of funds and resources. Landmark cases such as the *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*, in which the Supreme Court ruled that all laws establishing segregation in schools were unconstitutional, affected all children. Fullan (2007) pinpoints that to “the intrinsic complexity of changing one’s practice was added the enormous difficulty of tackling the existing power structure and overcoming the prejudice and ignorance of ethnic class, gender, and special differences of all kinds” (p. 6). Providing children of multiple ethnicities and diverse experiences the opportunities to succeed in school was a new concept for the United States.

Education reforms in the 1970s. Although the corporate structure of education had proven successful, conflicts among people because of socio-economic and cultural differences existed within the school system. Cultural and socio-economic diversity characterized an environment of people with differing morals and values, which inevitably led to problems with safety in our nation’s schools. In fact, many problems with crime and violence had begun with school-aged children, and many of the problems took place on or around school campuses. Kinsler and Gamble (2001) posit that schools “that contain a high proportion of students from low socio-economic statuses and ethnic backgrounds, where students come to school with little cultural capital, do poorly on standardized tests, and have high incidences of truancy, violence and role infractions” (p. 81). Education leaders responded to the exigencies that crime and violence manifest on school grounds by developing discipline alternative education programs.

These were operated as second-chance schools for students who were at risk of failure in academics and in life in general.

Supporters of school reform began to develop “schools within schools” and “magnet” schools as alternatives to the traditional school setting. “Schools within schools” are smaller learning communities that specialize in a particular academic area or a vocation within a larger school setting. Students are able to specialize in a subject area in which they have interest, such as business or health careers. A “magnet” school is an entire school that prepares students for college and careers in a particular industry and is recognized for veering students attending those schools in the direction of that career path. Today, schools within schools and magnet schools are still considered the norm. Other alternative schools known as schools without walls, multicultural schools, continuation schools, learning centers, and fundamental schools were developed during the 1970s (Lange & Sletten, 2002).

Legislation in support of education reform. The history of education reform can be chronicled along the continuum of reauthorizations of the ESEA of 1965. “Remarkably, the history of intensive educational change is little more than half a century old” (Fullan, 2007, p. 4). Figure 1 shows the timeline of reauthorizations to the ESEA of 1965.



Figure 1. ESEA of 1965 reauthorizations. The most notable reauthorizations are marked with an asterisk.

As an ESEA of 1965 reauthorization, the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981 was enacted during Ronald Reagan's administration. Chapter 1 of the ECIA pertains to providing funding to state and local education agencies for special education. Chapter 2 of the ECIA details program improvement in the areas of school curriculum, instructional programs, and staff professional development. Intentions of this act were to improve the education and availability of education to all students.

Education reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. During the 1980s, education reform was revisited with a renewed effort to hold schools accountable for student performance. The trend was toward *choice schools* where parents were able to choose the schools their children attended. "School choice can take many forms, including publicly funded vouchers for private school tuition, charter schools, tax credits to pay for private school tuition, and public school choice

programs” (Jennings, 2012, p. 4). United States efforts to improve student achievement had not changed much from the 1950s and 1960s. The national goal was educating students to become mathematicians and scientists in order to sustain our global leadership in these areas.

During the 1980s, the education agenda shifted towards large scale reform efforts. Schools that were struggling to educate children to become tomorrow’s leaders became a focal point for education change.

Growing concerns with the performance and accountability of school systems, marked in the United States in 1986 by a *Nation at Risk*, resulted in a set of state driven prescriptions for reform which can be accurately described as the “uniformed prescription” of the 1980s and beyond. (Fullan, 2003, p. 4)

The 1980s can be credited as the era in which a set of content based criteria was set, and students were tested for attainment of knowledge and skills taught at grade level. “Standards-based reform originated in the late 1980s [and early 1990s] when the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics wrote a set of national standards for mathematics” (Jennings, 2012, p. 5). All states developed standards as descriptors of what students would learn and teachers would teach at each grade level. Students would graduate having attained all the knowledge described in the standards from pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade.

Standards were developed such as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, a prescription for curriculum instruction for teachers about what students should learn. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards were developed in mathematics, science, social studies, ELA, fine arts, career and technical education, technology applications, and languages other than English. Students were required to take core area courses for course credit in high school in each of these areas. However, each state developed its own standards for student achievement which led to differences across states.

In the 1990s, education reform programs addressed large scale educational change. They were sometimes referred to as whole-school reform models. “Whole-school reform models [were] intended to provide proven school-wide innovations that would be adopted by schools in order to improve student achievement, especially among more disadvantaged and low-performing schools” (Fullan, 2007, p. 10). Education reform programs were developed for schools that were not meeting the academic needs of their students. State and federal requirements added pressure to schools to meet the state standards measured by state assessments. In response to efforts for school improvement, education reforms were developed that were research based, comprehensive, and met certain criteria to become approved CSR programs.

Change Theory

Several major theories exist to support methodological processes for change. Kurt Lewin first introduced the three-step change theory in 1951. Edgar Schein (1995) expanded upon Lewin’s change theory. Edgar Schein’s contributions to Lewin’s change theory mentioned unanimously and one cannot search for publications on Lewin without retrieving information on Schein. In 1958, Lippitt and colleagues were the first to expand upon Lewin’s change theory. In the mid-1970s, Albert Bandura introduced social cognitive theory which related behavioral change to environmental influences, personal factors, and behavior attributes. James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente introduced the transtheoretical model for change in 1977. Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen proposed their theory of reasoned action and planned behavior in 1985.

Social scientist Kurt Lewin (1951) introduced a change process that consisted of unfreezing-changing-refreezing behavior. More than 40 years later, Edgar Schein, (1995) became strongly aligned with Lewin’s change theory and expanded the method terming it

“cognitive redefinition.” Edgar Schein (1995) stated that individuals were in constant states of change. In this change process, behavior was determined by individuals’ previous observational learning experiences and cultural influences (Schein, 1995). Individuals’ perspectives were formed causing certain behavior related to their schema. Unfreezing ones previous beliefs or perspectives had to occur through disconfirmation in which present conditions created dissatisfaction or undesirable outcomes. Disconfirmation occurred when previously held beliefs seemed invalid, triggering survival anxiety that caused a person to make changes. Schein added to the theory that individuals’ reactions to disconfirmation spurred survival anxiety in which adjustments were made to new changes that achieved desired results. Survival anxiety had to outweigh learning anxiety which was resistance characterized as pain in unlearning old habits or beliefs to replace them with new ones. Once dissatisfaction outweighed satisfaction, unfreezing was completed, and identifying what needed to change had occurred. Several strategies to support change were what Schein termed “cognitive redefinition” in which new practices changed beliefs and behaviors. Cognitive redefinition allowed for individuals to form new perceptions based on purposeful experiences arranged to redefine beliefs. Once changes became habitual, refreezing occurred, and a new concept or habit was formed.

Lippitt (1958), Watson, and Westley expanded Lewin’s theory creating a seven step theory focusing more on the change agent’s role and responsibility. Lippitt and colleagues suggested that the change agent diagnoses the problem, takes the temperature on motivation and capacity for change, considers the change agent’s commitment and ability, sets action plans, clarifies the change agent’s role with the stakeholders, and campaigns for the change through multiple forms of communication.

Albert Bandura's 1970s social cognitive theory, similar to Lewin's theory, posited that behaviors were affected by environmental influences, personal factors, and behavior attributes (Robbins, 2003). In Robbins description, Bandura proposed that self-efficacy, the individuals' beliefs in their capability to perform an action followed up by an incentive to do so, was the primary factor for behavioral changes to occur. Like Lippit and colleagues suggested, Bandura (1986) stated that positive behavioral expectations had to outweigh the negative ones to produce desirable consequences. Bandura proposed that self-efficacy could be increased through clear instructions, opportunities for training, and models of attractive behavior (Robbins, 2003). Bandura further developed a process for training individuals to support a desired change through four processes: attention, retention, motor reproduction, and reinforcement. Essentially, individuals pay attention to change when they can relate to it and focus on the details. A high degree of retention is created when individuals can remember the characteristics of the model. Motor reproduction involves individuals putting into practice what they observed. Finally, reinforcement is done by rewarding the behavior with positive incentives (Bandura, 1986).

James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente's (1977) transtheoretical change model proposed that people processed through six stages of change (Prochaska, Johnson, and Lee, 1998). Individuals first contemplated the change before considering to make it. Individuals then contemplate change weighing both pros and cons. Individuals then begin the preparation stage of enacting the behavior. Individuals then practice the action working to maintain it without relapsing. Termination, the final and considered the most difficult stage to accomplish, occurred because the individual achieves one-hundred percent efficacy. Prochaska and DiClemente (1977) noted that individuals mostly spend their lifetime in the maintenance stage.

Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (1975) stated in their theory of planned behavior that an individual's intention to perform a behavior is determined by the performance of the behavior.

The individual must have a positive attitude about the change for it to occur and had to consider if peers' expectations were in favor of the change and if not, still proceed (Ajzen, 1991).

Fishbein and Ajzen's theory is similar to that of Bandura's in which strong self-efficacy in which an individual perceives that one has control over opportunities, resources, and skills was needed to perform the behavior.

Educational Change

Getting people to change thoughts and beliefs is much more difficult than it is to talk about what is needed for change. Change is a systemic process that must be supported from the top down and the bottom up. Fullan (2007) says that "Educational change is technically simple and socially complex" (p. 84). The idea and process of change is conceptually precise; however, getting to the heart of what makes individuals willing to support change has to be strategic.

Specific approaches must be taken to ensure that all stakeholders believe in the purpose for supporting a change. They must be willing to be active participants. "Change may come about either because it is imposed on us (by natural events or deliberate reform) or because we voluntarily participate in or even initiate change when we find dissatisfaction, inconsistency, or intolerability in our current situation" (Fullan, 2007, p. 22). Change in an organization requires each individual to act in ways that will create movement in a desired direction. It will take the actions of individuals collectively to support, implement, and sustain change successfully.

In struggling schools, leaders have overcome the challenge of changing existing practices and beliefs. Educators who have been in the profession for years sometimes believe that old dogmas work best. "Transforming existing schools is entirely different than creating them from

scratch. With existing schools, the change agent must help schools renegotiate both explicit and implicit rules and perceptions of reality” (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 28–29). Change agents, in this case principals, must get teachers in existing low-performing schools to support the vision and mission to create changes that address problems. Principals must recognize the difference between teachers complying with the rules and teachers who have truly shifted their beliefs.

Fullan on culture and beliefs. Changing culture and beliefs is important for change to occur. To change behaviors, people must share a belief that change is needed. When groups of people hold common beliefs, they develop shared practices and actions. Sometimes, those beliefs must be changed in order for practices to change. This is a cultural shift that a strategic leader must cultivate.

Fullan explained that it was important for individuals to think beyond themselves and their present arrangement by considering how the larger community is affected. He described how one should embed a shared vision to make everyone feel morally responsible during the change process in closing the achievement gaps, improving an entire district, and educating citizens in our nation. “If people believe they are doing something worthwhile of a higher order they may be willing to put in the extra sacrifices and effort” (Fullan, 2003, p. 35). Students, parents, and the community should be involved in this change process, as well.

Fullan defined the term “meaning writ large” to encompass beliefs held by individuals at the schools, districts, and states in which all individuals start to think about the big picture instead of their narrow schema. Gathering majority support for a change will create an atmosphere where everyone in the change process will be a contributor to changes in beliefs and behaviors. This theory does not support unanimous and uncritical agreement. Instead, it proposes that everyone have a shared vision, purpose, and desire to change in a common direction.

Fullan (2003) formed distinctions between a theory of education and a theory of change. He says that “A theory of education includes the substance of content and pedagogy” (p. 52) whereas “the theory of change, or action, concerns what policies, strategies and mechanisms are going to be used, in effect, to implement the theory of education” (Fullan, 2003, p. 53). Education theory relies on change theory to implement the new practices of content and pedagogy. Education research is based on scientific theories that support student achievement. “Neglect of the phenomenology of change—that is, how people actually experience change as distinct from how it might have been intended—is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most social reforms” (Fullan, 2007, p. 8). Fullan’s complexity theory describes how change occurs in education settings.

Fullan’s Complexity Theory. Fullan referred to his theory of education and change as complexity theory or chaos theory. His theory is complex because it involves interactions and processes that work in conjunction and lead to change. Complexity theory has two principles: the principle of correlation and the principle of auto-catalysis. “*Correlation* is what happens when individuals increase their interaction and exert greater influence over one another creating new convergent patterns; *auto-catalysis* is when the behavior of one system stimulates certain behaviors in another system that, in turn, stimulates another.” (Fullan, 2003, p. 40). The theme of these two principles is that people who frequently work together will develop similar habits that dominate their interactions. When coworkers or peers start to interact across systems, their shared habits and behavior may become the norm causing a cycle of correlating interactions that effect broader systems. Habits can be taught, and a strong education leader who develops healthy habits among faculty and staff can have a direct and positive impact on instruction.

Besides attempting multiple approaches for organizational improvement, complexity theory requires that governing agencies work in alignment. Fullan said that it is with theoretical certainty that we “need *systems* (schools, districts, states) operating in interaction over time where they influence and learn from each other, improving their capacity not to panic in the face of disorder while they periodically consolidate the gains of new patterned breakthroughs” (Fullan, 2003, p. 51). Some schools have adopted education reforms that include guidelines and procedures that are in conflict with expectations from the school district. The school, district, and state working as partners for school improvement is what Fullan calls the tri-level argument for successful educational change. “The tri-level argument is that educational transformation will require changes (new capabilities) within each of the three levels and across their relationships” (Fullan, 2003, p. 39). Communication across the tri-level structure of the school’s organization leads to clarity and greater transparency among the leaders. Fullan’s tri-level of support allowed for needed reforms to be far reaching with longer lasting effects. He believes that change is easier from the top down. Principals must garner the support of other leaders both locally and externally to change policies or actions that will transform schools.

Leadership for change and the change process. Common beliefs surfaced about the best approaches to facilitate educational change. Berman and McLaughlin, (1977) and Huberman and Miles (1984) wrote that change evolves through processes of initiation, implementation, and continuation.

Initiation of change begins with a leader who determines that change needs to occur. The leader then shares his or her vision with all stakeholders. During the implementation process, activities planned during the initiation process are practiced, monitored, and evaluated for quality and efficacy. Members determine the worth of a change during the continuation process. This

process for change seems rather simplistic, but the work that must go into changing a cultures beliefs and practices is more difficult when those stakeholders disagree with the proposed change or do not want to invest in it.

Accountability

“Accountability mechanisms are literally, the variety of formal and informal ways by which people in schools give an account of their actions to someone in a position of formal authority, inside or outside the school” (Elmore, 2004, p. 140). In the public education system, an accountability hierarchy exists. In Texas, public school governing agencies reside at the federal level, state level, district level, the school board, and the school, in that order.

The federal government has a moral and economic responsibility to address these low-performing high schools and has a role to play in bringing about school transformation through a well-designed accountability and improvement system. This requires encouraging the implementation of research-supported school improvement approaches that will yield significant change in schools experiencing real challenges. (Tucci, 2009, p. 2)

Accountability mechanisms exist to ensure that education policies are expressed with fidelity and that practices are exercised as intended by governing bodies. Teachers and administrators in the education profession must comply with policies and procedures to ensure that students are mastering skills necessary to become successful in college and in their careers. Schools and districts are responsible for preparing all students to become successful on state assessments that assess mastery of content necessary to graduate. Accountability for actions is necessary when implementing change. Change must be cultivated and monitored to sustain it in a school system.

Accountability in education reform. “Pressure for increased school accountability is a distinctive hallmark of the present period of educational reform” (Elmore, 2004, p. 134). The

NCLB Act of 2001 legislated accountability measures used to ensure that districts and schools follow laws outlined in the education code.

The reauthorization of the ESEA of 1965 has increasingly included diverse groups of students to ensure that gaps are closed between majority and minority subpopulations academic performance on standardized tests. “By and large, governments are becoming more insistent about the nature and accountability of educational reforms” (Fullan, 2007, p. 78). Education reform is a general term referring to all reforms put in place to change any facet of schooling.

Accountability imposed under No Child Left Behind. “NCLB is a federal government-mandated mega-reform (targeting all levels of educational practice and professionalism) aimed at increasing standards, accountability, and uniformity” (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 148). The NCLB mandate affected schools around the country. Education policy makers responded with legislation to support and enforce the NCLB stipulations.

NCLB brought about new practices in daily schooling. More test based accountability led to what many called “teaching to the test.” This was mainly because NCLB relies on the “theory that measuring performance, identifying schools and districts that fail to meet an expected performance level and applying a series of sanctions is what is needed to induce schools—and teachers—to work harder to improve student achievement” (Sunderman, 2007, p. 2). Schools that were struggling to prepare students to become successful in time for their annual state assessment became failing schools. When looking at these data historically, some high schools and their feeder pattern schools showed dismal results. High schools worked to remedy learning deficits that began as early as elementary school.

Stringent accountability requirements were implemented with the passing of the NCLB act.

By the time George W. Bush was elected president, all of the states were either in the process of implementing standards and aligned tests or had done so. The No Child Left Behind Act proposed by Bush, ramped up the intensity of Clinton's laws by prescribing more extensive grade-level testing, setting a deadline of 2014 for all students to be proficient in English language arts and mathematics, and mandating specific actions that schools and school districts had to take if they did not reach the state-prescribed yearly goals for student proficiency. (Jennings, 2012, p. 5)

Specifications for student performance, a timeline for state testing, sanctions for not meeting AYP, and requirements for funding became much more concise under NCLB guidelines.

Table 1 shows the provisions of the NCLB Act that were passed by both houses of congress in 2001 and were signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2002.

Table 1

Provisions Mandated Under the NCLB Act of 2001

Title I funding:	Increased funding for high poverty schools
Teacher qualification:	Mandated all teachers to be highly qualified by 2005–2006 school year
Language instruction:	Expanded educational opportunity for all students including English language learners and students who are new to the U.S.
Parental choice:	Allowed parents to transfer their children from failing schools to higher performing public or charter schools in the district
Accountability:	Required states to set academic standards by grade level and monitor the performance of all students and by subpopulations
Responsive to local needs:	Provided flexibility for states to manage their use of federal funds to attend to specific needs
Children with disabilities:	Measured how well students with disabilities had learned required material in reading and mathematics as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Note. (U.S. Department of Education, 2004, p. 14–21).

The objectives of the NCLB Act were to improve public education by providing better teacher preparation programs, offering more resources to help sustain educational improvement efforts, and setting performance standards and assessment measures to evaluate improvement in student learning. Students had to demonstrate mastery on certain core area tests at multiple grade levels to be promoted to the next grade level.

Accountability was not intended to be a punishment. Instead, it was meant to ensure that best practices were in place at public education institutions. Accountability systems alone are ineffective if sanctions that follow the failures do not allow time for resources to make improvements. “Heavy-handed accountability systems omit or seriously underestimate capacity building” (Fullan, 2007, p. 240). Accountability itself is not a reform but an expectation that schools perform determined levels.

Adequate yearly progress. NCLB reauthorized AYP, a federal accountability program originally mandated under the 1994 reauthorization of ESEA of 1965, the Improving America’s Schools Act. AYP is in place to determine how every public school and district performed on state mandated assessments and to monitor progress. Schools with high percentages of children from low-income families can participate in the Title I program and receive Title I, Part A grants to assist children in meeting rigorous academic state standards. Schools that commit to being part of the Title I program commit to meeting federally mandated state requirements as outlined by AYP and are subject to sanctions for not making gains.

AYP requirements for high schools in Texas are based on 10th-grade students’ performance on state assessments in reading/ELA and mathematics. For instance, if a school does not achieve the 70% standard in reading/ ELA for two consecutive years, then the school enters the school improvement phase. However, if a school fails to make AYP the first year in

reading/ ELA, and makes AYP by meeting the 70% standard in the same content area the following year, then the school does not enter Year 2 of school improvement. Schools in Texas must also meet a graduation rate requirement. In addition, schools must also have a 95% assessment participation rate on state designated testing days.

Schools that fall below the passing standards identified in Table 2 are referred to as “missing AYP” and are considered AU in that area.

Table 2

Texas Adequate Yearly Progress Passing Standards

<u>Standards Criteria</u>	<u>Campus Passing Standards</u>
Exemplary status in any area	90%
Recognized status in any area	80%
Acceptable passing standard by content area	
English language arts & writing	70%
Mathematics	65%
Social Studies	70%
Science	60%
Graduation rate	75%

Schools that do not meet the AYP passing requirements for two consecutive years in each area face sanctions.

Districts are charged with the responsibility of taking corrective actions to remedy low-performance in their schools or face the threat of state sanctions. In Texas, schools that miss AYP for two consecutive years must offer multiple types of interventions to support improvements in students’ academic performance. “Once a low-performing school or district has

identified its goals and needs, the challenge is to design a comprehensive, coherent plan around which all programs and funds are aligned” (Houseman & Martinez, 2001, p. 2). Concentrating on goals, setting objectives to achieve those goals, and planning and using a timeline to achieve results are important.

Before the beginning of each school year, the school district must identify any schools that missed AYP the previous year. Sanctions become more stringent based on the number of years a school has consecutively missed AYP. Sanctions are increased annually up to Year 6 when a school may face closure.

Schools enter the school improvement phase of sanctions during Years 2 and 3. In Year 4, schools enter the corrective action phase. In Year 5, schools enter the restructure and planning phase. The plan from Year 5 is implemented in Year 6, the restructure and implementation phase.

Year 1: No sanctions. Because AYP is determined retrospectively based on end of year state assessment results, sanctions do not apply to Year 1. The school is simply identified as not making AYP.

Year 2: School improvement. A school enters the Year 2 school improvement phase if at the end of the second year adequate progress is not made. During the school improvement phase, multiple sanctions are applied to support students’ academic progress. In particular, Title I districts must identify any Title I schools that fail to make AYP for two consecutive years. This is because Title I schools receive federal grants to assist in reforming schools with high populations of economically disadvantaged students.

Following the failure of making AYP, a district must identify the school's failure to the public before the beginning of the next school year. This gives parents the opportunity to transfer their children to another public school.

Within three months from the school's identification as a failing school, it is sanctioned to receive technical assistance by collaborating with the district, the TEA staff, other outside experts, school staff, and parents to develop a school plan for improvement.

Year 3: School improvement. A school enters phase three of school improvement if, by the end of the third year, the school misses AYP again in the same areas as in Years 1 and 2. The school must continue to offer school choice to parents to transfer their children to acceptable schools. The school administrators and faculty must also continue to collaborate with appointed district administrators, consultants, parents, and technical assistance providers from TEA.

During Year 3 of school improvement, the sanction for providing supplemental educational services is introduced. Supplemental educational services refer to statewide tutoring programs and other supplemental academic enrichment services, usually in reading, ELA, or mathematics. This extra help can be provided before or after school, on weekends, or in the summer.

Year 4: Corrective action. If a school fails to make AYP for four consecutive years, the same sanctions apply from Year 3. Year 4 is the corrective action phase in which more stringent consequences are applied and monitored. These corrective actions are implemented as a result of prior sanctions not being effective enough to remedy the chronic failure. Either all or several of the following corrective actions may be enforced as determined by school leaders at the state and district levels.

- Replace school staff relevant to the failure

- Institute and implement a new curriculum
- Significantly decrease management authority in the school
- Appoint outside experts to advise the school
- Extend school year or school day
- Restructure internal organization of the school

Year 5: Restructure (planning year). If a school fails to make AYP for five consecutive years, it is restructured. The same sanctions apply from Years 3 and 4 with the addition of one requirement: Not all corrective action sanctions from Year 4 had to be applied. If restructuring was not applied during Year 4, it is now a requirement to plan the restructuring phase in Year 5. If restructuring was introduced in Year 4, a continuation of planning and restructuring existed during Year 5, as well.

Year 6: Restructure (implement plan). At the end of the fifth school year of identification and using summer months to prepare implementation, the restructuring plan must be in place by the beginning of the sixth school year. The district must implement one of the following alternative governance arrangements in accordance to state law.

- Reopen the school as a public charter school
- Replace the school principal
- Replace all or most of school staff
- Enter into a contract with an entity who has a demonstrated record of effectiveness in operating schools
- Have the state takeover operation of the school
- Impose another major restructuring of the school's governance arrangement. (NCLB Fact Sheet)

For schools not meeting AYP, education leaders must work toward closing achievement gaps that exists among various subpopulations. Subpopulations that count for Texas' state accountability system are based on enrollments of students of minority groups and special populations. In Texas, an ethnic, special education, limited English proficient, or economically disadvantaged group of at least 30 students that make up at least 10% of the school's enrollment or a group of 50 or more of these students at one school is considered a subpopulation. The federal AYP system measures seven subpopulations to include the following: African American, Hispanic, white, limited English proficiency, special education, and economically disadvantaged.

In Texas, 72% of all schools made AYP during the 2010–2011 school year. This was a 23.2% drop from the previous 2009–2010 school year. Of Title I schools, 68.8% of schools made AYP, while 94.7% of them had made AYP the year before. State performance for not making AYP is consistent with the national performance of schools. Usher released a report through the Center on Education Policy (2011) about the monitoring of AYP data spanning from 2006 to 2010 stating that “an estimated 48% of the nation's public schools did not make AYP in 2011” (p. 1) an increase in failure from 39% in 2009–2010. This was the single largest drop since the inception of NCLB. The report notes that 24 states and the District of Columbia had at least half of their public schools not make AYP. Riddle and Kober (2011) wrote a companion paper published by the Center on Education Policy in 2011 which explained the decline in AYP achievement. Ten factors detailed the reasons for the large decrease in schools making AYP by state. Some of the factors included changes in assessment cut scores, raises in performance targets where students were already failing, adoptions of new assessments, overrepresentations of performance results of schools in large and medium-sized states, and uses of the safe harbor

provision in which schools were forgiven if schools performed generally well even if one or more subpopulations failed (Riddle & Kober, April 2011).

Accountability in Texas. The NCLB Act of 2001 monitored that schools receiving Title I funding must have met AYP as measured by improvement gains in student performance in mathematics and ELA. Growth was determined annually with a goal of reaching 100% proficiency for all students by 2014. State assessment passing standards were set individually by states. High school students had to pass the exit level TAKS to graduate. For accountability measures in Texas, tenth graders' performance on all core content areas were measured and used to determine if a school was making AYP. In Texas, the TAKS passing standards for schools were as follows: reading/ ELA /writing and social studies 70%, mathematics 65%, and science 60%. Schools that fell below these standards in 10th grade ELA or mathematics were considered AU in that area.

A school in Texas that did not meet the passing standard for two consecutive years in ELA or mathematics faced state sanctions and was required to meet the passing standard for two consecutive years to regain acceptable status. The TEA required that schools in Year 4 or 5 not meeting AYP had to implement a transformation or turnaround model such as HSTW. Title I School Improvement Grant funding was provided to persistently failing schools to implement a CSR program to assist with improvements.

Comprehensive School Reform Programs

In 1994, the Improving America's Schools Act and Goals 2000 Educate were enacted. With this reauthorization of the ESEA of 1965, all education components, once separate, were integrated. Curriculum standards, professional development, accountability, and leadership were brought into alignment to increase student achievement for all students regardless of ethnicity,

gender, or disability. “In 1994, the Improving America’s Schools Act introduced the concept of holding schools accountable for student performance on state assessments” (Herman et al., 2008, p. 4). State assessments, such as the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills given from 1991–2002 to assess student mastery of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, were used to measure student growth and to hold schools and districts accountable for student performance. Schools and districts that did not master content on state assessments or meet requirements for attendance, graduation, and completion rate faced punitive consequences.

Although intentions to increase student achievement were the same across the nation, multiple state efforts for education reform led to disarray. The *Nation’s Report Card* on student performance across states could not compare state’s performances with fidelity because state standards and performance measures were inconsistent.

Many education reforms have been available for schools to implement as turn-around or transition models for school improvement. Accountability measures for providing funding were put in place in the 1990s with the implementation of CSR programs.

The New American Schools Development Corporation, later shortened to New American Schools (NAS), was a nonprofit organization founded in 1991 and privately funded by chief operation officers from several major corporations. Their goal was to provide resources and support for the design and dissemination of innovative “whole school reform” models. Whole-school reform models had to be designed using “think outside the box,” nontraditional methods to receive the available NAS grants.

Secretary Alexander went to corporate leaders with the request: help us design “break the mold” schools, ones that can provide *all* children with a world-class education. Corporate leaders obligingly established the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC) as a nonprofit organization with a five-year life span, during which it would oversee the development of a number of expectations. In brief; the change in school life must be comprehensive, performance must be benchmarked against world-class academic

standards, and designs must be capable of going to scale. (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 12)

Schools modeled from NAS expectations were based on scientifically validated approaches. NAS developed designs to help students achieve at high levels. Intended to develop innovative education reforms, NAS shifted toward customizing designs for individual campuses that paid attention to particular needs such as leadership, teacher quality, and community support. NAS was one of the first attempts to provide a research-based school reform program.

NAS held a CSR design fair in Memphis in 1996. This event is marked as the beginning for the use of the term CSR to refer to school reforms that had nine characteristics identifying them as having met criteria for federally approved school reform programs. In Memphis, 18 schools were initially chosen to implement a CSR design program. “Hoping to speed the adoption process, [NAS] offered additional incentives in the second year to help Memphis increase the number of schools that could become partners with CSR designs” (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 21). As CSR programs were approved, the implementation of these programs at struggling schools was the next step. This is referred to as “scaling up” the model. Programs with success rates in school reform spread across the United States.

Requests for proposals required “that designs be adaptable for many communities [and] not be prescriptive “cookie cutter” models. Moreover, the designers had to explicitly address how they would proceed in the face of existing federal, state, and local regulations” (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 14). These programs had to meet the needs of the schools that implemented them. CSR criteria included assistance with implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of reform results.

NAS provided guidelines for these schools to begin implementation. These guidelines would set the standard for what CSR programs should encompass. Early on, New American

Schools Development Corporation set the framework for the developer's comprehensive approach—standards, curriculum, technology, parent and community involvement, and school governance. Schools implemented the designs with some autonomy in deciding how to address the nine components. “The visionaries were incubated in a variety of institutional settings—a cutting-edge technology firm, school districts, think tanks, a research university, an outdoor adventure-based program,” among others (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 4). After careful consideration, schools that met the nine CSR criteria were selected. Three designers chose to develop standards and assessments; others chose or adapted existing standards such as the International Baccalaureate” (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 15). Ultimately, 11 “break the mold” school designs of 600 proposed program designs were chosen.

In 2002, an Education Consumers Foundation brief detailed the failure of the NAS reform program. Past reform failures were repeated and not revised. Old concepts regarding school reform were supported in favor of the revolutionary designs that NAS had purportedly developed. Instead, the same old thing was done over again.

The long version of what happened is that instead of making an independent assessment of the problem, NAS allowed the schools to diagnose themselves—a common misstep brought about by the politics of education reform. Instead of recognizing mistakes and learning from them, NAS developed a menu of “whole-school” reforms and permitted schools to choose. Not surprisingly, the schools selected reforms that fit their vision of teaching and learning. (Mirel, p. 3, 2002)

Although NAS is cited as a failure, other CSR programs are cited as successes. Implementing and sustaining a CSR program involves ongoing assessment, evaluation, and reengineering for desired results. Before going to scale with CSR programs, pilot schools were used to test the results. Aladjem and Borman (2006) described the types of questions asked regarding pilots such as “What type and level of investment in pilot schools’ infrastructure [were] needed, what would be the strategy for supporting schools in the transformation, and what were the criteria for

selecting pilot sites?” (p. 17). Pilot schools were used to determine if practices implemented would bring about real change.

Federal funding in support of comprehensive school reforms. Representative David Obey, a democrat from Wisconsin, and Representative John Porter, a republican from Illinois, implemented the Obey-Porter legislation in 1997. Struggling schools, mostly Title I, were awarded a minimum of \$50,000 a year for up to three years for schools to adopt a CSR program. Funding would only be provided to those programs that met nine criteria outlined in the legislation as fitting a CSR design. This was because so much money had been lost on programs that promised comprehensive improvements but did not deliver.

The Obey-Porter legislation listed nine criteria that reforms had to include in order to be considered comprehensive:

1. Proven methods of effective strategies for teaching, student learning, and school management
2. Comprehensive design with aligned components including instruction, assessment, classroom management, professional development, parental involvement, and school management
3. Professional development
4. Measureable goals and benchmarks that are linked to the state’s content and student performance standards
5. School staff supporting one another
6. Parental and community involvement
7. External technical support and assistance
8. Evaluation strategies

9. Coordination of resources (Lockwood, 1998, p. 3)

The Obey-Porter legislation provided 17 examples of CSR that schools could choose or model. The importance of the CSR program was that, unlike other homegrown programs, it provided some criteria for measurement of success and accountability for federal funds.

Authorized in Public Law 105–78, the FY 1998 Department of Education Appropriations Act, the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Program [aimed] to raise student achievement by helping public schools across the United States successfully implement comprehensive school reform strategies. The legislation [promoted] the adoption of reform models based on reliable research and effective practices, with an emphasis on coordinated, aligned school reform programs. (U.S. Department of Education, 2000, p. 1)

The Obey-Porter legislation became less popular under the NCLB act and emphasis was placed on Title I resources. The Obey-Porter funding alone could not sustain a program without being paired with Title I funds. NCLB of 2001 added two additional components to the nine CSR components.

- Support provided for staff, including support for school faculty, administrators, and other staff (added in 2001).
- Scientifically based research to significantly improve the academic achievement of students participating in such programs (as compared with students in schools who have not participated in such programs), or strong evidence that such programs will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating children (added in 2001). (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 59)

Federal funds were used to supplement state funding for education. The expectation was to “provide three-year grants to schools to help cover the initial costs of adopting an externally developed model or a comparable set of research-based strategies, as part of a school’s CSR plan” (U.S. Department of Education, 2000, p. 6).

In sum, the federal role in school finance should (a) foster equitable resource distribution within each state, (b) promote interstate equality by compensating for interstate disparities in fiscal capacity, (c) motivate states to exert reasonable effort in support of education, (d) adjust federal aid for geographic cost differences, and (e) provide aid sufficient to enable the poorest states to educate their children to national standards. (Sunderman, 2007, p. 117)

Funding was earmarked specifically for Title I schools to implement CSR programs. The selection of research based education reforms occurred because “schools applying for awards [were] required to select or develop a ‘model’ school-reform program established by empirical research as effective in improving students’ academic performance” (Church, 2000, p. 3). The amount of federal funding for education improvement was hefty. Schools that received this aid had CSR program options selected by the federal government. “In July 1998, the first of a three-year series of grants made funds available to Title I (\$120 million) and non- Title I (\$25 million) schools. In 1999, an additional \$145 million in second-year funding was awarded” (Church, 2000, p. 2). In 2000, the amount was increased to \$220 million. Programs for systemic CSR were expected to give school leaders the resources needed to implement and sustain change.

The amount of funding provided to schools was distributed nationally to areas identified as having the most need for improvement. Evers (2001) stated that “if two programs [were] competing for limited funds, put the money into the one that [achieved] the best results. If a program does not improve student performance, do not fund it” (p. 299). In other words, reform programs needed to show improvement results to maintain federal funding.

In Texas, the federal Title I grant is known as the Texas Title I Priority Schools Grant. Largely, these funds have been used to implement CSR programs to remedy persistent failures. The funds allocated to states, districts, and schools have been intended for implementation of CSR with practices proven to improve students’ academic performance.

Struggling schools that received federal funding such as Obey-Porter and Title I funding

had many programs to choose from, and stakeholders were encouraged to choose programs that best fit the needs of their campuses. Ensuring that CSR programs had the eleven components provided for long term systemic change. Schools initiated programs with hopes that successful reform would sustain struggling schools that likely faced sanctions for not meeting AYP.

Choosing reform programs that had proven to produce desired results was the responsibility of local and state school leaders. High-stakes sanctions are detrimental to a school community, and the outcome of how funds are used to improve school performance is based largely on student assessment results. The evaluation of the effectiveness of CSR programs occurred because accountability for the use of federal and state funding had to be monitored.

Before NCLB, funding had been provided to schools, but recipients had not made effective decisions about spending. Some internal or external service providers did not make the improvements as promised. To track allocations of awards and evaluate CSR programs, each state was required to submit basic demographic data and award expenditures for each recipient of the grant. “The Department [of Education] arranged that this information be submitted by the states to the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory and be made available in a publicly accessible database” (U.S. Department of Education, 2000, p. 10). The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, a nonprofit education research, development, and dissemination organization, changed its name to its acronym, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, in 2007 to reflect that their scope of work spans across the country, and not only across southwest region.

Accountability for the improvement of students’ education was connected to the amount of funds provided to schools. It was important to set spending stipulations for federal funds provided to help equalize opportunities for all students. Hale (2000) explained that there was an

expectation that schools would collaborate with expert partners to implement CSR methods and strategies that derived from a strong research base and that had successful replication records (p. 7). Other forms of funding have since been provided to CSR programs to sustain reform efforts, continue ongoing professional development, or support research.

Action steps for school reform. “Reforms, like revolutions, are not easy. Successful implementation requires knowledge, time, effort, and willingness to change” (Church, 2000, p. 9). Many reform efforts are unsuccessful because the strategies are not implemented with fidelity. Either the stakeholders on campuses or the education reform programs themselves lack the necessary support to carry the process through all phases. “The reason that it is so difficult to pin down is that at the end of the day large scale reform is about shared meaning, which means that it involves simultaneously individual and social change” (Fullan, 2007, p. 11). It is important for all members in the change process to accept their roles as part of the change and work towards common goals.

To change a school, attention must be paid to school leadership, parental and community involvement, professional development for teachers and leaders, curriculum instruction, and other areas that may be impacting the success of a school. Successful reform requires willingness, determination, and strong leadership. Fullan states that “At this point, we know what needs to be done, but there is neither the sense of urgency nor the strategic commitment to do the hard work of accomplishing large-scale, sustainable reform” (2007, p. 6). Until support is generated and all stakeholders involved understand the process to undergo successful change, reform will be difficult to implement. Moreover, reforms must be strategic to get desired results, and ways to implement, monitor, and assess change will require the state, the district, and the school to be in alignment to support a desired outcome.

Comprehensive school reform characteristics. In 1998, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory published a *Catalog of School Reform Models* to provide CSR summary information to schools and districts. Only 33 of the 64 reform models are considered whole school reform models and 31 are skill- and content based models. Table 3 shows that schools must seek additional funding sources to subsidize grants as CSR programs cost substantially more.

Table 3

<i>Top Ten CSR Programs, Main Features, and First Year Cost</i>			
	<u>Program</u>	<u>Main Features</u>	<u>First-Year Cost</u>
1	Success For All	Provides reading and language-arts curriculum and instructional strategies	\$70,000
2	Accelerated Schools	Provides “gifted and talented” curriculum to “at-risk” students	\$25,000 to \$35,000
3	Lightspan	Offers standards-based learning games and family participation	\$75,000 to \$140,000
4	Direct Instruction	Focuses on curriculum and instruction by setting out specific knowledge, skills, and instructional strategies	\$127,500
5	America’s Choice	Provides detailed, grade specific core-subjects curriculum and standards-referenced exams	\$65,000
6	Roots and Wings	Focuses on reading, mathematics, science, and social-studies curriculum and instruction	\$70,000
7	Coalition of Essential Schools	Key feature is a set of “common principles” that focuses on curriculum and instruction	\$50,000 to \$250,000
8	High Schools That Work	Combines the content of traditional college-preparatory studies with vocational studies	\$25,000 to \$35,000

9	Co-NECT	Technology into instruction, organizes lessons around interdisciplinary projects, and encourages reorganization of schools into smaller learning communities	\$50,000
10	Core Knowledge	Focuses on a curriculum that builds a common base of knowledge	\$10,000

Note. (Church, 2000, p. 4) — Public Domain

Choosing an education reform aligned with the needs of low-performing schools takes time and input from all education stakeholders. “When decision makers consider effective reform approaches, they do not make the fine distinctions that the researchers might make” (Fleischman & Heppen, 2009, p. 108). The U.S. Department of Education (2000) conducted a study in which they researched how CSR programs served different populations and found that several distinctions existed.

- CSR served schools with a high concentration of minority students.
- CSR schools were serving substantial numbers of special education students.
- Student mobility in CSR schools was higher than in Title I schools in general.
- CSR schools were more likely than Title I schools with models to have had teachers vote on the adoption of models (U.S. Department of Education, 2000, p. 46–70)

Research on CSR programs and their offerings is referenced in the literature. “Thousands of schools have implemented CSR programs over the past decade, using either self-developed models or externally developed models. This breadth of activity has spawned an almost equally wide variety of research into CSR” (Aladjem & Borman, 2006, p. 7). Each program caters to specific needs that are believed to be necessary for the improvement of low performing schools. Implementing these various programs in schools has been largely based on what districts and schools have identified as needs.

Some CSR programs have shown efforts in alignment with district and campus characteristics, revealing challenges that explain why some schools fail. One CSR program provided reform strategies that it believed would be helpful for schools with high mobility rates. Another CSR program gathered academic performance data on a school and then designed instruction that supported mastery learning.

Comprehensive school reform evaluation. CSR legislation stipulated that states evaluate CSR programs. “Findings are reported to the federal government in Years 2 and 3 performance reports” (Church, 2000, p. 7). Entities put in place to evaluate these programs used various approaches to assess the performance of a CSR program’s effectiveness. The Rand Cooperation is a nonprofit institution that has long evaluated the effectiveness of these reforms. The Rand Cooperation conducts research to improve policy and decision making. One of the first research efforts was conducted using the National Longitudinal Survey of schools. Several entities cooperated to effectively evaluate CSR programs.

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory keeps a database of CSR schools. NAS conducts research on CSR school performance. The Regional Educational Laboratory and the American Institute for Research conducts studies to evaluate the impact of CSR programs on struggling schools.

Comprehensive school reform challenges. Understanding the challenges faced before implementing a CSR helps those in charge of the reform overcome common obstacles. Aladjem and Borman (2006) said that the following are the most frequently occurring challenges in the adoption, implementation, and sustainability of CSR programs under NCLB provisions:

- Administrative mandates: the extent that top-down decisions impede or change the focus of local reform efforts

- Instability of leadership policy: how lack of continuity among district, state, and federal educational leaders, and shifting priorities affect ongoing efforts at reform
- Model fit: how to make sure a given CSR model at the school level aligns with instructional goals, and the culture and vision of the district and school
- Teacher buy-in: the extent to which teachers resist or accept model practices
- Teacher and student mobility: how high teacher turnover and student mobility affect district efforts to coordinate and organize curriculum and instruction;
- Resources: concerns associated with securing adequate funding for successful implementation and sustainability of CSR
- Developer limitations: obstacles faced by districts in securing necessary professional development and technical support from developers. (2006, p. 152)

This list is not all encompassing. Teacher buy-in may be one important factor, but tri-level support and community support are also important. Issues may arise from a lack of clarity that could be resolved by clearly communicating the needs and the goals for improvement and including all stakeholders in the process of choosing, implementing, and sustaining CSR.

“Features of schools which serve to assist or hinder the application of CSR include leadership, organizational commitment, and parental involvement” (Church, 2000, p. 8). Another challenge to implementing CSR is that embedding the reform effort into the school culture and daily practices is left up to the employees at the campus. Where time may be factor, understanding the program layout and implementing it may prove troublesome to those who may already feel overwhelmed.

HSTW Program of Study

In 1948, the SREB formed from a relationship of southern governors and legislators who realized the importance of educating our youth to ensure economic growth for the nation. As the United States first regional interstate compact for education, SREB is currently comprised of 16 states organized to improve public education from early childhood to higher education. Texas is one of the 16 member states that comprises this nonprofit organization headquartered in Atlanta. SREB works with state legislatures and education agencies to develop, inform, and improve education policy and practice. Objectives include improving student achievement, increasing graduation rate, and encouraging graduation completion. SREB tracks member states' progress, collects and analyzes these data, and reports findings.

The literature addressing the HSTW program comes primarily from reports published by SREB. From a review of multiple reports published by this consortium, several themes emerged. There was a clear description of the HSTW program. Core beliefs were stressed and were linked to the history of HSTW. The mission of the program aligned with the objectives and key components. The HSTW program assesses students' and staffs' performance, reviews the outcome of student achievement, and provides feedback from and to all stakeholders. In addition, a rigorous, core curriculum is integrated with a career and technology curriculum. Foundational support from SREB, the state, the district, the campus, parents, and external partners is paramount.

The HSTW program services are to provide ongoing monitoring, assessing, charting progress, and providing feedback in the form of research reports, the HSTW assessment, and surveys of students, teachers, and administrators. Details from a report by SREB (2007) titled, "Best Practices for Implementing HSTW and MMGW [Making Middle Grades Work],"

articulate a vision that HSTW ensures “the selection and preparation of effective leaders, the use of data to identify needed improvement, and the alignment of curriculum and instruction to college and career-readiness standards” (p. 1). Research revealed that a strong level of commitment and fidelity in implementing the program holistically was necessary for a school to become successful.

A description of the HSTW’s history, mission, goals, and objectives was identified in a report published by SREB (n.d., pub # 02v07) titled, *High Schools That Work: An Evidence-Based Design for Improving the Nation’s Schools and Raising Student Achievement*. HSTW has an overarching belief, mission, and purpose. First, the program is based on the belief that “in the right school environment, most students can learn complex academic and technical concepts” (SREB, n.d., pub # 02v07, p. 1). Second, HSTW’s mission is to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers by enrolling them in solid core classes that are blended with career and technology courses. Third, HSTW’s purpose is to give students the ‘technical literacy’ to succeed in today’s workforce and higher education.

A SREB report by Gene Bottoms, titled *What Really Works?* (n.d., pub # 06v21), stressed academic rigor to challenge students. Bottoms stated that “helping students see relevance in their schoolwork, providing students with caring personal relationships from adult mentors, helping students understand their responsibility to take charge of their own learning, and helping teachers understand their responsibility for implementing engaging classroom instruction” places onus on all parties (p. 2). These core beliefs were enumerated as key success factors for student achievement.

The major goals, key practices, and conditions for implementing the HSTW program are grounded in the literature. Major goals for HSTW outlined in a SREB (n.d., pub # 02v07) report are as follows:

- Raise the mathematics, science, communication, problem solving and technical achievement of more students to the national average and above
- Blend the essential content of traditional college-preparatory studies—mathematics, science and language arts—with quality career/technical studies by creating conditions that support school leaders, teachers and counselors in carrying out key practices
- Advance state and local policies and leadership initiatives necessary to sustain a continuous school-improvement effort for academic and career-technical studies (p. 2)

Foundational support for the 10 key High Schools That Work components. In an HSTW study (2007) of 22 principals regarding the level of district support needed for school improvement, it was reported that “Schools making the most improvement were more likely than other schools in the group to be the recipients of district policies and practices designed to improve teaching and learning” (p. 1). In this report, principals indicated there were “two major things they wanted but [were] not getting from their districts.” First, the power to make school-based decisions and to form a better alignment between the district and the school (p. 2). Second, support from the district superintendent regarding financing, resources, and campus logistics were identified as crucial component HSTW implementation.

Bottoms (n.d., pub # 06v21) wrote “States should consider policies that link quality career/technical studies with a solid academic core and review successful strategies to use as a guide for improving low-performing high schools” (p. 8). The basis for setting key conditions is to outline the need for foundational support and align the goals, objectives, and expectations of

all stakeholders. These actions hold all parties within the program accountable for improving student achievement.

The conditions for supporting HSTW rely on foundational support efforts. The process for ensuring continuous involvement and organizational structure of all stakeholders is needed to support the mission and goals set by this program. A campus leadership team and a rigorous curriculum coupled with career/technical skills are necessary to implement key practices at schools. As noted in a SREB report (n.d., pub # 02v07), HSTW components are as follows:

- High expectations—setting higher expectations and getting more students to meet them
- Career/technical studies—increasing access to intellectually challenging career/technical studies, with a major emphasis on using high-level mathematics, science, language arts and problem-solving skills in the modern workplace in preparation for continued learning
- Academic studies—increasing access to academic studies that teach the essential concepts from the college-preparatory curriculum by encouraging students to use academic content and skills to address real-world projects and problems
- Program of study—having students complete a challenging program of study with and upgraded academic core and a major
- Work-based learning—giving students and their parents the choice of a system that integrates school-based and work-based learning that spans high school and postsecondary studies and that is planned by educators, employers and employees
- Teachers working together—having an organization, structure and schedule giving academic and career/technical teachers the time to plan and deliver

integrated instruction aimed at teaching high-level academic and technical content

- Students actively engaged—getting every student involved in rigorous and challenging learning
- Guidance—involving each student and his or her parents in a guidance and advisement system that ensures the completion of an accelerated program of study with and in-depth academic or career/technical major
- Extra help—providing a structured system of extra help to enable students who may lack adequate preparation to complete an accelerated program of study that includes high-level academic and technical content
- Keeping score—using student assessment and program evaluation data to improve continuously the school climate, organization, management, curricula and instruction to advance student learning and to recognize students who meet both curriculum and performance goals. (p. 2–3)

The HSTW program uses a recommended curriculum with rigorous core content that include advanced placement courses. Several pathways to meet the recommended curriculum exist. Students can follow a career/technical pathway, a mathematics and science pathway, a humanities pathway, or a blended academic and career/technical pathway. No matter the concentration, each student is required to complete the following:

- At least four English courses with the content and performance standards of college preparatory English.
- At least three mathematics courses, including two courses with the content and performance standards of college-preparatory Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II and trigonometry.

- At least three science courses, including two courses with the content and performance standards of college-preparatory biology, chemistry, and physics or applied physics.
- At least three college-preparatory-level social studies courses.
- At least four courses in a planned career/technical concentration or additional course work in either mathematics or science, the humanities, or a blended concentration. (SREB, n.d., pub# 02v07, p. 4).

Literature about the HSTW program explained that the program's rigorous curricular pathways aim to prepare students for college and careers by making learning more meaningful.

Accountability Measures for High Schools That Work. Accountability through assessment is a key criterion of the HSTW program. To monitor school progress, data are collected from several sources. The HSTW assessment was described as “the most important tool [used] to measure schools’ and students’ improvement” (SREB, n.d., pub # 02v07, p. 7). The HSTW assessment is designed by Educational Testing Services, one of few high stakes educational assessment publishers in the nation. Educational Testing Services designs the HSTW assessment in alignment with the National Assessment of Education Progress standards, measuring senior achievement in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science. In addition, Educational Testing Services offers preparation and distribution of test materials to sites and dissemination of the results to each state and site.

MPR Associates, Inc. is an education research firm headquartered in Berkley, California. The company is named after its founders Harry Mandil, Bob Panoff, and Ted Rockwell. MPR Associates, Inc. publishes reports on survey findings and conducts “follow-up studies” of students one year after graduation. They partner with SREB, providing survey tools and data

disaggregation to participating HSTW sites. A student survey consisting of sections asking about “students’ high school experiences that addresses what and how they have been taught, what has been expected of them, and how much effort they and the school have exerted” (SREB, n.d., pub # 02v07, p. 7) was used to show connections among students’ experiences, student performance, and educational quality. An administrator, counselor, and teacher survey consisted of sections asking about collaboration time, school climate, and quality of instruction (SREB, n.d., pub # 02v07, p. 8).

MPR Associates, Inc. is part of the Research Triangle Institute. The Research Triangle Institute is the third partner that works with SREB to monitor HSTW sites. This partner publishes data about curriculum and best instructional practices used at the most-improved HSTW campuses. This organization reported that HSTW sites, in a two year-period, were able to meet the reform program’s achievement goals and complete the recommended program of study.

Education Testing Service, MPR Associates Inc., and The Research Triangle Institute were three HSTW partners that provided data and feedback for monitoring progress at HSTW sites. Each of these organizations have conducted studies confirming that implementing the HSTW design increases student achievement. In 1999, the American Institute for Research chose HSTW as the sole high school reform effort that showed “strong evidence” of student performance gains.

Primary goals of HSTW are for students to meet at least 85% achievement in reading, mathematics and science on the HSTW National Assessment of Education Progress referenced assessment; to meet 85% graduation in a four-year cohort in one of the recommended pathways; and to have 90% of students who enter ninth grade complete high school in four years, (Bottoms, n.d., pub # 06v21, p. 11). Studies revealed that the level of implementation of key practices was

the primary factor that differentiated high-performing schools from low-performing ones. Bottoms (n.d., pub # 06v21) wrote that between “2002 and 2004, all groups of students—regardless of race/ethnicity, family income and gender—in the 75 high-achieving schools raised their mean scores in reading and mathematics by one grade level and by almost two grade levels in science” (p. 1). These data were based on results from the senior survey in the section regarding student-reported school experiences. Schools that did not make gains declined in some cases because they did not effectively implement school improvement practices.

Gene Bottoms graphically represented students’ performance data outcomes in three tables in his report, *What Really Works?* (n.d., pub # 06v21). The tables in his report showed similar differences in results from high-performing to low-performing schools. Data revealed that high performing schools had a minimum 8-point gain while low-performing schools had a minimum 7-point loss in student achievement on the HSTW assessment.

HSTW holds a core belief that students aspire to higher standards when they have the support of mentors and extra help that encourages college and career goals. Students who completed each recommended core content area performed better on assessments than those who did not complete the recommended core content.

HSTW Studies. Several HSTW case studies were conducted to evaluate the impact the program had on student outcomes. In reviewing several HSTW case studies, two emerged as necessitating explanation. All HSTW case studies were conducted by SREB using the HSTW surveys and assessment tools. Both case studies explained here are similar, each highlighting the setting; the need for improvement; lists of CSR strategies used with results indicated; the importance of teacher expectations for students and teacher preparation; systems in place to guide change; and support from states, districts, and HSTW.

Henry W. Grady High School. A case study was conducted at Henry W. Grady High School in Atlanta, Georgia, a culturally diverse campus. In the early 1980s, Grady High School experienced a shift in enrollment attributed to “white flight” from the inner city neighborhoods due to a changing socio-economic population that was moving into the school’s attendance zone. “Fear of the new student diversity caused many families in the Grady school zone to lose confidence in the school’s ability to maintain high standards. Many faculty members took early retirement or took positions in suburban schools” (SREB, n.d., pub # 05v74, p. 1) As a result, two high schools in the suburban area closed, leaving Grady High School the lone campus as enrollment decreased. The student population changed to “66 percent African-American, 30 percent White; 4 percent Hispanic, Asian and multiracial” (SREB, n.d., pub # 05v74, p. 1). In addition, “Forty-four percent of Grady students were eligible for free or reduced-price meals; 30 percent were classified as gifted students; and 8 percent were enrolled in special education” (SREB, n.d., pub # 05v74, p. 1).

By 1991, Grady’s SAT scores had increased, but the average daily attendance rate had “dropped from 86 percent in 1988 to 80 percent in 1990” (SREB, n.d., pub # 05v74, p. 2). Low attendance rates led campus and district leaders to implement HSTW. The campus leadership and faculty completed the HSTW assessment and surveys, and then evaluated the results in an end-of-year meeting. Using the HSTW reform program, multiple goals were outlined that supported student performance improvement. Some of the goals included increasing teacher expectations, motivating students to complete challenging assignments, establishing an adviser/advisee program, and using data to guide improvement (SREB, n.d., pub # 05v74, p. 4)

In 2000, Grady High School received the Title I Distinguished School Award from the U.S. Department of Education; in 2001, the Georgia School of Excellence Award from the

Georgia Department of Education; in 2002, the National School Change Award from the Fordham University Graduate School of Education, Pearson Education and the American Association of School Administrators; and in 2003, the Gold Performance Award from HSTW for improving by ten or more percentage points in reading, mathematics, and science.

Waynesville High School. A case study was conducted 50 miles north of Cincinnati in Waynesville, part of northeastern Warren County, Ohio. This school is part of Wayne Local Schools comprising three schools; Waynesville Elementary with 500 students, Waynesville Middle School with 350 students, and Waynesville High School with 500 students (SREB Case Study, n.d., pub # 05v67, p. 1). Warren County is comprised of more than 43,000 families with 86% of the residents having high school diplomas and 28% having bachelor's degrees.

The performance level designations for Ohio school districts and schools were Excellent, Effective, Continuous Improvement, Academic Watch, and Academic Emergency. Wayne Local Schools was ranked as a Continuous Improvement district in 2001. That same year, Waynesville High School joined the HSTW program and began immediate implementation of best practices. The following two years, 2002 to 2003, the district received Effective ranking by the state and in 2004 received the highest ranking of Excellent.

According to the literature, the need for improvement existed based on the following factors. From 1999 to 2000 teachers in Wayne Local Schools were all ranked superior on their evaluations but few teachers were documented as attending professional development offered by the local education service center. In addition, there was no evidence that systems were in place to support improvements in student achievement and teacher quality. The theme of low teacher expectations was marked as a contributing factor in low student achievement. There were no systems in place to support successful student achievement.

In the summer of 2001, Waynesville High School teachers attended HSTW's national summer staff development conference and other workshops. In addition, a Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) in 2003, with a follow up report from HSTW, provided the campus with actions steps to begin improvements. School leadership and faculty defined three courses of action to begin CSR, including upgrading the curriculum, establishing higher expectations, and providing extra help and time for students to master curricular objectives (SREB Case Study, n.d., pub # 05v67, p. 3). Waynesville High school took several steps. The school "revised the grading scale; adopted a system of concentration (majors and minors); focused attention on reading and writing across the curriculum, and developed a culture of excellence and high expectations for all students" (SREB Case Study, n.d., pub # 05v67, p. 6). The school board, superintendent, and school leaders reviewed curriculum and instruction, teacher evaluations, professional development, and teacher collaboration.

In addition, a teacher survey revealed that an attitudinal shift resulted in high expectations for students to work hard, significantly impacting behavior in the following ways: "truancy decreased by 65 percent, class disruption decreased by 49 percent, minor insubordination decreased by 76 percent, major insubordination decreased by 86 percent, detention decreased by 45 percent" (SREB Case Study, n.d., pub # 05v67, p. 11). This improvement was attributed to fidelity to the HSTW program and students' completion of the recommended course curriculum.

Improvements in mathematics and science persisted. Support from the state, district, and HSTW was noted as being a contributing factor to the success of the school. Each level of support contributed to the belief that all students can learn, professional development was instrumental, and a rigorous curriculum was necessary.

HSTW Texas. In an April 2011 SREB publication, *Five Years of Enhanced HSTW in*

Texas, data regarding the performance of Texas schools using this CSR program were described. In 2005, after initially partnering with SREB to join the HSTW program in 1987, the TEA joined the enhanced, improvement design. Approximately 50 high schools across four cohorts in Texas joined the network between 2005 and 2012 to become a part of the enhanced network to implement more rigorous school reform strategies. All schools in the current study were a part of the enhanced design.

An assigned state coordinator housed at Education Service Center Region 13 in Austin, Texas partnered with a consultant from HSTW. The enhanced network required participation in TAV: a team reviews campus data, interviews the students, teachers, and administrators, and observes classrooms. The results of the TAV were compiled in a report. Feedback from the report was used for making improvements. In addition to TAV, enhanced network schools participated in site development workshops, worked with a HSTW consultant to review the schools progress annually, and received coaching. “The primary goal of these intensified services was to elevate HSTW schools in Texas to the Recognized and Exemplary levels in the state accountability program — the two highest levels of performance” (SREB, 2011, p. 1). According to the data displayed in Table 4, students at schools in the enhanced design network have experienced gains in all four core areas on the TAKS test.

Table 4

Percentages of Students Meeting Standards on All Four TAKS Tests between Year 2005 and 2010

Network Schools (Ranked by Percentage-Point Gain)	2005 All Tests	2010 All Tests	Change (percentage points)
Galena Park High School*	37%	79%	42
La Villa High School*	21	63	42
Burton High School*	35	73	38
Los Fresnos High School*	47	82	35
Barbara Jordan High School	34	67	33
Memorial High School	43	75	32
South Grand Prairie High School*	48	80	32
Reagan High School	23	54	31
J.M. Hanks High School	44	73	29
Phyllis Wheatley High School	19	48	29
Graham High School √	58	84	26
Kermit High School	34	59	25
Sam Rayburn High School √	41	61	20
Mount Pleasant High School √	52	71	19
Mabank High School √	62	80	18
Birdville High School √	58	75	17
Richland High School √	58	75	17
State High School Average	62	77	15
West Orange-Stark High School	36	51	15
Lubbock-Cooper High School	75	88	13
Haltom High School	49	60	11
Iowa Park High School	64	71	7
Diboll High School	67	72	5
Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice	79	81	2

Note. * These schools improved the percentage of students meeting standards on all four TAKS tests by at least 29 points between 2005 and 2010 and participated in both the 2008 and the 2010 HSTW Assessments.

√ These schools improved the percentage of students meeting standards on all four TAKS tests by 16 to 28 points between 2005 and 2010 and participated in both the 2008 and the 2010 HSTW Assessments.

Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (SREB, 2011, p. 3)

Improvements in HSTW schools are attributed to the implementation of the key practices of the CSR program. Lubbock-Cooper High School was named a Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education in 2008. This school started a guidance and advisement program and increased rigor in the classroom. Mabank High School is noted for changing its culture to one where all students successfully meet college and career readiness standards. Los Fresnos High School considered the relevance of student work to real life and embedded career and technology standards in the curriculum. West Orange-Stark High School is noted as having a principal that committed to fully implementing the HSTW reform program and building support for improvement by engaging the faculty in the process of enhancement.

More detailed synopses of school activities and processes were provided for seven Texas High Schools: Galena Park, South Grand Prairie, Diboll, Graham, Burton, The Summit High School Alternative Program of Excellence, and West Orange-Stark. The report noted that Galena Park High School teachers and administrators realized that:

If adults at the school expect students to learn and if they do a better job of planning instruction, engaging students in their studies, holding students to standards, offering extra help and giving students reasons to stay in school, the outcome will be higher achievement. (SREB, 2011, p. 8)

In 2009–2010, a principal at South Grand Prairie High School, a school that was already a part of the enhanced design network, said, “High Schools That Work is instrumental in bringing best practices to the campus” (SREB, 2011, p. 10). In summary, these schools had initiated common initiatives for successful school reform.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The purpose of this research was to compare academic performance data at HSTW schools before and after implementation, while taking into consideration the level of perceived fidelity to which HSTW had been implemented. The effectiveness of HSTW could not be determined without first analyzing how well administrators and faculty had adhered to the 10 key components that define the framework of the program. Therefore, fidelity to the HSTW program was assessed as a moderating factor.

This chapter describes the procedures used in the current study to answer the research questions. This mixed methods study is designed with three stages of data collection, with each phase building upon the other. The research design and participants section provides a layout of the three stages of data collection, a rationale for the design, and how participants were chosen. A description of the instruments used for data collection is explained for each phase of the design. Validity approaches used to reduce possible errors introduced with the use of instrumentation during data collection are described. The quantitative and qualitative data collection and analyses were discussed for each phase. Challenges and advantages for using the research design are then explained. Strategies that were put in place for the protection of human subjects followed. This chapter concludes with a discussion of limitations and delimitations.

Research Questions

This research was guided by three research questions, one answered in each of the phases.

1. What is the difference in academic performance of schools before and after HSTW was implemented?
2. Was HSTW implemented with fidelity to the program?

3. What are district and campus administrators' perceptions of levels of teacher, district, and HSTW program support during HSTW implementation?

Research Design and Participation

Mixed methods design uses both quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting and analyzing data in a study. The current study used a mixed methods, sequential explanatory research design. A sequential data analysis process was used for a specific purpose. Data were gathered at three different times. In Phase I, AEIS reports were used to collect data on students' demographic and academic performance at schools. In Phase II, quantitative results gathered from surveys were analyzed. In Phase III, a basic interpretive and descriptive qualitative study was conducted to consider how participants viewed their involvement and experiences with HSTW.

Figure 2 exhibits the research design used to answer the three research questions.

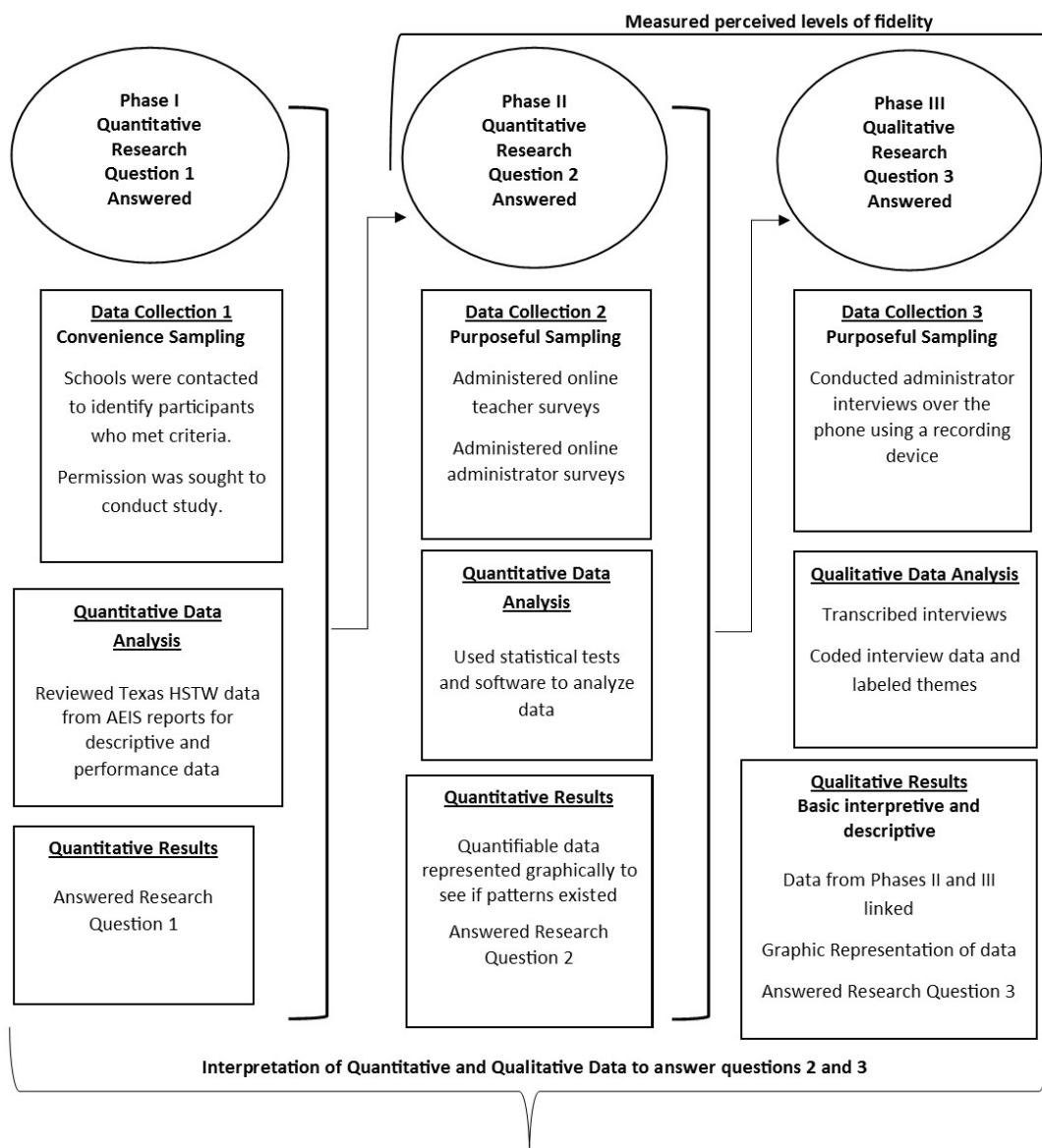


Figure 2. Sequential Explanatory Research Design in Phases 1, 2, and 3 for evaluating HSTW.

First, schools had to have a minimum of 150 students. Enrollment is important for a couple of reasons. First, schools may sometimes have advantages or disadvantages in being a smaller or larger school. For instance, a school with smaller enrollment numbers will have smaller classes where students are able to receive more individualized attention from teachers and administrators. However, schools with larger enrollments may have more extra-curricular

activities or opportunities for academic support from more staff or outside agencies. No maximum enrollment size was set.

Second, some HSTW schools were not eligible because of the lack of data included in AEIS reports. Overall scores for academic performance in areas for ELA and mathematics were not scored if there was not enough student participation on test day. By Texas law, at least 95% of the students enrolled at a campus must participate in state testing.

Third, schools must have participated in the HSTW program for at least three consecutive years. Two consecutive years of AEIS reports published preceding HSTW was implemented were reviewed to determine how the school looked demographically and performed academically. Some schools had just opened and were therefore ineligible because they had not been rated as meeting or not meeting AYP. The first year of HSTW implementation was reviewed but was considered a planning year. Evaluating the impact that HSTW had on academic performance was based primarily on data from the second and third year of implementation. However, the effectiveness of HSTW could not be determined until after research question RQ2 was answered in Phase II of surveying faculty and administrators.

Phase I—Academic Excellence Indicator System reports. RQ1, “What is the difference in academic performance of schools before and after HSTW had been implemented?” was answered during *Data Collection 1, Phase I*. Specific descriptive data were collected from AEIS reports accessible online through the TEA website. A total of five AEIS reports for each Texas HSTW school in the current study was downloaded to gather specific data from these reports.

Data Collection 1 took place at the onset of the current study. Identifying a CSR and reviewing data about the schools that implemented it occurred to determine the feasibility of the

study. A list of HSTW schools was identified by reviewing the SREB website and publications. Then descriptive data were collected from AEIS reports to predetermine the sample.

Phase I instrumentation—Academic Excellence Indicator System reports. The Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) is a statewide reporting system used by the TEA to collect extensive amounts of detailed information about finances, districts, staff, and students. These data are exhibited in AEIS reports. Since 1994, schools have been rated in AEIS reports as meeting or not meeting AYP based on subsets of performance data. The AEIS reports were first published for the 1990–1991 school year. The reports are public records that can be accessed online on the TEA website (<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/>). Archived reports are still available. PEIMS data include performance data based on the TAKS. In addition, AEIS reports indicated whether schools met or did not meet AYP. Reports were searchable by school or district name and school year. The following types of data were recorded from AEIS reports for each school in the sample: Met AYP for ELA (Yes/No), Met AYP for mathematics (Yes/No), overall student enrollment, 10th-grade student enrollment in which AYP was based, and the enrollment of economically disadvantaged students in which Title I is considered. AEIS reports were renamed Texas Academic Performance Reports after the 2012–2013 school year.

Quantitative data collection and analysis—Phase I (continued). Through convenience sampling, this researcher studied 32 Texas HSTW schools that had been members of the network from Fall 2005 to Spring 2012. Five AEIS reports for each HSTW school in the sample was compared to identify possible changes in AYP based on students' academic performance on TAKS in ELA and mathematics. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests were run to analyze data before

and after HSTW implementation at participating schools' attendance and 10th grade students' academic performance on TAKS.

Phase II—surveying staff. RQ2, “Was HSTW implemented with fidelity to the program?” was answered during *Phase II*. Two separate surveys were distributed to faculty and administrators at participating schools.

The *Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey* was distributed to selected teachers. This survey revealed the teachers' perceptions of fidelity to HSTW and connected outcomes to the impact on academic performance. Administrators' responses to the *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey* revealed their perceptions of fidelity to the program and their perceptions of HSTW staff, teachers, and district level personnel support for implementation and sustainability.

Due to limitations on the timeframe for this post hoc study, surveys were collected from ELA and mathematics teachers who were present at the time. Participants in the study had to have been employed at the school as ELA or mathematics teachers or administrators during Year 4 and Year 5 of the current study. This research surveyed 91 teachers and 27 administrators across the entire study from 32 Texas HSTW schools.

Instrumentation—surveying staff. The *Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey* and the *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey* (refer to Appendices A and B) were adapted with permission from surveys published by the RAND Corporation (refer to Appendix C) in a publication titled, *Evaluating Comprehensive School Reform Models at Scale* (2006). The RAND Corporation used a methodology to “quantitatively measure the level of CSR implementation that could be used across a variety of CSR models, and [the methodology was then applied] to measure actual implementation of four different CSR models in a large number

of schools” (Vernez, et al., 2006, p. XVI). These surveys were designed to be adapted to evaluate any CSR program.

Questions from the surveys were selected and adapted to suit the purpose of the current research. The teacher and administrator surveys were adapted to elicit data about the HSTW program’s key components (See Appendix D) that would provide pertinent information about how HSTW approached school reform. The *Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey* comprised 22 questions and the *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey* comprised 21 questions. The surveys assessed the level of fidelity to which the program was adhered.

Upon initial contact with the school principals, through email correspondence and phone calls, it was determined that the school employed faculty who met the criteria to participate in the current study. Information about participation criteria was included in the consent forms provided to the campus. The online teacher and administrator surveys were completed from August through November 2014. Each survey was taken in advance to identify how long they would take to complete. Each survey took no longer than 20 minutes.

The sample who completed surveys were selected during Phase II of the study to ensure that participants met eligibility criteria. A statement at the beginning of the online survey for teachers and administrators asked them about their role and if they were employed at their campus during the timeframe for the study. If teachers’ or administrators’ responses to the first online question indicated they did not meet eligibility criteria, the online survey informed them and automatically closed.

Validity of surveys. A team of individuals from the RAND Corporation developed and revised administrator and teacher survey questions that were based on characteristics of best practices for CSR. A team also conducted two rounds of pilot testing with teachers and principals

to assess the comprehension level of the tool and to measure variability of questioning (Vernez, et. al, 2006, p. 32). Survey questioning ranged from broad to narrow inquiry into specific model designs.

The RAND Corporation distributed surveys to schools that were implementing one of four CSR, none of which were HSTW. Construct validity was tested using a typology of developing questions that were identified as categorical variables, continuous variables, Likert scales, and frequency scales.

The teacher and administrator surveys used for this HSTW were adaptations of the RAND surveys. Adaptation of the surveys did not jeopardize the construction of questions. Both the teacher and administrator surveys were designed to ensure content validity. Using a survey question tracking system, a methodology was developed to ensure that all questions on the surveys fit within parameters of the 10 key components of HSTW. Questions that did not fit were categorized in a section titled, "Other," but were not omitted as the line of questioning provided pertinent data for the study. Unobtrusive data collection strategies were adhered to by using online surveys in which the researcher did not need to be at the school to conduct surveys.

Prior to Institutional Review Board approval, an instructional coach and a teacher who had experience with CSR reviewed the *Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey*. The *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey* was distributed for review to a principal and assistant principal who had experience with implementing a CSR, as well. Responses from their reviews were considered in making revisions to the instruments. After Institutional Review Board approval, consultation about the instruments was conducted with different administrators and teachers who had experience with CSR.

Data collection and analysis. Once all surveys had been completed online, data entry errors were corrected in the database. The SPSS was used to compute and recode the data using a codebook. A descriptive analysis of survey data was conducted. Frequency tests were run on categorical data to yield results that measured one or more of the 10 key components of HSTW.

Phase III—interviewing administrators. RQ3, “What are district and campus administrators’ perceptions of levels of teacher, district, and HSTW program support during HSTW implementation?” was answered during *Data Collection 3, Phase III*. After survey results were gathered and analyzed, interviews were conducted to substantiate results from surveys. Interviews were used to query or solidify data that was not assessed by the surveys. Administrators who could provide feedback about past performance data regarding the impact of HSTW were interviewed. Administrators include principals, academic deans, instructional coaches, district level staff, or other professionals in nonteaching positions. The administrator must have been working at a school or with a district having a direct relationship with HSTW.

Phase III participants. Like teachers, administrators had to be employed during Year 4 and Year 5 of the current study in an administrative position. Five administrators responded and agreed to requests to participate in phone interviews. The administrators represented five different Texas school districts.

Interview protocol. The *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Interview Protocol* (Refer to Appendix E) comprised questions written specifically for the current study. The protocol contained questions that could not be answered or fully explained by the survey alone. Questions were based mostly on the 10 key elements of the HSTW design. No additional interview questions were added.

The *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Interview Protocol* comprised eight pre-written, open-ended questions based on HSTW implementation and the impact the program had on students' academic performance. Actual interviews did not exceed 30 minutes as was previously determined by mock interviews.

The same procedures for selecting survey respondents were used for selecting administrator interview respondents. Eligibility was determined at the time of which participants were contacted. Consent forms detailed the criteria for participation in interviews. The administrator interviews were conducted over the phone at their convenience after surveys for the school had been completed. Interviews were completed from October through December 2014.

Validity of interviews. Interviews conducted during Phase III were based on predictions, as opposed to only having data comparisons from surveys. Interviews were validated using a method referred to as member checking. Responses to interview questions were transcribed using a word processor. Upon completion of transcriptions, the researcher reviewed completed transcripts with interview participants to guarantee accuracy. These data were coded into themes that were related within and across schools in the current study.

Quantitative and qualitative data were drawn from the same population to reveal consistency in responses considered during data analysis. A percentage of administrators from the surveyed sample were interviewed. During the structured interview phase, themes were identified and connected to results from survey data for follow up, making inferences, and drawing conclusions.

Role of the Researcher

Thomas (2003) says that a researcher's subjectivity to his or her work inevitably

influences “the creation of methods that focus on how results of an investigation are affected by the role an investigator adopts in relation to things being studied” (p. 75). The researcher for the current study has no connection with the participants.

My interest in the topic of evaluating CSR lies solely on professional experiences as an administrator. The school that I currently work for does not use HSTW nor does it have any connections with HSTW partners. Working with a struggling school made me realize change involves multiple stakeholders who must be held accountable for accomplishing specific tasks for successful school turnaround. Working for a school that dealt with multiple requirements sanctioned by the state has been an invaluable learning experience.

Challenges and Advantages of Using the Design and how They Were Addressed

Using the mixed methods design poses both challenges and advantages. Mixed methods require one to know both forms of research. Being knowledgeable of both forms of research requires one to be able to explain in detail the procedures for how the design was implemented quantitatively and qualitatively. In addition, one must be able to justify why this mixed methods design was the most useful.

Mixed methods designs take time and resources to collect and analyze data. This design requires data to be collected linearly. Each phase of data collection must be clearly articulated. Mixed methods design uses complex procedures and requires clear presentations. Although the design approach may take time, a single researcher can do it because of the distinct quantitative and qualitative phases. The distinct phases of data collection for the current study allow for survey data to be analyzed and results considered before proceeding to the interviewing phase. The process of collecting data three times and analyzing it at multiple phases provides an opportunity to organize the research.

In mixed methods research, the combination of methods used to gather data offset deficiencies. By nature, quantitative methods are weak in explaining the context because voices of participants are not directly heard (Creswell, 2007, p.9). In quantitative studies, researchers are in the background and their biases and interpretations are not discussed. Quantitative research methods minimize the influence of the researcher to guard against bias. Qualitative research differs because contexts for situations and voices of participants are heard. The qualitative method minimizes the influence of the researcher to guard against bias. Mixed methods research design allows for multiple modalities to be used to answer questions that cannot be answered by quantitative or qualitative research alone.

In qualitative research, conclusions are not generalized to a large group because of the limited number of participants. However, participants in a qualitative study offer valuable feedback to the researcher. Numbers of participants are usually small, as a researcher typically is assessing an instance at a specific place, during a specific time, and about a specific topic. The current study used a larger quantitative sample drawing a smaller qualitative sample of administrators from it to interview.

Mixed methods research is more comprehensive because all the tools of data collection are permitted to address the research problem. In mixed methods research, numbers and words can be used. Using mixed methods encourages researchers to interact with quantitative and qualitative researchers to ensure that each method is conducted with accuracy. Quantitative and qualitative researchers can use multiple paradigms in an atypical way.

Protection of Human Subjects

Prior to implementation of the research study, approval was obtained from the UIW Institutional Review Board (See Appendix F). This approval process was required to safeguard

participants' rights.

Participation in the current study was voluntary. Inquiry into appropriately obtaining permission from the district and school guided the researcher's approaches. Participant schools and/or districts received the informed consent form (Refer to Appendix G) indicating an agreement to participate voluntarily in the study. The informed consent form included statements regarding voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time, the purpose and nature of the study, and the timeline and procedures that were used in the study.

Complete anonymity was maintained. Participants' names were coded. Individuals' names were not disclosed in the research reporting and findings. Participant schools were not singled out. Instead, collective data results were expressed during Phases I and II. AEIS data connected to schools did not reveal the identity of the schools or participants. During Phase III, interviewees were referred to as Participants A, B, C, D, and E. Findings did not reveal identities of schools as not all Texas HSTW schools were a part of the current study. Data were discussed in a way that schools identities could not be discerned. All participants received a copy of the Institutional Review Board-approved subject consent form upon approval of this research.

I completed all recorded, transcribed, and online data that were gathered for the current study. Demographic data did not reveal participants identities. Schools classified by size were simply referred to as small, medium, and large. Research data were kept in a locked file cabinet in an office at the researcher's home and will remain there for five years and then be destroyed.

Limitations

The mixed methods sequential explanatory research design used in the current study required that data be gathered during three distinct phases. Limitations of the current study arose during each phase.

Changes in leadership and faculty posed a hurdle. In Phases II and III, the researcher conveniently chose high schools in Texas that participated in the current study but also purposely chose campuses and administrators as respondents to surveys and interviews. These respondents were chosen to yield results from individuals who were actually at the campuses in applicable positions during the timeframe of the study.

Implementation was a factor as some participants deemed implementation at their schools as being successful based on personal judgments. Participants may have different expectations on what they believed HSTWs would offer. The mixed methods research design was chosen to offset the lack of contextual information from using surveys alone.

During Phase II, teacher and administrator participants only had the opportunity to respond to closed ended questions with no opportunity to explain options they had chosen. Respondents' experiences with the HSTW program and interaction with HSTW staff were varied. The survey data were used to generalize a pattern of experiences teachers and administrators had at each campus. Administrator surveys and interviews were also compared across multiple Texas HSTW campuses.

During Phase III, my judgment as an interviewer may have been biased based on responses from surveys. I have no direct experience with HSTW. However, I do have experience with implementing CSR. I also believe that if funds are spent to implement CSR, then those entities, school administrators, and district level administrators should have procedures in place to ensure that support and practices are in place to produce desired change.

The preset, open-ended interview questions were used to counteract any influence of personal beliefs or expectation of outcomes. Often, leadership staff experience high turnover. Because the current study was focused on past data, it was important to identify participants who

could provide valuable insight and were present during the 2005 to 2012 timeframe. The mixed methods research design was chosen in part to ensure that enough data would be gathered to draw conclusions during the results and interpretation stages for the current study.

Another limitation of the current study derived from the school district and school's timelines and procedures for conducting research. Some schools were unable to participate because of ongoing factors at their campuses that were deemed confidential and sensitive.

Delimitations

Delimitations during Phase I of data collection began immediately. Once the researcher identified and listed Texas HSTW as the CSR program of study, schools were selected from the listing. The listing remained anonymous. AEIS reports were reviewed to determine which schools had been rated as meeting or not meeting AYP. Some schools had no ratings at all because not enough data were available to rate them at that time. Those schools were removed from the data set.

Texas HSTW schools in the current study implemented the program the first year no earlier than 2005–2006 and no later than the 2009–2010 school year. Because data collection required gathering perspectives on past performance of HSTW, survey and interview data were gathered from ELA and mathematics teachers and administrators from years of implementation.

The TAKS was last administered to students in grades 9 and 10 in the 2011–2012 school year. Because of the change in assessments, the latest year in which a school could have implemented HSTW was the 2009–2010 school year yielding TAKS data from two additional school years, 2010–2011 and 2011–2012. School year 2011–2012 was the last school year that TAKS was administered to 10th-grade students, on which the grade level that AYP is based.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of the current study was to compare academic performance at HSTW schools before and after implementation, while taking into consideration the perceived level of fidelity to which HSTW had been implemented. The current study used a mixed methods sequential explanatory research design. Data were collected in several distinct phases to support an effective analysis at each one.

The current study was guided by three research questions answered in three phases. In Phase I, AEIS reports were used to answer RQ1, “What is the difference in academic performance of Texas schools before and after HSTW was implemented?” The effectiveness of HSTW could not be determined without analyzing how well administrators and faculty had adhered to some of the key components that defined the framework of the program. In Phase II, both the *Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey* and the *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey* (refer to Appendices A and B) were used to answer RQ2, “Was HSTW implemented with fidelity to the program?” In Phase III, five administrator interviews were conducted to answer RQ3, “What were district and campus administrators’ perceptions of levels of teacher, district, and HSTW program support during HSTW implementation?” Refer back to Figure 2 which exhibits the research design by Phases I, II, and III.

Phase I, Academic Excellence Indicator Reports

Data Collection 1 took place at the onset of the current study. Identifying a CSR and reviewing data about the schools helped determine the feasibility of the study. A list of HSTW schools was identified from reviewing the SREB website and publications. Then descriptive data were collected from AEIS reports to predetermine a sample. The following types of data were compared before and after HSTW implementation using AEIS reports for each school in the

sample: attendance rate comparisons in schools overall and by size, comparisons of all students' performance in ELA and in schools by size, comparisons in subpopulations' performance in ELA, comparisons of all students' performance in mathematics and in schools by size, comparisons in subpopulations' performance in mathematics. To include all five AEIS reports reviewed for the current study, Years 1 and 2 refer to before HSTW was implemented, and years 3, 4, and 5, refer to the first three years of HSTW. Two consecutive years of AEIS reports immediately before HSTW was implemented were reviewed to determine how the school looked demographically and performed academically.

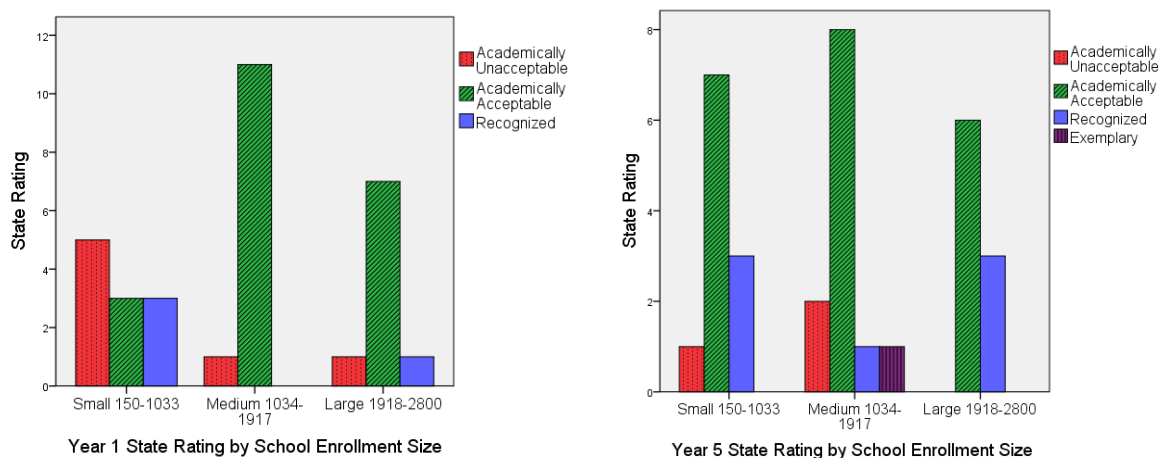


Figure 3. State ratings for small, medium, and large schools from Year 1 to Year 5.

The timeframe set for the current study was from Fall 2005 to Spring 2012 when schools had begun implementing the HSTW model to when assessment data for the TAKS for grades 9–12 was last recorded on AEIS reports. AYP ratings from 10th-grade students' performance on TAKS in ELA and mathematics formed the basis to determine the program effectiveness of HSTW. Figure 3 shows the state rating comparisons between Years 1 and 5.

Through convenience sampling, this researcher studied 32 Texas HSTW schools. There were about the same number of small (11), medium (12), and large (9) high schools in each category (See Figure 4).

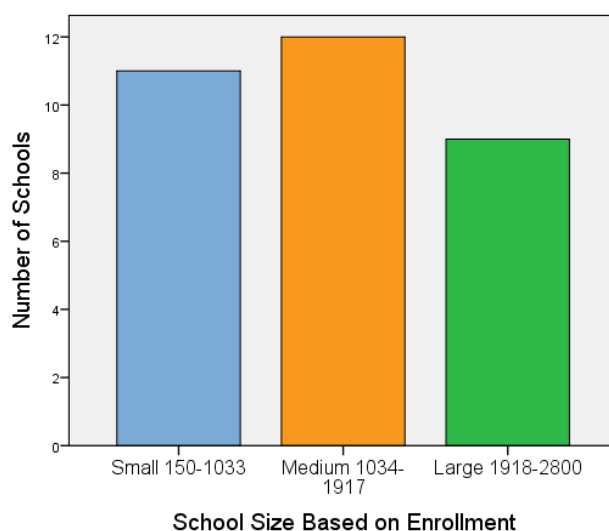


Figure 4. The total number of HSTW schools by enrollment size.

Because the sample size was small and the data were not normal, nonparametric tests were run to answer RQ1 about the difference in academic performance at schools, before and after implementation, in which data were gathered from AEIS reports. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was run to answer Phase I questions about the AEIS data as represented by questions I.1 through I.5.

I.1 Was there a significant difference in attendance rates between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools and in schools grouped by size?

I.2 Was there a significant difference in ELA TAKS performance between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools and in schools grouped by size?

I.3 Was there a significant difference in ELA performance, as measured by the percentage of students who met standard on TAKS from Year 1 to Year 5, between all students and special populations of students in special education, students identified as limited English proficient, and economically disadvantaged students?

I.4 Was there a significant difference in mathematics TAKS performance between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools and in schools grouped by size?

I.5 Was there a significant difference in mathematics performance, as measured by the percentage of students who met standard on TAKS from Year 1 to Year 5, between all students and special populations of students in special education, students identified as limited English proficient, and economically disadvantaged students?

RQ1 was supported by this series of questions in which Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were run to generate data. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test is a nonparametric equivalent of the parametric paired *t*-test used to compare two sets of scores from the same participants at different times (Field, 2009). The means and standard deviations were reported for comparisons. The Cohen's *d* was reported to estimate the impact of the effect on the population. Cohen's *d* is used to determine effect size to indicate the standardized difference between two means by measuring the strength of the relationship (Field, 2009). To determine the effect size, Cohen's *d* was chosen because it allows different sample sizes (*n*) across comparison groups. If a Cohen's *d* is 1.15, it can be determined that there was a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Lee Becker's calculator was accessed online (<http://www.uccs.edu/~lbecker/> accessed on 1/3/15) to determine the Cohen's *d* "by dividing the difference of the two means by their pooled standard deviation." The number of participants in the data set changed based on enrollment size categories and by schools with identifiable special education, limited English proficient, and economically disadvantaged subpopulations.

Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were run to make pairwise comparisons of all the possible combinations of treatment groups to reveal the differences (Field, 2009). Pairwise comparisons as those conducted in Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests may lead to Type I errors, in which it is believed there really is an effect on the population when there is not. To minimize a Type I error, Bonferroni corrections were made to counteract the problem of making multiple comparisons by

“dividing α [the probability of making a Type I error] by the number of comparisons, thus ensuring that the cumulative Type I error is below .05” (Field, 2009). Results are presented here about RQ1, Phase I.

Research Question 1, results. To examine RQ1, a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in attendance rate at HSTW high schools between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools. As shown in Figure 5, the annual attendance rate from Year 1 to Year 5 declined. The attendance rate was at its highest in Year 2 at 94% and its lowest 93.5% in Year 4.

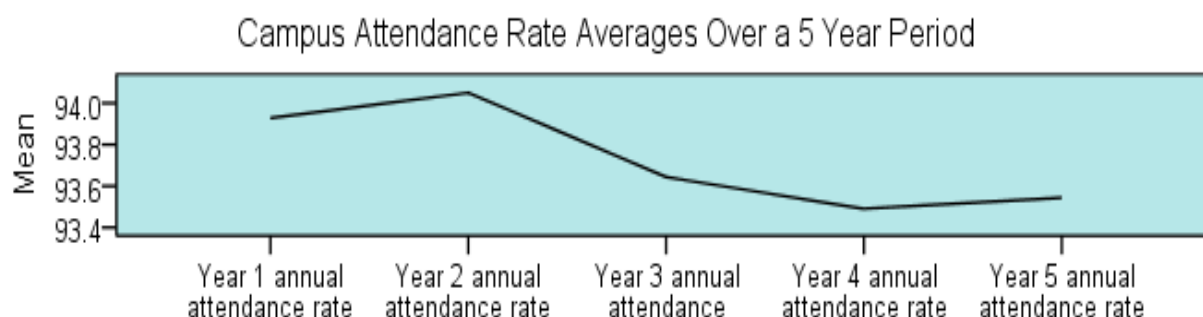


Figure 5. The annual attendance rate of 32 Texas HSTW schools over five years.

1.1 Was there a significant difference in attendance rates between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools and in schools grouped by size? Data for the annual attendance rate were presented for all schools and small, medium, and large schools in Table 5.

There was a significant difference in the attendance rate for all schools from Year 1 to Year 5 (See Figure 6). However, the annual attendance rate for all schools in Year 1 (93.93) was slightly higher than that of Year 5 (93.54) (Table 5).

No significant differences in attendance rates were found within schools grouped by size. The average attendance rate was nearly the same for small, medium, and large schools in Years 1

and 5. The attendance rate actually decreased for all schools regardless of size. In Year 5, in large schools, two outliers were reported where schools' attendance rates were lower than most schools (See Figure 7).

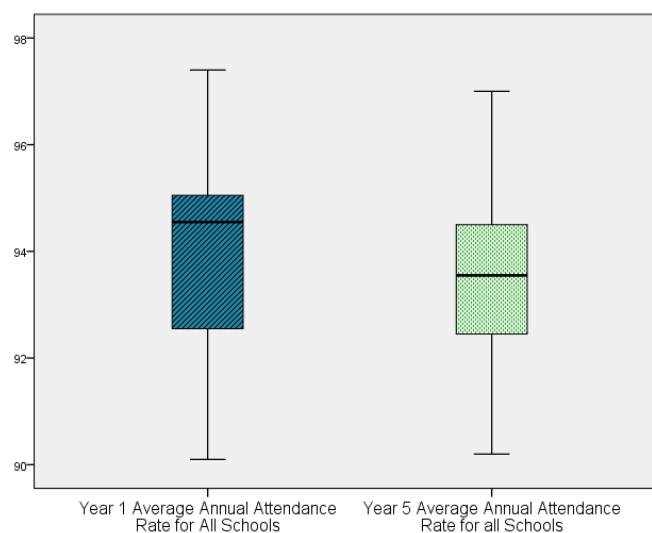


Figure 6. The annual attendance rate for Years 1 and 5 of 32 Texas HSTW schools.

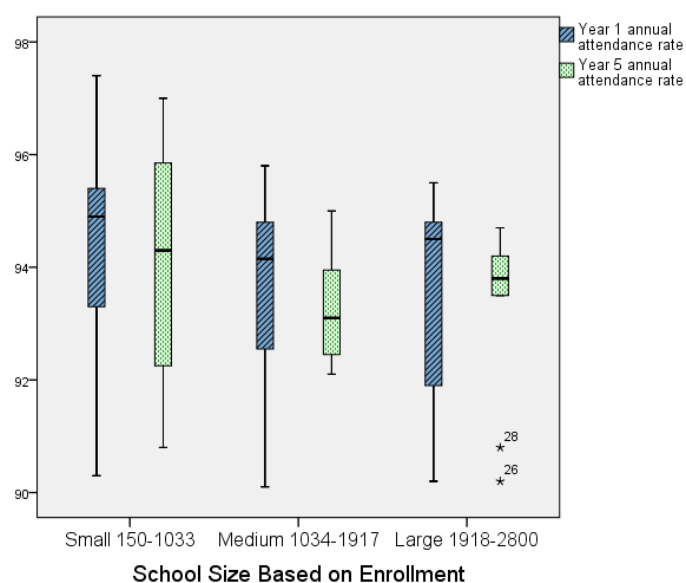


Figure 7. The annual attendance rate for Years 1 and 5 of HSTW schools by size.

Table 5

<i>Tests of Differences in Medians, Means, Standard Deviations, and Attendance Rates</i>							
School Enrollment	Year 1 Attendance Rate		Year 5 Attendance Rate				
	M	SD	M	SD	Cohen's <i>d</i>	<i>z</i> ^a	<i>p</i>
All Schools	93.93	1.77	93.54	1.63	0.22	-2.04	.04
Small	94.39	1.93	94.09	2.16	0.14	-5.53	.59
Medium	93.75	1.61	93.26	0.95	0.37	-1.74	.08
Large	93.60	1.86	93.26	1.62	0.19	-1.13	.26

^a Wilcoxon Signed Rank

1.2 Was there a significant difference in English language arts TAKS performance between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools and in schools grouped by size? To examine RQ1, a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in ELA TAKS performance between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools and in schools grouped by size. Data for ELA TAKS performance were presented for all schools and small, medium, and large schools in Table 6.

There was a significant difference in ELA TAKS performance in all schools from Year 1 to Year 5 (see Table 6). In Year 1, all schools had not met the ELA passing standard, but all schools did meet standard in Year 5. As shown in Figure 8, extreme values were reported for both Years 1 and 5 indicating that a group of students at a campus performed well below the mean of all students who took the ELA TAKS test.

Schools grouped by size also performed significantly different in Years 1 and 5. Schools based on size experienced a gain in which small and large-sized schools (20 schools) and some medium-sized schools had not met the 70% passing standard in Year 1. The ELA TAKS performance rate in small schools for Year 1 was 65.21% and 87.55% in Year 5. Students

performed significantly better in Year 5, meeting and exceeding the TAKS performance standard set. Extreme values existed in medium and large schools in Year 5, showing that a group of students at a campus performed much worse than the mean for all schools (See Figure 9).

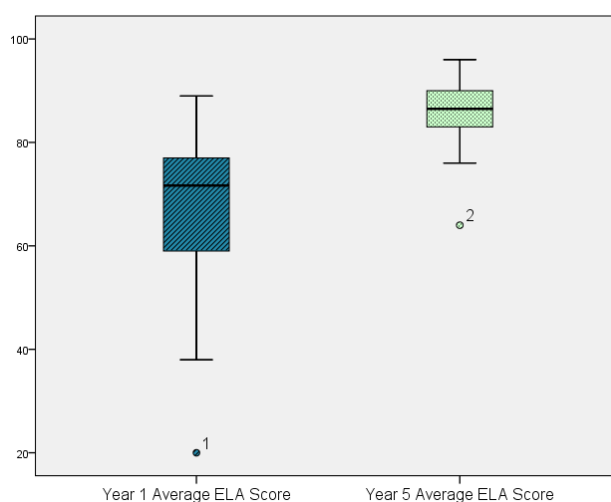


Figure 8. The average English language arts scores for all HSTW schools in the study between Years 1 and 5.

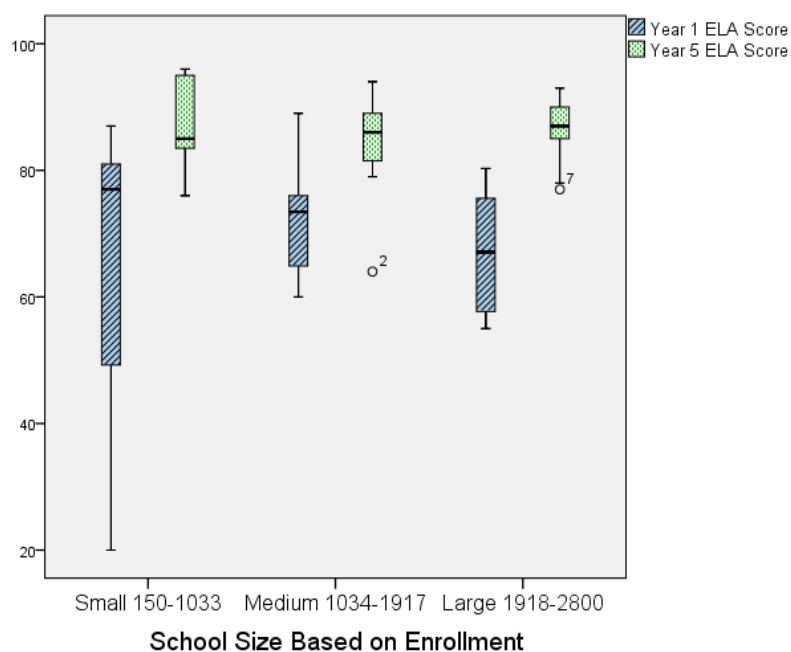


Figure 9. The average performance of students at 32 HSTW schools categorized by size on the English language arts TAKS test in Years 1 and 5.

Table 6

<i>English Language Arts TAKS Performance by School Enrollment</i>							
School Enrollment	ELA Year 1		ELA Year 5		Cohen's <i>d</i>	<i>z</i> ^a	<i>p</i>
	M	SD	M	SD			
All Schools	67.92	14.98	86.03	06.81	-1.56	-4.92	.00
Small	65.21	22.67	87.55	06.81	-1.34	-2.85	.00
Medium	71.77	8.25	84.25	07.64	-1.57	-3.05	.00
Large	66.09	9.84	86.56	05.79	-2.54	-2.67	.01

^a Wilcoxon Signed Rank

I.3 Was there a significant difference in English language arts performance, as measured by the percentage of students who met standard on TAKS from Year 1 to Year 5, between students and special populations of students in special education, limited English proficient students, and economically disadvantaged students? To examine RQ1, a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in mathematics performance, as measured by the percentage of students who met standard on TAKS from Year 1 to Year 5, between all students and special populations of students in special education, limited English proficient students, and economically disadvantaged students. A Bonferroni correction was applied so all effects are reported at .0167 level of significance.

Although there were 32 schools in the study, only 21 high schools had a significant number of ELA students and only 20 high schools had a significant number of limited English proficient students to create a subpopulation. All 32 schools were Title I, meaning they had an economically disadvantaged population of 40% or higher.

Comparisons between all students and special education students. There was a significant change in ELA TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in all students, $T = 527$, $r = -0.61$, and a significant change in ELA TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in special education students $T = 230$, $r = -0.56$. All students met and exceeded the 70% ELA passing standard in Year 5. Based on the results from the Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests, special education students performed at an average of 27.96% on the ELA TAKS test during Year 1 but increased their average to 60.84% by Year 5 (See Table 7). This change in special education students' performance demonstrated a 33 point improvement. The overall student population showed an 18.11 point improvement in ELA TAKS performance across the five years. Figure 10 shows that special education students had about a 40-point performance gap between students' performance in Year 1 but had closed the gap by 20 points in Year 5. In Figure 11, the boxplots show dramatic improvements in students' performance after HSTW was implemented.

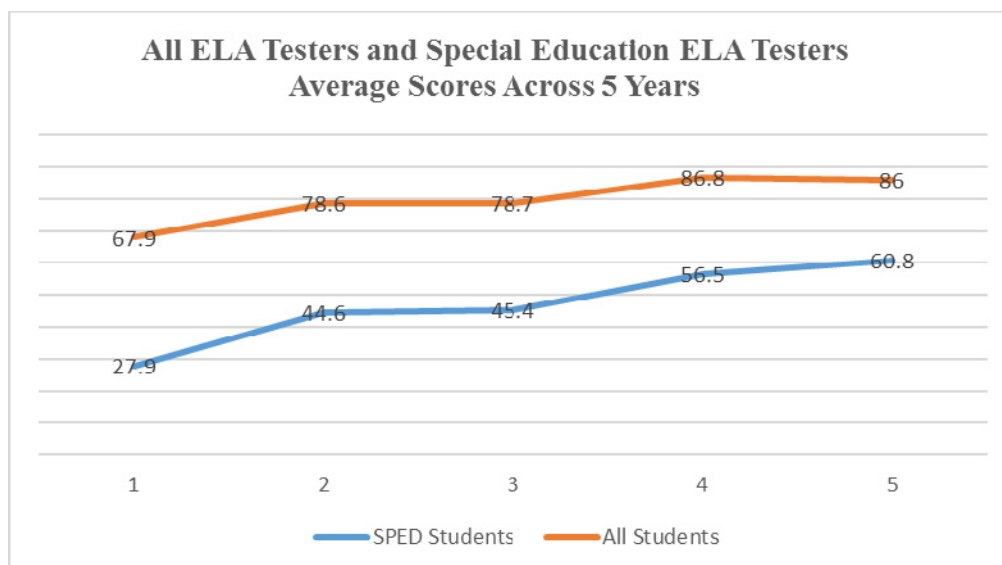


Figure 10. Special education students' performance on the English language arts test at HSTW schools over five years.

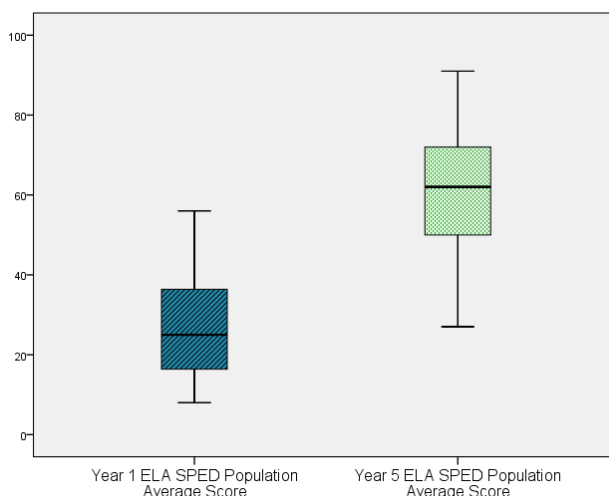


Figure 11. The average performance of special education students at HSTW schools on the English language arts TAKS test in Years 1 and 5.

Comparisons between all students and limited English proficient students. There was a significant change in ELA TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in all students, $T = 527$, $r = -0.61$, and a significant change in ELA TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in limited English proficient students $T = 207$, $r = -0.55$. Limited English proficient students had an average TAKS score of 17.64% in Year 1 and 40.67% in Year 5 (Refer to Table 7). In Year 1, a

50-point performance gap existed between all students and special education students, and this gap only closed about 5 points in Year 5 (See Figure 12). As shown in Figure 13, a case existed where an extreme value was reported that an ELA LEP student group at a campus performed much better than the mean group for Year 1 and Year 5.

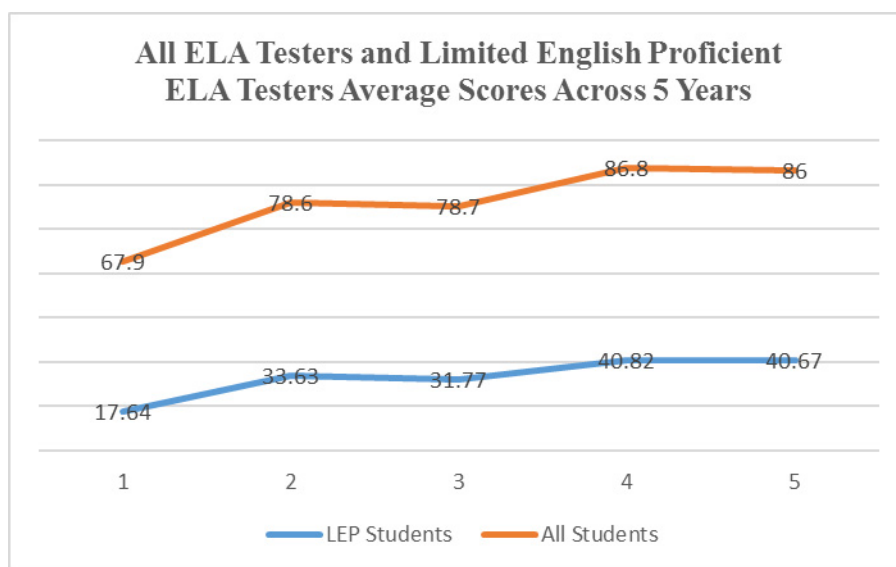


Figure 12. Limited English proficient students' performance on the English language arts test at HSTW schools over five years.

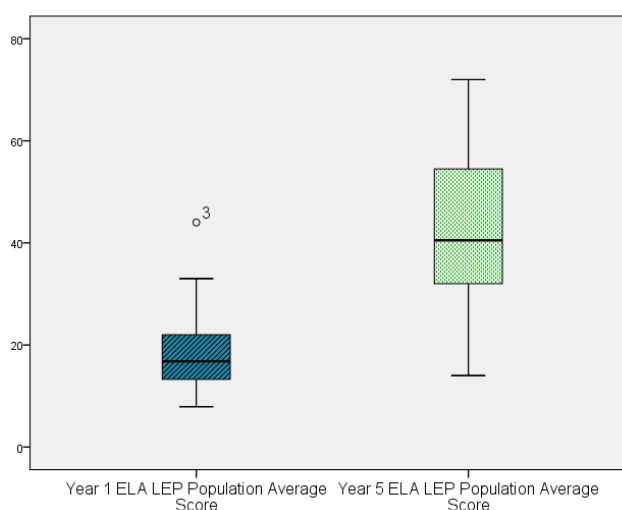


Figure 13. The average performance of limited English proficient students at HSTW schools on the English language arts TAKS test in Years 1 and 5.

Comparisons between all students and economically disadvantaged students. There was also a significant change in ELA TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in the economically disadvantaged student population, $T = 527$, $r = -0.61$. Based on the results from the Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests, economically disadvantaged students had an average TAKS score of 60.78% in Year 1 and 83.69% in Year 5 (Refer to Table 7). The economically disadvantaged student performance data are similar to that of all students' performance, as the schools in the current study are identified as Title I schools because of their large enrollment of economically disadvantaged students. Figure 14 shows the similarities in performance scores between all students and the economically disadvantaged population. As shown in Figure 15, several extreme cases were revealed in which the economically disadvantaged students at particular schools performed much worse than their counterparts at other schools in Years 1 and 5, and in Year 5 a group also performed significantly better.

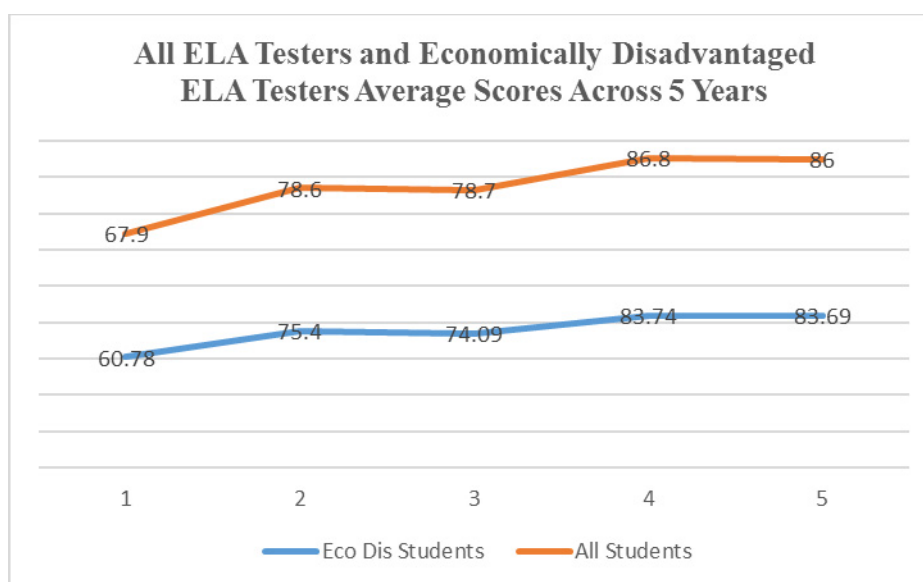


Figure 14. Economically disadvantaged students' performance on the English language arts test at HSTW schools over five years.

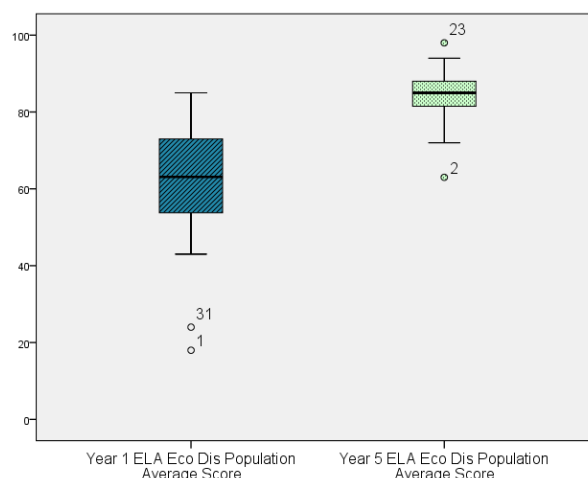


Figure 15. The average performance of economically disadvantaged students at HSTW schools on the English language arts TAKS test in Years 1 and 5.

Table 7

English Language Arts Performance on TAKS for All Students and Special Populations

Student Population	ELA Year 1		ELA Year 5		Cohen's <i>d</i>	<i>z</i> ^a	<i>p</i>
	M	SD	M	SD			
All Students	67.92	14.98	86.03	06.82	-1.56	-4.92	.000
Special Education	27.96	16.34	60.84	17.43	-1.95	-3.98	.000
Limited English Proficient	17.64	09.13	40.67	15.49	-1.81	-3.81	.000
Economically Disadvantaged	60.78	15.02	83.69	07.06	-1.95	-4.92	.000

^a Wilcoxon Signed Rank

1.4 Was there a significant difference in mathematics TAKS performance between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools and in schools grouped by size? To examine RQ1, a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in mathematics TAKS performance at HSTW schools between Year 1 and Year 5 in all schools and in schools

grouped by size. Data for mathematics TAKS performance were presented for all schools and small, medium, and large schools in Table 8.

There was a significant difference in mathematics TAKS performance in all schools from Year 1 to Year 5. Although the schools improved their mean score by about 7 points in Year 5, students still missed the 65% mathematics passing standard by just less than a point.

No evidence of significant difference was found in mathematics results for schools grouped by size. There was not a significant difference in mathematics TAKS performance in small HSTW schools from Year 1 to Year 5 (Refer to Table 8). Although students' performance on the TAKS mathematics test improved, the results showed minimal improvement (See Figures 16 and 17). Despite these findings, the mean score of medium-sized schools met the 65% mathematics passing standard for schools to achieve academically acceptable ratings. In Year 1 mathematics TAKS scores, extreme values existed for performance averages where students performed either well above or well below the mean of most schools in the study (See Figure 16).

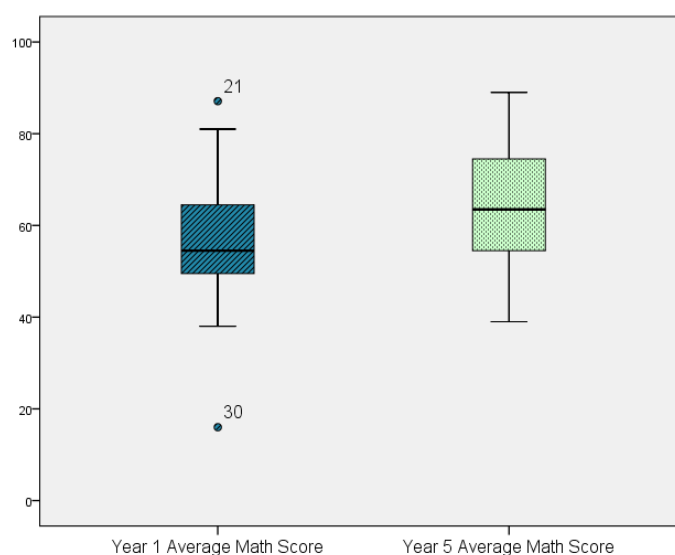


Figure 16. The average mathematics performance of students at 32 HSTW schools.

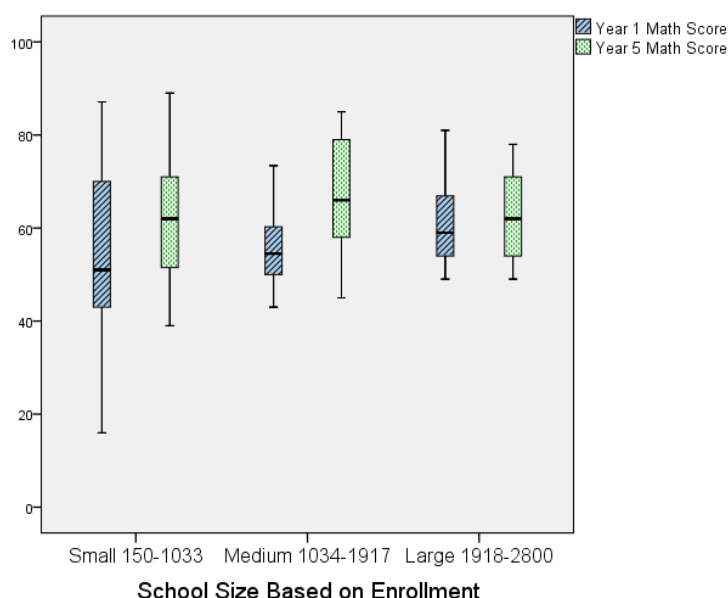


Figure 17. Schools by size and the average performance of students at 32 HSTW schools on the mathematics TAKS test in Years 1 and 5.

Table 8

Mathematics TAKS Performance by School Enrollment

School Enrollment	Mathematics Year 1		Mathematics Year 5		Cohen's <i>d</i>		
	M	SD	M	SD		<i>z</i> ^a	<i>p</i>
All Schools	56.82	14.19	64.09	13.70	-0.52	-2.34	.02
Small	54.47	20.52	61.91	16.44	-0.40	-1.47	.14
Medium	55.36	8.21	67.00	13.55	-1.04	-1.69	.09
Large	53.10	11.11	62.89	10.78	-0.89	-0.25	.80

^a Wilcoxon Signed Rank

1.5 Was there a significant difference in mathematics performance, as measured by the percentage of students who met standard on TAKS from Year 1 to Year 5, between all students and special populations of students in special education, limited English proficient students, and economically disadvantaged students? To examine RQ1, a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was

conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in mathematics performance, as measured by the percentage of students who met standard on TAKS from Year 1 to Year 5, between all students and special populations of students in special education, limited English proficient students, and economically disadvantaged students. Data for mathematics TAKS performance between all students and special populations between Year 1 and Year 5 are presented in Table 9.

Although there were 32 schools in the study, only 21 high schools had a significant number of mathematics special education students and only 20 high schools had a significant number of limited English proficient students to create a subpopulation with scores that would be calculated and impact the campus performance rating. All 32 schools were Title I, meaning they had an economically disadvantaged population of 40% or higher. A Bonferroni correction was applied so all effects are reported at .0167 level of significance.

Comparisons between all students and special education students. There was a significant change in mathematics TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in all high school students, $T = 326$, $r = -0.29$, and a significant change in mathematics TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in special education students $T = 165$, $r = -0.32$ (See Table 9). As shown in Figure 18, the special education population improved from Year 1 to Year 5 creating a smaller gap between special education students and all students. Figure 19 also exhibits the 20 point gain in average scores from Year 1 to Year 5. As shown in Figure 19, during Year 1 several extreme cases were revealed in which the special education population performed much better than other campuses that year and better than the mean score for Year 5.

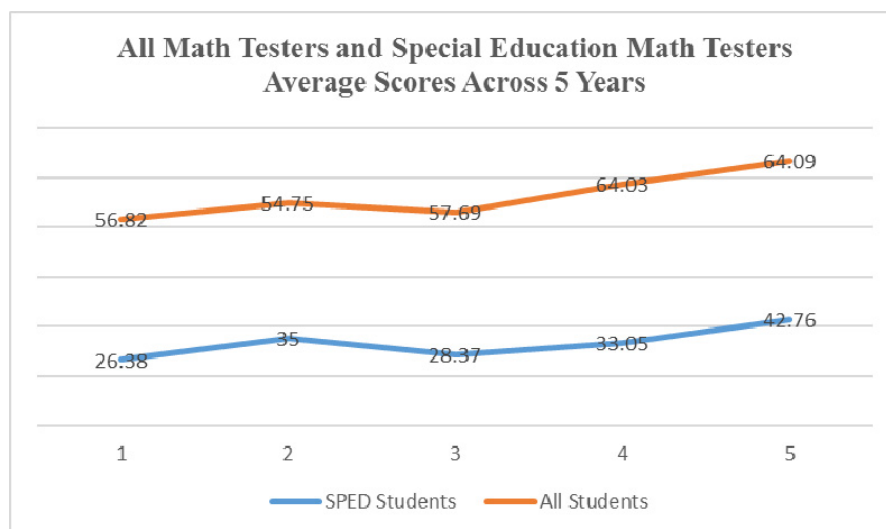


Figure 18. Special education students' performance on the mathematics test at HSTW schools over five years.

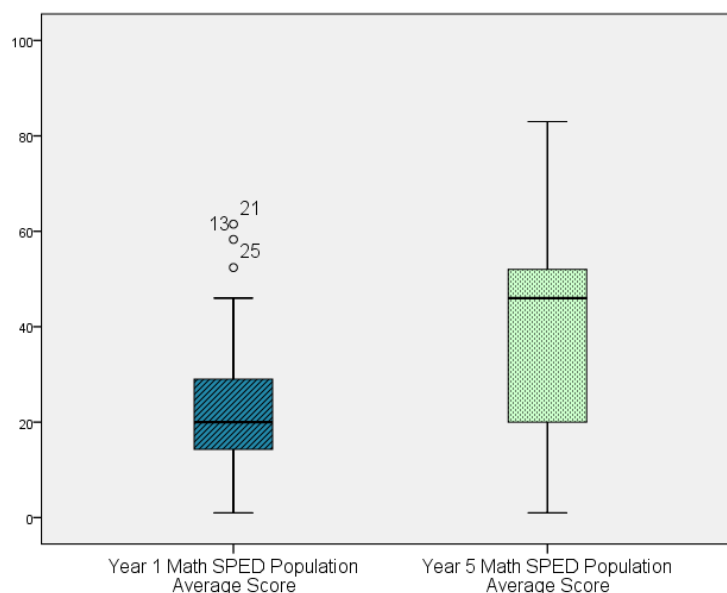


Figure 19. The average performance of special education students at HSTW schools on the mathematics TAKS test in Years 1 and 5.

Comparisons between all students and limited English proficient students. There was a significant change in mathematics TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in limited English proficient students $T = 126$, $r = -0.18$. Based on the results from the Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests, limited English proficient students had an average TAKS score of 26.16% in Year 1 and 32.79% in Year 5 (See Figures 20 and Table 9). In Year 2, all students and the limited English proficient

population's performance on the mathematics test decreased. During Year 4, the limited English proficient population's performance score was higher than that of Year 5 (See Figure 20 and Table 9). Figure 21 shows that limited English proficient students performed higher and at a broader range in Year 5 than in Year 1.

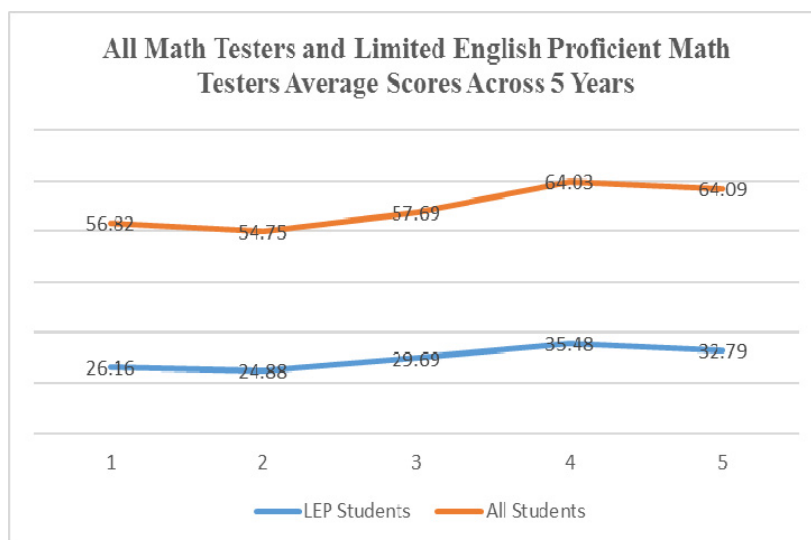


Figure 20. Limited English proficient students' performance on the mathematics test at HSTW schools over five years.

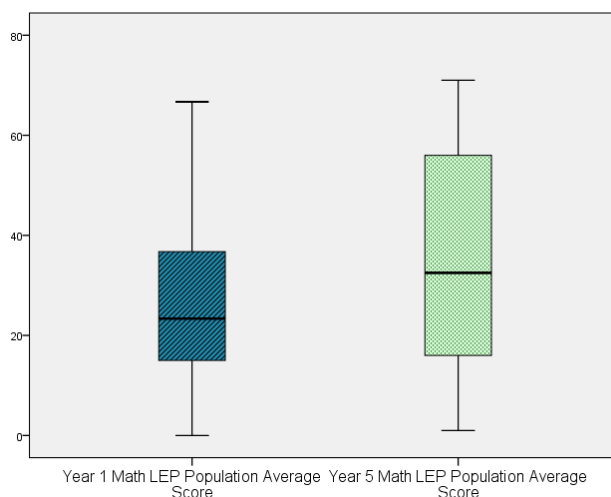


Figure 21. The average performance of limited English proficient students at HSTW schools on the mathematics TAKS test in Years 1 and 5.

Comparisons between all students and economically disadvantaged students. There was a significant change in mathematics TAKS performance from Year 1 to Year 5 in economically disadvantaged students $T = 403$, $r = -0.32$. Based on the results from the Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests, economically disadvantaged students had an average TAKS score of 50.42% in Year 1 and 59.19% in Year 5 (See Table 9). The mathematics results are similar to those of the overall population (See Figure 22). In Year 1, there was an extreme value reported in which the economically disadvantaged students performed much worse than average when compared to other schools in the study (See Figure 23). In Year 5, the boxplots show that the upper quartile of economically disadvantaged students scored at a higher range than those in Year 1. In Year 5, the median range of scores fell near the upper quartile fence for Year 1.

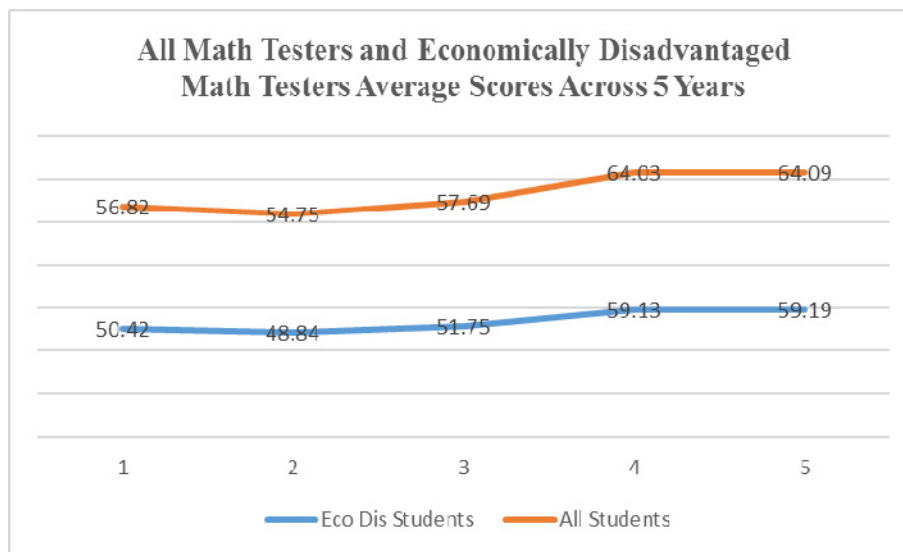


Figure 22. Economically disadvantaged students' performance on the mathematics test at HSTW schools over five years.

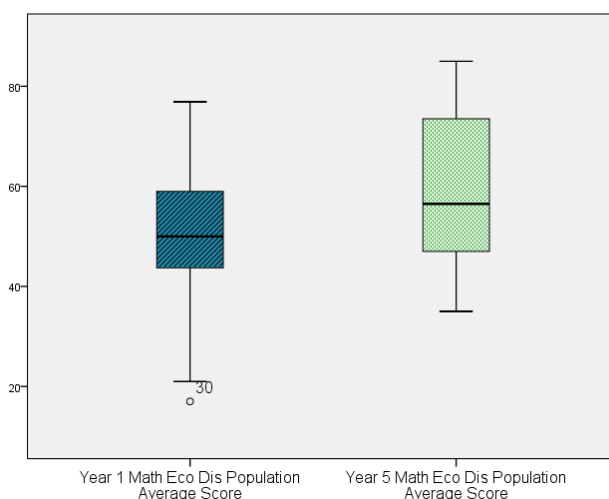


Figure 23. The average performance of economically disadvantaged students at HSTW schools on the mathematics TAKS test in Years 1 and 5.

Table 9

Mathematics Performance on TAKS for All Students and Special Populations

Student Population	Mathematics Year 1		Mathematics Year 5		Cohen's <i>d</i>	<i>z</i> ^a	<i>p</i>
	M	SD	M	SD			
All Students	56.82	14.19	64.09	13.70	-0.52	-2.336	.020
Special Education	26.38	17.66	42.76	23.18	-0.79	-2.240	.025
Limited English Proficient	26.16	14.61	32.79	22.56	-0.35	-1.248	.212
Economically Disadvantaged	50.42	13.29	59.19	14.63	-0.63	-2.590	.010

Phase I, Summary

Several questions about AEIS reports were asked to answer RQ1, “What is the difference in academic performance of Texas schools before and after HSTW was implemented?”

Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were run to compare data before and after HSTW was implemented.

Five questions were asked during Phase I of the current study about attendance rates, schools’

performance on the ELA TAKS test, schools' performance on the mathematics TAKS test, performance of all students and subpopulations on the ELA TAKS test, and performance of all students and subpopulations on the mathematics TAKS test. Based on overall results, it was determined that campuses had improved in performance after HSTW implementation had occurred.

I.1 The attendance rate in all schools from Year 1 to Year 5 was significantly different. Overall, the attendance rate had declined from Year 1 to Year 5. However, there was no significant difference in attendance rate in schools grouped by size. The attendance rate of large schools was the only group that had a slightly better attendance rate than in Year 1.

I.2 There was a significant difference in the ELA TAKS performance between Years 1 and 5 in all schools and in schools grouped by size. All students did not meet passing standard in Year 1 but did in Year 5. There was also a significant difference in ELA TAKS performance from Year 1 and Year 5 when schools were grouped by size. In Year 1, the medium-sized schools surpassed the ELA passing standard more so in small and large sized schools. In Year 5 after HSTW was implemented, all schools met and exceeded the 70% passing standard in ELA.

I.3 Queries about all students and subpopulations revealed there was a significant difference in ELA performance from Years 1 and 5 in all students, special education students, limited English proficient students, and economically disadvantaged students. Special education students met and exceeded the passing standard in Year 5 but had not done so in Year 1 before HSTW. A dramatic improvement in special education students' performance increased 33 points from Year 1 to Year 5. Limited English proficient students more than doubled their ELA performance score from Year 1 to Year 5. The gap that existed between all students and the LEP population stayed about the same in Years 1 and 5, but the LEP population improved at about the

same rate as all students. Economically disadvantaged students results are similar to all students. This subpopulation met and exceeded the ELA passing standard demonstrating an improvement in Year 5.

I.4 There was a significant difference in mathematics TAKS performance between Year 1 and 5 for all schools and in schools grouped by size. Scores improved after implementation of HSTW but just below the 65% mathematics passing standard for small and large-sized schools. No significant difference by school size existed. Although changes revealed minimal increases in the mean, only medium-sized schools achieved the passing standard in Year 5 after HSTW implementation.

I.5 Queries about all students and subpopulations revealed there was a significant difference in mathematics performance from Years 1 and 5 in all students, special education students, limited English proficient students, and economically disadvantaged students. All students and special education students performed better on the mathematics TAKS test after HSTW was implemented. In Year 5, special education students performed at a better rate of improvement from Year 1 than those in Year 5. The limited English proficient population performed better in Year 5, as well. The range of limited English proficient population's scores in Year 5 spanned wider and higher than the lower quartile fence for Year 1. In fact, the lower quartile fence for Year 5 was just below the mean for Year 1. Like in ELA, the mathematics performance rates for economically disadvantaged students were similar to that of all students. The mathematics performance rate improved from Year 1 to Year 5.

Based on these data, campuses improved in most areas after HSTW was implemented. Both ELA and mathematics performance rates improved. ELA demonstrated stronger effect sizes than in mathematics. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests revealed that significant changes occurred

yielding positive results in performance improvement at high schools after HSTW implementation.

Phase II, Administrator and Teacher Surveys

During Phase II of the current study, RQ2, “Was High Schools That Work implemented with fidelity to the program?” was answered. Ninety-one teachers and 27 administrators from 32 Texas HSTW schools completed the online CSR surveys during the summer and fall of 2014. The surveys were accessed online through Survey Monkey by Texas public school administrators and teachers at HSTW schools where it was implemented for at least three years at some time during 2005 to 2012. The *Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey* had 22 questions and the *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey* had 21 questions.

The surveys were designed to assess the following topics as they related to seven of the ten key components: commitment, program implementation, support, collaboration, and funding at HSTW schools. The following questions were asked to organize the survey data:

- II.1 At what level were teachers, principals and parents committed to the HSTW program?
- II.2 What other initiatives including other reforms and instructional strategies were undertaken during the implementation of the HSTW program?
- II.3 What was the level of support for HSTW implementation?
- II.4 What was the level of collaboration between administrators and teachers in the implementation of HSTW?
- II.5 Was funding adequate to fully implement the HSTW program?

Because the data from surveys were categorical with ordinal responses, frequency tests were run to answer Phase II questions that assessed if HSTW was implemented with fidelity. The

current study assessed seven of HSTW's ten key components. The survey section about commitment of stakeholders related to the key component about "guidance" (II.1). The survey section about support and preparation assessed the HSTW component about "Keeping score" (II.3). Survey questions about collaboration assessed the HSTW component about "Teachers working together" (II.4). The survey section regarding instruction (II.5) assessed four of the seven ten key components: academic studies, program of study, work-based learning, and students actively engaged. Questions II.2 about implementation and II.6 about funding were additional survey questions asked to further evaluate fidelity to HSTW.

II.1 Commitment. Survey responses discussed in this section detail what administrators said versus what teachers said about the level of commitment of teachers and principals, and about parental support of using HSTW?"

Teachers' commitment. When administrators responded to whether they believed most teachers in the school were fully committed to using HSTW, 66.76% agreed or strongly agreed (See Figure 24 and Table 10). Commitment to implementing a new program at a school is important as it requires a commitment from all teachers.

When teachers were asked the same question as the administrators about whether they believed most teachers in the school were fully committed to using HSTW, 55% agreed or strongly agreed (See Figure 24 and Table 10). Because more than half of the teachers were fully committed to HSTW, it was apparent that the HSTW design was structured in a way that appealed to teachers' needs.

The results shown in Figure 24 match closely. The administrators and teachers' responses were in alignment showing that teachers had mentally invested in the program.

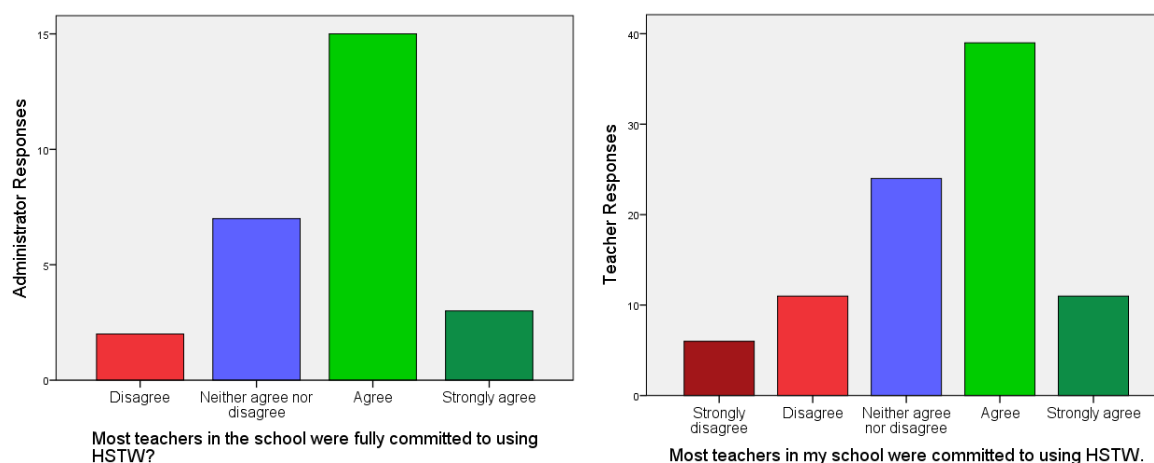


Figure 24. Administrators' and teachers' responses to if they believed teachers were fully committed to using HSTW.

Administrators' commitment. When teachers were asked if the principal of their campus was committed to using HSTW, 62.7% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed (See Figure 25).

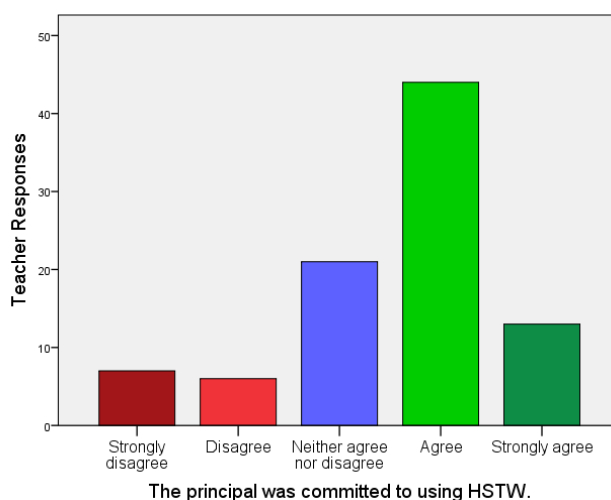


Figure 25. Teachers' response to if they believed principals were fully committed to using HSTW.

These results were nearly the same as what administrators thought about teachers' level of commitment to HSTW. See Table 10 for detailed results

Table 10

<i>Administrators' and Teachers' Beliefs in Levels of Commitment to HSTW</i>					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Administrators' belief in teachers' commitment	0	07.4	25.9	55.6	11.1
Teachers' beliefs in teachers' commitment	6.6	12.1	26.4	42.9	12.1
Teachers' beliefs in administrators' commitment	7.7	06.6	23.1	48.4	14.3

Note. Results in this table pertain to administrator survey question number 22 and teacher survey question number 20.

Parental Support. Survey responses discussed in this section detail what administrators said about whether parents were supportive of HSTW. When administrators responded to whether they believed most parents of the children at the school were supportive of the HSTW program, 70% of administrators agreed or strongly agreed (Table 11 and Figure 26).

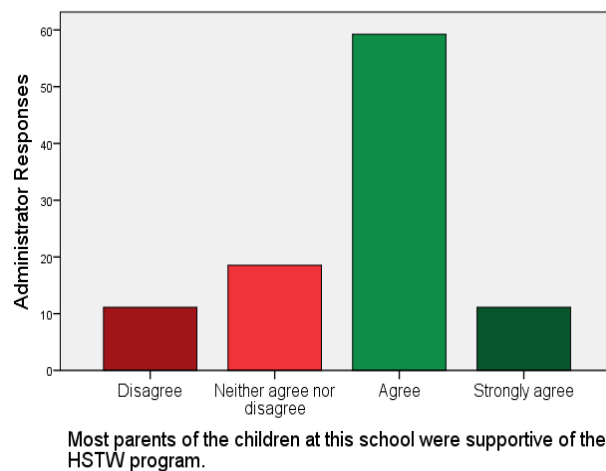


Figure 26. Administrators' responses to the statement about parental support of HSTW.

Administrators gave their best estimates of the percentage of parents who volunteered in the classroom at least once a year. About half the administrators (48.1%) reported that 1–25% of parents volunteered in the classroom during the years of HSTW implementation (Table 11 and Figure 27).

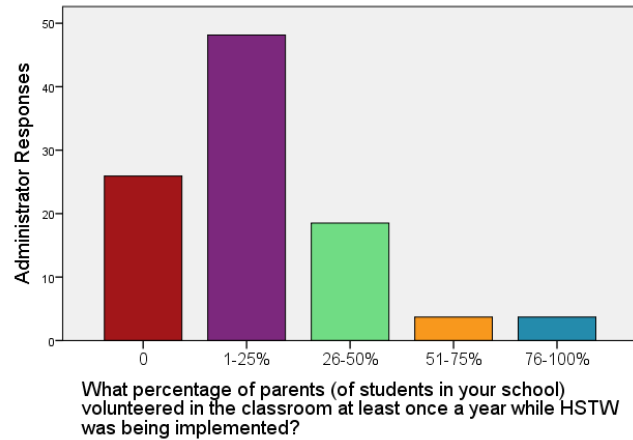


Figure 27. Administrators' responses to the percentage of time parents volunteered in the classroom during HSTW implementation.

About one-third of administrators (33.3%) reported that 26–50% of parents attended special events while another one-third of administrators (37%) reported that 51–75% of parents attended special events (Table 11 and Figure 28).

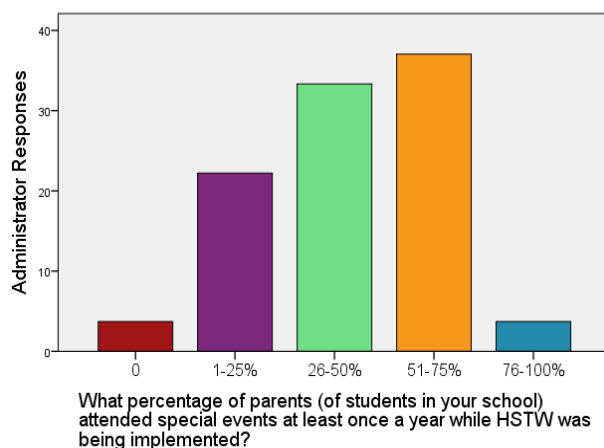


Figure 28. Administrators' responses to the percentage of parents who attended special events at least once annually during HSTW implementation.

About 40% of administrators (40.7%) responded that 1–25% of parents attended parent education workshops. One third of administrators reported that 26–50% of parents attended parent education workshops (Table 11 and Figure 29). Parent education workshops may range from sessions with counselors regarding course credit attainment to showing parents how to teach their children study habits.

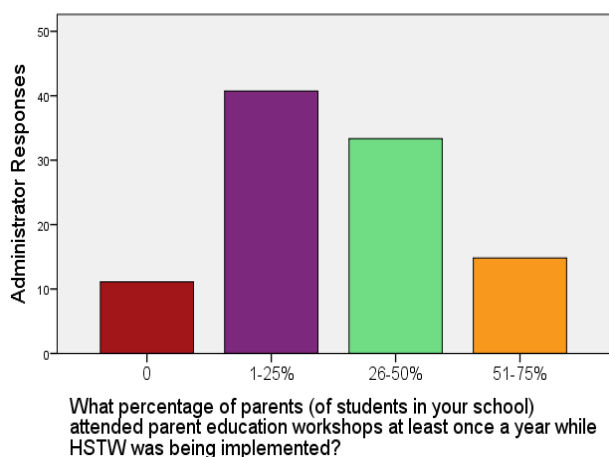


Figure 29. Administrators' responses to the percentage of parents who attended parent education workshops at least once annually during HSTW implementation.

By a rate of 66.7% of administrators responded that 1–25% of parents attended school committees or working groups. Almost a quarter of administrators (22.2%) reported that 26–50% of parents attended school committees or working groups (Table 11 and Figure 30). Results fell at the lower end of the bar chart for parent involvement in school committees or working groups.

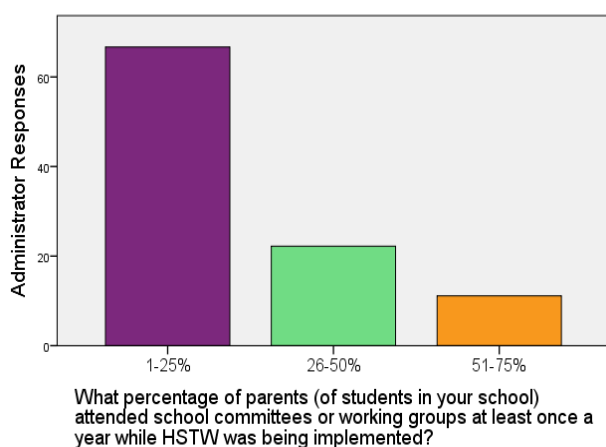


Figure 30. Administrators' responses to the percentage of parents who attended school committees or working groups at least once annually during HSTW implementation.

Table 11

Administrators' Beliefs in Parents' Support of HSTW

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	0	11.1	18.5	59.3	11.1
Belief that most parents were supportive of HSTW	0%	1–25%	26–50%	51–75%	76–100%
Volunteered in the classroom	25.9	48.1	18.5	03.7	03.7
Attended special events	03.7	22.2	33.3	37.0	03.7
Attended parent education workshops	11.1	40.7	33.3	14.8	0

Note. Results in this table pertain to administrator survey question number 22.

II.1 Summary. Administrators reported that most parents supported the HSTW program. Results for the percentages of parents who volunteered in the classroom or attended school committee working groups were similar. Trends from the data showed that parents attended special events or activities that were not connected to the classroom more so than activities that involve a higher level of engagement.

II.2 Program implementation. Survey responses discussed in this section detail what other initiatives including other reforms and instructional strategies were undertaken during HSTW implementation.

In evaluating the effectiveness of HSTW, it was important to consider if other reform programs were being implemented simultaneously. Eight of the 27 administrators responded that at least one other program was being implemented in conjunction with HSTW. To truly evaluate the effectiveness of HSTW at high schools, one had to consider what changes could be attributed to HSTW versus what impact those other programs might have had. First, teachers responded to survey questions related to the number of initiatives at their schools.

The next series of survey questions were posed to teachers about the nature of HSTW implementation at their schools. Teachers responded to a Likert scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree about statements related to their schools' initiatives.

When teachers responded to a survey question asking if many special initiatives had come and gone in their school, nearly half of them (50.6%) responded they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (Table 12). However, more than two-thirds of high schools implemented HSTW as their only CSR. Perhaps other special initiatives implemented were strategic actions put in place to assist with improving student achievement but were not considered CSR.

Other reform initiatives. About one-half of teachers (48.4%) agreed that once a new initiative was started the faculty and administrators followed up to make sure the initiative worked (Table 12 and Figure 31). This percentage is similar to the percentage of teachers who agreed that other reforms had been implemented in conjunction with HSTW. It is remarkable that even though teachers said that many special initiatives would come and go, they continued to follow up on them to make sure they worked. Some of these special initiatives may have included starting after school programs or other interventions.

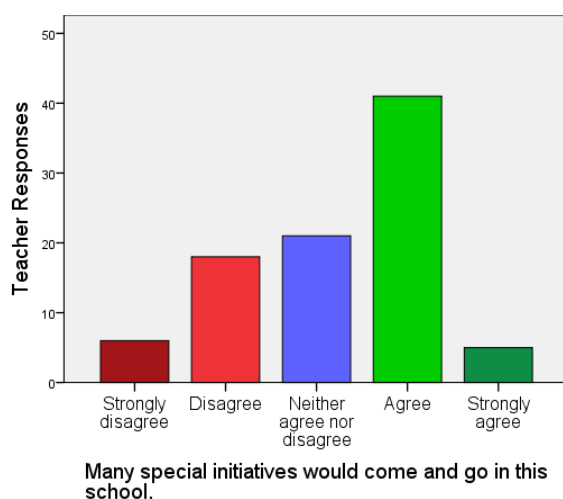


Figure 31. Teachers' responses to if many special initiatives would come and go.

About 33.3% of teachers agreed with the statement there were so many academic initiatives at their school they could not keep track of them all (Table 12 and Figure 32). Responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree were spread similarly.

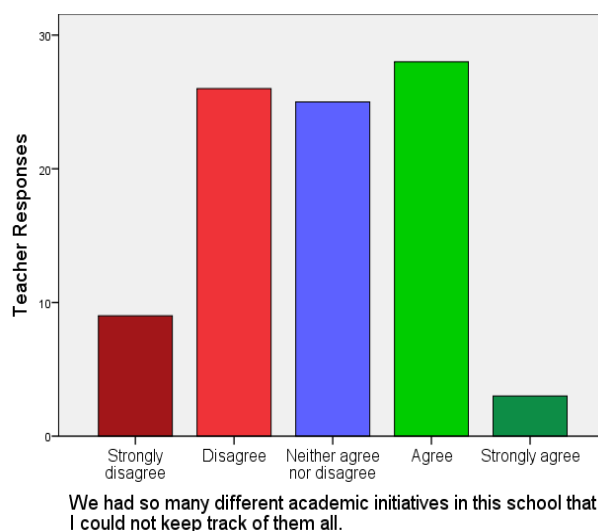


Figure 32. Teachers' responses to if there were too many initiatives in place.

Data from survey respondents who answered at a rate of 50.6% agreed or strongly agreed they followed up on initiatives can be compared with the responses here, in which almost 45% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement or were neutral. There were almost an even amount of responses for or against the statement when considering that just as many respondents selected they neither agreed nor disagreed (See Figure 33).

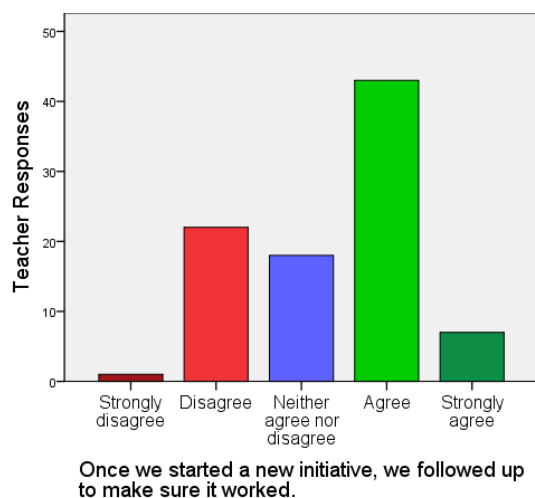


Figure 33. Teachers' responses to if their school team followed up on initiatives they started to make sure they worked.

Table 12

<i>Teachers Responses About Other Initiatives</i>					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Special initiatives come and go	06.6	19.8	23.1	45.1	05.5
Many initiatives implemented	09.9	28.6	27.5	30.8	03.3
Sustained new initiatives	01.1	24.2	19.8	47.3	07.7

Note. Results in this table pertain to teacher survey question number 10.

Administrators were asked a question about whether the state and/or district policies and regulations impeded the school's efforts to implement HSTW. Only 11.1% of the administrators agreed the statement was true (Table 13 and Figure 34). Based on these results, most high schools in the current study perceived district support. Because so many constraints can be placed on schools from the district and state level, it is worthy to note how much district support these HSTW schools received.

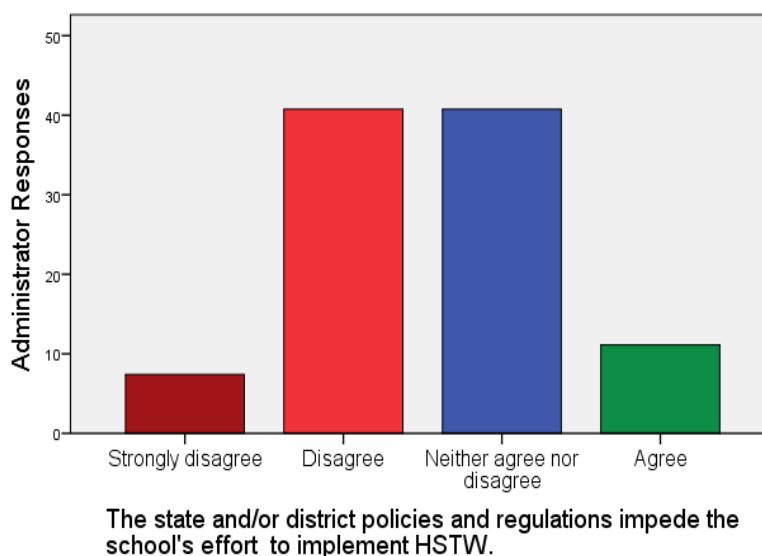


Figure 34. Administrators' response to the statement "The state and/or district policies and regulations impede the school's effort to implement HSTW."

When administrators were asked questions about different types of district support, all results were the same. When administrators were asked if the district conducted or assisted with a needs assessment related to HSTW, provided or arranged for professional development pertaining to HSTW, were granted in-service days or release time to spend on HSTW activities, supported HSTW implementation by having a district staff member participate in the HSTW training, 81.5% of administrators responded "Yes" (See Table 13).

Table 13

<i>Administrators' Perceptions of Beliefs in District Support of HSTW Implementation</i>					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The state and/or district policies and regulations impede the school's efforts to implement HSTW.	07.4	40.7	40.7	11.1	0
	NO		YES		
A needs assessment related to HSTW was conducted		18.5		81.5	
The district provided or arranged for HSTW professional development		18.5		81.5	
A district staff member participated in HSTW training		18.5		81.5	
The district granted additional time for HSTW initiatives		18.5		81.5	

Note. Results in this table pertain to administrator survey question number 19.

The next two questions asked of administrators are regarding the ease of implementation of HSTW. Teachers responded to a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

When teachers responded to the statement, "The structure of HSTW made it difficult to use in my classroom," about 25% agreed and strongly agreed that the statement was true. Another 46.2% of teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed, leaving about 29% responding neutral (Table 14 and Figure 35). When teachers responded to the statement, "HSTW materials were easy to use, more than half of the teachers (61.6%) agreed and strongly agreed (Table 14 and Figure 36). When comparing results from these two questions, the majority of respondents reported that HSTW was easy to use.

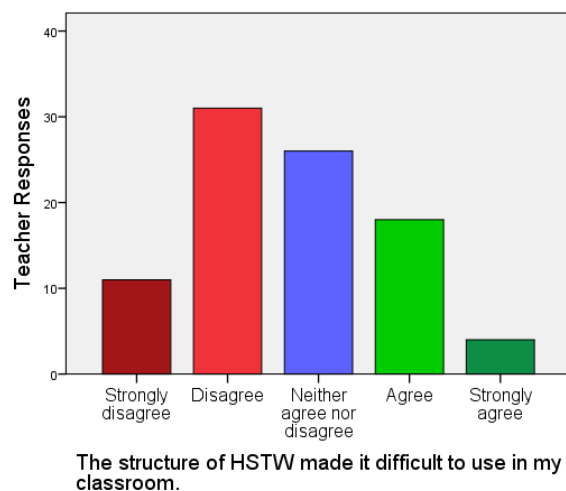


Figure 35. Teachers' responses to if they believed the structure of HSTW made it difficult to use in the classroom.

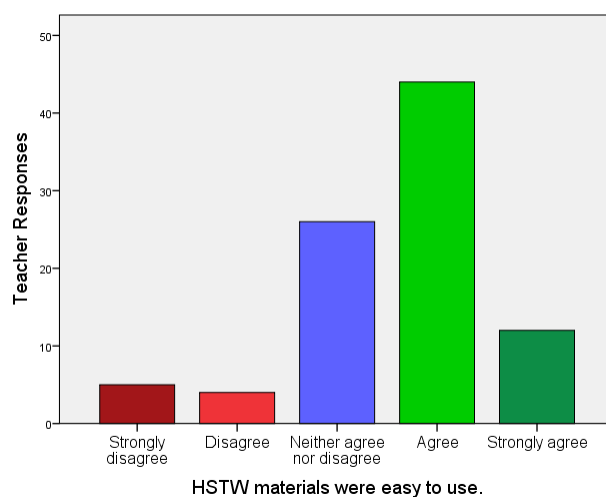


Figure 36. Teachers' responses to if they believed HSTW materials were easy to use.

Table 14

<i>Teachers' Beliefs in Ease Implementation</i>					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The structure of HSTW made it difficult to use in my classroom.	12.1	34.1	28.6	19.8	04.4
HSTW materials were easy to use.	05.5	04.4	28.6	48.4	13.2

Note. Results in this table pertain to teacher survey question number 20.

Survey questions here demonstrate what teachers said about the quality of instructional time. When teachers were asked to determine the amount of instructional time devoted to thematic instruction, an almost even percentage said they spent either 1–75% of their time on thematic instruction (Table 15 and Figure 37). Thematic instruction is a method in which teachers organize many concepts around a specific topic for students to draw connections.

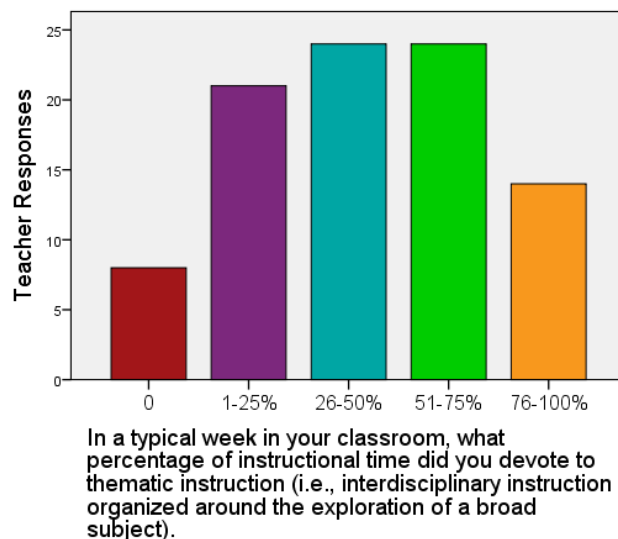


Figure 37. Teachers' responses to the percentage of instructional time spent weekly on thematic instruction.

Teachers were asked what percentage of instructional time they devoted to hands-on activities. About 35% said they had devoted 26–50% of their instructional time. Nearly the same number of teachers (34.1%) reported they had devoted 51–75% of instructional time to hands-on activities (Table 15 and Figure 38). The majority of teachers fell within the 26–75% range of allowing students to participate actively.

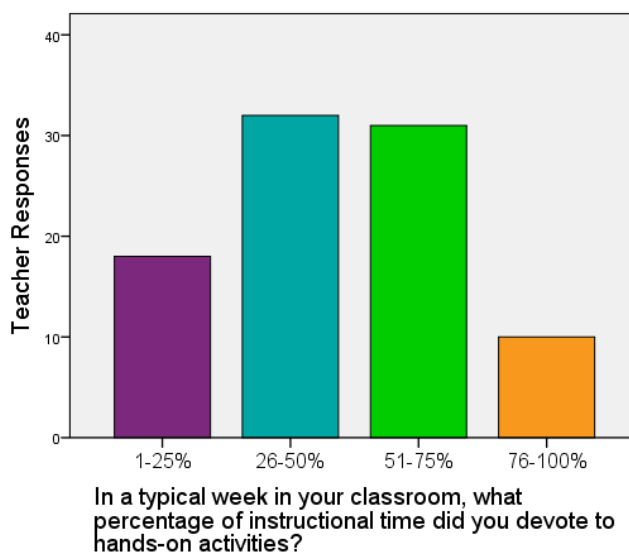


Figure 38. Teachers' responses to the percentage of instructional time spent weekly on hands-on activities.

When teachers were asked what percentage of instructional time they devoted to allowing students to practice higher order thinking skills, almost half of the teachers reported they spent 51–75% of their instructional time devoted to this practice (Table 15 and Figure 39).

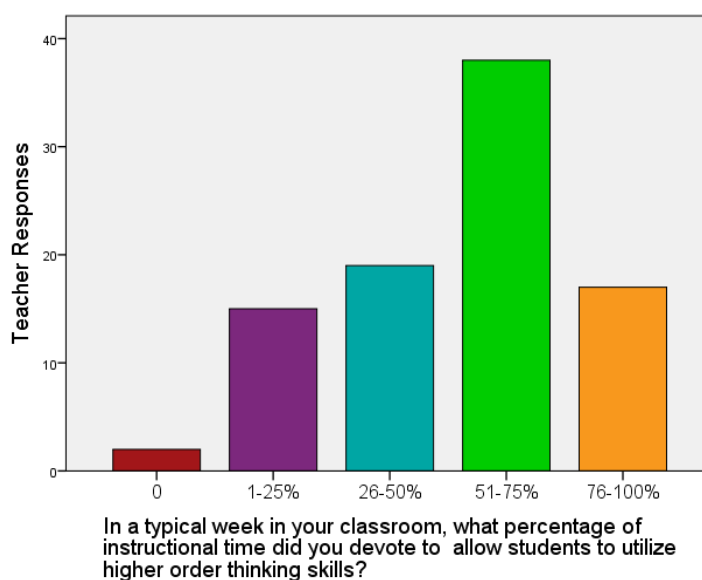


Figure 39. Teachers' responses to the percentage of instructional time spent weekly on allowing students to utilize higher order thinking skills.

Of the 91 teachers who participated in the study, 31.9% of them reported they allowed 1–25% of class time to students' individual exploration. Other teachers (36.3%) reported they spent 26–50% of their time on it (Table 15 and Figure 40). Time for students' individual exploration gives learners opportunities to problem solve.

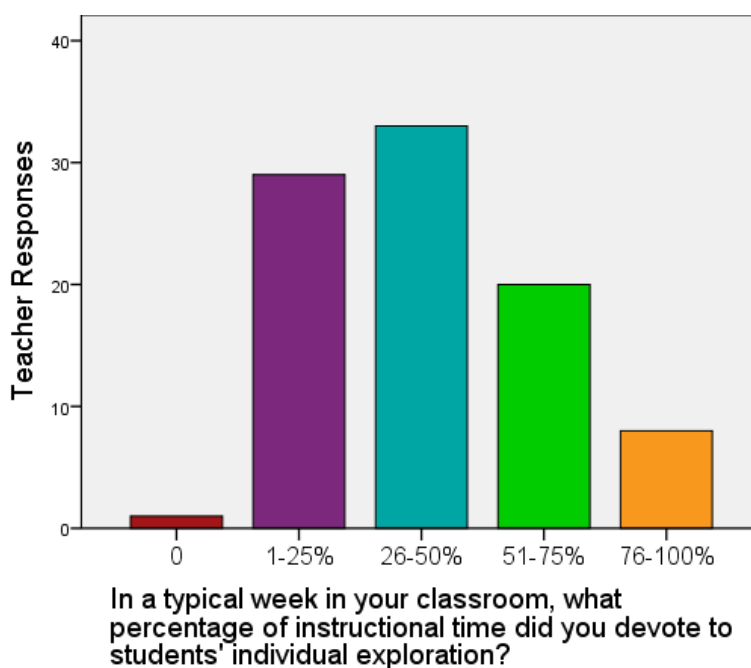


Figure 40. Teachers' responses to the percentage of instructional time spent weekly on students' individual exploration.

One of the teacher survey questions was asked to determine the average amount of instructional time teachers devoted to activities based on real-life situations. Most teachers (38.5%) reported they had devoted 26–50% of their instructional time on these types of activities (Table 15 and Figure 41).

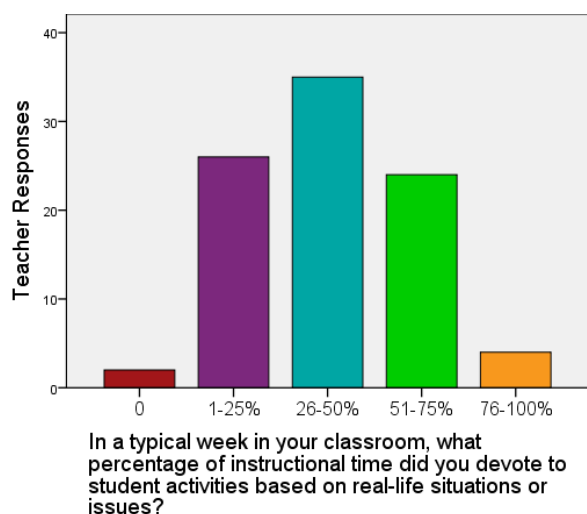


Figure 41. Teachers' responses to the percentage of instructional time spent weekly on students' activities based on real life.

A teacher survey question was asked about how much instructional time teachers devoted to activities connected to students' unique backgrounds and interest. About 36% reported devoting 26–50% of their instructional time and another one-third of teachers (34.1%) reported they had devoted between 1–25% of instructional time to activities related to students' backgrounds and interests (Table 15 and Figure 42).

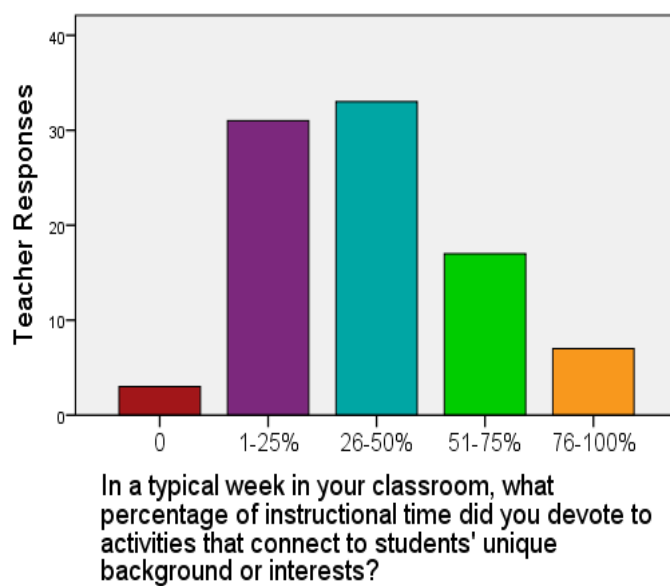


Figure 42. Teachers' responses to the percentage of instructional time spent weekly on activities connected to students' unique backgrounds or interests.

Table 15

Teachers' Response to the Amount of Time they spent typically in a week on Particular Instructional Activities in their Classrooms

	0%	1–25%	26–50%	51–75%	76–100%
Time devoted to thematic instruction	08.8	23.1	26.4	26.4	15.4
Time devoted to hands-on activities	0	19.8	35.2	34.1	11.0
Time devoted to student's using higher ordering thinking skills	02.2	16.5	20.9	41.8	18.7
Time devoted to students' individual exploration	01.1	31.9	36.3	22.0	08.8
Time devoted to activities based on real-life	02.2	28.6	38.5	26.4	04.4

situations or
issues

Time devoted to
activities that
connect to
students' unique
background or
interests

03.3

34.1

36.3

18.7

07.7

Note. Results in this table pertain to teacher survey question number 5.

II.2 Summary. About three-fourths of administrators reported that no other program was being implemented in conjunction with HSTW. Teachers reported that even though there seemed to be too many initiatives in place, they still worked to ensure success. After culminating the data, it was surmised that smaller initiatives that were not CSR might have been started at many of the schools.

On several survey questions about district support, administrators reported that district staff members were instrumental in helping them implement and sustain their programs. Administrators reported by more than 80% that district staff members conducted or assisted with completing a HSTW-related needs assessment, arranged for HSTW-related professional development, and granted release time to teachers to participate in training.

The majority of teachers reported they did collaborate with principals. Collaboration between teachers and principals tended to be less than monthly. Three quarters of the teachers reported that HSTW was easy to use. Teachers reported similar results when asked if the HSTW materials were easy to use, as well. Both teachers and administrators responses suggested they had positive experiences while implementing the program.

Teachers were asked six survey questions about instructional strategies that were developed while implementing HSTW. Very few teachers reported they implemented any of the instructional strategies 76–100% of the time. Most teachers reported they implemented particular

instructional strategies such as higher order thinking skills between 1% and 75% of the time. Teachers allowing students to utilize higher order thinking skills was shown to be the instructional strategy most commonly used by teachers for at least 51–75% of the time. Teachers also trended towards allowing for students to participate in hands-on activities and work on assignments that were related to real-life and to individual interests. A small percentage of teachers reported never utilizing any of the instructional strategies.

II.3 Support. The next series of survey questions posed to administrators are regarding district actions in implementing the HSTW program. These questions were only posed to administrators as they have a direct relationship with district level staff. If teachers had been asked, their responses may have been negative as their interactions with district staff regarding implementing a new program would have been limited.

Survey questions discussed in this section detail what administrators said versus what teachers said about how often they met with someone to facilitate implementation of HSTW. The same question was asked of administrators and teachers about how many times they met with staff members whose formal responsibility included coordinating HSTW activities. Administrators and teachers responses have not been compared as the responses are not expected to be the same. Four additional questions follow that asked only administrators about the level of support they had received from external consultants. The external consultant role refers to an HSTW consultant.

The next four survey questions asked teachers about principals' actions that would support fidelity to the program. These questions speak directly to the level of support the administrators would have provided to teachers during HSTW implementation. Teachers responded to a Likert scale about the amount of time administrators provided support.

When teachers were asked if administrators had observed their classrooms looking specifically at the implementation of HSTW, the majority of teachers (33%), reported they had been observed every grading period. Another 25.3% of teachers reported they had been observed about monthly (Table 16 and Figure 43).

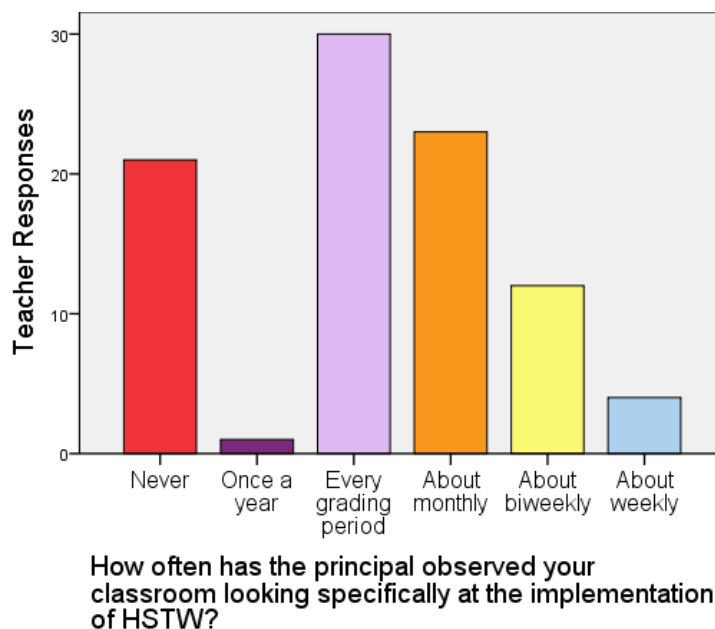


Figure 43. Teachers' responses to how often the principal visited their classroom to observe for HSTW components.

When teachers were asked if administrators had reviewed their students' assessments with them to determine if they were following the recommendations of HSTW, a little more than a quarter of teachers (28.6%) reported they had met with an administrator every grading period. By a rate of 20.9% of teachers reported they had met with an administrator monthly (Table 16 and Figure 44).

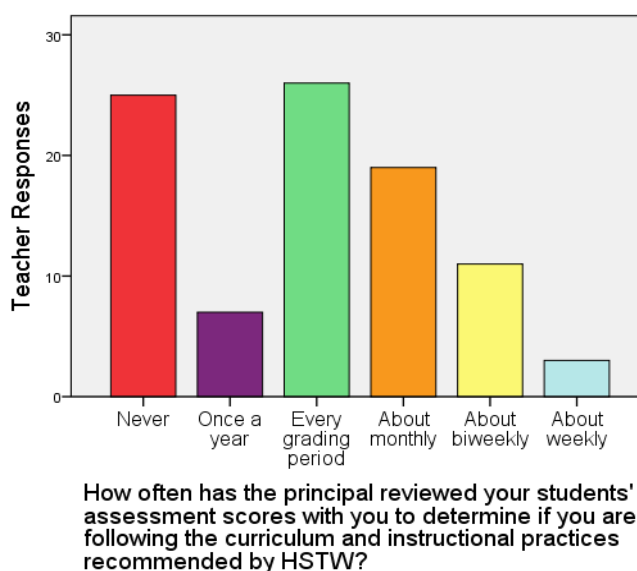


Figure 44. Teachers' responses to how often principals reviewed assessment scores to determine if HSTW curriculum and instructional practices were followed.

When teachers were asked if administrators had held meetings with them individually or with other teachers to discuss issues related to following the curriculum and instructional practices of HSTW, 29.7% of them selected that principals had never held meetings with them individually or with a group of teachers (Table 16 and Figure 45). The remaining 70% of teachers had met with an administrator at least once during the school year.

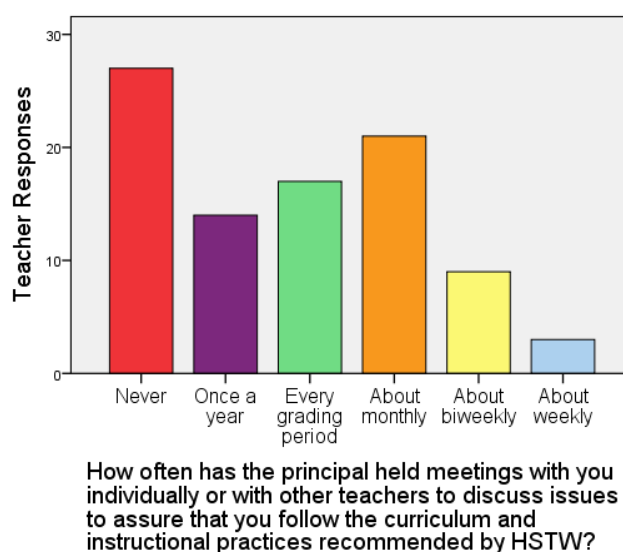


Figure 45. Teachers' responses to how often the principal held meetings with them or other teachers to assure that HSTW's curriculum and instructional practices were followed.

When teachers were asked if administrators had asked a model specialist (internal or external) to help them as teachers implement or sustain HSTW, many of the teachers (37.4%) responded that this had not ever happened. Over 50% of teachers reported that the principal had asked a model specialist to assist (Table 16 and Figure 46).

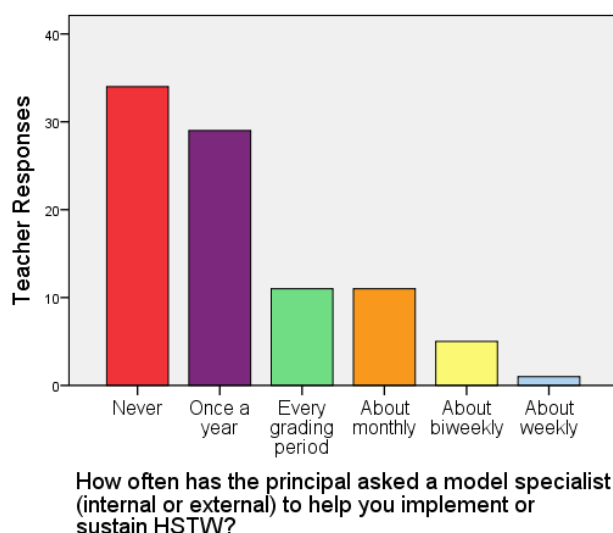


Figure 46. Teachers' responses to how often the principal asked a model specialist to help with implementation or sustainability of HSTW.

Table 16

Teachers' Responses about the Level of Support Provided to them by Principals

	Never	Once a year	Every grading period	About monthly	About biweekly	About weekly
Frequency of classroom observations by the principal	23.1	01.1	33.0	25.3	13.2	04.4
Frequency of state assessment reviews with the principal	27.5	07.7	28.6	20.9	12.1	03.3
Frequency of individual or group meetings with the principal	29.7	15.4	18.7	23.1	09.9	03.3
Frequency of times the principal asked a model specialist to support you	37.4	31.9	12.1	12.1	5.5	01.1

Note. Results in this table pertain to teacher survey question number 19.

A survey question was posed asking administrators to approximate the average number of times they met with a staff member annually whose formal responsibility included coordinating HSTW activities. Forty-eight percent of administrators reported they had met with a staff member whose formal responsibility included coordinating HSTW activities between 6 to 20 times in a year while, only 11% responded never (Table 17 and Figure 47). Based on these data it became apparent that the administrator had usually appointed one or several school leaders to oversee the implementation of HSTW.

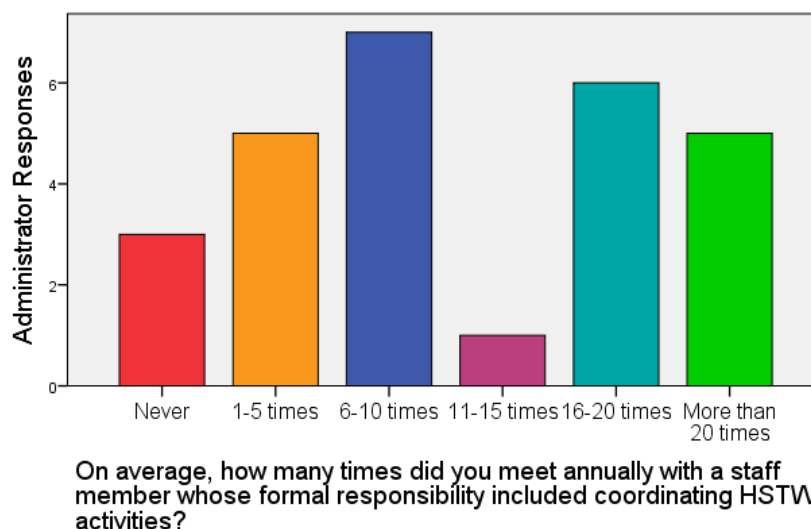


Figure 47. Administrators' responses to how many times they met annually with a staff member whose formal responsibility was to coordinate HSTW.

Teachers were asked a survey question similar to the administrators regarding how many times they had met with a staff member whose formal responsibility included coordinating HSTW activities. As it would appear in Figure 48, the majority of teachers reported they had met 1–5 times. However, results were almost evenly selected for whether teachers met 6–10 times, 11–15 times, or 15–20 times (See Table 17). Collectively, this supports that teachers mostly met more than five times. Teachers who met more than 20 times outnumbered teachers who responded they had never met. These data support that regularly scheduled meetings were likely in place.

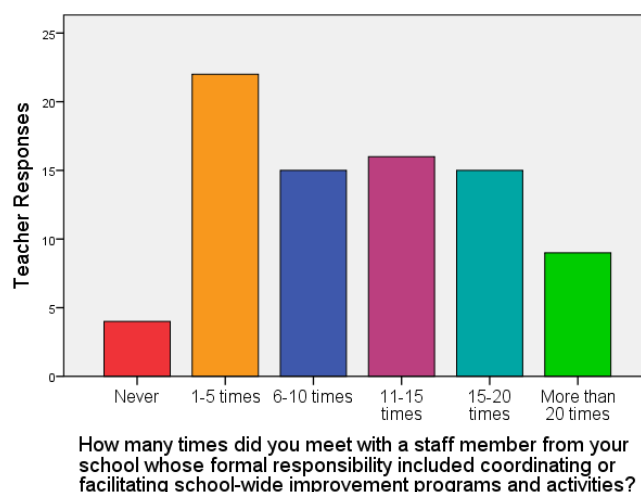


Figure 48. Teachers' responses to how many times they met annually with a staff member whose formal responsibility was to coordinate HSTW.

Table 17

Administrators' and Teachers' Responses to How Many Times they Met with a HSTW Staff Member

	Never	1–5 times	6–10 times	11–15 times	16–20 times	More than 20 times
Frequency of times an administrator interacted with a staff member who coordinated HSTW	11.1	18.5	25.9	03.7	22.2	18.5
Frequency of times a teacher interacted with a staff member who coordinated HSTW	15.4	24.2	16.5	17.6	16.5	09.9

Note. Results in this table pertain to administrator survey question number 12 and teacher survey question number 14.

Administrators were asked four questions regarding support from external consultants.

The purpose for gathering these data were to reveal on average the level of support HSTW

provided to administrators. Administrators responded “Yes”, “No”, or “N/A” for not applicable

to the series of questions. The “N/A” option was adopted from the original RAND survey adapted for use in the current study. An explanation for the meaning “N/A” was not provided other than it referring to the abbreviation “not applicable.” The only assumption that can be made for its meaning is that the answer did not apply to respondents.

Administrators were asked if they had met with an external consultant to help interpret results of students’ assessment data. Three times as many administrators (63%) responded “Yes” (Table 18). Only two of the 27 administrators who participated in the survey never interacted with an external consultant to interpret students’ assessment data.

When administrators were asked if an external consultant had assessed the progress the school was making in sustaining HSTW, administrators responded “Yes” by 77.8% (Table 18). These results demonstrated that more than three quarters of the administrators had worked with an external consultant to assess sustainability. Reviewing data is a common and crucial factor for administrators and teachers to consider. In high schools where students’ performance on TAKS must improve, reviewing data to become knowledgeable about students’ academic needs was crucial.

The majority of administrators (81.5%) selected “Yes” when asked if an external consultant had observed teachers in the classroom (Table 18).

When administrators responded to whether an external consultant had helped align HSTW with state standards, 66.7% of them selected “Yes” (Table 18).

Table 18

Administrators' Responses Regarding Collaborating with External HSTW Consultants

	NO	YES	N/A
Helped you with interpreting student assessment data	22.2	63.0	14.8
Assessed the progress you were making sustaining HSTW	07.4	77.8	14.8
Observed teachers in classrooms	03.7	81.5	14.8
Helped align HSTW with the state standards	18.5	66.7	14.8

Note. Results in this table pertain to administrator survey question number 17.

Like administrators, teachers were asked questions about their interactions with external consultants. When teachers responded to if an external consultant had coordinated or prepared their teaching materials for school-wide improvement programs or activities, 47.3% of teachers reported “Yes” (Table 19).

About the same number of teachers reported “No” or “N/A.”

Fifty-six teachers, 61.5% of the total number of teachers who responded to whether an external consultant had answered their questions about school-wide improvement programs or activities selected “Yes” (Table 19).

Teachers often participate in professional development to support their growth as highly qualified teachers certified to teach in their subject area. Teachers were asked if the HSTW related professional development they received had helped them use the program. They responded to a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. At a rate of 62.7%,

teachers agreed or strongly agreed suggesting that most teachers in the current study attended HSTW related professional development. Results are shown in (Table 19 and Figure 49).

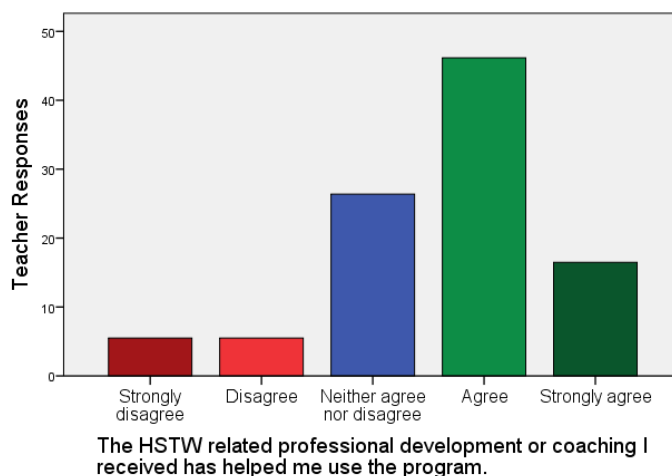


Figure 49. Teachers' responses to if the HSTW related professional development or coaching they received helped.

Table 19

Teachers' Perspectives on Quality of Support from HSTW

Teachers' Collaborating with HSTW Consultants			NO	YES	N/A
Coordinated or prepared your teaching materials			27.5	47.3	25.3
Answered questions about school-wide improvement			13.2	61.5	25.3
			Neither agree nor disagree		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree		Agree	Strongly agree
Professional development or coaching helped me use the program	05.5	05.5	26.4	46.2	16.5

Note. Results in this table pertain to teacher survey question number 17.

II.3 Summary. When teachers and administrators were asked about the level of support for HSTW implementation, teachers responded to multiple questions. About half of

administrators reported they met between 6 to 20 times annually with a staff member whose formal responsibility included implementing HSTW. Based on these data, most schools in the current study had assigned a campus or district staff member with the responsibility of leading implementation. Most teachers reported they met more than 20 times with staff members leading one to conclude that regularly scheduled meetings were in place.

Administrators were asked about the support they received from HSTW external consultants. They reported that external consultants were instrumental in reviewing students' assessments and aligning HSTW expectations with state standards. High school staff reported that most HSTW activities had been monitored and assessed for achieving desired progress. Half of the teachers who completed the survey reported the same findings as administrators when they reported that the external consultants had prepared their teaching materials to ensure they followed HSTW protocols. Both teachers and administrators seemed to have positive and productive relationships with external consultants. Only 11% of teachers reported never interacting with external consultants.

II.4 Collaboration. Survey responses here demonstrate what administrators said about how often they participated in a working group, curriculum and instruction as opposed to what teachers said about how often they as teachers participated?

Working groups. In curriculum and instruction working groups, teachers and administrators collaborate about the standards that are being taught and what concepts students have grasped versus what concepts with which students have had difficulty. Forty-four percent of administrators reported they participated in a curriculum and instruction working group on a weekly basis. Thirty-three percent of administrators at other HSTW schools reported they spent time in curriculum and instruction working groups at least monthly. At most, 33.3% of teachers

reported they participated biweekly (Table 20 and Figure 50).

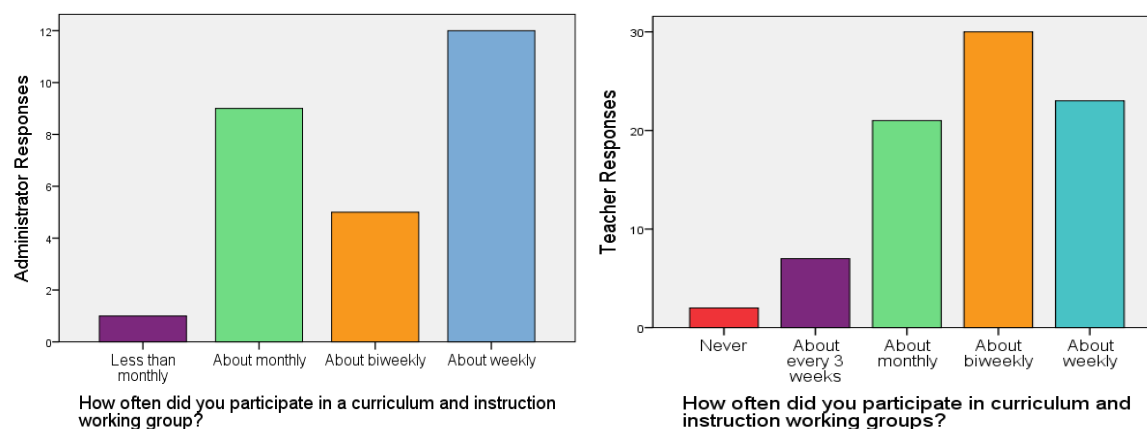


Figure 50. Administrators' and teachers' responses to how often they participated in curriculum and instruction working groups.

Table 20

Report of How Often Principals and Teachers Reported Participation in a Curriculum and Instruction Working Group

	Never	Less than monthly	About monthly	About biweekly	About weekly	N/A
Frequency of administrators' participation in curriculum and instruction working groups	0	03.7	33.3	18.5	44.4	0
Frequency of teachers' participation in curriculum and instruction working groups	02.2	07.7	23.1	33.0	25.3	08.8

Note. Results in this table pertain to administrator survey question number 6 and teacher survey question number 9.

Teacher collaboration. When teachers were asked how frequently they met with other teachers to assess school needs, teachers responded to a Likert scale on whether they never met, met about annually, about once a grading period, about monthly, or about weekly. The results to

the survey questions exhibited in Table 21 and Figure 51 show that the majority of teachers (35.2%) reported they met to assess school needs about once a grading period. This was followed by 28.6% of teachers saying they met to assess school needs about monthly.

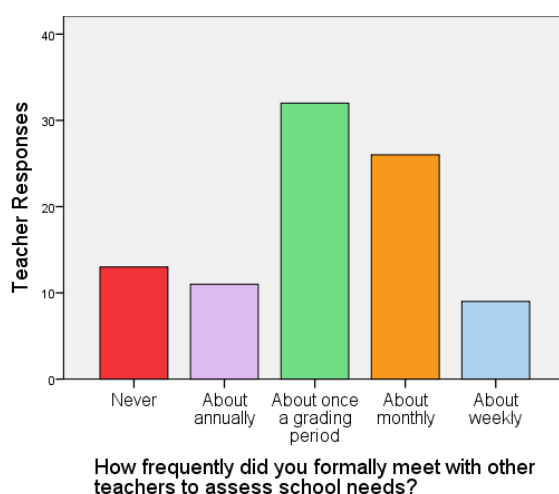


Figure 51. Teachers' responses to how frequently they met with other teachers to assess school needs.

Setting goals can be a strategic exercise for educators to plan for desired outcomes. In a survey question, teachers were asked how frequently they met with other teachers to set school goals. Teachers selected if they never met, met about annually, about once a grading period, about monthly, or about weekly. Responses to three of the options were similar. Based on these data, most teachers had met one to ten times in a school year. About 75% of teachers account for almost an even split of three different responses to how often teachers met to set school goals. Only 17% of teachers reported never meeting (Table 21 and Figure 52).

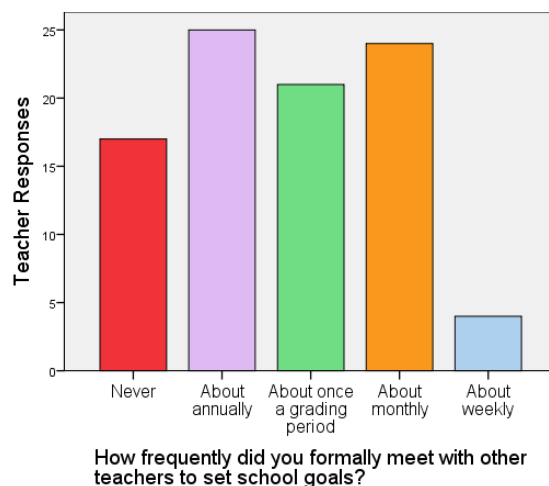


Figure 52. Teachers' responses to how frequently they formally met with other teachers to set school goals.

Following up to monitor if school goals were being met seemed to be a common practice for most. When teachers were asked how frequently they met with other teachers to implement plans to meet school goals, most teachers (36.3%) reported they met about monthly. Other teachers 27.5% reported they met about once a grading period, which is at least a meeting every nine weeks grading period of four grading periods in a school year (Table 21 and Figure 53).

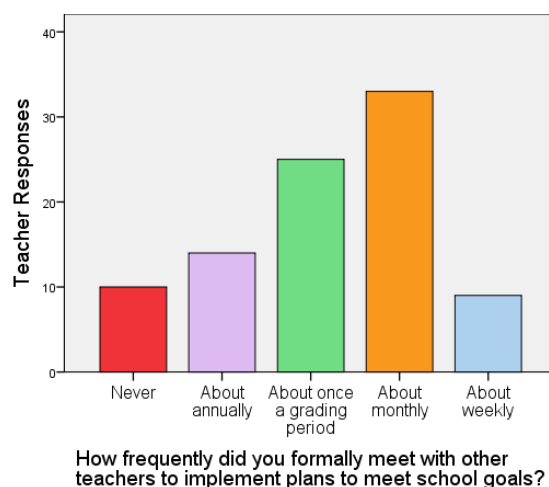


Figure 53. Teachers' responses to how frequently they formally met with other teachers to implement plans to meet school goals.

Teachers were asked in a survey about how frequently they met to develop or revise a curriculum. The results to the survey questions are exhibited in Table 21 and Figure 54. The

same number of teachers (27.5%) responded they had met about once a grading period or about weekly. Slightly less than one-fourth of the teachers (22%) responded they had met monthly.

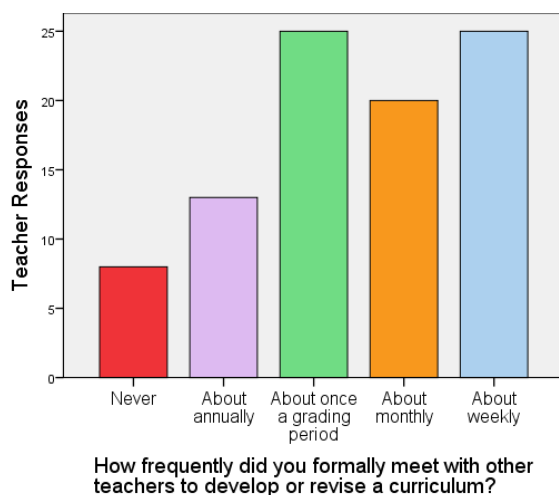


Figure 54. Teachers' responses to how frequently they formally met with other teachers to develop or revise a curriculum.

Teachers responded to how frequently they met with other teachers to develop or review a student assessment. Reviewing student assessments is necessary for planning future interventions that may include activities such as a reading program or scheduling students for tutoring. About 85% of the teachers who responded to this survey reported they met at least four times during the school year, monthly or about weekly (Table 21 and Figure 55). HSTW activities include reviewing student's assessments with an external consultant or during TAV.

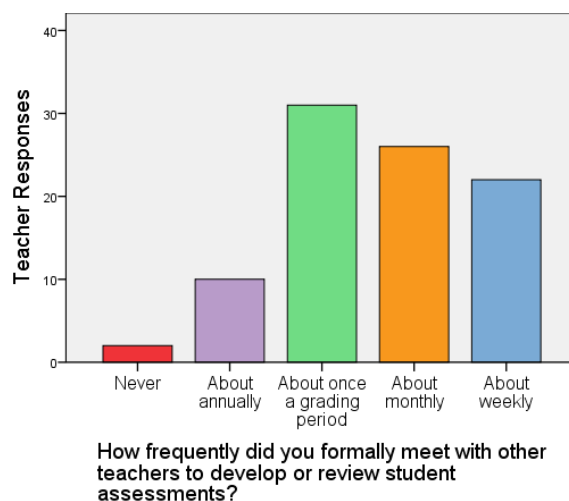


Figure 55. Teachers' responses to how frequently they formally met with other teachers to develop or review student assessments.

Nearly half the teachers (42.9%) at the Texas HSTW schools in the current study reported they met with other teachers about weekly to discuss or practice instructional strategies (Table 21 and Figure 56). About a quarter of the teachers (26.4%) reported they met at least monthly. The majority of teachers at different high schools met at least weekly to discuss instructional strategies indicating that weekly collaboration times were possibly set.

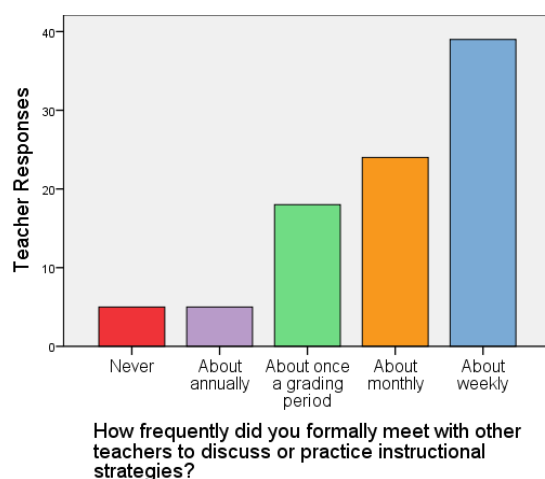


Figure 56. Teachers' responses to how frequently they formally met with other teachers to discuss or practice instructional strategies.

Table 21

Teachers' Responses Regarding Collaborating with their Peers

Frequency of meeting with other teachers	Never	About annually	About once a grading period	About monthly	About weekly
To assess school needs	14.3	12.1	35.2	28.6	09.9
To set school goals	18.7	27.5	23.1	26.4	04.4
To implement plans to meet school goals	11.0	15.4	27.5	36.3	09.9
To develop or revise a curriculum	08.8	14.3	27.5	22.0	27.5
To develop or review assessments	02.2	11.0	34.1	28.6	24.2
To discuss or practice instructional strategies	05.5	05.5	19.8	26.4	42.9

Note. Results in this table pertain to teacher survey question number 8.

II.4 Summary. Both teachers and administrators were asked about their level of collaboration while implementing HSTW. Both administrators and teachers reported that teachers met in weekly, biweekly, or monthly meetings. Most questions from this section were posed to teachers regarding their professional interactions with peers. Teachers were asked about how often they met to assess school goals, set school goals, and then put a plan in place to meet school goals. Most teachers reported they met at least annually and mostly during a grading period or at least monthly. Most teachers reported that goal setting was a standard practice.

Teachers were also asked how often they met with their peers to assess a curriculum, review an assessment, or discuss instructional strategies. Again, little to no teachers selected “never” in regards to working with peers for these instructional activities. Most teachers reported

they met about once a grading period, to monthly, and then weekly. Perhaps during regularly set meetings, teachers collaborated about goal setting and instructional strategies to improve schools' overall performance.

II.5 Funding. Survey questions here demonstrate what administrators said in regards to if funding was adequate to fully implement the HSTW program. In the last series of survey questions discussed in the current study, administrators were asked questions about funding provided for implementing the HSTW program.

When administrators were asked whether there were insufficient funds to support the full implementation of HSTW, 33% of administrators reported they agreed or strongly agreed they dealt with insufficient funding (Table 22 and Figure 57). Another 37% of administrators reported that funds were sufficient. Because these data were almost symmetrical from a neutral standpoint, as shown in Figure 57, one can speculate that about half of the schools in the current study did not have a HSTW funding issue.

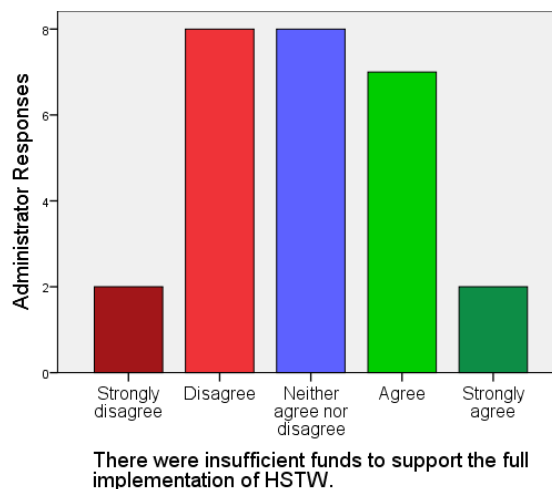


Figure 57. Administrators' responses to if there were insufficient funds to support the full implementation of HSTW.

Table 22

<i>Administrators' Perceptions of Adequate Funding for HSTW</i>					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Insufficient funds	07.4	29.6	29.6	25.9	07.4

Note. Results in this table pertain to administrator survey question number 22.

Administrators were asked four survey questions regarding the funding source from which HSTW was budgeted. Administrators were asked to respond either “Yes” or “No” or to select the option “n/a” for not applicable.

When administrators were asked if there was money from federal CSR demonstration funds, 40.7% of administrators selected “Yes” (Table 23). CSR funds are monies allocated specifically for approved CSR efforts that meet criteria proven to support school improvement.

Administrators were asked if there was money from Title I funds used to implement and sustain HSTW. Title I funds are state funds provided to schools that have an economically disadvantaged population of forty percent or more. Two-thirds of the administrators (59.3%) selected “Yes” Title I funds were used (Table 23).

Many schools initially had grants to fund their CSR. However, most private grants and donations had to be supplemented with federal funds to afford implementation. Administrators were asked if there was money from private grants or donations to the school to implement and sustain HSTW. More than two-thirds of the administrators (66.7%) selected “No” (Table 23).

Administrators were asked if there was money used directly from school based organizations to implement and sustain HSTW. Nearly two-thirds of the administrators (63%) selected “No” school based organization funds were used (Table 23). The majority of HSTW

schools funded their programs using Title I funds allocated specifically for school improvement initiatives.

Table 23

<i>Administrators' Responses about Funding Sources for HSTW</i>			
	NO	YES	N/A
Federal CSR funds	44.4	40.7	14.8
Title I funds	22.2	59.3	18.5
Private grants or donations	66.7	14.8	18.5
School-based organizations	63.0	18.5	18.5

Note. Results in this table pertain to administrator survey question number 21.

II.5 Summary. Only administrators were asked budget related questions regarding implementation of HSTW. Most administrators reported that Title I funds were used to cover the cost of implementing the program. All of the schools in the current study were Title I schools and had funds available to use towards interventions to improve student achievement. Smaller percentages of administrators reported using other funds that were likely used to supplement a larger allocation. The federal CSR funds were also used widely by high schools and were meant solely for implementing an approved CSR such as HSTW.

Phase II, Summary

In Phase II, data were collected from the *Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey* and the *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey*. Twenty-seven administrators and ninety-one teachers completed surveys online related to the implementation of HSTW at their high schools. The purpose for using the surveys were to answer RQ2, “Was High Schools That Work implemented with fidelity to the program?” Commitment, program implementation, support, collaboration, and funding at HSTW schools was assessed. Survey feedback yielded results that HSTW was an effective CSR program. Data from six supporting research questions

were used to answer RQ2. Using SPSS, frequencies were run on survey responses to yield measures of central tendency to make comparisons in some teachers' and administrators' responses and to review feedback from the two separate groups. Survey questions about commitment to HSTW, support of implementation, collaboration, instructional practices, and funding were asked.

Question II.1 asked administrators and teachers about their levels of commitment and about their perceived level of parents who are committed. It was found that teachers and administrators had a high level of commitment to the implementation of the HSTW program. Parents were believed to be present for high school events but were present less often when their involvement necessitated time in the classroom or when engaging in smaller working groups related to curriculum and instruction.

Question II.2 asked about experiences administrators and teachers had while implementing HSTW. Teachers reported that principals were more present than not in supporting them in their efforts to implement and sustain it. The majority of administrators reported that HSTW was the only CSR being implemented at their schools. Despite the fact that most teachers agreed that too many initiatives were in place, about the same percentage of teachers reported they worked to ensure that the initiatives were successful.

Administrators had generally positive responses in regards to the level of district support to support the implementation of HSTW. Responses from teachers and administrators suggested they had positive experiences while implementing the program.

When teachers were asked about specific instructional strategies and their frequency of use in the classroom, most teachers reported they implemented multiple types of instructional

strategies at least once during the school year. However, no one instructional strategy was used more than 75% of the time.

Question II.3 asked about the level of support for HSTW implementation. It was found that at most schools, teachers and administrators collaborated with others on and off the campus and generally received support for implementation. Results showed that meetings with teachers took place more than twenty times during a school year. These data suggested that schools might have appointed one of their administrators or teacher leaders to oversee HSTW implementation. Survey results also highlighted that external consultants from HSTW were instrumental in providing support to about 90% of the high schools.

Question II.4 pertained to the level of collaboration between administrators and teachers while implementing HSTW. Generally, teachers, administrators, district staff, and external consultants collaborated extensively while implementing the program.

Question II.5, asked if funding was adequate to fully implement the HSTW program. Money allocated as CSR demonstration funds and Title I funds were used more often than any other funding source to cover costs for the HSTW program.

The *Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey* and the *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey* responses revealed that administrators and teachers perceived HSTW as being a supportive program that supported collaboration from top-down. In addition, HSTW practiced monitoring strategies and interventions that were developed as a team and reflected consistently on results for continuous improvement.

Phase III, Administrator Interviews

During Phase III, RQ3, “What were district and campus administrators’ perceptions of levels of teacher, district, and HSTW program support during HSTW implementation?” was

answered.

The five administrators were interviewed from schools for which data for RQ1 and RQ2 had already been gathered. The *Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Interview Protocol* comprised eight pre-written, open-ended questions that could not be fully explained by the surveys alone (See Appendix E). The eight interview questions were asked in the order as listed with minimal variations from the language.

1. Why was HSTW implemented at your campus?
2. How well had HSTW been implemented at your campus? How closely did your campus follow the HSTW framework?
3. Were there major barriers to implementing or sustaining HSTW at your school? If so, what were they?
4. Had any changes been made in the overall approach to HSTW since you arrived?
If so, on what basis were they made?
5. Were the actions to improve student achievement monitored? If so, how?
6. How much had you attributed to HSTW for bringing about desired change to your campus?
7. How did you believe the HSTW program impacted student performance on TAKS?
8. Is there anything else I should know to tell the story of your past school improvement efforts?

A basic interpretive and descriptive qualitative study was conducted to consider how participants viewed their involvement and experiences with HSTW. All interview participants were insured confidentiality. After recorded interviews were completed, responses were transcribed for analysis. Interviews were coded to reveal common patterns or themes. During the

structured interview phase, themes were identified and connected to results from survey data for follow up, making inferences, and drawing conclusions. The thematic data from the interviews are presented by question. Administrators who participated in the current study are referred to as “Respondent A”, “Respondent B”, “Respondent C”, “Respondent D”, and “Respondent E”.

Each interview began with a friendly introduction and a reminder that the interviews were completely voluntary and responses were confidential. Interview respondents were assured that their recorded responses were solely used for the purposes of the study.

The synopsis of the feedback from the five interviews revealed that HSTW campus administrators’ perceptions of levels of teacher, district, and HSTW program support during HSTW implementation was substantial once schools implemented the enhanced design of HSTW. Respondents A, B, C, D, and E reported on the reason for implementing, the quality of implementation, if there were barriers, changes to the programs’ approach, monitoring progress, attributing desired change, and impacting student performance.

Respondent A reported that when he was hired, his school was at the “tail end of the grant” used to implement HSTW and that they did not do much work with the program. Once the enhanced design of the program was implemented later, the school received extensive support to implement and sustain the program. Respondent A reported that only “bits and pieces” of the program was implemented. A statement was made that parts of HSTW were difficult to implement because the TEA monitor did not support some of the objectives. It was disclosed that the program had very little impact on the school, but that attending the HSTW conferences and professional development did help.

Respondent B reported being present during implementation of HSTW. Respondent B explained that even though their high school was already high performing, they chose to

implement the program anyway. The program was fully implemented using all of the HSTW components, and the school showed improvements even though they were already doing well. School administrators and faculty participated in the TAV, regularly monitored implementation, and worked collaboratively.

Respondent C was present at the high school during implementation and explained that TEA sanctions mandated that a CSR be put in place. An overall barrier that existed stemmed from the departure of the leader who initiated HSTW. Issues with communicating the goals and concepts of HSTW to other district personnel was a difficulty. Despite the difficulties, Respondent C indicated that the school believed they received a lot of support for implementation. HSTW was implemented with fidelity to the design and teachers' progress was monitored.

Respondent D indicated they implemented the enhanced design of HSTW because they wanted a systemic program that would impact all aspects of schooling. Respondent D said there were no changes to the design of the program and they received support with implementation. The program was flexible enough for school administrators and faculty to adjust lessons and interventions to meet the needs of their students. Teachers' activities were monitored and the school made progress.

Respondent E reported that their district initiated the implementation of HSTW at all of their high schools. TAV were considered valuable means of support. Respondent E noted they assigned a team of school staff to work with a team of HSTW liaisons as opposed to only one primary staff member. Teachers and administrators received feedback from classroom observations, and the HSTW consultant provided coaching. Respondent E contributed the high level of monitoring to the schools' progress.

Interview Question 1. Why was HSTW implemented at your campus? Interview

Respondents B and C had been at their high schools during the time of implementation and were still currently administrators at their campuses. They explained that HSTW had been implemented to assist with improving student achievement at their campuses. Three of five administrators, Respondents A, D, and E, stated that HSTW had been implemented prior to their employment at the campus. However, these three administrators were present at the campus to implement the enhanced design of HSTW. All five of the interview respondents reported that the HSTW program was funded through a school improvement grant.

Respondent A reported that when hired, the campus was at the “tail end of the grant and I didn’t do anything with it.” Respondent A reported not knowing anything about HSTW even after signing a continuation agreement because they did not receive any support. Respondent A also explained that when they were awarded a substantial new grant they applied for the enhanced design of HSTW. They explained that HSTW had restructured things in 2007 and that the school then began to receive support.

Respondent B reported that the school improvement grant they had received was a fluke, because they were already a high-performing school. However, Respondent B reported that for HSTW, “We had a year to attend a lot of training and if we wanted to undertake it, we could. We were impressed with what we experienced and decided to implement it.” Although Respondent B’s campus was already high performing, the school still showed improvements in test scores.

Respondent C reported they implemented HSTW as a school turnaround model to assist with the consistently low-performing TAKS scores. Implementing a program was not an option for them as they had already entered into TEA sanctions.

Respondent D explained they “wanted a systemic program that would help improve multiple aspects of the school.” All of the interview respondents expressed a need for increasing student achievement as the main reason for why the program was implemented at the school. Respondent E informed that the HSTW program was implemented at all of the high schools in his or her district.

Interview Question 2. How well had High Schools That Work been implemented at your campus? All five interview respondents reported that with the enhanced design, they received a substantial amount of support. Respondent A reported that a HSTW consultant was given a schedule of when he or she was expected to be present at the campus. While on the campus, the HSTW consultant conducted classroom walkthroughs, implemented many initiatives, and provided support to the teachers.

Respondents B and E reported how the TAV greatly impacted what they did on their campuses. Respondent B stated “We had three TAVs with full committees that looked over everything with a fine tooth comb. We were choosing to implement things that would stay and not choosing the flavor of the month. We are even still sustaining these programs now.” Respondents B, C, and E shared that their high schools were still implementing HSTW today. Respondent D explained that practices that were put into place were products of collaborative efforts of a team and that the whole school supported implementation.

Interview Question 3. Were there major barriers to implementing or sustaining HSTW at your school? If so, what were they? Administrators from four of five schools reported there were no major barriers between the school and the district in implementing HSTW. Respondent B explained that support was top down. To get teacher buy in, Respondent B explained “we took non-believers with us [to the HSTW national conference] and really watched the light come on

for veterans. It was nice to see them get excited again and believe.” Respondent B reported that the only roadblocks they had were normal, theoretical ones.

Respondent C was the only campus where the administrator reported there were barriers to sustaining HSTW. “The original idea for implementing the HSTW program originated from a district staff member. Once that staff member was gone, there was always a challenge of trying to explain the program to other district level staff who we really needed to support what we were trying to do.” Although this barrier existed, it was not in association with the HSTW program itself, but more in reference to parameters within the district. Based on this feedback from Respondent C, any attributes to campus failure and possibly improvements may not directly be attributed to HSTW.

Interview Question 4. Had any changes been made in the overall approach to HSTW since you arrived? If so, on what basis were they made? Respondent A reported that some “bits and pieces” of the program were implemented, while Respondent B reported that the program was implemented with fidelity. Respondent B stated, “...we believed in it. We added the ethical burden that we chose the program, so we needed to do what we needed to do.” Respondents C and D reported that no overall changes had been made in the program. Respondent E described one attribute they changed about the program was assigning multiple campus level staff to work with the HSTW staff as opposed to having only one primary liaison at the campus level.

Interview Question 5: Were the actions to improve student achievement monitored? If so, how? All interview respondents said that actions to improve student achievement were monitored. All interview respondents also reported that their students took the HSTW assessment. Respondents B, C, and D mentioned that their teachers participated in the student and teacher surveys to review the impact the program had on what they were doing. Respondent

B said “They helped us evaluate ourselves. We had never done anything like that. It was impressive how in two days they could see what we needed that quickly. They knew exactly what to look for and had a plan to sure up our program.” Respondent E stated, “We had classroom observations and discussed feedback in meetings. We coached our teachers and let them work with the HSTW consultants if they needed help. The assessments also offered some progress monitoring.” All respondents’ answers demonstrated the importance HSTW had placed on monitoring progress. Respondent E expressed that “Having more people from outside the school come in and assist with monitoring and coaching teachers helped because it was hard for a small group of people on a campus to get to that with all the other responsibilities.” Having a HSTW external consultant allowed for administrators and teachers to receive feedback and suggestions from someone who had an objective outlook.

Interview Question 6. How much had you attributed to HSTW for bringing about desired change to your campus? Respondent A said that the question was a hard one to answer because they had obligations to TEA, as well. “It was really hard working with both of them. Not 100% of HSTW was supported by the TEA monitor which made it hard when trying to implement specific initiatives with which the TEA monitor’s ideas conflicted with.”

Respondents C, D, and E all attributed improvements on their campus in relation to receiving support and having opportunities to share ideas with others to HSTW. Respondent D explained, “I believe HSTW gave us some tools that were useful in guiding our campus in a desirable direction. We did a needs assessments and focused on big ideas that we believed would help us make progress in shorter amounts of time.” Respondent D was the only interviewee who mentioned the term “needs assessment” and said that one had been conducted at his or her high

school. Other respondents all mentioned that monitoring and feedback had taken place during TAV.

Interview Question 7. How do you believe the High Schools That Work program impacted student performance on TAKS? Respondent A said there was not that much of an impact and that they had only helped them design some programs such as an advisory program or program of study. Respondent B reported that at his or her campus the rigor had increased leading to excellent scores on the state assessment and an increase in the graduation rate. Respondent D reported, “We used the HSTW assessment to forecast how we would perform on the TAKS. We were able to adjust lessons and interventions to fit our students’ needs.” Three respondents shared that their campuses participated in the HSTW student assessments.

Interview Question 8. Is there anything else I should know to tell the story of your school improvement efforts? Respondent A reported that going to the national and state conferences really helped them with implementing new programs at their schools. Respondent B reported that the relationship with HSTW involved a collaborative process. “It was one where we got to make choices; it wasn’t too rigid. It was organic in that what we did worked for us. We looked at all sorts of data. The program was sustainable because we embedded it in our school culture. It also does not happen overnight.” Respondent B discussed the dedication it took to cultivate a new program into an already existing organization.

Phase III, Summary

In Phase III, five administrator interviews were conducted over the phone. The interview questionnaire consisted of eight questions that were posed to administrators who had been instrumental in implementing HSTW at their Texas high schools. Four of the five administrators responded favorably to HSTW. Four of the administrators explained that the program had been

implemented to improve students' academic achievement, as the fifth high school was already high performing. Only one of the schools made changes to how the HSTW program was implemented. One administrator shared that conflicting expectations with the TEA consultant made it difficult to implement HSTW. All of the respondents reported that HSTW activities were monitored to ensure progress. All of the administrators shared a belief that if they could implement the program with fidelity they would get the desired results. Administrators believed that the HSTW tools and monitoring progress definitely helped their schools improve.

Responses from administrator interviews revealed broad themes encompassing some of the key components of the HSTW program. Similarities in all of the responses existed highlighting the importance of student achievement. Administrators consistently expressed the importance of implementing HSTW with a goal of increasing students' academic success. Administrators' responses unveiled the central focus illuminating the purpose for implementing the CSR at their campuses. The key themes that arose exemplified some of the objectives that HSTW presented as characteristics of the program. HSTW's key components prevalent in the results of this section were commitment, collaboration, support, preparation, implementation, and funding. Themes that derived from interviews were (a) support for implementation, (b) leadership, (c) change culture, (d) structure and pre-planning, (e) professional development, (f) collaboration, (g) monitoring and feedback, and (h) data gathering.

Support for implementation. Administrators agreed that support was crucial to successfully execute implementation of a CSR program. District, administrator, and teacher support coupled with HSTW consultants provided an ideal relationship for fostering growth for campus professionals to make school improvements. Administrators explained that having top-down support made change less cumbersome. Support from HSTW staff seemed to be

synonymous with enrolling in the enhanced design of HSTW. Assigning a consultant to the school and the TAV that were elements of the enhanced design offered opportunities for teachers and administrators to receive guidance and feedback throughout the process. Respondent A expressed not receiving support and generally seemed to have a negative experience with implementing HSTW. However, the experience seemed to be connected with the lack of support at the district level that hindered the respondent and the high school in implementing the program with fidelity. In addition, Respondent A said that conflicts surfaced when the TEA service provider's expectations were not in alignment with HSTW activities. Respondent A did express that support improved once the high school implemented the HSTW enhanced design.

Change culture. It became clear through interview responses that four of the campuses were able to create a change culture. Campus administrators facilitated teacher buy-in and commitment by involving faculty in the process of implementation. In one of the interviews, an administrator expressed that he saw several of his veteran teachers' spark return. Through national and state conferences, the teachers were inspired by networking and sharing ideas with other administrators and teachers who had implemented HSTW. The big ideas that came from planning meetings provided a forum for teachers, administrators, and HSTW staff to coordinate efforts and choose next steps. Professional development was provided through the national and state conferences to ensure fidelity to the program. Teachers really appreciated opportunities to collaborate. Collaboration was also an underlying theme that fell within the parameters of building a change culture. Through collaborations, team members were able to contribute their skills and beliefs for supporting change in which they all believed.

Structure and pre-planning. Oftentimes, it may be difficult for teachers and administrators to find the time to embark on innovations. Interviews revealed there was an

appreciation for implementing a program that was already structured. However, several of the respondents explained that HSTW was not too rigid of a program for them to implement at their school. They expressed that HSTW offered campuses an opportunity to implement a CSR with a framework that supported pre-planning, professional development, collaboration, monitoring and feedback.

Monitoring and feedback. Administrator interviews revealed that classroom walkthroughs and observations were common practice. Administrators, faculty, and when scheduled, a HSTW consultant, conducted walkthroughs and observations as a means for collecting data. Several administrators expressed that monitoring and feedback data they received during the TAV provided a plethora of information used to improve their high schools. It was evident that the attention that HSTW gave to monitoring and feedback reminded administrators that this practice needed to be a priority.

Data gathering. HSTW collected data through teacher and administrator surveys, assessments, walkthroughs, observations, and group meetings with administrators and teacher leaders. Three of the administrators shared that their campuses had taken the HSTW's student and teacher surveys and all the schools' students took the HSTW assessments. These data were used for planning initiatives for student success and for improving teacher quality. Several administrators disclosed that the feedback they received regarding their school's performance allowed them to focus their attention on worthwhile activities.

Linking Results Across Phases I, II, and III

Only one comparison was made between results from AEIS reports, Phase I, and administrators' responses from an interview question, Phase III. Data were linked mostly from Phases II (surveys) and III to identify patterns in the results. Comparisons were made between

data from surveys and interviews where some overlapping in types of questioning existed which yielded similar responses. Some results could not be connected because the survey or interview did not pose similar questions. Only one factor stood out from the interviews that was not connected nor addressed in the same manner as surveys. Results from Phases I, II, and III were outlined and coded for similarities.

A primary goal for implementing a CSR is to improve the academic achievement of students at schools. Results from AEIS reports and administrators' responses to interview questions supported that improvements in student performance were achieved as hoped. Four of five administrators interviewed in the current study expressed they supported implementing HSTW to improve students' academic performance. The fifth administrator may not have specifically expressed improving academic achievement as a goal, but this was only because the school was already high performing but had the funds to implement HSTW. Even though the school was already high-performing, students' academic performance on TAKS improved from Year 1 to Year 5. AEIS results for all 32 HSTW schools in the study showed that ELA and mathematics scores improved from Year 1, before implementation, to Year 5 after implementation meeting administrators' and faculty's expectations.

The teacher survey, administrator survey, and interview responses correlated demonstrating that teachers and administrators consistently agreed there were high levels of commitment in implementing HSTW. Administrators expressed that commitment was fostered by involving teachers in decision making during the process of implementation.

Correlations in the teacher and administrator surveys and interview results also existed about the level of support provided across four tiers. Teachers, administrators, district, and HSTW staff generally worked as a team to support program implementation and sustainability.

Teachers expressed being supported by principals, principals expressed being supported by district staff, and both teachers and administrators expressed being supported by HSTW. An astounding 90% of respondents reported that an HSTW external consultant supported them. Systems were put in place to provide guidance to schools as they altered practices at their campuses.

Teacher survey results about following up to make sure initiatives worked corresponded with administrator interview responses about monitoring and receiving feedback at their schools. Survey results garnered more details than interviews regarding the types of follow-up made to ensure HSTW implementation was successful. Survey data revealed that technical assistance visits, walkthroughs, observations, and collaboration were commonalities found at HSTW schools in the current study that attributed to school success.

Teacher and administrator surveys and interview responses corroborated that all parties had and utilized multiple opportunities to collaborate. Teachers' results demonstrated that teacher met on average more than 20 times annually. Interview results revealed that the HSTW state and national professional development conferences were well attended. Expectations for schools to collaborate in teams and participate in HSTW initiatives to support their schools implementation of the program were apparent.

Summary of Results

- The HSTW program is implemented with fidelity.
 - Half of the HSTW schools in the current study reported funding issues.
 - Changes in leadership during HSTW implementation caused some disruption.
- An increase in TAKS achievement was accomplished from Year 1 to Year 5.
 - HSTW schools in the current study experienced greater gains in students' TAKS performance on ELA than they did on mathematics.

- HSTW was beneficial in closing the achievement gap between special education students and all students as shown from results on the ELA and mathematics TAKS assessments.
- English language learners' TAKS scores improved, but their scores lagged far behind the all student group, economically disadvantaged subpopulation, and the special education subpopulation.
- Economically disadvantaged students TAKS scores were similar to all students at high schools in the current study.
- Some results were not significant.
 - Attendance rates could not be determined to have an impact on students' academic performance on TAKS.
 - When schools were categorized as small, medium, or large based on enrollment, results showed that school enrollment size did not matter.

Chapter 5: Reform Practices for Effective Change

The purpose of this research was to compare academic performance data at HSTW schools before and after implementation, while taking into consideration the level of perceived fidelity with which HSTW had been implemented. This chapter presents an interpretation of the findings and their relationship to the theoretical framework and earlier studies. The implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research conclude the chapter.

Interpretation of Findings

Teachers and administrators were committed to implementing HSTW and ensuring that the program worked as in Frome's (2001) study. Two-thirds of the administrators in the current study described reviewing students' assessment results with an external consultant. Teachers expressed collaborating with peers to revise a curriculum, develop or review assessments, and discuss and practice instructional strategies at a higher frequency than not conducting these activities at all. These strategies are best practices for ensuring student achievement. By reviewing student performance data and using it to adjust curriculum to ensure students master skills, administrators and teachers were able to make data informed decisions and employ instructional strategies in academic areas where students struggle.

Funding comprehensive school reform. Most schools in the current study used Title I funds to pay for the HSTW program. Once paid for, key components of HSTW could be implemented using human resources. Fifty percent of the schools in the current study reported funding issues. However, comprehensive school reforms are normally funded before they are implemented. Since purchasing HSTW was an upfront cost meaning it was likely that sustaining the program was where funding issues may have surfaced. Technology initiatives and travel for professional development could be affected by a lack of funds, but funding did not pose issues

for improving academic achievement. The findings suggested that the funds spent to implement HSTW had been a worthwhile investment.

Leadership turnover during implementation. Fullan (2007) posits that for large-scale, systemic reform to be successful, tri-level leadership is necessary. Changes in leadership posed a problem for schools to successfully implement the CSR. Schools need leaders who are strategic and flexible to implement a successful change process that will turn around persistently low-performing schools. New school leaders may not have shared the same values of implementing the particular CSR as those school leaders who originally chose to implement the program. A new school leader's vision and mission for the campus may have led him or her in a different direction, opposing methods for school improvement that the previous leader envisioned.

Administrator interview respondents spoke specifically about difficulties in understanding the HSTW implementation if they were not employed on the campus when it was first implemented. School leaders relied on peers and teachers to understand the program and expressed difficulty in understanding its purpose. As noted by interviews, it was not until the decision to join the enhanced design, that administrators gained a clear understanding of the initiative.

Academic Improvement

From Year 1, before HSTW implementation, to Year 5, after HSTW implementation, TAKS performance averages showed gains, meeting and sometimes exceeding passing standards. The results confirmed SREB's (2011) conclusion that ELA and mathematics scores improved after HSTW implementation as demonstrated by the HSTW benchmark assessment scores in the same content areas. Michael Fullan (2000) said that it takes about three years to see change in an elementary school but about six years in a secondary school depending on school

enrollment size (p.1). Educational change occurred over a five year period as evidenced by the current study. Clark (2007) stated that no evidence supported that HSTW was effective.

However, the current study supports that schools improved in areas in which they focused their HSTW efforts. The average mean scores improved in both ELA and mathematics for all students and subpopulations.

While AYP includes more than one achievement indicator, the law puts almost all of the emphasis on standardized test results (Sunderman, 2007, p. 176). Emphasis was placed on standardized tests results because of the high-stakes sanctions that were placed on schools if students did not perform as expected.

The HSTW flexibility proved beneficial for schools to implement interventions in their areas of need. The schools in the current study aligned HSTW initiatives with their districts' efforts and TEA's expectations and experienced improvements in academic achievement.

Differences between ELA and mathematics. The average means in ELA TAKS results were better than those in mathematics. This supported Young & Cline's (2008) comparisons of HSTW assessment scores with students' other academic achievements such as grade point averages and college examination scores. HSTW may have targeted more attention on ELA or more schools may have previously missed AYP in the ELA content area creating a heightened focus. These results may indicate that the HSTW schools focused on improvements in the areas in which they had the most struggles and placed less energy in other content areas that still could have benefitted from increased opportunities for interventions. Results from the ELA TAKS tests demonstrated that HSTW allowed administrators and teachers to implement interventions in this area. It was clear that specific ELA strategies had been practiced to increase scores.

Where ELA content spans across multiple disciplines, mathematics does not. Perhaps schools did not stress the need to improve mathematics in all classes as is often done in ELA and reading. Moreover, mathematics interventions programs, if put in place, may have received less systematic monitoring than those programs offered to campuses to improve reading comprehension skills. Mathematics mean averages in TAKS scores for all schools in the current study improved for all students, each of the subpopulations, and in all schools by size in Year 5. Although all mathematics scores improved in Year 5, only medium-sized schools met and surpassed the 65% mathematics passing standard.

Special education subpopulation. In ELA and mathematics, the special education group did not meet the passing standard in Year 5, but their percentage points increased.

“The broad goal of NCLB is to raise the achievement levels of all students and to close the achievement gap that parallels race and class” (Sunderman, 2007, p. 156–157). Probably one of the largest claims HSTW can make is that the program closes achievement gaps. The special education group showed the greatest improvement with a 32 percentage point increase in ELA and a 16 percentage point increase in mathematics from Year 1 to Year 5. The increase in special education TAKS scores positively affected the “all students” group’s average increase to within 10 percentage points of meeting the passing standard in ELA. However, special education students’ TAKS scores were about 22 percentage points away from the mathematics passing standards.

The TEA published the *Special Education Rules and Regulations Side by Side* (2012) referencing special education legal requirements from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the State Board of Education Rules, the Commissioner's Rules, and Texas State Laws. In special education, research based interventions, testing, and processes for monitoring

accommodations are required by law. Admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) meetings held periodically throughout the school year for each special education student require ARD committees to establish and review goals and objectives that support academic achievement for students identified. The systematic process for ensuring that interventions worked well for special education students and fidelity to HSTW attributed to success in narrowing the achievement gap between special education students' scores and the scores of all students.

Limited English proficient subpopulation. In ELA and mathematics, the limited English proficient group also did not meet the passing standard in Year 5, but their percentage points increased. Even though the limited English proficient group improved similarly to all students and the other subpopulations, their scores still remained 30 percentage points below the passing standard.

The National Assessment of Education Progress, the National Education Association, and the Office of English Language Acquisition report that limited English proficient subpopulations historically struggle academically. English language learners' can enroll in a course to assist with language acquisition but only if those students' parents or guardians have identified them as limited English proficient. The quality of the program is contingent upon which language acquisitions programs have been applied and how well districts and schools have embedded them into their existing general education programs.

Economically disadvantaged subpopulation. Martin (2012) compared economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students' academic performance on assessments and found that the at-risk group performed worse. Contrary to Martin's findings, the economically disadvantaged subpopulation in the current study performed at about the same level on the TAKS assessment as the whole student population. This is largely impart to the

schools in the current study being Title I, in which a large percentage of the whole population was comprised of economically disadvantaged students. It is important to note that like the all student group, the economically disadvantaged subpopulation encompasses special education and the limited English proficient subpopulations. Where Martin compared economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students' scores across the country, the current study made comparisons of economically disadvantaged students' scores at schools where fewer students were excluded from the subpopulation.

In the current study, the economically disadvantaged subpopulation performed slightly less favorably than the all student group in ELA and mathematics. However, this group met the passing standard in ELA but not in mathematics. Borman and Rachuba (2001) showed evidence that when economically disadvantaged students were provided equal education opportunities and resources at schools, resilience enabled them to perform as well as non-economically disadvantaged peers. Blank (2011) agreed that performance gains have occurred with similar groups over a period of time.

Neutral Findings

Two questions asked resulted in neutral results. Attendance rates and school size gave no evidence of effect on TAKS performance.

Attendance rate. HSTW did not have a key component that specifically mentioned improving campus attendance rates. However, a question was posed about annual attendance rate to determine if there was a correlation with academic achievement. A common belief is held that if you improve student attendance, that student achievement will improve (Roby, 2004). Data showed that although there was a significant difference in attendance rate from Year 1 to Year 5. The attendance rates for all schools in the current study were good, above 93% from Year 1 to

Year 5. However, the attendance rate actually decreased slightly overall. The nine small schools experienced a decline in the annual attendance rate but showed the best improvement in test scores. Despite the differences in annual attendance rate from Year 1 to Year 5, changes were negligible. Balfanz, & Byrnes (2012), Gottfried (2010), Buehler, Tapogna, & Chang (2012) support that attendance does matter. Given that attendance rates were good in the current study, issues of absenteeism did not pose a problem for students assessed.

School size. Schools were categorized by small, medium, and large size schools to determine if there was a difference in academic performance at schools based on enrollment. It was determined that school size did not matter as their averages were about the same. There were instances where small schools performed slightly better on TAKS assessments in Year 5 than medium or large-size schools. Then there was an instance where medium-size schools performed slightly better or the same as large-size schools. There was also an instance where large schools performed slightly better on TAKS than small or medium-sized schools. Although Conant (1965), Barker & Gump (1964), Lee & Smith (1995), Nathan & Febey, 2001, Wasley et al. (2000), Howley & Bickel (2000) debated whether small or large schools were more beneficial, the data from the current study supports that school size did not matter.

Limitations of the Study

Lag time in conducting a post hoc study was a primary research limitation. Because the data that needed to be assessed was from 2005 to 2012, there was difficulty in reaching the needed sample. Challenges were faced in connecting with faculty and administrators present at the campuses during the study timeframe. Repeated phone calls and emails occurred to reach participants. Some of the participants had moved to other districts or had changed careers. Snowball sampling occurred to help with identifying participants. Efforts ensued from state,

district, and school personnel who assisted with providing contact information to complete surveys and conduct interviews.

Another primary limitation was memory loss. Some of the participants responded that they could not remember enough to provide information in a survey or interview. This inevitably effected the number of survey and interview respondents.

The researcher's past experiences with implementing a CSR influenced previous perceptions about school reform. Interpretations of the results were based on findings to minimize this limitation and avoid personal judgments and bias. Respondents selected survey options without interference from the researcher. Interview respondents were provided guided, open-ended questions to steer the conversation, and interjections of the researcher were used only to further the conversation.

The current study used self-report data as done when conducting surveys and interviews. Self-report data posed a limitation because respondents could have altered or misrepresented their feedback depending on their motives. Because of the nature of the research design, this limitation was unavoidable.

Implications

CSR personnel must work with schools to assist them in reaching desired goals. Leaders of the reform must be experienced change agents capable of motivating others to accomplish goals established through shared beliefs. "Reforms, like revolutions, are not easy. Successful implementation requires knowledge, time, effort, and willingness to change" (Church, 2000, p. 9). Education reform involves implementing change by altering beliefs and practices that impact the outcome of student achievement.

Primary goals for district and school leaders are to have their visions actualized through the coordinated efforts of administrators, faculty, parents, and community partners. The objectives for most schools that implement a comprehensive school reform program is to improve academic student achievement by implementing systemic approaches to organize and monitor lessons and activities.

The mixed methods, sequential explanatory design used in the current study provided valuable insight into the benefits of conducting research using this format to analyze a CSR. The practice of connecting statistical data, survey data, and interview data is not new, however; the refined explanatory design used in the current study allowed for targeted analysis procedures that yielded substantial results. This method for evaluating comprehensive school reforms can be replicated in other studies and extends the current literature on HSTW external research.

School leaders want to (a) know which specific instructional strategies and practices advance students' academic achievement and improved teacher quality, (b) ensure that their efforts and funding were worthwhile investments, (c) know if CSR providers assist in completing task to support implementation efforts, (d) confirm that CSR providers recognize the importance of aligning their standards and practices with existing expectations, (e) be assured that CSR providers are going to become advocates who help facilitate desired change, and (f) gather statistical data that show students are improving academically after a CSR has been implemented.

Fostering academic achievement and improving teacher quality. Understanding which specific instructional strategies and practices advanced students' academic achievement and improved teacher quality is valuable for school leaders seeking change. Educators can measure how the use of specific instructional strategies reinforce student learning. Once effective

instructional strategies are identified, teachers can include them as part of their teaching methods. Fullan's (2003) complexity theory which incorporates the principle of correlation and the principle of auto-catalysis best exemplifies that once habits are developed by teachers and leaders, those who work together on a regular basis can have broad impact within and across their school systems.

Making investment decisions. Stakeholders want to ensure that their efforts and funding are worthwhile investments. School leaders want to hold CSR programs accountable for doing what they claim. Leaders of schools that face sanctions desperately seek turnaround and simply cannot afford to invest limited funds into initiatives that boast false positives. The methodology undergone in this study provides opportunities for data-driven decisions to be made as school leaders consider the worthiness of a large investment of money and effort.

Work-based support. CSR providers are needed to assist in completing task to support efforts in implementing and sustaining a program as opposed to serving only as an adviser. The infrastructure of the current study allows for school leaders to determine which specific practices are descriptive of specific CSR programs that are being considered.

Aligning standards and practices. CSR providers must align their standards and practices with existing expectations from the district and state. Conflicting standards and expectations amongst multiple initiatives at schools will inevitably result in the failure of one of them. Therefore, standards between the CSR program and the school need to be parallel.

Advocacy. CSR providers who become advocates help facilitate desired change. As Fullan (2003) expressed in the tri-level leadership theory, buy-in is essential. If difficulties arise in getting tri-level leadership support, school leaders will benefit from working with CSR

providers who are willing to facilitate relationships with the school, district, and state. Those considering a CSR initiative must prioritize building tri-level support.

Statistical evidence of improvement. A CSR needs to show statistical evidence that a CSR helps students improve academically. Silver (2004) agreed that reviewing subpopulations' performance and examining whether achievement gaps are closing with implementation of a CSR will prove invaluable to school and district leaders. Stakeholders will want to be informed if a program is proven to work when implemented with fidelity. Considering all the data collected and analyzed from the current mix-methods, explanatory study, school leaders can employ the same strategic method in evaluating the effectiveness of any CSR programs they are considering.

Recommendations for Future Research on High Schools That Work

Additional opportunities to extend the current study exist. Further research on HSTW could explore why students performed better in ELA than in mathematics. There is speculation that more attention may have been paid to ELA than mathematics given that ELA skills impact students in all contents areas. However, conducting a study to solidify why students performed better in ELA than mathematics could provide crucial data that impacts educator practices.

The use of only one survey for both teachers and administrators could create more opportunities for direct correlation of results. The current study utilized two different surveys to gather information from administrators and teachers based on their roles. A future study could examine more closely recommended programs of study implemented by multiple CSR programs in which students participate in an academic core that requires additional enrollment in core courses beyond the recommended graduation plan.

Recommendations for Future Research on any Comprehensive School Reform

The results of the current research are promising in terms of the findings about the

effectiveness of HSTW. These data revealed that the key practices and themes identified by the current study improved students' performance after HSTW was implemented. However, many opportunities for future studies on other CSR programs remain.

Other CSR programs could be examined to determine their effectiveness. A future study could include administering a parent survey regarding the impact the CSR programs on students' academic performance. The survey could include aspects of parent involvement in the classroom, roles parents perceived they played in the education of their children, frequency in which parents communicated with school staff either in person, over the phone, or by email. In addition, parents could provide feedback regarding what aspects of a CSR seemed most beneficial for student and parent engagement.

Student surveys and interviews could provide feedback regarding school culture, student voice and choice, and perceptions of quality of learning experiences. The study could focus specifically on which teaching strategies and practices were perceived to promote learning.

A more in-depth study reviewing students' academic performance on daily grades, benchmarks, and classroom tests would be beneficial, as well. Research on students' daily performance and attitudes may provide information on what promotes strong work ethics in students at high performing schools where CSRs are implemented.

A comparative study on results of CSR assessments and state assessments such as Texas's STAAR/End of Course or other state assessments could be conducted to consider how well the CSRs are aligned with high stakes tests. Benchmark assessments conducted by school districts at their campuses are used to forecast how well students perform on the high stakes, state assessment. Evaluating the rigor of CSR assessments in relation to state assessments would provide pertinent data to administrators and teachers.

Conclusion

The major conclusions of this research support that if well-structured, CSR programs that are implemented with fidelity improve schools. The current study on HSTW used an external evaluation tool to assess implementation and effectiveness of CSR programs. Education reform literature noted that additional research on CSR effectiveness was needed that focused specifically on which practices lead to successful school turn-around. The mixed methods, sequential explanatory research methods allow for statistical, survey, and interview data to be intertwined supporting validity in the results.

In conclusion, the findings of this study attempt to contribute to the education reform research in several ways. First, the current study adds to the current literature about comprehensive school reform. Second, an extension in an area lacking on the current research is provided about which specific instructional practices and strategies are useful for improving academic achievement. There is an opportunity to conduct further research on implementation and practices on individual comprehensive school reforms. This study refines the methodology for making improvements and further researching the topic.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A: Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Survey

adapted with permission from the RAND Corporation

Comprehensive School Reform – Teacher Survey

Survey adapted with permission from the Rand Corporation.

Completion of this survey is strictly voluntary. You may choose to decline to answer any question. All responses to this survey will be strictly confidential. Individual respondents will never be identified by name or any other manner that could allow another researcher, government official, or member of the public to infer his/her identity.

***1. I agree to participate in this study.**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No -- close survey

Curriculum and Instruction

***2. How many hours per week did you spend developing units and preparing lessons either individually or with other teachers?**

- ☐ 0–5 hours
- ☐ 6–10 hours
- ☐ 11–15 hours
- ☐ 16–20 hours

***3. Did you teach at an instructional level in English Language Arts (ELA) or mathematics that is lower, about the same, or higher than the independent level of most of your students?**

- ☐ I taught at a LOWER instructional level than the independent level of most of my students.
- ☐ I taught at an instructional level that is ABOUT THE SAME as the independent level of most of my students.
- ☐ I taught at a HIGHER instructional level than the independent level of most of my students.

Comprehensive School Reform – Teacher Survey

***4. What percentage of the students to who you taught regularly receive tutoring in your core subject, either before, during, or after school?**

- ☐ 90–100%
☐ 75–89%
☐ 74–88%
☐ 73–59%
☐ 58–44%
☐ 43–30%
☐ 29–20%
☐ Less than 20%
☐ None -- no tutoring or instruction in your area

***5. IN A TYPICAL WEEK in your classroom, what percentage of instructional time did you devote to the following?**

	0%	1–25%	26–50%	51–75%	76–100%
Thematic instruction (i.e., interdisciplinary instruction organized around the exploration of a broad subject)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hands-on activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Higher-order thinking skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students' individual exploration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Activities based on real-life situations or issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Activities that connect to students' unique background or interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

School Practices & Work Environment

Comprehensive School Reform – Teacher Survey

*6. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
All staff and administrators had a strong sense of the school's purpose.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal was responsive to my concerns.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher morale was low.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All students in my classes were capable of achieving at high standards.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My skills and expertise as a professional were utilized to address school-wide issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers in this school emphasized immediate correction of student academic errors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*7. How much influence did TEACHERS in your school have over each of the following areas?

	No influence	Minimal influence	Neutral influence	Moderate control	Complete control
Developing goals for the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adjusting the curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*8. How frequently did you FORMALLY MEET WITH OTHER TEACHERS to do the following?

	Never	About annually	About once a grading period	About monthly	About weekly
Assess school needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Set school goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Implement plans to meet school goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop or revise a curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop or review student assessments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discuss or practice instructional strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comprehensive School Reform – Teacher Survey

***9. How often did you participate in the following work groups? Work groups focus on specific school-wide goals such as curriculum or instruction throughout the year. If your school did not have such a work group, select N/A.**

	Never	Less than monthly	About monthly	About bi-weekly	About weekly	N/A
Parental and community involvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curriculum and instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessment and data disaggregation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School culture expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional development and collaboration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feedback on HSTW performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Many special initiatives come and go in this school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Once we start a new initiative, we follow up to make sure it worked.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We have had so many different academic initiatives in this school that I couldn't keep track of them all.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curriculum, instruction, and learning materials were well-coordinated from one level to the next.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There was consistency in curriculum, instruction, and learning materials among teachers in the same grade.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comprehensive School Reform – Teacher Survey

***11. Overall, how many HOURS OF ONE-ON-ONE COACHING have you received in relation to HSTW during the time frame for this study?**

- ☐ 0–5 hours
☐ 6–10 hours
☐ 11–15 hours
☐ 16–20 hours
☐ 21–25 hours
☐ More than 25 hours

Assessments, Standards, & Accountability

***12. Please indicate how frequently you reviewed your students' scores on criterion-referenced or norm-referenced tests with the following individuals.**

	Never	After SOME assessments	After MOST assessments	After ALL assessments
The school principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A coach or facilitator on the SCHOOL STAFF	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
An EXTERNAL coach or consultant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other teachers, excluding coaches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***13. How well do you think the state standardized test (TAKS in Texas) were aligned with what you were teaching in the following subjects?**

	Poorly aligned	Somewhat aligned	Well aligned	N/A
ELA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Math	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

School Improvement Activities

Comprehensive School Reform – Teacher Survey

***14. If you interacted with a STAFF MEMBER from your school whose FORMAL RESPONSIBILITIES included coordinating or facilitating school-wide improvement programs and activities, how many times did you meet with this school staff member at that time of implementation?**

- ☐ Never
☐ 1–5 times
☐ 6–10 times
☐ 11–15 times
☐ 15–20 times
☐ More than 20 times
☐ I never interacted with a STAFF MEMBER whose FORMAL RESPONSIBILITIES included this coordination

***15. Had the school staff coordinator/facilitator ...**

	No	Yes	N/A
trained or coached you in using school-wide improvement programs or activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
coordinated or prepared your teaching materials for school-wide improvement programs or activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
answered your questions about school-wide improvement programs or activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***16. If you interacted with an EXTERNAL CONSULTANT to assist with the implementation of school-wide improvement programs and activities, how many times did you meet with the external consultant annually?**

- ☐ Never
☐ 1–5 times
☐ 6–10 times
☐ 11–15 times
☐ 15–20 times
☐ More than 20 times
☐ I never interacted with an EXTERNAL CONSULTANT for this purpose

Comprehensive School Reform – Teacher Survey

*17. Had the external consultant . . .

	No	Yes	N/A
trained or coached you in using school-wide improvement programs or activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
coordinated or prepared your teaching materials for school-wide improvement programs or activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
answered your questions about school-wide improvement programs or activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*18. In how many hours or professional development directly associated to HSTW have you participated?

- ☐ None
☐ 1–5 hours
☐ 6–10 hours
☐ 11–15 hours
☐ 15–20 hours
☐ More than 20 hours

*19. THIS SCHOOL YEAR, how often has the PRINCIPAL taken each of the following actions to assure that you follow the curriculum and instructional practices recommended by HSTW?

	Never	Once a year	Every grading period	About monthly	About bi-weekly	About weekly
Observed your classroom looking specifically at the implementation of HSTW	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reviewed your students' assessments with you to determine if you are following the recommendations of HSTW	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Held meetings with you individually or with other teachers to discuss issues related to HSTW	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asked a model specialist (internal or external) to help you implement or sustain HSTW	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comprehensive School Reform – Teacher Survey

*20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The structure of HSTW made it difficult to use in my classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
HSTW materials were easy to use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The HSTW related professional development or coaching I have received has helped me use the program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal was committed to using HSTW.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most teachers in my school were committed to using HSTW.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank You!

Thank you for completing this survey!

APPENDIX B: Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Survey

adapted with permission from the RAND Corporation

Comprehensive School Reform – Administrator Survey

Survey adapted with permission from the Rand Corporation.

Completion of this survey is strictly voluntary. You may choose to decline to answer any question. All responses to this survey will be strictly confidential. Individual respondents will never be identified by name or any other manner that could allow another researcher, government official, or member of the public to infer his/her identity.

*** 1. I agree to participate in this survey.**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No -- close survey

School Practices & Work Environment

*** 2. How many TIMES PER WEEK did full-time teachers have for individual planning time?**

- ☐ Never
- ☐ 1–3 times
- ☐ 4–6 times
- ☐ 7–10 times
- ☐ More than 10 times

*** 3. How many TIMES PER WEEK did full-time teachers have for common planning time?**

- ☐ Never
- ☐ 1–3 times
- ☐ 4–6 times
- ☐ 7–10 times

*** 4. Please give your BEST ESTIMATE of the percentage of parents (of students in your school) who at least once a year did the following in the years during which HSTW was implemented:**

	0%	1–25%	26–50%	51–75%	76–100%
Volunteer in classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend special events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend parent education workshops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend school committees or working groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comprehensive School Reform – Administrator Survey

***5. Consider from when your program was implemented. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?**

The state and/or district policies and regulations impede the school's effort to implement HSTW.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither agree or disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly agree

***6. Other than the state standardized test (TAKS in Texas), how frequently were the students in your school evaluated using criterion-referenced, norm-referenced, or other tests designed to assess student performance in an entire grade in the following subjects?**

	Never	About once a year	About once every other grading period	About once a grading period	Multiple times a grading period
ELA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Math	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

School Governance

***7. 6. How often did you participate in the following working groups? If you did not have such a working group, select N/A.**

	Never	Less than monthly	About monthly	About bi-weekly	About Weekly	N/A
Parental involvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curriculum and instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

Comprehensive School Reform – Administrator Survey

***8. Please indicate how much influence YOUR SCHOOL faculty had over the following.**

	No influence	Minimal influence	Neutral influence	Moderate control	Complete control
Developing goals for the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Setting performance standards for students in this school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adjusting the curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Choosing improvement programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

School Improvement Activities

***9. At any time during implementation of HSTW on your campus, was your school using any other comprehensive school reform program in conjunction with HSTW?**

- ☐ No
☐ Yes

***10. Did your school have a STAFF MEMBER whose FORMAL RESPONSIBILITIES included coordinating or facilitating the implementation or sustainability of the HSTW program and activities?**

- ☐ No – skip to question 13
☐ Yes

11. How much time was allotted for this function for the staff member?

- ☐ Full-time
☐ Part-time
☐ Less than part-time

12. On average, how many times did you meet with this staff member annually?

- ☐ Never
☐ 1–5 times
☐ 6–10 times
☐ 11–15 times
☐ 15–20 times
☐ More than 20 times

Comprehensive School Reform – Administrator Survey

***13. Did your school have any EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS available (someone NOT on the school staff) who visited the school to assist in implementing the HSTW program and activities?**

☐ No – skip to question 19

☐ Yes

14. Was your external consultant affiliated with HSTW?

☐ No

☐ Yes

15. Was there an external consultant not affiliated with HSTW, who assisted with the comprehensive school reform initiative?

☐ No

☐ Yes

16. How many times did you meet face-to-face with the external consultant(s) each semester regarding evaluating and providing feedback on the program?

☐ Never

☐ 1–5 times

☐ 6–10 times

☐ 11–15 times

☐ 15–20 times

☐ More than 20 times

Comprehensive School Reform – Administrator Survey

17. Did the external consultant(s) help you in any of the following ways in using HSTW during the time period set for this study?

Has/Have the external consultant(s) . . .

	No	Yes
helped you with interpreting student assessment data?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
assessed the progress you were making sustaining HSTW?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provided on-site training to teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
observed teachers in classrooms?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
helped align HSTW with the state standards?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. How many FULL DAYS, annually during the HSTW program, did the external consultant(s) visit your school to assess progress or assist you and the staff?

- ☐ Never
☐ 1–5 times
☐ 6–10 times
☐ 11–15 times
☐ 15–20 times
☐ More than 20 times

Comprehensive School Reform – Administrator Survey

*** 19. Did your school district support your school's implementation of HSTW activities in the following ways?**

Did your district . . .

	No	Yes
conduct/assist with a needs assessment related to HSTW?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provide or arrange for professional development pertaining to HSTW?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provide technical assistance such as helping to align HSTW with district requirements or monitoring its implementation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have a district staff member participate in training on the HSTW program?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have a district staff member attend school meetings related to the HSTW program?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
grant in-service days or release time to teachers to spend on the HSTW program activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** 20. Did your school use federal or state [Texas Title Improvement Program (TTIPs) or School Improvement Grant (SIG)] funding to implement HSTW?**

☐ No – skip to question 22

☐ Yes

21. Was there money from the following sources used directly to implement and/or sustain HSTW?

	Yes	No
Federal CSRD funds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Title I funds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private grants or donations to the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funds from school-based organizations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comprehensive School Reform – Administrator Survey

*22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
HSTW staff provided adequate support to the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
HSTW provided the type of reform that helped students in this school achieve at higher levels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There were insufficient funds to support the full implementation of HSTW.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most teachers in the school were fully committed to using HSTW.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most parents of the children at this school were supportive of the HSTW program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank You!

Thank you for completing this survey!

APPENDIX C: Permission From RAND Corporation to Adapt Surveys

Irving-Conaway, Kimberley M

From: Bernstein, Beth <bethb@rand.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2013 9:24 PM
To: Irving-Conaway, Kimberley M
Subject: Re: Permissions question

Kimberley,

Thank you for your interest in RAND. You are free to use the survey tools from RAND's MG-546 for your research. It is available for noncommercial purposes with no need for permission. For the full report, visit:

<http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG546.html>

Best of luck with your study!

Beth Bernstein
 Permissions Editor
 RAND Corporation
 1776 Main Street
 PO Box 2138
 Santa Monica, CA 90401
 Email: bethb@rand.org
 Ph: 310.393.0411 x7423

On 11/16/13 12:09 PM, "Irving-Conaway, Kimberley M"
 <kirvingconaway1@saisd.net> wrote:

>I am requesting to use the following tools from the Appendix of a RAND
 >publication. I want to use the the interview protocol and two survey
 >instruments to gather data for my study. I will visit schools to
 >interview administrators. I will survey administrators and teachers as
 >well. Instead of creating my own instruments to gather my data, I would
 >rather use the RAND tools/instruments because they are in alignment
 >with what my study is about. I want to adapt the RAND tools to fit my
 >study. I am attaching sample pages of what I am requesting to use. How
 >do I obtain permission to use these tools.

APPENDIX D: Permission and Ten Key Components of High Schools That Work

Print

Page 1 of 1

Subject: Permission Granted
From: Scott Warren (scott.warren@sreb.org)
To: kmichelle00@att.net;
Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2015 5:48 PM

Kimberly

You have permission to print within your dissertation the information on the High Schools That Work 10 Key Practices found in the link below.

http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/CSAS/CSAS%20Home/CTE%20Home/Perkins/Reserve_Funds_RPOS/HSTW%20and%20RPOS%20Alignment.pdf

Scott Warren
SREB
Director of HSTW/MMGW State Initiatives
(404) 879-5613 (Office)
(678) 643-9821 (Cell)

**Why is it okay to have students redo a course they fail,
but not okay to have them redo assignments and assessments
that they fail?**

High Schools That Work (HSTW) 10 Key Practices	Rigorous Programs of Study (RPOS) 10 Framework Components
<p>HSTW identified a set of Key Practices that impact student achievement through development of multiple programs of study that prepare students for postsecondary studies and careers. These Key Practices provide direction and meaning to comprehensive school improvement.</p>	<p>A rigorous Program of Study is a Comprehensive, structured approach for delivering academic and career and technical education to prepare students for postsecondary education and career success that utilizes a framework of 10 supporting elements viewed as instrumental for creating and implementing a high quality, comprehensive POS.</p>
<p>High Expectations Motivate more students to meet higher standards by integrating high expectations into classroom practices and providing frequent feedback.</p>	<p>Legislation and Policies Federal, state, and local legislation or administrative policies promote POS development and implementation</p>
<p>Program of Study Require each student to complete an upgraded academic core and a concentration.</p>	<p>Partnerships Ongoing relationships among education, business and other community stakeholders are central to POS design, implementation, and maintenance.</p>
<p>Academic Studies Teach more students the essential concepts of the college-preparatory curriculum by encouraging them to apply academic content and skills to real-world problems and projects.</p>	<p>Professional Development Sustained, intensive, and focused opportunities for administrators, teachers, and faculty foster POS design, implementation, and maintenance.</p>
<p>Career/Technical Studies Provide more students access to intellectually challenging career/technical studies in high-demand fields that emphasize the higher-level academic and problem-solving skills needed in the workplace and in further education.</p>	<p>Accountability and Evaluation Systems Systems and strategies to gather quantitative and qualitative data on both POS components and student outcomes are crucial for ongoing efforts to development and implement POS</p>
<p>Work-Based Learning Enable students and their parents to choose from programs that integrate challenging high school studies and work-based learning and are planned by educators, employers and students.</p>	<p>College and Career Readiness Standards Content standards that define what students are expected to know and be able to do in order to enter and advance in college and/or their careers comprise the foundation of a POS</p>
<p>Teachers Working Together Provide cross-disciplinary teams of teachers time and support to work together to help students succeed in challenging academic and career/technical studies.</p>	<p>Course Sequences Non-duplicative sequences of secondary and postsecondary courses within a POS ensure that students transition to postsecondary education without duplicating classes or requiring remedial coursework.</p>
<p>Students Actively Engaged Engage students in academic and career/technical classrooms in rigorous and challenging proficient-level assignments using research-based instructional strategies and technology.</p>	<p>Credit Transfer Agreements Credit transfer agreements provide opportunities for secondary students to be awarded transcribed postsecondary credit at the time the credit is earned and are supported by formal agreements between secondary and postsecondary education systems.</p>
<p>Guidance Involve students and their parents in a guidance and advisement system that develops positive relationships and ensures completion of an accelerated program of study with an academic or career/technical concentration.</p>	<p>Guidance Counseling and Academic Advisement Guidance counseling and academic advisement help students make informed decisions about which POS to pursue.</p>
<p>Extra Help Provide a structured system of extra help to assist students in completing accelerated programs of study with high-level academic and technical content.</p>	<p>Teaching and Learning Strategies Innovative and creative instructional approaches enable teachers to integrate academic and technical instruction and students to apply academic and technical learning to their POS coursework.</p>
<p>Culture of Continuous Improvement: Use data continually to improve school culture, organization, management, curriculum and instruction to advance student learning.</p>	<p>Technical Skills Assessments National, state, and/or local assessments provide ongoing information to the extent to which students are attaining the necessary knowledge and skills for entry into and advancement in postsecondary education careers in their chosen POS.</p>

HSTW Key Practices and RPOS Framework Components Alignment

1.	High Expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation and Policies Accountability and Evaluation Systems 	1.	Legislation and Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture of Continuous Improvement High Expectations
2.	Program of Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Sequence College and Career Readiness Credit Transfer Agreements 	2.	Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work-Based Learning Career/Technical Studies
3.	Academic Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and Learning Strategies College and Career Readiness 	3.	Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture of Continuous Improvement
4.	Career/Technical Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Skill Attainment Credit Transfer Agreements Partnerships 	4.	Accountability and Evaluation Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture of Continuous Improvement High Expectations
5.	Work-Based Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships 	5.	College and Career Readiness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program of Study Academic Studies Extra Help
6.	Teachers Working Together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and Learning Strategies 	6.	Course Sequences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program of Study Extra Help
7.	Students Actively Engaged <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and Learning Strategies 	7.	Credit Transfer Agreements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career/Technical Studies Program of Study
8.	Guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance Counseling and Academic Advisement 	8.	Guidance Counseling and Academic Advisement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance
9.	Extra Help <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Sequences Teaching and Learning Strategies College and Career Readiness 	9.	Teaching and Learning Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Studies Teaching and Learning Strategies Extra Help
10.	Culture of Continuous Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Development Legislation and Policies Accountability and Evaluation Systems 	10.	Technical Skill Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career/Technical Studies

APPENDIX E: Comprehensive School Reform Administrator Interview Protocol

Introductions with interviewer and interviewee.

1. Why was HSTW implemented at your campus?
2. How well had *High Schools That Work* been implemented at your campus?
 - a. How closely does your campus follow the HSTW framework? (Probes: master scheduling, career and college ready courses, other key practices such as parental involvement and mentors)
3. Were there major barriers to implementing or sustaining HSTW at your school? If so, what were they?
4. Have any changes been made in the overall approach to HSTW since you arrived?
 - a. If so, on what basis were they made?
5. Are the actions to improve student achievement monitored? If so, how?
6. How much do you attribute to HSTW for bringing about desired change to your campus?
7. How do you believe the *High Schools That Work* program impacted student performance on TAKS?
8. Is there anything else I should know to tell the story of your school improvement efforts?

APPENDIX F: Institutional Review Board Approval Letter



7/7/2014

Kimberly Irving-Conaway
4732 Bent Elm
San Antonio, Texas 78259

Dear Kimberly:

Your request to conduct the study titled *Comprehensive School Reform: A study on the effectiveness of the Texas High Schools That Work program* was approved as an expedited study on 7/7/2014. Your IRB number is 14-07-001. Any written communication with potential subjects or subjects must be approved and include the IRB approval number. Electronic surveys or electronic consent forms, or other material delivered electronically to subjects must have the IRB approval number inserted into the survey or documents before they are used.

Please keep in mind these additional IRB requirements:

- This approval is for one year from the date of the IRB approval.
- Request for continuing review must be completed for projects extending past one year. Use the **IRB Continuation/Completion form**.
- Any desired changes in proposal procedures must be approved by the UIW IRB prior to implementation except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Use the **Protocol Revision and Amendment form**.
- Prompt reporting to the UIW IRB of any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.
- IRBs are filed by their number. Please refer to this number when communicating about the IRB.

Suspension or termination of approval may be done if there is evidence of any serious or continuing noncompliance with Federal Regulations or any aberrations from the original application.

Congratulations and best wishes for successful completion of your research. If you need any assistance, please contact the UIW IRB representative for your college/school or the Office of Research Development.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Ohnemus, MAA, CRA

Rebecca Ohnemus, MAA, CRA
Research Officer
University of the Incarnate Word IRB

APPENDIX G: Informed Consent Form

SUBJECT CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN A STUDY OF An Evaluation on the Effectiveness of a Comprehensive School Reform: High Schools That Work (HSTW) University of the Incarnate Word

My name is Kimberly Irving-Conaway. I am a graduate student at the Dreeben School of Education at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, TX. I am working towards a doctorate degree in education with a concentration in organizational leadership. In addition, I am an Assistant Principal in San Antonio, so I understand how busy you are.

You are being asked to take part in a research study on the effectiveness of the *High Schools That Works* (HSTW) program on students' academic performance on TAKS, using past data from Academic Excellence Indicator System reports. We want to compare academic performance data at High Schools That Work (HSTW) schools before and after implementation, while taking into consideration the level of perceived fidelity to which HSTW had been implemented. You are being asked to participate in this study because you are currently or have in the past implemented HSTW at your campus. Any guidelines from your district to conduct this research will be strictly adhered.

If you and your campus or district decide to participate, select English Language Arts and mathematics teachers and administrators who were present during the identified timeframe for your specific campus will be asked to complete a one time, online survey about the impact the program has had on your campus.

In addition, some of the administrators who also participate in completing the online survey may be asked to participate in a brief, one time interview with me about the HSTW program for the purpose of providing more insight about the implementation and impact the comprehensive school reform program had. At your convenience, the interviews may take place at your campus, over the phone, or at a mutually agreed upon time and place, and should last no longer than 30 minutes.

The procedures of this study are designed to be of little inconvenience to you. Surveys and interviews are meant to be conducted at one time by all participants at your campus during the months of July, August, or September during a faculty or department meeting at your campus. Interviews will take place after surveys have been completed and analyzed. Interviews are meant to be conducted at some time during the Fall 2014 semester. The time selected to participate in online surveys and conduct interviews will be at a mutually agreed upon time.

We do not guarantee that you will benefit from taking part in this study. However, there are minimal risks associated with participating. All identifying information will be both private and confidential. Survey participation is anonymous, which means that no one will know your answers. Identity of the interview participants will only be known by myself as the principal investigator. Teachers and Administrators' information will be coded. For instance, School A, Faculty A, Principal A is an example of coding to ensure anonymity. Study information will be kept in a secure location. The results of the study will be published in my dissertation, but your identity will not be revealed. Data will also be presented in a way in which participants identities cannot be determined.

Taking part in the study is strictly voluntary. You may choose to withdraw from participating at any time.

If you choose not to take part or stop at any time, it will not affect your current and future status at the University of the Incarnate Word.

If you have questions now, please feel free to ask. You may contact me at (210) 842-8832 and kirving@student.uiwtx.edu. If you have additional questions later or you want to report a problem that may be related to this study, you may contact me or contact Dr. Judy Beauford, Professor at the University of the Incarnate Word in the Dreeben School of Education at (210) 829-3171.

The University of the Incarnate Word committee that reviews research on human subjects, the Institutional Review Board, will answer any questions about your rights as a research subject. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research may be contacted at (210) 829-2759.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Your signature indicates that you (1) consent to take part in this research study, (2) that you have read and understand the information given above, and (3) that the information above was explained to you.

Signature of Subject

Signature of Witness

Signature of Investigator

APPENDIX H: Collaboration Institutional Training Initiative Certification

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI)

DREEBEN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION CURRICULUM COMPLETION REPORT

Printed on 03/12/2014

LEARNER Kimberly Irving-Conaway (ID: 4070533)
DEPARTMENT Dreeben School of Education
EMAIL kirving@uiwtx.edu
INSTITUTION University of the Incarnate Word
EXPIRATION DATE 03/11/2017

DREEBEN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

COURSE/STAGE: Basic Course/1
PASSED ON: 03/12/2014
REFERENCE ID: 12584001

REQUIRED MODULES	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction	03/12/14	3/3 (100%)
Students in Research	03/12/14	10/10 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE	03/12/14	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE	03/12/14	5/5 (100%)
The Regulations - SBE	03/12/14	5/5 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE	03/12/14	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE	03/12/14	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE	03/12/14	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE	03/12/14	4/4 (100%)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE	03/12/14	4/4 (100%)
Internet Research - SBE	03/12/14	5/5 (100%)
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees	03/12/14	4/4 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects	03/12/14	5/5 (100%)
University of the Incarnate Word	03/12/14	No Quiz

For this Completion Report to be valid, the learner listed above must be affiliated with a CITI Program participating institution or be a paid Independent Learner. Falsified information and unauthorized use of the CITI Program course site is unethical, and may be considered research misconduct by your institution.

Paul Braunschweiger Ph.D.
 Professor, University of Miami
 Director Office of Research Education
 CITI Program Course Coordinator

Collaborative Institutional
 Training Initiative
 at the University of Miami