A PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS:

EXPERIENCES OF ADMINISTRATORS

A Record of Study

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the lived experience of administrators in developing school improvement plans. The outcome being sought was an informed framework to build the capacity of administrators to strategically plan for school improvement. The central research question for this study was the following: How do secondary school administrators at Magnet ISD develop school improvement plans? The subset questions for this study were the following: a) How do the participants describe their experiences in developing school improvement plans and any associated challenges? a) How do administrators describe the contexts or situations that influenced or affected their experiences in developing the school improvement plan?

This qualitative study was grounded in social learning and educational change theories. Through a phenomenological process, my intent was to describe through an empirical inquiry the development of school improvement plans through the shared and lived experience among the school administrators, the context of their experiences, and how these experiences affected or influenced the development of school improvement plans. Through purposeful sampling, one administrator per secondary school within the Magnet Independent School District was selected on the basis that the administrator was directly in charge of the development of the school improvement plan. The sources of data were texts, interviews, and a research journal. The results of this study aligned to the literature presented that there exists a lack of a systematic process for positive improvement, school administrators might lack strategic skills necessary to enact timely educational reform, and effectiveness of principals must be developed and improved. These results guided the recommendations and the artifact presented as part of this record of study.

DEDICATION

My study is dedicated to my life foundation – my Family. Without them, I would be lost in this world. Through this process, my mother Maria Luisa Rodriguez Arriazola and my brother Eliazar Rodriguez Jr fulfilled their life purpose and mission in this world. Together with my Lord, I know that my mom and brother held my hand and inspired me to keep on going. To my mother and father, Eliazar Rodriguez Cantu, thank you for being my role models and creating the strongest foundation to develop me as a strong, independent woman. To my sisters, Leticia, Ofelia, and Dora Elia, thank you for showing me resilience and endurance in this life. To my nephews, Elias, Abel, Eddie, and Alex, and my princess Andrea thank you for loving me and being my inspiration in my life. My educational endeavors have been to guide you, be an example, and for you to continue our family legacy and the foundation of your grandparents Maria and Elias that education is the key to a better life. There exists no excuse for you not to be successful and lead a purposeful life. To my love, Richard Flores III, thank you for your unconditional love, patience, and kindness. By your side, my life has been fulfilled. Siempre Juntos.

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Contributors

The work in this record of study was supervised by committee chair Dr. Michelle Kwok from the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture. Co-chair of the committee was Dr. Shaun D. Hutchins from the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture. The committee members were Dr. Joyce E. Juntune from the Department of Educational Psychology and Dr. Robert Capraro from the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture. All work completed for this record of study was completed by the student independently.

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1.1. The Context

In the state of Texas, the overall goal for the current education system is to support all students to be college, career and military ready. The overarching goal among states and our nation is the advancement of education to influence future generations. Beyond the federal and state mandates and educational reforms that stem from this goal, school districts entrust schools to meet the standards expected by the state and federal mandates. Ultimately, school leaders are left to mitigate the best course of action to meet the expectations set by every governing body from the local school district to state and federal government. Consequently, the effectiveness of the school leaders is of utmost importance in meeting student achievement and school performance standards set by every entity. Coming just after classroom instruction, school leadership has been central in influencing school improvement (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Louis, Dretzke & Wahlstrom, 2010; Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi Doris, 2010). Principals focusing on school improvement plans as a systemic and strategic process geared at meeting state and federal mandates can lead to the advancement of schools, students, and education.

1.1.1. National Context

On January 24, 2020, President Trump declared that our educational system continued to fail our children by stating that "at the time when our students need the skills to succeed in an ever-changing world, the "Nation's Report Card" shows that about two-thirds of our children are not Proficient readers" (Proclamation, 2020, p. 5297-5298). In the latest international comparisons in the National Center of Educational Statistics, in 2015, the United States ranked 15th in reading literacy scores, 19th in science literacy scores and 37th in mathematics literacy scores for 15-year-olds (McFarland et al., 2019). Educational reform is inevitable.

Today, as stated in *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 and recognized by previous administrations, "the success of future generations determines the success of our Nation" (Proclamation, 2020, p. 5297-5298). With this determination, policy changes have occurred at the federal and state level from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965 signed by President Johnson to No Child Left Behind in 2002 to Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015 signed by President Obama supported advancing education as a priority (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Policy changes and implementation have consistently increased the accountability of districts and schools, as well as the support for the educational system in improving student achievement. With every educational policy change and establishment, school leaders carry the mantle to meet all the accountability demands of educational policies.

The role that school leaders play in student learning is crucial. When it comes to influencing student achievement, school leadership comes in second just under classroom instruction (Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). In the 2017-2018 National Teacher and Principal Survey, principals were asked how they thought they influenced different school activities. Based on the outcomes of the survey, principals felt that they had a major influence in evaluating teachers with a 93.4 percent; the greatest gap in school activities was found between 46.8 percent in establishing curriculum and 93.4 percent in evaluating teachers (Taie & Goldring, 2019). Additionally, the survey reported that only 83.4 percent of principals participated in professional development activities (Taie & Goldring, 2019). Based on the report from the National Center of Educational Statistics, *The Conditions of Education*, comparing principals in 2015-16 to 1999-2000, a higher percentage of principals in 2015-16 had 3 or fewer years of experience, 39 compared to 30 percent, and 4 to 9 years of experience as principals with 35 versus 31 percent (McFarland, et al., 2019). Central to positively impacting

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the current educational system is school leaders developing strategic improvement plans to increase student achievement and school success. When school leaders lack the skill to develop effective strategic plans, this can lead to a lack of advancement in the quality of schools, instruction and ultimately student success.

1.1.2. Situational Context

The region is composed of four counties with a population close to two million people. Because Magnet ISD[1] only serves three of the four counties, only these three counties are being compared. Based on the United States Census Bureau, the highest population is found in County One[2] with 865, 939, followed by County Two[3] with 423, 908 in population and 21,515 in County Three. County One and County Two have had an increase in their population since 2010 of 11.8% and 4.4% respectively with County Three[4] having a decrease of population of 2.8%. All three counties have a predominantly Hispanic population above 88% in the three counties as compared to Texas with 39.4%.

When it comes to education, income, and poverty in the population of the three counties, the overall Texas population has a higher percentage in these areas than the three counties in the Rio Grande Valley. The state of Texas has around twenty percentage points above in persons over age twenty-five that are high school graduates or higher. The percentage of persons of age twenty-five with a bachelor's degree or higher in Texas is 28.7% as compared to County Three

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[1] All names are pseudonyms.
[2] All names are pseudonyms.
[3] All names are pseudonyms.
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with 9% and County Two and County Three at around 17%. As compared to Texas, the three counties being compared fall below 50% of the per capita income with County Three being over 53% below the Texas' per capita income.

1.1.2.1. District Description

Magnet Independent School District (MISD) traditionally serves students in 7th through 12th grade and in 2021 with the addition of an online academy it started serving grade 6. The district serves students from three counties and overlaps 28 school districts. Currently, the district is composed of six magnet schools, two middle schools, four high schools, and one virtual academy. Magnet ISD is the only all-magnet school district in the state of Texas offering students an educational alternative. MISD is a public-school district and as such, there is no cost for students to attend nor a charge for bus transportation. MISD maintains an open enrollment policy which means that any student
within the three counties can attend. One middle school and high school are located in County One. The other middle school and two other high schools are located near the center of the three counties but are still part of County One. The newest high school is located in County Two. No schools are located in County Three.

Magnet ISD does not believe in a top-heavy staffing approach; the district prioritizes staffing at the campus level instead of at the district level. Central administration accounts for only 0.4% of the staff in the entire district, lower than the state percentage of 1.1% as addressed in the Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR). Currently, the district has one superintendent, one deputy superintendent overseeing curriculum, assessment, and instructional programs and principals, one assistant superintendent overseeing finance and human resources, one administrator for support services, and one public relations and marketing coordinator.

1.1.2.2. District's Focus

The mission of Magnet ISD is the following:

> The mission of Magnet Independent School District, a proven educational leader
> that values academic success and high expectations for all, is to inspire and
> develop each student to achieve at the highest-level lead in a chosen field and
> contribute to a changing world by nurturing each student's aspirations through a
> supportive environment that engages our entire community in challenging
> learning experiences (STISD, 2021).

As stated in their mission, Magnet ISD has proven its academic success. Based on the 2018-2019
Texas Academic Performance Report, South Texas ISD enrolled 4,098 students with a
population consisting of predominately Hispanic at 84.2%, 8.3% Asian, 5.8% White, 0.8%
African American, and 0.1% American Indian, and a population of 0.7% with two or more races.
The student population is 53.9% economically disadvantaged with 20.9% at-risk of not
graduating. Magnet ISD received an "A" as an accountability rating with a distinction
designation in Postsecondary Readiness and the status of meeting requirements for the 2019
Special Education Determination. Academically, Magnet ISD surpasses the state STAAR
performance rating with over twenty percentage points in all performance levels. Similarly, the
district surpassed the state in the College, Career, and Military Readiness graduation measure
with thirty percentage points at 95.5% as compared to 65.5%, as well as, over forty percentage
points in the college ready graduation standard at 90.5% as compared to 50%. Based on the
graduating class of 2017-2018, Magnet ISD surpassed the state performance in the Texas
Success Initiative Assessment (TSI) with over twenty percentage points with 41.4% meeting
both reading and math requirements, the Advance Placement and International Baccalaureate

(AP/IB) results with thirty percentage points with a 43%, and SAT/ACT results at or above the criterion with over thirty percentage points with a 61.4%. Based on the state accountability system, Magnet ISD has surpassed the state and region performance.

Although Magnet ISD has a positive accountability record, Magnet ISD has been stagnant in academic performance starting in 2018. The career pathways that once made Magnet ISD unique are now a common offering in school districts due to graduation requirements in the state. Since program offerings are being offered by neighboring districts, Magnet ISD has struggled to meet enrollment numbers. In 2017, a five-year strategic plan was created but only one year of actions were developed. The actions and goals that were developed for 2017 were implemented and surpassed by 2018; however, the plan was never reviewed again after the 2017-2018 academic year. The goals that continue to give direction to Magnet ISD are the 2017-2018 goals with no updated actions and goals. Developing a current improvement plan by reviewing the most current data can lead Magnet ISD to be strategic in implementing actions that can support improvement in the district.

1.2. The Problem

Before 2018 and unlike other school districts, Magnet ISD prioritized staffing and a low student to teacher ratio at the campus level and not the district level accounting 99.6% of staff at the campuses. The district supported principals in exercising autonomy and decision-making in addressing the needs of their individual campuses. Principal mobility, accountability, and standard practices and systems were non-existence. In 2018, a new superintendent was hired, audits were conducted, and evidence of non-compliance and lack of systemic plans were evident. Starting in 2018, the continuity of administrators at Magnet ISD has been a concern. Six out of the seven schools have had a change in principals and assistant principals. In the last four years,

six out of the seven schools have had between two to three changes in administration. Changes in administration have been due to the lack of effectiveness and strategic skills by the campus administration which led to their dismissal and as stated by central office administration, the success of Magnet ISD was "by chance and not by design" (Central Office, personal communication, 2021). Knowing the influence principals have on schools and student learning, the lack of continuity of highly effective and skilled administrators in meeting district and campus goals has been a concern. In the Spring of 2022, the district initiated the development of improvement plans, leaving behind the 2017 strategic plan. Based on the district's improvement plan, recruiting, development, and retaining highly effective teachers and administrators is a goal for the upcoming year. Furthermore, based on the 2021 spring 2022 preliminary STAAR EOC assessments, the district did not meet the action goals of 100% approaches, 85% meets, and 50% masters in student achievement (Central Office, personal communication, May 30, 2022). This study seeks to understand the lived experiences of school administrators at Magnet ISD in developing school improvement plans to impact the overall performance of a campus.

1.2.1. Relevant History of the Problem

Magnet ISD has been successful in educating students across three counties by providing students with an innovative educational option that was not available at their home campus. However, since 2018, the student enrollment has decreased, the district student achievement goals have not been met, and most schools now offer the academic and specialized programs that Magnet ISD offers (Central Office, personal communication, May 24, 2022). Additionally, Magnet ISD's population has changed to include an increase of students under the special education program, section 504 program, and the bilingual program plus the academic achievement gap between these populations and the general population has increased (STISD,

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2021). Furthermore, as part of the effect of the pandemic, the achievement gap by all students as compared as other years has increased leading campuses not meeting district goals. These recent data at Magnet ISD make it more important to develop improvement plans that can advance Magnet ISD.

1.2.2. Significance of the Problem

Education reform is not new, it is complex, and it continues to be a never-ending goal of public education. In the early nineteenth century, Horace Mann saw a venue to support children in the state of Massachusetts which "lacked an overarching system, a common curriculum, systematic training of its teachers, and textbooks free of the kind of religious doctrine" (Peterson, 2010, p. 27). Today as in the past, education reformers continue to seek progress and advancement for the future generations; however, the deficiencies seen by Mann in the nineteenth century continue to exist. Educational reformers are necessary today due to a continued missed opportunity to advance students and a lack of untimely action by educational leaders to create personal and institutional responsibility to advance education.

The development of school improvement plans by educational leaders is the focus of this study due to the crucial role educational leaders play in advancing education, schools, and children. In the past four years, Magnet ISD has seen a decline in student academic achievement, has been stagnant in advancing educational programs, and has not met district improvement plan goals. The importance to engage in this study is to develop an understanding of shared experiences from secondary school administrators in developing school improvement plans. Developing an understanding of these experiences will support the development of best practices to support administrators in strategic and purposeful planning and the development of school improvement plans to improve student outcomes.

1.3. Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to describe the lived experience with designing school improvement plans for secondary school administrators at Magnet ISD. The outcome being sought is an informed development and implementation of an action plan to build the capacity of administrators to strategically plan for school improvement. The central research question for this study is the following:

1. How do secondary school administrators at Magnet ISD develop school improvement plans?

The subset questions this study is pursuing are the following:

a. How do the participants describe their experiences in developing school improvement plans and any associated challenges?

b. How do administrators describe the contexts or situations that influenced or affected their experiences in developing the school improvement plan?

1.4. Personal Context

Our vocation can transform the world. My interest in pursuing this study is the unending desire for improving our educational system to positively impact the lives of students. One way that we can impact the education system is by developing the skills necessary for school administrators to lead their schools successfully.

I have a strong conviction in daily developing oneself to be a driving force in student learning. I strongly believe that our vocation is one of the purest and most influential in our world. I have always believed that the day that I decided to be an educator I took an oath with the sole purpose and responsibility to make a difference in students' lives to reach their full potential. My journey in education started with my parents being my guidance and teachers.

Although my parents only had formal education up to grade three, they instill in me the importance of learning, doing the right thing, and that education would be my only means to get out of poverty, as well as education being the only thing that no one could take away from me. Today, I am a principal of a magnet high school.

The Rio Grande Valley, in the Southernmost tip of Texas, has been my home and this is where my journey as a student and educator began. The Rio Grande Valley has a predominantly Hispanic population, with most schools having a high number of low economic disadvantaged families, a high number of first generation college-goers and high number of students at-risk of not graduating. Like many of these students, I, too, was economically disadvantaged, first generation college-goer, at-risk of not graduating and limited English proficient. Regardless of the disadvantages and labels, in the fall of 2001, I became a high school teacher in a Title 1 school led by a female principal who I saw as a strong instructional leader. Her leadership, strong work ethic and assertiveness instilled in me the conviction to do my best in supporting our students and to continue to develop myself.

Before becoming a principal, I always sought people to learn from as my colleagues or school administrators, I enrolled in various university courses throughout my career, and I attended workshops aligned to my duties that were state and federally mandated as LPAC and district initiated; however, it was not until I became a principal that I realized that I needed specialized guidance, professional development and supports to lead my school. Throughout my twenty years of educational experience, I had to seek answers through research, former principals, and by collaborating within my administrative team. I recognized that I had not experienced systemic professional development to make me a better administrator and problem

solve through the demands of our educational system other than university course work and learning from good or bad experiences in my career.

Today, I believe that I would have been a total failure in leading schools if I did not have the ambition to learn and the drive to seek answers to improve my practice in improving schools. Through my twenty years in the educational system, at no point, did anyone hold my hand or systemically guide me to be an administrator, much less improve my craft. As a school leader, understanding continuous improvement planning as a tool for school reform and implementing improvement plans guided me and supported me in the demands necessary for school and student advancement. With this study, I seek to understand the lived experiences of administrators in developing school improvement plans to be able to later formulate an action plan to build the capacity of administrators to strategically plan for school improvement.

1.4.1. Researcher's Role

The role that I will play as a researcher will be full membership. I was employed with the district in 2018. I was able to see the central administration shift from the prior to the new central administration which allowed me to see the transformation in the top leadership positions as the superintendent and deputy superintendent. Having these experiences allow me to be reflective about my own perspective but also be flexible by being fully active and involved with the participants of my study which are my own colleagues holding the same position of principals at Magnet ISD. Before 2018, all principals had been in their positions between ten to more than twenty years; however, since 2022 with only four years in the district, I am now the longest standing principal. My goal is to be reflective and flexible of my own perspectives and to "strive to describe the meaning of the findings from the perspective of the research participants" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 43). My aim will be to give a voice to the perspectives of the

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participants to generate meaning of their realities of the development of campus improvement plans.

1.4.2. Journey to the Problem

Before 2018, Magnet ISD was a leading educational success as a magnet school district offering students educational opportunities and programs not seen at other districts; however, after 2014, the district became stagnant in its educational offerings and other districts started offering the same educational opportunities as Magnet ISD (Central Office, personal communication, 2021). In 2018, the superintendent retired, and a new superintendent was hired. His experience as a leading director of innovative practices at the regional education service center brought a vision of "always innovating" and to improve and move the district to be in the top ten in the nation "by design and not by chance" (Central Office, personal communication, 2021). Based on the new central administration leadership, leadership practices are seen as correlated to learner success and teacher effectiveness. By 2018, all principals had been leading their campuses for a minimum of ten years with some leading their campuses for over twenty years; however, Magnet ISD did not have a process to decrease the teacher quality gap. Autonomy was a practice exercised by each campus principal, each set their own practices such as the development of teachers. With the new administration, systemic processes, uniform practices, principal accountability, campus performance, and student achievement became an expectation. Several central office positions were created and fulfilled as a Curriculum and Instruction Academic Officer overseeing curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development.

For the new administration, the principal is a pillar for the success of the schools, and therefore, their development became a priority as well as the professional development of

teachers and administrators. Principals are accountable to build the capacity of their teachers to grow in their craft regardless of their effectiveness as a campus and instructional leader (Park & Datnow, 2017). Due to the autonomy principals have over their campus and depending on each principal's capacity to know their own leadership effectiveness, their own needs for professional growth can go unnoticed, as well as, having the skill of meeting the needs of their campus (Johnston, Kaufman, & Thompson, 2016). Due to principals being underqualified or focused on other school business, principals might not meet the needs of campuses, focus on teacher effectiveness, and increase student achievement (Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010). By 2022, most schools at Magnet ISD have a new principal, and principal accountability and improving student achievement, campus performance, and being innovative by design are all expectations. Moreover, the district has focused on creating uniformity and processes to support the principals, streamline curriculum, and create a professional development plan to support all personnel.

1.4.3. Significant Stakeholders

The most significant stakeholders are secondary school administrators. Understanding the secondary school administrators' learned experiences in leading school improvement forms the basis of this study. Furthermore, forming an understanding of their experiences will lead to the development of an action plan to improve their current capacity to improve their practice with the phenomenon. With this understanding and implementation of an action plan, additional stakeholders will be other school personnel such as teachers that have an interest in embarking in administration to lead schools.

Additionally, other stakeholders include district administrators and students. Building the capacity of current school leaders and future school leaders is an interest of district leaders. The investment from district leaders in developing the effectiveness of school administrators is

critical in improving schools and student achievement. The possibility of creating an action plan that can build not only current but future leaders has the potential to create the synergy necessary for continuous improvement of schools and districts. Finally, the goal for any school and district is the success of students so that they can impact their future. Students are stakeholders. Ultimately, the intent for this study is to indirectly impact students, their learning, advancing education and future generations.

1.5. Important Terms

School Performance – According to the Texas Education Agency, "evaluates performance across all subjects for all students, on both general and alternate assessments, College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) indicators, and graduation rates" (TEA, 2019, p. 3).

Student Achievement – According to the Texas Education Agency, "measures district and campus outcomes in two areas: the number of students that grew at least one year academically (or are on track) as measured by STAAR results and the achievement of all students relative to districts or campuses with similar economically disadvantaged percentages" (TEA, 2019, p. 3).

School Improvement Plans – For the purpose of this study, the school improvement, strategic improvement plans, continuous improvement plans, and strategic plans will be used interchangeably. Beyond a required artifact for Title I schools, federal and state mandates, and school accountability, for the purpose of this study the focus being entertained is the improvement of all students and schools as the major outcomes as stated by the Texas Education Agency.

Effectives Schools Framework (ESF) – According to the Texas Education Agency, "the goal of the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) is to provide a clear vision for what districts and schools across the state do to ensure an excellent education for all Texas students. The ESF provides support for district and campus continuous improvement through the facilitation of the ESF diagnostic process that results in the identification of prioritized practices the campus can focus on to support continuous improvement" (Texas Education Agency, 2019).

1.6. Closing Thoughts on Chapter I

Our vocation calls to prepare students for their future, to positively impact the world. Similarly, our vocation calls to always be prepared to learn and advance our own understanding, to be and do better due to the direct impact our learning has on advancing students. Consequently, educational entities view teaching and teachers as a priority in supporting the advancement of instruction, curriculum, and assessment to impact student achievement. Although teachers must always be a priority, an emphasis must also revolve around the development and systemic support of school administrators to lead continuous improvement in all school operations and systems. Due to educational reform, the accountability system, state and federal mandates, school administrators are crucial in leading schools in meeting all expectations by the different governing bodies. Building the capacity of school administrators is necessary for improvement not only in school achievement and school performance, but the indirect impact of future school leaders. Part of the purpose of this study is to increase the capacity of current administrators so that synergy and their influence can impact future administrators and ultimately see the continuous growth in student achievement and school performance.

In this study, I plan to explore the beliefs and experiences of administrators in developing school improvement plans utilizing qualitative data as a primary source. For chapter two, I conducted a review of the literature pertaining to the role principals and school improvement plans and the influence both have in student achievement and school performance. In chapter three, I will discuss the solution, design, and methods for implementation in the study. Data analysis and the findings will be shared in chapter four and conclusions will be presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIP

2.1. Introduction

A vast number of issues are influencing the current education system and these issues are impacting organizations as a whole and ultimately students. Among the critical issues that currently impact education as a whole is the development of purposeful and strategic school improvement plans that can lead to improvement in student achievement and campus performance (Texas Education Agency, 2019). School administrators must be purposely engaged in the strategic process of developing school improvement plans to continuously improve the conditions of schools, positively impact student achievement, increase the quality of instruction, and increase school performance (Texas Education Agency, 2019). Principals as school administrators are instructional leaders and the driving force of schools; however, not much time is spent supporting principals in being effective instructional leaders and a lack of shared accountability exists when it comes to leading improvements in student achievement (Park & Dantnow, 2017). After the beginning of the yearly professional development, many principals are left to lead their schools and be accountable to make progress towards meeting the district's goals. Instruction, mentoring and principal-focused professional development might continue to be a topic of support only in a large school district (Johnston, Kaufman, & Thompson, 2016). Most principals then will lead their campus to success or failure, and at the end, the accountability system will determine the shared success or lonely failure of a school.

Principals are at times seen through a *neoheroic* idealistic lens since they will face many challenges, wear many hats and most "successful leaders [will] improve learning in their schools in many ways" (Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010, p. 698). However, when a principal lacks the understanding of the importance of teaching and learning as a major aspect of student

achievement, the lack of understanding can lead to a lack of improvement in classroom

instruction, the learning of students and teachers, and the establishment of processes for success.

Through this study, I plan to seek an understanding of how school administrators develop school

improvement plans to impact student achievement, school performance, and the overall

conditions of schools.

Through chapter two, I review the literature associated with school improvement plans

and the role of school administrators in the planning process of developing school improvement

plans. In the first part of this chapter, a review of related literature relevant to the history of

educational reform, the action research traditions alignment along with change theory in the

educational setting, and the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) will be presented. The evolution

of education through these three lenses is intended to create relevancy to the expectations of

principals to improve the current conditions of schools and lead them to success as determined

by state and federal standards. The Effective Schools Framework (ESF) is presented as the

guidance to principals in the continuous improvement process to positively impact student

achievement. Next, the research literature is examined to create an understanding of the process

of purposeful strategic planning in the development of school improvement plans as determined

by the Texas Education Agency. Then, through the literature review, I attempt to create an

understanding of the actions needed by school administrators for the improvement of schools.

Subsequently, the literature is analyzed to construct the significance of the outcomes of school

improvement plans such as increasing student achievement, as well as effective school

improvement plans that can lead students to achieve high standards and access to high-quality

instruction. A critical analysis of reviewed literature is examined for relevancy among the

various and associated essential areas needed to be addressed by administrators for

understanding of their campus and student population needs, effective use and analysis of data, research-based action, goal development, and strategic activities to lead to student and campus success. Lastly, the literature is analyzed for relevant gaps for further study to address any disconnect amongst all the essential areas necessary to support principals in leading student and campus improvement.

2.2. Relevant Historical Background

For over the past 50 years, our nation's educational system has been inspired to commit to national goals to provide educational opportunities and increase the achievement levels of all students. From the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965 to the current Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA), educational reform has led to varied policy and accountability changes with the purpose of committing to improving the education system to improve the academic achievement and performance of all students.

The educational system has evolved through the decades; however, the goal has not changed from being the academic achievement and performance of students, as well as, providing more educational opportunities. In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was signed as a national education law by President Lyndon Baines Johnson. This act afforded "all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps" (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.; Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965, p. 8). Since then, this act has been amended with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act enacted in 2002, followed by Every Student Succeeds (ESSA) Act in 2015 signed into law by President Obama; nonetheless, the premise among the acts continued to provide an equal opportunity to education for all students and increase student achievement. Equally, the focus on accountability was a critical component

associated throughout the acts to improve educational systems to support all students which led to recognize the challenges in meeting the educational goals through each act. Ultimately, ESSA allowed flexibility to states to develop their own plans to "close achievement gaps, increase equity, improve the quality of instruction, and increase outcomes for all students" (U.S. Department of Education, n.d., p. 2) and still stay focused "on the clear goal of fully preparing all students for success in college and careers" to strengthen not only the educational system but also the national economy (U.S. Department of Education, n.d., p. 2). While states were able to have flexibility by developing their own plans, the focus continued to be the education of all.

In the early eighties, a major movement of reform was initiated by *A Nation at Risk* which demanded to place our educational system and students at the forefront of our actions for the future of our country and the economy. In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education made a call for action to the nation and the United States Department of Education through the report titled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. *A Nation at Risk* reported on the "strengths and weaknesses of American education to help define the problems afflicting American education and to provide solutions, not search for scapegoats", a call to action to innovation and reform, and reflection of the "conflicting demands" placed on schools and colleges "to provide solutions to personal, social, and political problems that the home and other institutions either will not or cannot resolve"(U.S. Department of Education, National, 1983, p. 9). Ultimately, *A Nation at Risk* led the nation to analyze and act on the state of American education by creating a concern focused on the future of the country and the economy.

A Nation at Risk shifted the direction of our educational system to think about student achievement and performance beyond the national level into the competitive global community.

In 1989, *Goals 2000* was proposed as a solution to the nation's ailing education system. In 1994, President Clinton signed the *Goals 2000 Educate America* act that "set educational goals for the nation's public schools to be achieved by the year 2000, creating a framework for implementing the goals, and provide incentives for the states to cooperate in meeting the goals" (National Center of Home Education, 2002, p. 1). The response from the state of Texas was to move from the *Closing the Gaps by 2015* to the *2015-2030 Texas Higher Education Plan: 60x30TX*. The *60x30TX* higher education plan strives for "60 percent of the 25- to 34-year-old Texas population to hold a certificate or degree by 2030" to increase student success with combined supports and collaborative efforts from various stakeholders allowing Texas institutions of higher education to "have more opportunities to grow, which will enrich students and the state" (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2015, p. iv). With the development of the *60x30TX* plan, Texas led collaborative and strategic efforts focused in supporting students through their transition from their school to a job certification or a college degree.

With every act signed and goals set at the federal and state level, the precedence to meet the standards was established. The accountability system for every state and local education agency became the measure of success for every local education agency. Not meeting the goals of the accountability system led to the identification of schools and districts as needing improvement. A system of supports and processes was then established to support districts in meeting the accountability system through the development of strategic improvement plans (Texas Education Agency, Division, 2019). The effectiveness of the development and implementation of school improvement plans inevitably is tied to the campus leader being able to effectively monitor the plan and to see the school make progress towards meeting the accountability system.

2.3. Alignment with Action Research Traditions

The topic of this qualitative study is the development of school improvement plans. This study is seeking to understand how school improvement plans are developed by school administrators at Magnet ISD. Understanding this phenomenon would allow for an understanding of how to increase the capacity of administrators in developing school improvements by effectively addressing the needs of a school organization to influence change and improvement. The qualitative approach and research paradigm chosen for this study is a phenomenological inquiry. A phenomenology "describes the meaning for several individuals of their *lived experiences* of a concept or a phenomenon" in this case the phenomenon being study is the development of the school improvement plan (Creswell, 2017, p. 57). This qualitative study as a phenomenological inquiry tries to describe through an empirical inquiry the development of school improvement plans through the shared and lived experience among the Magnet ISD's administrators, the context of the experiences, and how these experiences affected or influenced the development of school improvement plans.

2.4. Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

Whole system improvement can be the result of knowledgeable education leaders driven by outcomes. Educational change or "change theory or change knowledge can be very powerful in informing education reform strategies and, in turn, getting results – but only in the hands (and minds, and hearts) of people who have a deep knowledge of the dynamics of how the factors in question operate to get particular results" (Fullan, 2006, p. 3). A "mix of cooperative responsibility and dispersed leadership", combination of "power with" and "power over," or collective action for "change and improvement, are based not only upon common beliefs, values, visions, passion for improvement and emphasis upon both the personal and the functional, but

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also are moderated by the organizational context and cultures of the society" (Day & Leithwood, 2007, p. 173). From theory to action, from learning to doing, principals play a crucial role in the continuous improvement to influence educational change.

This study is grounded in social learning and educational change theories by Bandura (1986, 1997, 2006), Lewin (1947), Elmore (2005), and Fullan & Quinn (2016) and the use of the Texas Education Agency's Effective Schools Framework to support the continuous improvement of all Texas schools. These theories through the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) collectively inform my study by the common construct of continuous improvement process driven by school administrators to positively change school systems. Whole system reform through strategic action led by education leaders can define the success of systems.

The Texas Education Agency's Effective Schools Framework (ESF) "supports school and district continuous improvement efforts by providing the basis for the ESF diagnostic process and the foundation for the alignment of resources and supports to the needs of each school" (Texas Education Agency, 2019, p. 1). The overall foundation of the ESF is that strong school leadership and planning can ensure the success of each of the following levers: strategic staffing, high-quality instructional materials and assessments, positive culture, and effective instruction. Additionally, the ESF is grounded in the continuous improvement process with three connected steps including 1) identifying needs, 2) plan, and 3) implement and monitor. These steps are a common construct of continuous improvement processes found within the educational change theories by Bandura (1986, 1997, 2006), Lewin (1947), Elmore (2005), and Fullan & Quinn (2016).

Based on Kurt Lewin's Change Theory, change is a process with three steps: unfreezing, change, and refreezing (Lewin, 1947a). The unfreezing step involves the desire for change by a

change agent who would thoroughly assess the need for change based on data collected and analyzed. The change step would then occur by rethinking processes in an attempt for the system to be innovative and productive. During this step, the change agent would determine the goals, objectives, strategies, and tasks along with implementation, completion, and necessary modifications (Woten & Krakashian, 2021). For the last step, refreezing, establishing policies and processes need to be defined as the outcome of the change. The change agent would need to institutionalize changes in the system until the change is accepted and established (Woten & Krakashian, 2021). As with the ESF continuous improvement process, educational leaders as change agents enact action as in Lewin's three step process to support positive change and improvement.

At the core of the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) is that effective instruction is determined by the collective interactions between teachers, students and content which will determine the learning outcome. According to Elmore, improvement is a process that involves learning, individually and collectively by an organization, it is not linear, and it is "both a technical and social-emotional process" (Elmore, 2005, p. 139). As Bandura explains "unless people believe that they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act or persevere in the face of difficulties" and regardless of other influences, the basis stands with the belief that individual and collective action can effect change (Bandura, 2006, p. 55-56). As defined by Bandura, human agency plays a crucial role in the belief system by school administrators in acknowledging their ability to produce a given outcome by implementing an action (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Part of this improvement process, new knowledge must be gained, embraced, and implemented to advance student achievement and school performance (Elmore,

2005). Collective and individual action towards a set outcome or goal is necessary for the improvement.

Furthermore, "improvement is a continuous, developmental process that requires different types of knowledge and skills at successive development stages" (Elmore, 2005, p. 139). During this process, problem solving becomes part of the process of implementing new strategies to advance specific student learning concerns. Moreover, continuous improvement, learning, and problem solving must be on-going without thinking that practicing the same strategies will continue to produce positive results. Due to various systems of accountability requiring improvement in student achievement and school performance, improvement shifts the learning of educators and challenges their competency in evolving new practices (Elmore, 2005). Likewise, Bandura (1986) states that "an outcome is the consequence of an act, not the act itself" (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). Like Elmore's improvement process, the ESF moves beyond planning and into action which can lead to the desired change and outcome needed in the current educational system. Learning, individually and collectively, plays a crucial point in the process of improvement.

The premise of the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) is that "effective campus instructional leaders with clear roles and responsibilities develop, implement, and monitor focused improvement plans that address the causes of low performance" thus ensuring outcomes that ensure positive outcomes (Texas Education Agency, 2019, p. 2). Based on the ESF, the expectation of campus leaders is whole system improvement being a must to bring positive change. As Bandura, Fullan's perspective of education change is defined as "educational change stands or falls on whether educators, students, and other learners find personal meaning in what they are learning and how they are learning" and summarizes effective change as "effective

change processes shape and reshape good ideas, as they build capacity and ownership among participants" (Fullan, 2016, p. 41). Fullan (2016) defines the process of change to include six essential elements: (1) define closing the gap as the overarching goal, (2) recognize that all successful strategies are socially based and action oriented—change by doing rather than change by elaborate planning, (3) assume that lack of capacity is the initial problem and then work on it continuously, (4) stay the course through continuity of good direction by leveraging leadership, (5) Build internal accountability linked to external accountability, and (6) Establish conditions for the evolution of positive pressure. These steps align to ESF's process of positive outcomes.

Moreover, Fullan (2011) explains that choosing the right drivers is necessary for whole system reform. The drivers to produce positive and effective change "are those that cause whole system improvements, are measurable in practice and results, and for which a case can be made that strategy X produces result Y" (Fullan, 2011, p.1). Fullan and Quinn (2016) defined a coherence framework with the right drivers in successful systems: (1) focusing direction, (2) developing collaborative cultures, (3) deep learning, and (4) securing accountability. For coherence to happen within the ESF, Lewin, and Fullan's framework, leaders are the agents in leading the change, improvement, and success of the system. Similar to the ESF's continuous improvement framework, the Coherence Framework by Fullan and Quinn (2016) distinguishes the first driver as *focus direction* with four elements: (1) purpose driven, (2) goals that impact, (3) clarity of strategy, and (4) change leadership. Focusing directly on student outcomes, Fullan and Quinn's Coherence Framework directly aligns to the development of school improvement plans.

Depending on the contexts and societal demands, the actions principals employ may be different depending in the situations being faced; however, the principals' purposes and the way

they act out their beliefs, values and visions in the contexts in which they work make the difference between success and failure (Day & Leithwood, 2007). Schmoker and Willson (1995) state that focusing on results, the process, and the conditions can lead to school improvement. Outcomes and "results will require tough but intelligent decisions from us (educational leaders)" (Schmoker, 2002, p. 13). Educational change knowledge by educators can support systemic improvement in student achievement and school performance with the leadership of principals being change agents in the process.

2.5. **Most Significant Research and Practice Studies**

Based on the present act, ESSA, the accountability system and standards for principals, the impact expected by campus leaders is to be able to increase the outcomes in part by increasing the campus performance and student achievement. The expectations placed on principals as leaders and reformers of their schools is aligned with the documented positive impact principals have on school performance (Cheng, 1994; Dolph, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Kushman & Yap, 1999; O'Day, 2002; Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995). The systemic processes established by the different governing bodies such as the Texas Education Agency and certification requirements as the State Board of Educator Certification elicit an understanding of the expectations for principals to lead schools to successful reform and meeting state and federal performance. Similarly, principals as strong instructional leaders can lead to a positive effect on student achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Louis, Dretzke & Wahlstrom, 2010; Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi Doris, 2010). Aligned to improved school performance is the expectation of continuous growth in student achievement, increased student learning and teacher learning.

Furthermore, principals being fully aware and having an understanding of the importance of developing, implementing and monitoring school improvement plans is important in the

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improvement and performance of schools (Graczewski, Ruffin, Shambaugh, & Therriault, 2007; Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 2001; Meyers, & VanGronigen, 2019; Bernhardt, 2013; Sailes, 2008). Principals having an understanding of the importance of school improvement plans as a precursor of direction in meeting state and national standards will support advancing the expectations in school performance and student achievement. Principals understanding the school improvement cycle can support principals to effectively organize school structures to meet expectations (Miskel, Fevurly, & Stewart, 1979). Principals play a crucial role in the improvement of the conditions of schools; thus, their effectiveness as principals needs to be a priority.

2.5.1. Student Achievement

When it comes to improving student achievement in schools, the principal can make a difference (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Louis, Dretzke & Wahlstrom, 2010; Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi Doris, 2010). Through the years, research has supported that principals can positively impact the quality of schools and student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Leithwood, Patten, and Jatzi (2010) found that leadership can have a positive influence through four paths towards student learning, either rational, emotions, organization, and family. Each path was composed of variables exercised by the leaders to improve the conditions and effects of students' learning, the organizational path in leadership being the most influential. Similarly, Louis, Dretzke, and Walhstrom (2010) investigated how three different leader behaviors impacted student achievement. The three behaviors were "instructional leadership (which focuses on improving classroom pedagogy), shared leadership (which emphasizes the engagement of leaders at many levels), and trust (which focuses on the importance of emotions and emotional intelligence in motivating high performance) and connect(ed) them to student achievement through their impact

on teachers' work." (Louis, Dretzke & Wahlstrom, 2010, p. 316). The findings were not any different from those established that these leadership variables positively impacted student learning (Louis, Dretzke & Wahlstrom, 2010). In essence, the research recognized that principals play a crucial role in improving student achievement.

2.5.2. School Performance

A crucial factor in school performance is the effectiveness of principal (Cheng, 1994; Dolph, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Kushman & Yap, 1999; O'Day, 2002; Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995). Overtime, defining a strong leader or an effective principal has evolved, but has maintained essential components. In 1994, Chen defined a principal having strong leadership as a "principal (that) can be supportive and foster participation for teachers, can develop clear goals and policies and hold people accountable for results, can be persuasive at building alliances and solving conflicts, can be inspirational and charismatic, and can encourage professional development and teaching improvement" (Chen, 1994, p. 299). In his study, he found that "strong leadership is found associated with high organizational effectiveness, strong organizational culture, positive principal-teachers relationship, more participation in decision, high teacher esprit and professionalism, less teacher disengagement and hindrance, more teacher job satisfaction and commitment, and more positive student performance particularly on attitudes to their schools and learning" (Chen, 1994, p. 299). Since 2014, principals must be able to meet the principal's standards that revolve around creating a positive school culture, establishing and maintaining a vision, mission, and goals to improve instruction, the capacity of self and others, as well as, managing data and processes.

Similarly, Hallinger and Heck (1998) described several paths in which principal influence student learning outcomes. The paths "included school goals, school structure and social

networks, people, and organizational culture. In particular, the principal's role in shaping the school's direction through vision, mission and goals came through in these studies as a primary avenue of influence" (Hallinger & Heck, 1998, p.187). Furthermore, the pattern found within the review supported the belief that "principals exercise a measurable, though indirect effect on school effectiveness and student achievement. While this indirect effect is relatively small, it is statistically significant and supports the general belief among educators that principals contribute to school effectiveness and improvement" (Hallinger & Heck, 1998, p. 157). The research continuously suggests that school principals have a positive effect on school performance and effectiveness.

2.5.3. School Improvement

Having a strategic school improvement plan with high expectations for all students can be the precursor to increase student achievement and improve school performance. Effective instructional leaders can lead school reform, growth, and progress by utilizing tools as strategic plans and data to drive instruction so that school improvement can follow (Datnow & Hubbard, 2016). Bernhardt (2013) states that in order for schools to know what is working or not, schools need to use a framework for continuous school improvement and be able to analyze data. Leaders acknowledging the importance of strategic thinking, planning, and focused on improvement through data and the support required for teachers to better understand, use, and transfer their understanding into instructional decisions can increase teacher and student learning (Park & Datnow, 2017). Leaders seeing instruction as an area of focus is critical to school improvement, as well as, seeing the importance in teacher's instructional development is crucial.

Similarly, leaders that place teacher learning at the forefront and who deeply sustain a supportive teacher environment with a culture of collaboration can lead to thoughtful decisions

which can lead to authentic learning for teachers and above all, students (Gornik & Samford, 2018). Placing teacher development and learning as the focus can only improve the quality of instruction. The type of instruction that "evolves around authentic tasks, real-world problems and simulations" which will lead students to develop their thinking into more complex tasks, be able to transfer their knowledge, and be globally competitive (Nicaise, Gibney, & Crane, 2000, p. 80). Effective leaders can positively lead schools to improvement by strategically focusing on a continuous school improvement process focusing on increasing school performance and student achievement.

2.5.4. Supports

Principals play a crucial role in the improvement of the conditions of schools; thus, their effectiveness as principals must be developed and improved. Gaps in the literature exist in this area to ascertain the professional development principals receive once placed in schools and how non-administrative leadership positions as teacher leaders or department leaders have on student achievement and school performance (Archer, 2004). Due to the role principals play in impacting student outcomes, local educational agencies need to recognize that the development of principals is important.

The emphasis must not only be on the recruitment and preservice of new principals, but also once principals are placed in schools; a lack of support to build the capacity of principals still exists even when the vital role they play in increasing student outcomes continues to be evident (Johnston, Kaufman, & Thompson, 2016). Furthermore, the increase and complex situations and problems that schools face certainly requires the need for the continuous development of school administrators (Biesta & Mirón, 2002). The complexity of various situations only leads school leaders and leadership researchers to be more focused on variables

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affecting student learning as classroom and family when they make school improvement

decisions (Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010). Once placed in schools, the professional

development of principals is nonexistent. Knowing the importance that school principals play in

school improvement and student achievement, the Texas Education Agency renewed their

framework to develop and support principals to be strategic leaders.

In 2014, the new principal standards were developed aligned to the outcomes of

improving student achievement and school success. To support principals through these

standards, the Texas Education Agency developed a support system that included a curriculum,

professional development and an appraisal system aligned to the principal standards. The Texas

Education Agency system of support included the Advancing Education Leadership (AEL)

curriculum, an appraisal system by title the Texas Principal Education and Support System

(TPESS) with an emphasis in the growth and development of principals, and the Effective

Schools Framework (ESF) to guide principals through a system of school improvement.

2.5.5. Standards

With the intention of reforming the educational system to purposefully improve student

achievement, principal standards did not go unnoticed. In 2014, the latest principals' standards

were adopted which were expected to guide the support for training, professional development,

and appraisal for principals. Five standards were set as follows.

- Standard 1--Instructional Leadership. The principal is responsible for ensuring every
  student receives high-quality instruction.
- Standard 2--Human Capital. The principal is responsible for ensuring there are high-
  quality teachers and staff in every classroom and throughout the school.

- Standard 3--Executive Leadership. The principal is responsible for modeling a consistent focus on and commitment to improving student learning.

- Standard 4--School Culture. The principal is responsible for establishing and implementing a shared vision and culture of high expectations for all staff and students.

- Standard 5--Strategic Operations. The principal is responsible for implementing systems that align with the school's vision and improve the quality of instruction (Texas Education Code, Commissioner's, 2019).

Through the establishment of the 2014 standards, the Texas Education agency set the expectations for principals to meet in order to improve student achievement and school success.

2.5.6. Training

The Texas Education Agency developed the Advancing Educational Leadership (AEL) curriculum addressing seven strands aligned to the principal standards with five emerging conceptual themes that principals must know and be able to do as follows:

- Creating Positive School Culture

- Establishing and Sustaining Vision, Mission, and Goals

- Developing Self and Others

- Improving Instruction

- Managing Data and Processes

The seven strands from the AEL curriculum were aligned to the standards as follows.

- Curriculum and Instruction—Principal Standard: 1(A)(i)

- Data Gathering and Analysis—Principal Standard 1(A)(ii)

- Goal Setting—Principal Standard 2(A)(i) and 5(A)(i)

- Effective Conferencing Skills—Principal Standard 2(A)(ii)

- Conflict Resolution Skills—Principal Standard 3(A)(i)

- Team Building Skills—Principal Standard 5(A)(ii)

- Teacher Coaching and Mentoring—Principal Standard 3(A)(ii)

The AEL curriculum guided principals in their professional development and growth in meeting the standards leading them one step closer in fulfilling their principal certification.

2.5.7. Appraisal System

Using the standards as a guide, the Texas Education Agency developed the Texas Principal Education and Support System to support principals in improving student achievement and school productivity (Texas Education Agency, Texas, 2019). The following are the aligned standards.

- Standard 1: Instructional leadership. You are responsible for ensuring every student receives high-quality instruction.

- Standard 2: Human capital. You are responsible for ensuring there are high-quality teachers and staff in every classroom throughout the school

- Standard 3: Executive leadership. You are responsible for modeling a consistent focus and personal responsibility for improving student outcomes.

- Standard 4: School culture. You are responsible for establishing and implementing a shared vision and culture of high expectations for all staff and students.

- Standard 5: Strategic operations. You outline and track clear goals, targets, and strategies aligned to a school vision that continuously improves teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.

Standard five is aligned to this study in that developing strategic operations is an expectation to continuously focus on student outcomes and achievement through goals, targets and strategies aligned to the school vision (Texas Education Agency, Texas, 2019). In essence, TPESS outlines the responsibilities and expectations of principals in leading schools to success.

2.5.8. Professional Development

Similarly, the Texas Education Agency developed the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) to provide guidance to districts and schools in providing an "excellent education for all Texas students" with an emphasis for instruction as the connection between students, teachers, and content as the connection to the determinant of student outcomes. Furthermore, ESF provided a diagnostic process and framework grounded in the continuous improvement process that included three steps- identify needs, plan, implement and monitor (Texas Education Agency, 2019). The following are the five prioritized levers found within the ESF.

- Prioritized lever 1 - Strong school leadership and planning

- Prioritized lever 2 - Effective, well-supported teachers

- Prioritized lever 3 - Positive school culture

- Prioritized lever 4 - High-quality curriculum

- Prioritized lever 5 - Effective instruction

Based on the priorities of the levers, ESF identifies that strong school leadership and planning as the top priority and explains that at this level "effective campus instructional leaders with clear roles and responsibilities develop, implement, and monitor focused improvement plans that address the causes of low performance" (Texas Education Agency, 2019). The Effective Schools Framework provides the guidance for improvement, while, identifying the role of the principal in this process a top priority.

2.6. Closing Thoughts on Chapter II

Schools are complex systems. The role of principals is complex as are schools; however, the intent of their role has been reformed to be ready and able to continue to positively impact students and schools. Over fifty years of policy reform have led to the continuous assertion that principals make a difference in student learning and the quality and development of schools (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Researchers have concluded that principals can positively impact school performance (Cheng, 1994; Dolph, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Kushman & Yap, 1999; O'Day, 2002; Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995). Principals having the knowledge and expertise to lead their schools to meet state and federal mandates, as well as district expectations are vital to the success of schools. The lack of expertise and experience from principals to guide schools through systemic improvement and advancement can be detrimental not only to the school, but students and the district as a whole. Furthermore, principals can have a positive effect on student achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Louis, Dretzke & Wahlstrom, 2010; Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi Doris, 2010). Students are the priority of all schools. Every school mission reflects the advancement of education and student learning. Principals are central in driving every school's mission; in essence, principals understanding their critical role in fulfilling the goals of the school mission will inevitably impact the achievement of students. Not fulfilling the mission's goal breaks the intent of education and student learning. Aligned to the role that principals play in school performance and student achievement is the importance that principals need to give to systemic and strategic school improvement. Principals having the knowledge of implementation, development and monitoring of school improvement plans is critical in the improvement and performance of schools (Graczewski, Ruffin, Shambaugh, & Therriault, 2007; Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 2001; Meyers, & VanGronigen, 2019; Bernhardt,

2013; Sailes, 2008). The lack of systemic processes to drive the improvement process in schools can lead to the failure of schools and student progress. Ultimately, the outcome will be a lack of educational advancement. The role of the principal is crucial in impacting school performance and student achievement.

Through my ROS, I will examine the experiences of administrators in the development of school improvement plans. It is still unclear from the research how to effectively build the capacity of school leaders to positively impact schools and students. For my study, I will examine how school improvement plans are developed in my district and I will collect data on the experience administrators have in engaging in purposeful planning for school improvement. The outcome expected is to develop practices to support administrators and campuses through the development of school improvement plans for strategic and purposeful planning. My focus is the development of principals for systemic change to positively impact student achievement and school performance.

CHAPTER III: SOLUTION AND METHOD

3.1. Proposed Solution

We live in an evolving educational system where our prompt awareness and action for continued improvement, performance and advancement of our schools and students is a must. In our educational system, school improvement plans can support systemic action. School improvement plans are living documents that can drive change in a campus. Through strategic improvement planning, administrators identify targeted data-driven objectives, goals, and activities. However, administrators need explicit training in the development of school improvement plans through purposeful strategic planning. A deficiency in experience and knowledge from administrators in strategic planning may lead to insufficient improvement in the development of organizational operations, processes, and positive outcomes. Furthermore, a lack of support and capacity building for new school administrators in the development of improvement plans can hinder improvement in teacher and student learning and campus success. Overall, administrators hold an important role in influencing student and campus success. In response, my ROS aimed to to understand best practices in developing school improvement plans and use the findings from this study to develop a gide for districts to develop school improvement plans.

3.2. Outline of Proposed Solution

Before developing an artifact focused on developing improvement plans, I needed to fully understand the current contexts and needs of school administrators as they were developing school improvement plans. Therefore, this study aimed to understand the lived experiences of school administrators at Magnet ISD in developing school improvement plans. The findings of

this study were used to inform an artifact as an informative tool to build the capacity of school administrators to strategically plan for school improvement.

3.3. Justification of Proposed Solution

The data analyses aligned with the sampling and data collection, research questions, purpose and design led to develop a full understanding of school administrators' lived experiences of campus improvement plans by answering the question: How do secondary school administrators at Magnet ISD developed school improvement plans? The research generated themes that led to a holistic view of the phenomenon as perceived by the school administrators which resulted in addressing the areas of need for capacity building of school administrators in the development of school improvement plans.

3.4. Study Context and Participants

For this study, the sample was six administrators within the Magnet Independent School District that were directly in charge of the development of the school improvement plan. Magnet Independent School District is composed of four high schools, two middle schools and one virtual secondary school grades six thru twelve. For this qualitative study, the sampling strategy used was purposeful sampling to gain a better insight of the phenomenon. The sample was one administrator per secondary school within the Magnet Independent School District that was directly in charge of the development of the school improvement plan, equaling up to six participants. Although the development of the school improvement can be a collaborative effort within a school, to best serve the intent of the study and develop a holistic understanding of the entire school district, the administrator that was selected per school was the administrator directly in charge of completing the campus improvement plan. To gain access, the superintendent of the Magnet ISD was presented with the intent of the research as well as the

value of the research to the organization. Once I was allowed by the superintendent, the prospective participants were approached with the intent and the value of the research and the importance their participation could bring to the organization. I was open and honest to questions by the potential participants, and I worked towards building rapport with the potential participants to eventually be immersed fully with the participants' environment.

3.5. Research Paradigm

The topic of this qualitative study was the development of school improvement plans. This study sought to understand how school improvement plans were developed by school administrators. Understanding this phenomenon allowed for an understanding of how to increase the capacity of administrators by effectively addressing the needs of a school organization through problem-solving skills to influence change and improvement.

Phenomenology "describes the meaning for several individuals of their *lived experiences* of a concept or a phenomenon" in this case the phenomenon being studied is the development of the school improvement plan (Creswell, 2017, p. 57). Bloomberg and Volpe define phenomenology as a "way of thinking that emphasizes the need for researchers to achieve an understanding of their participants' worlds from the participants' points of view and the ways in which (the) participants make sense of the world around them" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 96). Using phenomenology as this study's research method led to developing an understanding of the lived experiences across the participants in developing the school improvement plan "in order to identify the core essence of human experience or phenomenon as described by the participants" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 96). One approach of phenomenology is hermeneutics addressing the interpretation of texts plus the analysis of the researcher's own experiences as part of the data (Merriam, 1998, p. 159). The purpose of this study was to develop

an understanding and insight to inform professional practice in developing school improvement plans within the Magnet Independent School District.

This study as a phenomenological inquiry tried to describe through an empirical inquiry the development of school improvement plans through the shared and lived experience among the participants, the context of the experiences, the interaction of texts, and how these experiences affected or influenced the development of school improvement plans. The natural and bounded setting of this study was six of the seven secondary schools within the Magnet Independent School District and the participants were "selected intentionally" due to their "capacity to provide detailed information, based on their unique experiences and perspectives" (Billups, 2021, p. 3). The participants were school administrators acting as school principals or assistant principals that were directly involved in developing school improvement plans within the schools. To gain a thorough picture of the development of school improvement plans by the participants an inductive exploration was conducted and various data sources were collected, analyzed, and triangulated to allow for a holistic view of the phenomenon.

3.6. Data Collection Methods

For this study, the data collection methods included interviews, textual artifacts, and a reflective journal. The textual artifacts included past and present school improvement plans and the interviews collected were a maximum of two interviews per participant.

3.6.1. Interviews

The primary source of data was a maximum of two interviews per participant. The structures of the interviews were open-ended semi-structured interviews with questions prepared in advance with room for probes based on participant's response and based on text-elicited probes to generate conversations from texts selected by the participant or the researcher such as

past school improvement plans and data reports. Each interview was a minimum of ninety minutes. The interview questions for the two interviews are found on Appendix A and B. Conducting open-ended semi-structured interviews allowed for the participants to respond in ways that they "define(d) the world in (their own) unique ways" plus "this format allow(ed me) to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic" (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). The data collection included a maximum of two interviews per participant where participants were able to share their knowledge of developing school improvement plans and what texts they used to inform their decisions in the process of developing the school improvement plan, as well as any challenges they encountered. Furthermore, participants were asked within the interviews about the process they planned in preparation for collaborative and faculty meetings to make collaborative decisions to culminate in the construction of the school improvement plan.

3.6.2. Textual Artifacts

The textual artifacts that were analyzed were past and present school improvement plans, state accountability reports and campus data reports. Analyzing these texts allowed me to review any type of patterns found within the texts and in comparison, between campus improvement plans developed through the years. Furthermore, these texts were used during the interviews with the administrators to elicit how these texts were used or not in the development of school improvement plans and to further understand the process that administrators followed in the use of these texts. The assumption of hermeneutics is "the connection between the reader and the text derives the interpretation" plus the assumption can be made that the "the author of a text can make connection to readers in various situations through the interaction of the reader and the author's text" (Bhattacharya, 2017, p. 69). A venue to understand the author's intent of each

school improvement plan was a hermeneutic circle to understand the "smaller parts of an idea with the intent of gaining an in-depth understanding of the whole" and the continued intent situating the author and the text in their own unique context (Bhattacharya, 2017, p. 69). The essence of school improvement plans is a diagnostic process that brings various pieces of evidence of improvement together to form a strategic plan. Understanding how school administrators developed the school improvement plan, presently and in the past, and within their unique contexts led to an interpretation grounded within Magnet ISD.

3.6.3. Research Journal

A research journal was kept through the inquiry process to document my thoughts and hunches and to track my thinking. The journal was a resource and a process of documenting and discovering what experiences the participants had with the development of the school improvement and what contexts shaped how the participants experienced school improvement plans. Part of the intent of the research journal was to "include an analysis of (my) own experience as part of the data" being that as a researcher I positioned myself as a full participant (Merriam, 1998, p. 159). The research journal or "analytic memo writing documented (my) reflections on: coding processes and code choices; how the process of inquiry was taking shape; and the emergent patterns, categories and subcategories, themes, and concepts in the data" (Saldana, 2016, p. 44). The research journal allowed me to reflect and think about my own thinking throughout the inquiry and analysis process that led to opportunities for in-depth connections and provided direction.

3.7. Justification of Instruments

Various sources of data were collected so that a full and complete interpretation could be provided of the phenomenon and the needs of administrators could be addressed through an

artifact or framework to build their capacity as strategic leaders. The collection tools that were

used for this study were interviews, texts, and a research journal. The use of the various data

instruments used to explore the research questions in this study and the triangulation of these

data tools supported the validity and credibility of the findings (Merriam, 2009). By using the

three data tools – interviews, texts, and the research journal – and analyzing the data collected

through cross-checking of the instruments led to triangulation. For example, the three data

instruments were cross-checked against each other from what a participant shared in an

interview, to what was found in texts, and notes within the research journal. Additionally, since

the role that I played in the observation data was full membership, another strategy that was

employed for internal validity was member check-ins so that the emerging findings were true

interpretations of the people I interviewed (Merriam, 2009). Employing triangulation of multiple

data resources and member check-ins allowed me to use data as a whole to support

trustworthiness of my findings.

3.8. Data Analysis Strategy

Through phenomenological inquiry, I sought to understand how the participants made

meaning of the various data, findings, various goals, and strategies encompassing the school

improvement plans to fulfill the campus mission. Through interviews, text-elicited

conversations, and the research journal, I explored how participants developed the school

improvement plan by interacting and exposure to connected components.

Before starting data collection of interviews and texts and through the process of epoche,

I explored my "own experiences, in part to examine dimensions of the experience and in part to

become aware of personal prejudices, viewpoints, and assumptions" later bracketed these

assumptions as the data collection process started (Merriam, 2009, pg. 25). As explained by

Moustakas, the epoche process is the "preparation for deriving new knowledge but also as an experience in itself, a process of setting aside predilections, prejudices, predispositions, and allowing things, events, and people to enter anew into consciousness, and to look and see them again, as if for the first time. This is not only critical for scientific determination but for living itself—the opportunity for a fresh start, a new beginning, not being hampered by voices of the past that tell us the way things are or voices of the present that direct our thinking" (Moustakas, 1994, pg. 3). Noting my assumptions of the phenomenon of the development of school improvements in my research journal allowed me to continuously revisit my past assumptions, have an open mind and focus on the essence of the lived experiences by the participants of the phenomenon.

Moreover, through phenomenological reduction, my task was that of "describing in textual language just what one sees, not only in terms of the external object but also the internal act of consciousness, the experience as such, the rhythm and relationship between phenomenon and self. The qualities of the experience become the focus" (Moustakas, 1994, pg. 6). Through continuous reflection, my prior views were bracketed, and bracketing the focus of the study, the qualities as described by the lived experiences of the participants were documented. As Moustakas explicitly explained "in the process of explicating the phenomenon, qualities are recognized and described; every perception is granted equal value, nonrepetitive constituents of the experience are linked thematically, and a full description is derived" (Moustakas, 1994, pg. 10). This process allowed me to discover the phenomenon as lived by the participants.

Additionally, through the process of horizontalization, the data was examined and treated with equal value at the beginning of analysis to later arrange into thematic units through imaginative variation (Merriam, 2009). Through imaginative variation as Moustakas explained,

the task is to "seek possible meanings through the utilization of imagination, varying the frames of reference, employing polarities and reversals, and approaching the phenomenon from divergent perspectives, different positions, roles, or functions" (Moustakas, 1994, pg. 11). The intent of analyzing the interviews by positioning myself in different roles and perspectives further allowed me to arrive at the essential descriptions by participants of their lived experiences in developing school improvement plans.

Through an interpretive process of a hermeneutic phenomenology stance, semi-structured interviews and texts were conducted as data collection tools and analyzed to develop an understanding of the lived experiences of school administrators in developing school improvement plans. The intent of using the "interpretive process (was) to gain an understanding of the meaning of everyday experience to offer plausible insights about our interactions with the world we live in" (Dibley, Dickerson, Duffy & Vandermause, 2020, pg. 3). Understanding the stories from the participants and the world that influenced their experiences allowed me to interpret their lived experiences in developing school improvement plans. Moreover, as the researcher and being an instrumental tool in this analysis, I continuously reflected in my journal my own experiences with the texts derived from the interviews and the various school improvement plans gathered from the context and questioned my own understanding of the phenomenon through the texts based on my past assumptions which allowed me to expand my own reflections.

The analysis process that was utilized was the hermeneutic circle which "is an ongoing, non-linear, circular and iterative process, going from the parts to the whole and back again in a rigorous, circular process of questioning, writing and thinking, in which data is instrumental to accessing understanding" (Dibley, Dickerson, Duffy & Vandermause, 2020, pg. 7). After

conducting the interviews, I transcribed the interviews in a two-column format which allowed me room for analyzing the conversation by coding the statements to later circling the text to explore any emergent themes. Once I collected all the data from the different participants, the next process that I took was to "dwell in the data" from the various conversations to create links and connections among them for emergent themes (Dibley, Dickerson, Duffy & Vandermause, 2020). Rereading and analyzing the transcriptions of the conversations and continuously circling through the process and my own thinking led to interpretations of connecting themes.

To collectively analyze the data, I used the constant comparative method to "make sense out of the data" which involved "consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people had said and what the researcher had seen and read – (being) the process of making meaning" (Merriam, 2006, p. 175-176). While developing meaning, the goal was to see "the world through their eyes and understanding the logic of their experience" to bring a fresh insight (Charmaz, 2006, p. 54). Based on the constant comparative method, I looked for patterns by using the constant comparative method to analyze the information gathered to determine the differences and similarities through a cross-comparison chart to later find themes within patterns seen in the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The constant comparative method supports inductive coding to develop themes and categories. Using this method allowed for coding the open-ended responses of the interviews of the lived experiences of administrators to refine them to conceptual segments of data, to later refined them to codes that led into overarching or recurring themes (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Using the constant comparative method and my engagement in the process of "making comparisons between data, codes, and categories" developed my conceptual understanding of the lived experiences of the participants (Charmaz, 2006, p.179). I continued to use the research journal to document the analysis process as findings emerged.

Furthermore, I did a content analysis of the transcribed participants' interviews and their school improvement plans to find any relationships against the Effective School Framework (ESF) and the emergent themes found in the transcripts of the interviews. Krippendorff (2004) defines content analysis as a technique to "take content to *emerge in the process of a researcher analyzing a text* relative to a particular context" (p. 19). In this stance, the texts considered were the individual improvement plans from each participant's school and the transcripts of the transcribed participants' interviews. By analyzing the texts within each context, I was able to make associations among the texts that led to inferences within each participant's context within my study. As Krippendorff (2004) states, one must "construct a world in which the texts make sense and can answer the analyst's research questions" (p. 24). Systematically bringing the various inferences together to answer the intended research questions led to the connections among the emerging themes among the texts.

Through interviews, texts, and the research journal, I sought to understand how the participants developed school improvement plans by interacting and the exposure to connected components. The phenomenological inquiry process along with a hermeneutic interpretive process and content analysis were utilized to analyze interviews and texts, as well as the constant comparative method to holistically analyze the data. The data was analyzed by looking for patterns to determine the differences and similarities among data in order to find themes. A cross-comparison chart was utilized to find themes within patterns seen in the various sources of data.

3.9. Timeline

The duration of this study was a four-week period with the following activities outlined below.

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1. Met with Superintendent for collaboration on selecting a purposeful sample from each school

2. Documented continuously on researcher journals

3. Hosted one meeting with all six administrators directly in charge of developing the campus improvement plan for awareness of the intent of the study, the importance of their participation, answer any questions they might have so that I could start building rapport to eventually be fully immersed in interpreting their environment, and created a timeline of study activities for each school independently as times for interviews.

4. Preparation for data collection:
   a. Collection of texts from the six campuses of Magnet ISD to included campus improvement plans and Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) from the past two years for analysis
   b. Developed the common questions for semi-structured interviews
   c. Developed open ended questions for the text-elicited conversations

5. Scheduled and conducted individual interviews and text-elicited conversations

6. Transcribed each interview and text-elicited conversation immediately and initiated data analysis in two-way format for coding

7. Conducted member check-ins for accurate interpretations for each interview and conversation

8. Analyzed texts as historical documents for any patterns, similarities, and differences

9. Managed and organized all data records to easily circle back and forth between each collection by rereading and continually reflecting on my own thinking

10. Brought all data records to analyze holistically using the constant-comparative method

11. Created a cross-comparison chart to fully interpret findings from the data collection

12. Conducted peer-examination activity of study by a peer with the same context of the study

13. Hosted a meeting with Superintendent to present findings and artifact

3.10. Trustworthiness Concerns

Concerns for trustworthiness in this qualitative study stand in that the findings were the outcomes of the responses by the participants and the interpretations by the researcher as a full participant as a current administrator at Magnet ISD. The context of this research and currently being a school administrator at Magnet ISD were also part of the concerns of trustworthiness of this study thus allowing for biases and presumptions I could make as a researcher but also by the participants based on my dual role. To alleviate these concerns, research strategies for validity and reliability of this study were addressed through the criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1986). The research strategies that were employed in this study were triangulation, member checks, audit trail, discrepant case analysis, and peer-examination.

3.10.1. Credibility

Being able to calibrate the findings and interpretations of the participants by the researcher was necessary for my study to be credible. To show credibility, the "participants' perceptions match up with the researcher's portrayal of them" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, pg. 202). Triangulation of the data was one of the primary strategies for credibility of this study in that multiple sources of data were collected and analyzed for similarities and differences to

develop units of patterns that eventually lead to emergent themes. Another strategy that was utilized to show credibility was the researcher's journal to document my position, my bias and assumptions bracketing the focus of the study and the constant reflection of my thinking throughout the research process. Moreover, being fully and continually engaged in the data collection with thick descriptions of what I heard, saw, and read to convey what the participants' responses plus member checks through the data collection and analysis process that led to credible findings. Another strategy that was employed in the data collection process was negative or discrepant case analysis to "purposefully seek data that might disconfirm or challenge (my) own expectations or emerging findings" (Merriam & Tisdel, 2016, pg. 249). Using this strategy to challenge any dispositions by the researcher can certainly lead to other emergent themes that otherwise would not have been sought. Furthermore, peer-examination and debriefing of this research findings were used to support credibility of the study. The research strategies specific to this study that addressed the issue of credibility were triangulation, journaling, data engagement, and peer-examination.

3.10.2. Dependability

For a study to be reliable, the research process must achieve dependability meaning that the data must show stability and consistency over time (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, pg. 204). Through the researcher's journal, an audit trail was used to detail the sequences of the research process and procedures taken along with detailed field notes when the data was collected. Part of the researcher's journal was used as a reflecting tool for the researcher to circle and dwell in the data and cross reference the data collection through triangulation. To further address dependability, peer-examination and debriefings were used to ascertain the researcher's consistency in the interpretations and findings.

3.10.3. Confirmability

To show confirmability in this study, I continuously strived to achieve the focus of the study being the lived experiences of the participants and not base it on biases or assumptions. Confirmability was shown using the strategies of triangulation and the researcher's journal. Confirmability requires the "researcher to demonstrate how conclusions have been reached" and to establish that the "researcher's findings and interpretations are clearly derived from the data" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, pg. 204). Documenting in full detail in the researcher's journal served for confirmability which created an audit trail of how the decisions were made and documented my engagement in the entire research process through reflective practices. Additionally, confirmability was reached through triangulation of the data which further demonstrated how the findings were reached.

3.10.4. Transferability

The goal of this qualitative study was "not to produce "truths" that (could) be generalized to other people or settings but rather to develop descriptive context-relevant findings that (could) be applicable to broader contexts while still maintain content-specific richness (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, pg. 205). Lessons learned from this study was one of the ultimate goals I was looking for as an outcome. Part of the transferability of this study depended on the detailed information found within the description of the context, the purposeful sampling strategy, data, and findings of this study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Detailed descriptions throughout and within the study will allow for readers to decide if any of the aspects of this study can be applicable within their setting.

3.11. Closing Thoughts on Chapter III

Through a phenomenological inquiry, I sought to understand how school administrators within Magnet ISD developed school improvement plans and how they made meaning of the various texts encompassing school improvement plans to fulfill the campus mission. Through interviews, texts, and the research journal, I tried to understand how participants developed the school improvement plan by interacting and exposure to connected components of strategic plans. The researcher being a primary data tool, I kept a reflection journal throughout the research process. Documenting my own thinking and processes by keeping a researcher's reflection journal allowed me to reflect continuously on the research process, continuously circling and dwelling on the data for emergent findings based on congruent interpretation by participants and acknowledging my own biases and any preconceived assumptions when making interpretations. Continuously reviewing, analyzing, and writing throughout the research process with the use of the journal plus other strategies as members checks led to a more accurate interpretation of the data (Lincoln, 1986). Aside from reflective journaling and member checks, other research strategies that were employed to alleviate trustworthiness concerns were the triangulation of data, full engagement in data analysis, and peer-examination throughout the research process.

CHAPTER IV: SOLUTIONS

4.1. Introducing the Analysis

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the lived experiences of administrators in developing school improvement plans at Magnet ISD (MISD). Understanding the phenomenon of developing school improvement plans can lead to a better-informed perspective in designing improvement plans. Through constant comparative comparison and the use of a cross comparative charts, I analyzed the data by "comparing sections of text and noting similarities and differences between the sections" and extracting "essences", experiences, and reoccurring themes (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 234). In this chapter, I will report the analysis of the data collected, the key findings of this qualitative study, and the alignment of the key findings to the Texas Education Agency's Effective Schools Framework and the educational change theory.

4.2. Presentation of Data

This qualitative study aimed to understand how school administrators at Magnet ISD develop school improvement plans by exploring their shared and lived experiences, the context of the experiences, and how these experiences affected or influenced the development of school improvement plans. Six administrators were interviewed as follows:

Table 1

Participants'(P) Role and Experience

Participants	Principal	Asst. Principal	Years of Administrator Experience	New to MISD	Experience at other ISDs
Robert		X	5-10		
Josie		X	10-15		X
Belinda		X	0-5	X	X
Nancy	X		10-15		X
Joe	X		0-5		
Sandra		X	0-5		

The main question pursued for this qualitative study was the following:

How do secondary school administrators at Magnet ISD develop school improvement

plans?

The subset questions explored were the following:

a. How do the participants describe their experiences in developing school improvement

plans and any associated challenges?

b. How do administrators describe the contexts or situations that influenced or affected

their experiences in developing the school improvement plan?

Five major findings emerged from this qualitative study as follows:

1. Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the

campus improvement plan based on identified needs.

2. Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus

improvement, though they expressed different types of data.

3. Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders.

4. Most participants expressed the need or the importance for a sustainable system, process, or support to develop the campus improvement plan.

5. Most participants expressed collective and individual efficacy influenced the negative and positive development of the school improvement plan.

4.3. Results of Research

This study was designed to explore the lived experiences of Magnet ISD's administrators in developing the campus improvement plan. Through phenomenological inquiry, the collection of semi-structured interviews became a primary resource in the analysis of data. Through the interpretive process, I was able to understand the current state of how current administrators develop school improvement plans which will lead to the possible solution of a framework or tool to support the current administrators in the district in the future development of school improvement plans. Before presenting my findings, I will first present the results of the content analysis of participants' interviews and school improvement plans.

4.3.1. Results of Content Analysis of Interviews

For each participant, I analyzed the transcribed interviews against the components of the ESF framework, which were the establishment of a campus committee, identifying the campus needs, an actual improvement plan exists, and evidence of implementation and monitoring of the plan. Table 2 shows the content that was covered by each participant's interview and how their responses aligned to TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF) in developing a campus improvement plan.

Table 2

ESF Components Reflected in Participants' Interview Responses

ESF Component	Robert	Josie	Belinda	Nancy	Joe	Sandra
Campus Committees	X	X	X	X	X	
Identify Needs		X	X	X	X	X
Plan	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implement and Monitor		X	X	X		

Participants' experiences with creating a campus improvement plan were varied. Robert was involved in the process, Belinda was not involved in the process at MISD since she was hired this year, and Sandra has been employed with the district for the past ten years but has not been involved or is aware of the process to develop the campus improvement plan as followed by MISD. Robert noted the main changes that occurred was that, unlike other years where only the administration would develop the school improvement plan, committees were developed to collaborate, collect, and analyze data, and develop the campus improvement plan. Based on Josie's interview, she has had the most experience in being involved in the development of the campus improvement plan from her role as a teacher to now an administrator. Through her experience and roles, she along with her stakeholders, grew to understand the importance and the value of the campus improvement plan and being part of the development of the actual plan.

Similarly, participants Belinda and Joe have grown with their roles from being involved to leading the development of the campus improvement plan. Both have experienced the hardships of establishing change and shifting the mindset of a campus. Unlike other participants, Belinda expressed that being a female has made it harder to enact change. She attributed these experiences to communities where she has worked and in comparing the different communities,

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she attributes the reluctance to change, schools and communities with high poverty levels, low socioeconomic status, low levels of education, and a pattern of males holding high ranking roles.

Due to opening a new campus, Nancy has had massive experience to develop a campus improvement plan, one which was not in existence and could not be replicated as what has been a normal practice of updating an existing one. She resorted to communication with her peer administrators from sister schools, researching, and asking stakeholders for their feedback on their needs due to having no data as a baseline. Like Nancy, Sandra made the connection of administrators needing the support and a framework that can assist in developing the campus improvement plan with purpose and not just one more item in the "to-do" list.

Table 3 provides an overview of the comparison of the ESF components against each participant's campus improvement plan. The only component not revealed in any of the campus improvement plans was the documentation of campus committees. Not a single plan documented the campus committees nor members that collaborated to develop the campus improvement plan. In the interviews and as shown on Table 2, all except Sandra mentioned that committees were in place and collaborated to develop the campus improvement plan. Except for Nancy, all campus improvement plans had data documented, problem statements and identifiable root causes. Based on the interview with Nancy, a campus needs assessment was not conducted at this campus because it did not exist, and the 2021-2022 academic year was when the campus was developed. Regarding the overall plans, all campuses had a plan; however, not all could be determined to be constructed in a manner that was acceptable by state and federal standards. The campus improvement plans for participants Robert, Josie and Belinda were well developed having measurable goals, strategies, evaluation data sources, expected results and impact, individuals

responsible for monitoring, and identification of Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements, TEA Priorities, and ESF Levers.

Regarding Joe and Sandra, plans do exist; however, both were not developed based on the needs ascertained in the campus needs assessment addressed in each plan but were only copied from the district improvement plan. Both plans have identified needs with goals and some strategies set by the district and documented on the plans, but did not identify the following elements: strategies, evaluation data sources, expected results and impact, individuals responsible for monitoring, and identification of Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements, TEA Priorities, and ESF Levers.

Table 3

Campus Improvement Plan Analysis per Participant

Improvement Plan Component	Robert	Josie	Belinda	Nancy	Joe	Sandra
Campus Committees						
Identify Needs	X	X	X		X	X
Plan	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implement and Monitor	X	X	X	X		

4.3.2. Findings Related to the Development of School Improvement Plans

The main question pursued for this qualitative study was the following: How do secondary school administrators at Magnet ISD develop school improvement plans? The analysis of the data yield key findings in relation to this question and aligned to the characteristics of social learning and educational change theories by Bandura (1986, 1997, 2006), Lewin (1947), Elmore (2005), and Fullan & Quinn's (2016) educational change theory and TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF). Most participants expressed that they developed the campus improvement plan by involving all stakeholders in the process of identifying specific and targeted campus

needs based on campus data. Involving and collaborating with all stakeholders provided stakeholders a voice in the process of developing campus goals and continuously monitoring and adjusting the plan to improve student outcomes and campus improvement. Three major findings aligned to the primary question were as follows:

1. Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs.

2. Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data.

3. Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders.

All participants except Robert connected the development of the campus improvement plan to the needs of students and the instruction of students. Robert did not mention the development of the campus improvement plan involved gathering data to develop the needs assessment and he did not remember the use of state and federal accountability data reports being used; however, he did mention that developing the campus improvement plan was to develop strategies.

Robert's career and experience had been only at MISD as a teacher and administrator. He was hired by the previous district and campus administration and his experience in developing the campus improvement plan has evolved. As he explained,

> this past school year it was a little bit different in the sense that yes administrators were involved but not to the point where it was developed only by administrators. It was developed by the department leaders and the grade level leaders. They were all given a section of the campus improvement plan and then we put it all together, so like I said it wasn't only involving the admin like it used to be.

He further explained that data is an area that they "weren't really too much into (being) a data-driven district". Based on my interview with Robert, data was not a driving factor to address the needs of the campus or district, and any components of the campus improvement plan were devised by the administrators. For Robert, the collection of data and using the data to guide the development of the campus improvement plan had changed since last year with the direction from new campus and district administration as he explained,

> by looking at the data. Looking specifically, targeting a specific area where you want to improve, so you must go deep and see it again. Okay, what is your data telling you? What is the trend that you have from a previous year to the current year? And see what is the strategy that you're going to use to reach a specific goal or target?

Josie was relatively new to the district and has had experiences as a teacher, dean of instruction, and assistant principal. Based on my interview, Josie had always been involved in developing the campus improvement plan based on her revolving role from a teacher to now an administrator and based on those specific times, her role evolved from having input into leading the development of the current campus improvement plan. As she explained, she had led the development of the campus improvement plan for her campus.

> Oh, our campus improvement plan is very data-driven. Depending on the committee, depending on the data that they're using, … I mean down to gender …changes if the needs of our campus have changed due to demographics and I know that now we're doing the audit for the university so we're also using that data in order to help us with our campus improvement.

Furthermore, Josie explains that all the departments were able to have input and a voice in developing the campus improvement plan. Based on my observation, she exerted confidence,

knowledge, and self-reflection by specifically explaining the development of the campus plan and changes she planned to incorporate based on last year's process by even giving stakeholders a voice in the development process "because they themselves came up with the (idea of intermixing department members) and that's the way that we're doing it this year. Every department (will have) a member in all the committees that way that particular department or that representative can go back to the department" and give updates.

Belinda was new to MISD. She had diverse experiences that ranged from elementary to high school in various districts. Based on my interview, she had experiences in developing the campus improvement as she explained,

well, I can't talk about my current school because I wasn't involved in that process but with my previous campus it was very much by grade level heads… different stakeholders giving their input…and really going based off need and coming up with the campus improvement plan.

She seemed to be well versed in using data being that she previously worked with a school grant and based on our interview, she looks forward to understanding the process used at MISD. She further explained that "data drives instruction and data drive the need for the campus and so that's a huge component, looking at data. Our needs assessment was predominantly driven by data".

For Nancy, MISD was her second district she had worked with and where she was hired to build and lead the virtual academy last year. As she mentioned in her interview, she was used to developing the campus improvement plan by building from the previous year's plan; however, for her, she had to start from scratch. She started by doing "some research on how (her) sister campuses were developing their (plans) and asking questions as how you included this one thing

that you purchased into your CIP. Also talking to the different stakeholders to see what they would like to see implemented". For Nancy, the campus improvement plan

should all be based on data and whatever our needs of our campus are. Where are we? What are our strengths? What are the students' needs based on data such as any kind of surveys… data is really going to drive our CIP as far as what's working and what's not and where we need to invest a little more funds.

Joe started his fourth year as an administrator and his third year as a principal in the same school. As with Robert, his only experience has been at MISD and the process of developing the campus improvement was new to his campus. After his first year, he described collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, looking at the "numbers and then based on the numbers we developed the questions that we had to ask" and

look at the things that we need to be looking at like our demographics, like our assessments, like our partnerships, and our instructional resources and let's determine what is needed based on what our stakeholders are telling us and what the data is telling us. More importantly, as well, what is data telling us about our strengths so that we can reinforce those things and what are the weaknesses so that's how we started it last year.

Furthermore, he explained that part of their development of their campus improvement plans was to get everyone involved from community members, school committee representatives, affiliates, and partners to discuss and develop the campus improvement plan.

Sandra started her career at a different district and then was hired as a teacher at MISD where she was eventually hired as an administrator three years ago. Like Robert and Joe, before this district administration, she did not work with data, nor the campus improvement plan. Unlike any of the other participants, Sandra had never been involved in the campus improvement

plan due to having school changes or administrator changes. In the past three years, she had four different principals and has been moved twice to different schools. As far as campus improvement plans, she explained that she:

> absolutely think(s) that (the campus improvement plan) it's supposed to play one of the biggest roles…you've got to be pulling your data constantly because you need to know what you would have as needs…or what is the data is saying is going on and then what part of instruction is it affecting…what decisions do we need to make as administrators as campus principal to say, okay then this money needs to be allotted here because this is an area we need to grow in.

Although Sandra did not actually have the experience of being involved or leading the development of a campus improvement plan, she seemed to be aware of some of the steps in the process of the development of a plan.

Except for Sandra, all participants had been involved in the development of the campus improvement plan, and most expressed that stakeholders need to have a voice and be part of the development of the campus improvement plan. Additionally, aside from Robert, most expressed that campus data determines the needs that need to be addressed in the campus improvement plan and data drives the development of the campus improvement. All except Robert and Joe expressed the use of data to continuously monitor and change the campus improvement plan based on need.

4.3.3. Findings Related to Participants' Experiences

The subset question explored and related to the participant's experiences was the following: How do the participants describe their experiences in developing school improvement plans and any associated challenges? The finding that emerged was the following: Most

participants expressed the need or the importance for a sustainable system, process, or support to develop the campus improvement plan. Based on their experiences through the years, the participants indicated a need for a systemic framework to develop the campus improvement plan. They indicated that having a process or framework and time to reflect would have facilitated an effective and strategic campus improvement.

Robert defined his experiences as challenging but found it positive to "finding that specific area that we wanted to improve." During our interview, he mentioned that they:

> Weren't really too much into (being a) data-driven district and as we are moving forward, it was a little bit challenging trying to gather that data and they (district administrators) were looking at the data. Like I said, are you going to target a specific area, a specific content, a specific population of students? So yeah, there has been some challenges.

As he explained, they were not "too much into analyzing the data" and that doing so became "challenging not only for me (him) but for other staff members."

> Unlike the other participants, Josie was very reflective and expressed several connections in improving the process as she either listened to stakeholders' needs and as she developed the plan. For this participant, "experiences and data pretty much go hand in hand except for certain areas where it was like, huh, you know we thought we had fixed it or at least improved it, but it wasn't to where we thought" it needed to be. Her best experience in developing the campus improvement was that the actual process helps with the:

> school culture because you're bringing together individuals that might not be brought together naturally or normally on their own for the process. We start to discuss very sticky situations and areas that at least my teachers are extremely passionate about. It opens up conversations, and you start seeing the way people think, their opinions, their

point of views, so I honestly do think that an impact that I have seen besides the goal of the campus improvement plan.

While developing the campus improvement plan, her greatest challenge was "taking people's time"; however, eventually she realized that people wanted to be involved and be part of the process. She realized that being part of the process changed the people's "mentality which had been a huge impact, and again I do see the impact of it with our culture and our teachers. Their guard is not as high, giving them a voice to be involved, and feeling involved" supported the positive school culture.

While interviewing Belinda, she expressed that "in education it is still very hard to be a woman. I think that as females in education, we're still making strides, but at the end of the day, sometimes duties get handed to men". For Belinda, the experience of not being allowed to take on duties because males are seen as more qualified "has been the toughest to witness". This experience was not common among the other participants and would be something to further analyze.

Nancy expressed that being able to understand and review data was the most important process in her experience. Analyzing data helped her campus identify their needs and continue to grow. She stated that normally schools focus on reading and math; however, her campus data made them aware that reading and writing was not a campus need. Although reading continues to be a focus, data allowed them to see that other areas needed more focus and funding such as realizing that their scores had "flipped flopped… English language arts scores were amazing and our(their) math scores were suffering as well as their science". Like the other participants, she believes that data drives instruction. She further expressed that receiving feedback from the different stakeholders supported a change in mindset and real focus. Unlike the other

participants, Nancy expressed that she would like to see educator programs incorporate the development of campus improvement plans as part of learning in their courses. Once in the field, they:

> talk about how a campus improvement plans need to be in place, but how do you develop it? What do you do to refine it and what data do you look at? How is it conducted and how do you do you edit it? All those questions are really important, but they are never addressed or rarely addressed in those leadership classes… I think that's something that definitely needs to be included in as we start to educate our future leaders on what it takes to build a campus and how to develop a campus improvement plan.

As stated before, Nancy had opened a new virtual school for Magnet ISD from "scratch" and in turn, had developed the campus improvement plan from "scratch". She exerts confidence, knowledge, and success in her answers, and because she sees the campus "improvement plan [as] the heart of our campuses", I was able to see her passion to drive the vision of her campus through the campus improvement plan and the need for future leaders to be trained and learn how to develop a campus improvement plan.

As the interview moved forward with Joe, he grew more reflective, taking time to think and answer. He mentioned that the experience he had in developing the campus improvement plan could be explained by being "frustrated, confused, confident, and hopeful". For Joe, data was important, however, the data does not give you the whole story of students. As he stated, it was "frustrating because you look at a student on paper and you're like this kid is doing amazing, but why are they always in trouble? Why are they always in the counselor's office? Why are they always crying?" For him, becoming a new principal to his campus and "shifting the paradigm' was the biggest challenge. His goal was changing the mindset of the school being "only a place

for top kids and if they're not at the top when they get here, then this is not the place for them". Spending two years and going on three years of his leadership, shifting the paradigm of the purpose of his campus, and transitioning into a leader that listens to stakeholders and having those tough conversations has brought about his confidence in moving in the right direction and he is hopeful in seeing improvement. He further expressed that he liked being a participant for this study because:

> it allowed me to reflect on things and talk about things that I usually don't get to have conversations like this all the time. We're so busy …this forced me to talk more deliberately about school improvement plans. It allowed me to really stop and think of some of the things that we did. Just hearing myself talk about it, I know what I could do differently next year. I'm coming up with ideas already.

Although Sandra has been administrator at MISD, she has not been part of any of the processes involved in developing the campus improvement; however, she did express as "administrators we all need to grow and improve on". Through her interview, I was able to see honesty in her answers and at times confusion as she would question herself of the process and the development of the campus improvement plan. She questioned, "when is it that we should already be starting on the new one for it to cover the 23-24 school year? Shouldn't it be like around January, February?" She further asked, "so last year, were they already letting you know (principals) that this needs to be worked on, the needs to be submitted for the 21-22 for the 22-23 school?" She stated that she didn't "know how it worked. What was being communicated to you as principals, but I guess for me that's important. The structure needs to be there more". She explained that she didn't think she had experienced the process but being part of the interview was making her reflect when "do we start ours?" and that she needed "to be very intentional with

what [she was] going to bring to the table." She felt that "if we had a framework with all these processes that need to happen when you're doing the campus improvement plan" would benefit her and every administrator. When she expressed, she had no experience, she would continue to reflect and then she stated that by having a framework, then the administrators would be able to do the process:

> we get everybody's insight; use the data and I don't know if you agree, but I don't put everything on there because you won't be able to reach all those goals, right? It needs to be something attainable like a smart goal. Something that is realistic, and I guess, if you're going to put one on there, that's going to take time when we need to indicate that it's going to be something that's going to take several years.

Based on this participant's interview and the participant being an administrator shed light on the inconsistency this participant has had in campus leadership and changes in the district.

Overall, the experiences and challenges that the participants expressed in developing the campus improvement plan allowed them to see the importance or the need to implement a framework to establish a process that could be followed. Furthermore, as expressed by some of the participants, administrators would benefit in learning a framework with processes to develop the campus improvement plan.

4.3.4. Findings Related to the Participants' Context

The second subset question for this study was the following: How do administrators describe the contexts or situations that influenced or affected their experiences in developing the school improvement plan? The finding related to this question was that most participants expressed that collective and individual efficacy influenced the negative and positive development of the school improvement plan. Participants expressed that their knowledge and

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effectiveness in developing the campus improvement plan grew through the years based on the role they played in their school and their involvement as a stakeholder.

Except for Sandra, most participants expressed that their individual efficacy increased positively as Joe stated, "I've gotten better and personally I think we as a team have gotten really good at it" although at times the experience had been frustrating but helpful in that data might say that "kids (are) doing very well and then they're having breakdowns, they're suffering from anxiety, and that needs to be something that you look at too when you develop your school improvement plan" so it has "been frustrating but also hopeful because it means that we're determining what we need and if we know what we need then we can work toward it and we can respond to it."

Robert expressed how being able to see growth was one of the positive impacts that changed his perspective as he mentioned, when "you see growth even though like I said we were not 100% data-driven but just looking from one year to the next there were some areas that we saw growth" that transformed in some cases to providing more experiences to students. As he explained,

> throughout the years, with the experience, you start seeing things different -what worked, what didn't work, how can I improve in a specific area. Like I said, this past school year was very different for me because I was learning something different, being done differently and involving more stakeholders. In a way, I feel that I guess that's the way that we should do it so that everybody has a voice when developing this plan because it's a campus plan, and not an admin plan…everybody's got to voice their needs, their concerns, and we're able to add something new too.

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Josie's experiences have evolved through the years and as an administrator now, she has connected more to the importance and value of a campus improvement plan. As a teacher, she saw the development of the plan as one more thing to do and administrators needing for her to write an area of the plan as she stated,

I'm going to be very honest, I didn't see the importance of it as a teacher. I just saw, "Oh my gosh, I'm getting extra work". As an administrator, that's when I saw the importance of it and because of my experience as a teacher and not seeing the importance of it, as an administrator I do try to explain to those that are involved in the campus improvement plan the importance of why they're involvement is important.

Furthermore, she explained that her most impactful experience is when,

My committee members were 50 teachers or community members. When they have their aha moment! When they realize why they're there…they get to learn a lot, you get to learn why certain things change, why certain things get more funding than others, how you can get something that you have been needing if you can tie it to your campus improvement plan.

For Belinda, her perspective has changed from being a "contributor to being the conductor that puts it all together from the needs assessment to rolling out". She further explained:

I think being a part of it not as a classroom teacher but as a grant funding member of the team and even as a leadership team member my perspective has changed since then greatly. I think that that experience was unique because it was my introduction to all of this. When you have different roles, you will have very different perspectives, so my role

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has changed. As I've advanced in my career, I've experienced different things, but that will forever be the most influential.

After spending nineteen years in the same district, Nancy moved to Magnet ISD. Changing to this new district changed her understanding of her role as a principal due to change in setting from a "brick to a mortar campus", adapting to the requirements of the new district, and adjusting to how different districts interpret what the state and federal government expects. As she explained, the most impactful and influential experience in building the campus improvement plan was due to "maybe the location or the context that you're in…. these last couple of years have been very eye opening. Sometimes we get into this almost like a cycle of using the same programs and using the same CIP item number". However, she had to create her virtual campus from scratch; thus, she had to create the campus improvement plan from scratch. She had to learn how to connect all their campus needs to the CIP from creating line items to their new programs, tutoring and instructional tools not found in a traditional CIP. As she stated, it was "not as easy. It has been the most impactful for me to really understand it and be able to say, oh we can just put it under this (line item or goal) like well there's nothing there. We have to create it… so, it's been very impactful this year to really develop a campus improvement plan from the ground up." In developing the campus improvement plan, getting the feedback from teachers, talking to her colleagues, and collaborating with her fellow principals in how they manage their CIP supported her into creating a CIP that was best suited for her students' mode of virtual learning.

For Joe, the most impactful experience was "practicing decentralized command." Before being an educator, Joe worked in the private sector. In the public sector he "would practice decentralized command" meaning,

the most impactful is being around the kids, being around the teachers, being around the parents and listening and having conversations and sometimes you must have difficult conversations…. that's been the most impactful and just gives me that perspective and allows me to respond to what it is that the campus needs.

Sandra had been with the Magnet ISD for eleven years and has not had many experiences in developing the campus improvement plan; however, with "experience and time [she] was able to be the IB coordinator and help coordinate the program and that was an administrative position and then that also led to an opportunity of becoming an assistant principal." Other than a six-month transfer to a sister school, she has spent her time at only one school with several administrators overtime and as she explained this move was "the only real change that I've seen but it does shed light on different systems that are in place at certain schools that already that have had consistency as a clear vision versus maybe coming back to somewhere where it's had several administrators over time that is still looking for its purpose, its vision, its mission." In her six-month transfer, she realized that "there's a lot I don't know but a lot to learn about how the systems of a school" work and being "intentional with what was going to be on the CIP [Campus Improvement Plan]."

As participants grew in their experience and knowledge over time, their understanding of the campus improvement plan importance grew as well. Similarly, knowing, involving, and collaborating with all stakeholders allowed for most participants to develop a campus improvement plan better suited to meet the needs of their students. Through the years, the increase in collaboration, experience, and knowledge led most participants to increase their collective and individual efficacy in developing the improvement plan.

4.4. Interaction Between the Research and the Context

Magnet ISD has had significant changes since 2018 when a new superintendent replaced an administration that had been situated in the district for over twenty years. Over a five-year span, every school has seen a change in leadership from the principal to assistant principals. Most administrators are new or have led their campus for less than three years with some schools having a minimum of two principals to a maximum of four principals in a period of five years. The context of this study fits into the perspective of the crucial role principals play in improving student achievement and campus success. The principal leading the process and guiding the process of the development of the school improvement plan based on the district's direction, vision, and campus needs can lead to an effective implementation of an action plan to lead to improvement at the student and campus level.

4.4.1. How did the Context Impact the Results

Changes in administration at MISD led to the operational issue in the selection of participants that were engaged in development of the campus improvement plan. In four out of the seven schools, the administrators that developed the school improvement plan were no longer employed with Magnet ISD. Additionally, out of the four schools at least two of the schools had completely new administration. Based on my own experience at Magnet ISD and working with three different schools in my five years within the district, my perception of any reluctance of the new administrators to MISD was to being overwhelmed to the change of leading a high performing campus, the lack of systems within the campus, and the culture inhibited by the mobility and retention of administrators. Although several attempts were made, one out of the seven schools chose not to participate. After a first round of interviews, I was not able to reach three out of the six original participants and eventually they chose not to participate. Eventually, I met with the other administrators from the three schools, and I was able to engage with them to

be part of my study. Time constraints to their duties was the reason given by the new participants as to their peers not being able to engage with the study.

4.4.2. How did the Research Impact the Context

The reactions from the participants translated to a positive impact of this study in that the interviews led to the participants to reflect on their work and practices in developing the campus improvement plan. As Sandra stated,

> These questions are really insightful. Maybe it's something that every administrator team should think about before they start working on it and that way you get a background and context of what everybody understands and knows when it comes to CIP especially if you're bringing in outside community members to help you. It's good to have prior knowledge and this will already have them understand the ways that they need to be thinking. These interviews gave me that thought process. These are good questions. you should share them.

For this participant, the interviews made her realize connections that she had not connected before such as the impact of the budget and what to do besides just having data. She felt that not many people knew how to develop the campus improvement plan and she "definitely would love to become more knowledgeable in how to make those connections in how to develop it, what do I use, what is justifiable" or not. Like Sandra, Joe stated,

> I like the fact that I participated. It allowed me to reflect on things and talk about things that I usually don't get to have conversations like this. All the time we're so busy so I want to share that I thought it was a positive experience. The other thing though is that it forced me to talk more deliberately about school improvement plans. It allowed me to really stop and think you know some of the things that we did and it just hearing myself

talk about it you know what I could do that differently next year. I'm coming up with

ideas already.

Overall, all participants felt that their participation made them reflect on their practices

and how to further themselves in their knowledge in developing a campus improvement plan.

Furthermore, aside from Sandra's suggestion of sharing the interview, Nancy stated that she

would like to see current preparation certification or university programs teach our "future

leaders… how to develop campus improvement plans".

4.5. Summary

In summary, this study resulted in five findings from the analysis of the data collected by

exploring the lived experiences of Magnet ISD's administrators in developing the campus

improvement plan. Through phenomenological inquiry, the collection of data from interviews,

texts, and the research journal, I was able to understand the current state of how current

administrators at Magnet ISD develop school improvement plans. The five findings were the

following:

1. The need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan
   based on identified campus needs.

2. The importance of various types of data to drive the development of campus
   improvement.

3. The importance of including feedback from stakeholders.

4. The need for a sustainable system, process, or support to develop the campus
   improvement plan.

5. The collective and individual efficacy influenced the negative and positive
   development of the school improvement plan.

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Participants expressed that the purpose of the campus improvement plans was to bring positive student outcomes and campus improvement by addressing the campus needs through collaboration of all stakeholders. Furthermore, the participants expressed the need for a system or framework to develop the campus improvement plan that would positively impact their knowledge, and the positive development and implementation of the campus improvement plan. Moreover, the participants conveyed that their knowledge and efficacy of developing school improvement plans grew through the years and the role they played as stakeholders. As they grew in their efficacy, they also grew in understanding the importance of providing a voice to all stakeholders which led to an increase of collective efficacy in developing a campus improvement plan that supported continuous improvement in student performance and campus success.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1. Summary of Findings

The results found through this study aligned to the research question of how administrators develop school improvement plans based on their lived experiences. Five findings were found as follows:

1. Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs.

2. Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data.

3. Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders.

4. Most participants expressed the need or the importance for a sustainable system, process, or support to develop the campus improvement plan.

5. Most participants expressed collective and individual efficacy influenced the negative and positive development of the school improvement plan.

Findings one, two, and three emerged from the main question of how school improvement plans. Participants expressed that they developed the campus improvement based on campus specific and targeted needs based on campus data and they developed goals to be met to improve student outcomes and campus improvement. Furthermore, participants expressed the need to include all stakeholders in the development of the campus improvement plan. Finding number four addresses the first subset question related to participants' experiences in development of school improvement plans. Based on their experiences through the years, the participants indicated the need for a systemic framework to develop the campus improvement

plan. They indicated that having a process or framework would have facilitated an effective and strategic campus improvement. Finding number five addresses the second subsequent question related to the contexts or situations that influenced or affected the participants' experiences in developing the school improvement plan. Participants expressed that their knowledge and effectiveness in developing the campus improvement plan grew through the years based on the role they played in their school and their involvement as a stakeholder. From not involving stakeholders to increased stakeholder collaboration, the development of the school improvement plan revolved into a collaborative effort. The findings resulting from this qualitative study were aligned to the research problem of the lack of a systematic process for positive improvement and school administrators lacking strategic skills necessary to enact timely educational reform.

5.2. Discussion of Results in Relation to the Literature

The results of this study aligned to the literature reviewed as part of this study. In the literature, Hallinger and Heck (2018) among other researchers found the importance of the effectiveness of the principal in leading the charge of the positive direction of schools (Cheng, 1994; Dolph, 2016; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Kushman & Yap, 1999; O'Day, 2002; Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995). Thus, the effectiveness of principals must be developed and improved. Gaps in the literature exist in this area in establishing the professional development principals need when leading schools focused on the improvement of student achievement and school performance (Archer, 2004). As expressed by the participants of this study, the need to support principals through a sustainable system or process to develop the school improvement plan is necessary. Although after 2014, the Texas Education Agency revamped the standards and the training to meet the new appraisal system by administrators seeking certification, once certified,

districts must continue to support principals in leading school improvement. As Nancy stated, being that the campus

> improvement plan is the heart of our campuses to never to be addressed or rarely addressed in leadership classes, it's just a disservice to those trying to learn to be in this (administrative) role, so I think that's something that definitely needs to be included in as we start to educate our future leaders on what it takes to build a campus out of the development of a campus improvement plan.

Following the Effective School Framework as a support system for principals to lead school improvement, the steps defined by ESF for the continuous improvement process include 1) identifying needs, 2) plan, and 3) implement and monitor which are common constructs of the continuous improvement process found within educational change theories by Bandura (1986, 1997, 2006), Lewin (1947), Elmore (2005), and Fullan & Quinn (2016). As Fullan states, "whole-system improvement is the ultimate goal of the new meaning of educational change. A policy driver is a policy and an associated set of strategies designed to bring about positive change in the system. … whole- system reform is just that—100% of the system" (Fullan, 2016, p. 41). Fullan (2016) specifically addresses the following drivers for whole system improvement that are closely aligned to the five prioritized levers of the Effective School Framework

> (1) fostering intrinsic motivation of teachers and students,
>
> (2) supporting continuous improvement of instruction and learning,
>
> (3) encouraging collective endeavors or teamwork, and
>
> (4) affecting all teachers and students—100% (p. 41-42)

Participants that have had the experience of being part of developing the school improvement plan expressed that the development included addressing the needs of the students and

instruction, and overall campus needs while creating goals driven by the data collected based on the needs to lead positive change and improvement in student outcomes and campus improvement. These findings aligned to the ESF's first two steps of identifying needs and planning and Fullan's drivers of supporting continuous improvement affecting the whole system.

Fullan states that "effective change processes shape and reshape good ideas, as they build capacity and ownership among participants" (Fullan, 2016, p. 41). One experience that through the years influenced and affected the participants' experiences in developing the school improvement plan was the involvement or lack of involvement of their school stakeholders. As the participants gained experience and grew in their roles, participants realized that the development of the campus improvement plan was not only in the hands or lenses of the administrators but a collective effort among all stakeholders including teachers and students. They realized that including all stakeholders allowed for the whole system to have a voice in the plan which in turn allowed ownership of the stakeholders to work towards results.

Furthermore, as they grew in their role and through collaboration amongst the stakeholders, their individual and collective efficacy grew to support greater improvement. This practice aligned with Bandura's definition of collective efficacy- "a group's shared belief in its conjoint capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainment" (Bandura, 1997, p. 476). As Donohoo & Katz (2019) state on "the power of collective efficacy—the belief that a team can accomplish its goals despite difficult circumstances… they can positively influence student achievement, regardless of some of the difficult circumstances faced in schools today, the results can be very powerful" (Donohoo & Katz, 2019, p. 15). As Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) found "school leaders' collective efficacy

was an important link between district conditions and both the conditions found in schools and their effects on student achievement" (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008, p. 496).

Growing on their own practices came as the participants developed their own learning through time and their growing roles in the development of the campus improvement plan. The participants expressed that due to the interviews of this study, they grow due to the reflection that prompted them to think about their current and future practices in developing the campus improvement plan. Their reflection suggests that as a "learning leader—one who models learning, but also shapes the conditions for all to learn on a continuous basis" they continue to build their individual and collective efficacy of others (Fullan, 2014, p. 9). Furthermore, based on their responses, their intent has grown to impact the educational system collectively and positively.

5.3. Discussion of Personal Lessons Learned

This qualitative study had great implications in my own practice as a current principal and aspiring central office administrator. A personal commitment to my vocation is student and campus growth. Listening to the different participants made me reflect on how to improve my own practice as an instructional leader in leading the campus improvement plan.

One of the realizations that I had is the continuous commitment to communication and involvement of stakeholders is part of the success of developing the campus improvement plan. Creating a partnership with all stakeholders results in a driving force in meeting the mission for the campus. Together, being open to truly assessing the campus needs assessment based not only on quantitative data as state reports, but qualitative data such as surveys and focus groups, can really give us the opportunity to address what the numbers are not able to provide us. As the participants shared, I, too, found communication and collaborating with stakeholders to be the

hardest tasks early in my career which are essential to be successful. Today, I know that once the partnership is created, then a mutual commitment to the school mission will lead to success.

The second realization is the understanding that the campus improvement plan is not just one more thing to do but a driver for improvement. The plan must be a living document that continuously needs to be visited and revisited to meet yearly goals. One of the major responsibilities of my role as a principal is to build the capacity of personnel and I must hold myself responsible to educate stakeholders and communicate a consistent and efficient process for further understanding of the campus improvement plan and make it a standard of practice to continue the implementation of strategies, progress monitoring, and evaluation.

5.4. Implications for Practice

5.4.1. Implications for Context

As expressed by participants, one implication that this study suggests for Magnet ISD is the need for the development of a continuous improvement process or framework. Based on the outcomes of the interviews, there is no systemic process currently that can support administrators to "lead learning and to maximize impact whereby the system as a whole dramatically improves" (Fullan, 2014, p. 14). A second implication is the need to continuously educating administrators using the new standards and supports developed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in 2014 as the Advancing Education Leadership (AEL) curriculum, the Texas Principal Education and Support System (TPESS) and the Effective Schools Framework (ESF). Educating administrators in the responsibility their role carries through systemic professional development and growth in developing a campus improvement plan can positively drive schools to continuous improvement in student achievement and campus success.

5.4.2. Implications for the Field of Study

The findings of this study suggest various implications for the field of study. Collective efficacy was expressed by participants to have occurred overtime while they grew in their role or moved up the ranks in their organization. This finding aligns to the lack of understanding of the crucial role that principals play in being the "learning leader" that drives all stakeholders to a collective effort in school improvement of the whole organization that is continuous and not a one-time event (Fullan, 2014, 2016; Donohoo & Katz, 2019; Bandura, 1997). Current administrators must be able understand and practice the standards expected of principals set by the Texas Education Agency and the State Board for Educator Certification. With this finding, further research is suggested in understanding how educator certifications programs and renewing certifications practices support the efficacy of current administrators.

Another finding in my study was the need for a continuous improvement framework that administrators could be trained on to support them in developing the campus improvement plan. This finding suggests that in the context of my study there is no defined method of developing improvement plans district wide. Administrators in this context lacked guidance for a cohesive systemic process to develop the improvement plan. This finding suggests that although the Effective Schools Framework (ESF) to support administrators in the continuous improvement process has been in effect since 2014 by the Texas Education Agency, the ESF framework is not being utilized in my context of study. This implies that further research needs to be conducted on what effective practices are being utilized by districts to support continuous improvement plans such as the use of logic models or frameworks. Plus, this finding suggests further research in the areas of which frameworks are most effective in the improvement plan process and how to best educate administrators in leading the practice of improvement frameworks at their schools. Moreover, another implication for further research is how district administrators see their role in

the continuous improvement of not only the district but also individual schools and administrators.

5.5. Lessons Learned

My hope is that this study involves a support system for current and future administrators within my context. Through this study and my own reflection, I have realized that there has been a lack of support for administrators to embrace improvement as a goal of education. Certification programs and practices need to support administrators in defining the role of being an administrator and holding ourselves to meet high expectations in student achievement and campus improvement as Bernhardt states "it is about providing a new definition of improvement, away from compliance, toward a commitment to excellence" (Bernhardt, 2013, p. 5). Once certified and given the opportunity to be a principal, district administration needs to support principals through professional development in the continuous improvement process. Districts must understand that collective efficacy links the district to campuses as principals to their school stakeholders. As expressed by participants as a need in my study, the results found in Leithwood and Jantzi's study suggested that district leaders are

> most likely to build the confidence and sense of collective efficacy among principals by emphasizing the priority they attach to achievement and instruction, providing targeted and phased focus for school improvement efforts and by building cooperative working relationships with schools. (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008, p. 496).

And, as stated by Bernhardt, "an organizational shift away from a singular focus on compliance, toward a true commitment to improvement through a shared vision is required" (Bernhardt, 2013, p. 5). Once we collectively understand that we thrive through a shared vision in the continuous improvement of teaching and learning for all, results are bound to be positive.

5.6. Recommendations

Study findings suggest four recommendations for school leaders about school improvement plans. First, using various data to drive the development of the continuous improvement plan and continuously monitor the data and modify it based on identified needs is important. Second, providing a voice to all stakeholders and including their feedback are essential in the development of the school improvement plan. Third, a sustainable system, process, or support in developing the campus improvement plan is beneficial. And lastly, the collaboration between stakeholders can lead to collective and individual efficacy that can positively influence the development of the school improvement plan. Based on the findings from this study, continuously supporting and guiding school leaders in continuous school improvement can support schools and increase their capacity in their role.

My first and primary recommendation is for administrators to develop their own understanding of how to construct a campus improvement plan and the importance of their role in the entire process of continuous improvement. The first step in this recommendation is to develop our own understanding of the importance of the campus improvement by asking questions such as the following: What is a campus improvement plan? Why is the campus improvement plan improvement plan important? What is my role in the campus improvement plan? What are the essential components in developing the campus improvement plan? What makes a campus improvement plan successful? What skills do I need to develop or improve to

effectively produce continuous campus improvement using the campus improvement plan? One of the resources that can support this process of personal growth is studying the work of Victoria L. Bernhardt regarding continuous school improvement through data analysis and Michael Fullan's work on maximizing impact through educational change. By building our own knowledge and skills in developing and implementing school improvement plans can lead us to better "Gallant efforts" as V. L. Bernhart states when leading the development of the campus improvement we need to "figure out how to work smarter, not harder, and get better results" (Bernhart, 2004, p. 17). As an example, Bernhart recommends gaining commitment of stakeholders, knowing how to analyze summative data as a beginning step, then being able to analyze other types of data such as demographic and perceptional data, followed by having a full understanding of current school practice, and the most critical component is having a continuous improvement process (Bernhart, 2004, p. 17-18). This process would entail data-driven decision making and not only a clear and shared vision but inspiring a shared vision by strong leadership as she states,

> It takes a strong leadership to inspire a shared vision and to ensure its implementation. It also takes a strong leader to ensure analysis and use of data. A continuous improvement process can ensure all professional development is focused on implementing the vision; that partners, such as parents, understand their roles in implementing the vision and helping students learn; and that there is a continuous evaluate n to know how to improve an ongoing basis to reach school goals (Bernhart, 2004, p. 19).

My second recommendation is to create a framework or a process to develop the campus and district improvement plans with a timeline that is continuously reviewed and evaluated. Creating a framework or process to develop a continuous improvement plan along with

professional development to support leaders in learning the process will encompass the findings

of this study. The key word in the framework or process is continuous. The significance of

continuous monitoring and use of the campus improvement plan as a living document must be an

ongoing force essential in the framework to yield continuous improvement. In the instance that a

unique framework in the district does not exist, the recommendation is to utilize the resources

available by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The resources that are recommended to be

used are the following:

1. Effective Schools Framework

2. Campus Needs Assessment and Planning Guidance

3. Targeted Improvement Plan Rubric

The Effective Schools Framework (ESF) will provide the essential actions for success plus steps

for continuous improvement. The Campus Needs Assessment and Planning Guidance will

provide the guidance to define the campus needs based on campus data collected, develop the

campus plan based on the needs assessment, and implement and monitor the plan through the

year. The Targeted Improvement Plan Rubric will provide the guidance to create an effective

plan that meets state and federal guidelines required for campus improvement plans. Likewise,

based on my personal experience and findings of this study, I have developed a framework found

in Appendix C that could be utilized to guide an understanding of continuous planning for

improvement.

Continuous professional development for principals and administrators is my third

recommendation. Simply providing professional development for teachers might not be enough

to support long term improvement or success in schools without the proper guidance from an

effective principal. Like mentorship programs for teachers, a recommendation is to develop a

mentorship program or support system for new principals, as well as create opportunities for principals to collaborate continuously in the use of effective improvement practices. Part of this process can include collaboration and partnering with universities to help identify research-based strategies and approaches that can help address identified needs. Part of any of these support systems or plans is to support administrators in familiarizing themselves with the newest standards and systems relevant to their role as the resources by the Texas Education Agency. A recommendation is to educate administrators on the responsibility and role that administrators play by creating a principal profile unique to the district based on the principal standards. Having a principal profile can support administrators in better understanding the unique and crucial role they play as part of the district's vision.

5.7. Closing Thoughts

The role of the principal is a crucial component in improving student achievement and school performance. Professional development of the principal is necessary, more so in the new areas of principal standards established in 2014 and the Texas Education Agency's resources to support schools in the continuous improvement process. Building the capacity of the principal in understanding their role and their responsibilities in creating positive change and outcomes is necessary as well as understanding a process or framework for continuous improvement. Based on the continuous evolution of educational reform, principals as change agents in our current education system can support the improvement of teaching and learning; thus, maximizing their individual efficacy to influence collective change in student achievement and campus success.

My hope is that the findings of my study can lead to building the capacity of our current and future administrators within my own context. Personally, I have grown in my own practice as a principal. As an aspiring future district administrator, this study has allowed me to reflect

and better understand the importance of research practices and traditions to continue to improve in my leadership skills in continuing in my passion for improvement, accessibility, and equity in education.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PART ONE

Q1. What are your first thoughts and feelings that come to your mind about campus improvement plans?

Q2. What is your perspective about school improvement plans?

Q3. What type of experience do you have in developing school improvement plans?

Q4. What have you experienced through the years about the development of school improvement plans?

Q5. How has your role changed through the years based on your location, physical setting, or context?

Q6. What situations or experiences have been impactful and have generated personal and positive changes in developing the CIP?

Q7. What about challenges that you have experienced in developing the CIP?

Q8. Based on your experience, what has been the most influential experience and impactful context that you have experienced in developing CIPs?

Q9. To obtain your final thoughts, is there anything else you would like to tell me or share with me regarding campus improvement plans?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PART TWO

Q1. How did you develop the current school improvement plan?

Q2. How did you use data to develop the current CIP?

Probes: What type of data did you use? How did you use campus data? What types of

reports did you use? How did you use federal and state accountability reports?

Q3. How would you describe your experiences with your interaction with data to develop CIPs?

Probes: What about challenges?

Q4. What experiences involving the development of the current CIPs have been the most

impactful for you?

Q5. What about the challenge that has been the most impactful in enacting change

personally, and professionally?

Q6. How do you determine success when developing the campus improvement plan?

Q7. What experiences or factors have generated the successful development of a campus

improvement plan?

Probes: What about challenges?

Q8. Have any of your perspectives or actions changed through the years?

Probes: What brought about these changes?

Q9. To obtain your final thoughts, is there anything else you would like to tell me or share with

me regarding these interviews?

APPENDIX C

ROS ARTIFACT

A school improvement plan is a continuous, strategic process. This artifact is informed primarily by free resources by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the outcomes of my study, and my personal experiences in developing school improvement plans. The artifact developed involves the development and implementation of the campus improvement plan; however, this study only explored the development and not the implementation of school improvement plans. The development of the improvement plan process only includes the sections of Involve, Assess, Target, and Strategize. The implementation includes the steps of Implement, Monitor, Adjust, and Evaluate.

The artifact includes the outcomes of this study of how administrators develop school improvement plans based on their lived experiences which were the following:

1. Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs.

2. Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data.

3. Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders.

4. Most participants expressed the need or the importance for a sustainable system, process, or support to develop the campus improvement plan.

5. Most participants expressed collective and individual efficacy influenced the negative and positive development of the school improvement plan.

Furthermore, the TEA resources being utilized for this artifact are the Effective Schools Framework (ESF), the Campus Needs Assessment and Planning Guidance and the Targeted Improvement Plan Rubric. ESF is a framework with essential actions for continuous improvement. The Campus Needs Assessment and Planning Guidance provides steps to develop the campus improvement plan based on data collected and analyzed resulting in campus needs that need to be implemented and monitored in a timely manner. The Targeted Improvement Plan Rubric assesses the campus improvement against state and federal guidelines required for campus improvement plans. Based on my personal experience in development and implementation of school improvement plans, the outcome of my study, and the TEA resources, the infographics that follow that could be utilized to guide an understanding of continuous planning for improvement.

Continuous Improvement Plan Framework

Success for All Draft Framework	Rationale
Involve	
1. Create a campus stakeholder committee to include current parents, students, teachers, administrators, community members, business and industry representatives, student services personnel, teachers of special education students. 2. Review district local board policy BQB for stakeholder membership 3. Convene the committee to develop the plan and to progress monitor during the school year.	Finding #3, most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders. Therefore, I suggest that the first step in building an improvement plan is to set up the stakeholder network, which represents members of the school, district, and community. Finding #4, most participants expressed the need or the importance for a sustainable system, process, or support to develop the campus improvement plan. As part of this step, I recommend training all stakeholders in the continuous improvement process and understanding their individual and collective roles and expected outcome of the process. Finding #5, most participants expressed collective and individual efficacy influenced the negative and positive development of the school improvement plan. As with finding #3 and #4, I suggest the continuous collaboration among stakeholders is a component that eventually can support the positive outcomes and build the capacity of everyone involved.
Assess	
1. Analyze the data of the campus in four areas (Campus Needs Assessment)- Demographics, Student Learning, District Process & Programs, and Perceptions a. Demographics- Provide a demographic summary to include student and staff demographics and program. Quantitative data including	Finding #2: Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data. One of the major keys in developing the campus improvement plan is the use of various data as suggested in this step. Data needs to be the driver for the development of the campus improvement plan.

student information such as number of students, number of students by gender, grade level, ethnicity, economically disadvantaged plus number of students in special programs such as special education, emergent bilinguals, migrant, section 504, and gifted and talented. For staff aside from the demographic data include the years of experience and the number of teachers by programs. Include the data of the composition and expectations of the families and the surrounding community. b. Student Learning – Provide a student achievement summary to include data from state and federal accountability reports and local assessment data. Quantitative data found in the Texas Education Agency such as the STAAR/EOC, ACT, SAT, TSI, and aligned accountability reports as the domains of student achievement, school progress, and closing the gaps. c. School Processes & Programs – Provide a summary of the process and programs of the school to include information of human capital, facilities, curriculum, instruction, assessment, recruitment and retention of students and staff, technology, and the overall school organization. d. Perceptions – Provide a summary of the perceptions of the school by the stakeholders.	Finding #1, most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs. As suggest from finding #2, data is a driver to the campus improvement plan and any modifications to the plan relies on the continuous monitoring of the data. Finding #3: Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders. As suggested in this step, perception data is one form of data that needs to be assessed to inform a holistic interpretation of the campus needs.

Include qualitative data from surveys. Include how the school engages students, families, staff, and the community. Also, include the data pertaining to the school culture and climate. 2. Based on the data, identify the strengths and weaknesses for each of the four areas above. 3. Based on the data analysis, identify areas of improvement(problem) to reduce the gap that exists between the desired standard and the outcome desired based on your school mission and accountability standards. 4. Create problem statements that are factual, based on data. Prioritize one or two problem statements that will help meet the desired performance. 5. For each problem statement, do a root cause analysis by finding the main reason why the problem exists, and which can be under the control of the school such as quality of instruction and student services.	
Target	
1. Review the district goals. The district goals must be addressed by the campuses. 2. Review the TEA requirements such as the Title I and ESSA requirements. 3. Based on your problem statements, create SMART goals (Campus Performance Objectives) that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. 4. The SMART goals created will be the performance objectives. 5. Identify the evaluation data sources that will be analyzed to determine if the performance objectives have been met.	Finding #1: Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs. Finding #2: Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data. Finding #3: Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders. I recommend the continuous involvement of stakeholders in developing the plans' goals and how these goals will be evaluated for

	mastery. Based on findings #1 and #2, these goals are based on the problem statements developed in the previous step of collecting and analyzing various data.
Strategize	
1. Based on the developed goals (performance objectives), create strategies that will lead to meet the performance objectives. 2. The strategies must be scientifically research-based activities. 3. Provide the persons responsible for the activities, timeline of formative reviews, resources needed, the funding sources, and expected results and impact. 4. Identify the elements aligned to the Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements. 5. Identify the priorities aligned to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) priorities. 6. Identify the levers aligned to the Effective School Framework (ESF) Levers. 7. Submit to the central office for board approval.	Finding #1: Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs. Finding #2: Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data. Finding #3: Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders. In this step and based on the first three findings of this study, I suggest to individually and collectively research proven strategies to include activities and steps that can lead to meeting the goals established in the previous step. Strategizing requires creating subcommittees per goal within the stakeholders, then coming together to present the results of their research and agreeing to the best strategies to meet the plan goals.
Implement	
1. Once board approved, make the plan available and accessible to the entire community by posting it on the school website and having hard copies in areas such as the front office and library. 2. Communicate the plan to all stakeholders. 3. Meet with the person responsible for implementation. 4. Facilitate the implementation such as by ensuring the resources are available	Finding #3: Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders. This step of Implement and the subsequent steps were not part of my study; however, I added findings of the study that I found to be relevant due to my personal experiences in not only developing campus improvement plans but also implementing campus improvement plans. I personally believe that stakeholders in this step of Implement are crucial. Most times, the persons involved as

	stakeholders are also responsible to implement part of the strategies or activities found within the plan. Thus, all stakeholders normally take ownership of the plan due to their involvement and they will keep the plan alive.
and any professional development necessary is delivered.	
Monitor	
1. Collect formative assessment data that is qualitative and quantitative based on evaluation sources. 2. Timely review of the data must be completed based on the timeline of the formative reviews and the summative review. 3. Convene the committee to review the data, implementation, and the progress of the plan by reviewing each strategy.	Finding #1: Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs. Finding #2: Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data. Finding #3: Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders. Similarly to previous steps, data and collaboration are important in this step. I recommend that stakeholders come together in a timely manner to continuously reflect on the progress of each strategy towards meeting the set goals.
Adjust	
1. While the committee has been convened to check the progress of the plan for formative and summative reviews, adjust the plan as necessary. 2. Adjusting can include changing any components of the plans such as the eliminating and adding strategies if not enough or no progress has been made to meet the performance objectives. 3. Continue monitoring. 4. Reconvene committee as necessary when progress is not being made between review and readjust.	Finding #1: Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs. Finding #2: Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data. Finding #3: Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders. This step makes the improvement plan not only a living document but a continuous process too. Personally I believe that the

5. Communicate the adjustments and changes for implementation.	previous step of monitoring goes hand in hand with this step of adjustment; however, I chose to separate them in this framework so that the reader understands that adjusting is a crucial step to continuous improvement. Adjusting the improvement plan in a timely manner based on the campus data makes the plan a collective living document driven by the conscious effort of all stakeholders.
Evaluate	
1. Convene the committee for the summative review and evaluate the plan. 2. Determine if the performance objectives and goals were met by critically analyzing the data. 3. Reevaluate the plan once the state and federal accountability results are released. 4. Initiate the process again. 5. Recap on the effectiveness of the process taken by the committee in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the plan. 6. Adjust the process as necessary.	Finding #1: Most participants expressed the need to continuously monitor data and modify the campus improvement plan based on identified needs. Finding #2: Most participants expressed the importance of data to drive the development of campus improvement, though they expressed different types of data. Finding #3: Most participants expressed the importance of including feedback from stakeholders. Finding #4, most participants expressed the need or the importance for a sustainable system, process, or support to develop the campus improvement plan.. Finding #5, most participants expressed collective and individual efficacy influenced the negative and positive development of the school improvement plan. I recommend this step not only as evaluation of the success of the plan to meet the goal developed but also as an evaluation of the effectiveness of the stakeholders in coming together in every step of the development, implementation, monitoring and adjustment of the campus improvement plan. Doing this step of evaluation of the plan and the stakeholder committee can lead to a true continuous process of improvement of the actual framework, individual stakeholders, and the stakeholder committee.

Reflection

Through my years of experience in developing and implementing campus improvement plans, I have grown in understanding the significance of the campus improvement plan for continuous improvement. Through this study, I grew in my own practice in better understanding the research behind the importance of being research and data-driven to support improvement. Early in my career, I experienced a lack of understanding of the critical role the campus improvement plan played which I can only attribute to the lack of understanding of the development process and the lack of importance given to the plan other than being a one-time event for compliance. As I grew in my practices, my knowledge, and based on the needs of my campuses, I have learned of the positive impact that a continuous improvement plan can have in the positive progress and performance of students and campuses.