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A Strategic Plan to Increase Equitable Practices in a Pacific Northwest School District

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by
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A Strategic Research Project Submitted to the
Abraham S. Fischler College of Education
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Approval Page

This Strategic Research Project was submitted by Nancy L. Reisner under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

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Statement of Original Work

I declare the following:

I have read the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility as described in the *Student Handbook* of Nova Southeastern University. This Strategic Research Project represents my original work, except where I have acknowledged the ideas, words, or material of other authors.

Where another author's ideas have been presented in this Strategic Research Project, I have acknowledged the author's ideas by citing them in the required style.

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Nancy L. Reisner
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April 19, 2021
Date

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Dedication

To Madeline, Natalie, and Thomas. Thank you for waiting patiently as Mom had to write for just a few more minutes that turned in to hours, days, and then years. You inspire me every day to be a better human. I love you always!

Executive Summary

A Strategic Plan to Increase Equitable Practices in a Pacific Northwest School District. Nancy L. Reisner, 2021: Strategic Research Project, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice. Keywords: equitable practices, SWOT analysis, social justice, school districts

This strategic research project was designed to provide a plan to support global implementation of equitable practices in a school district in the Pacific Northwest. Using results of a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis, internal and external factors were analyzed to score each item to identify areas that could be addressed to improve the overall function of the organization. Grounded in cultural relevancy theory and social justice theory, the problem of implementation of equitable practice with fidelity throughout the district was identified and addressed.

Key factors impacting the implementation of equitable practices identified were teacher training, leadership structure, implementation fidelity, and quantitative measurement of outcomes. Further investigation of each of these factors was done to identify one solution that could be used to efficiently and effectively move the organization toward global implementation of equitable practices. The solution identified was the use of quantitative measurement of implementation fidelity to create plans at the district level that could be utilized to implement changes to support equity and monitor fidelity. The recommendations include identification of leadership and teacher traits that support implementation fidelity of equitable practices. This information could be used to remediate teacher and leadership behaviors that impact the implementation of equitable practices, resulting in learning for all students and potentially supporting reforming or replacing the deficit-based approach to the achievement gap.

The results of a quantitative strategic plan matrix analysis of the SWOT data were used to compare intervention plans. Based on attractiveness scores of each intervention, a final recommendation was made to use centralized data intervention teams over the course of the school district's fiscal year. The plan included hiring an equity chief and identifying team members from stakeholders in the community and district staff. Once appointed and trained, staff would be responsible for implementing training, data collection, strengths-based staff remediation, and progress monitoring related to global implementation of equitable practices.

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Part 1: Critical Analysis

Researcher's Role

I am a certificated special education teacher working in the study school district. I teach in an inclusive preschool classroom with an extended-day component. The classroom consists of 14 students, seven typically developing and seven students with a medical diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Flensborg-Madsen and Mortensen (2018) described typically developing students as students who exhibit expected developmental milestones based on their age. The students with a medical diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder exhibit a cluster of symptoms with deficits in social communication, restricted interests, and impaired ability to interact socially (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). During the extended-day component of our preschool program, we provide additional direct instruction using an applied behavioral analysis model. Applied behavioral analysis is an instructional method using discrete trials to introduce functional skills in a sequential order based on development (Leaf et al., 2016).

Additionally, I support teachers in the building with strategies and interventions for students having difficulties related to adaptive, social, and cognitive development in the general education setting. Some of the students have Individualized Education Programs as they have qualified for services in special education. Some are referred to me using our school response to intervention process, a research-based method of identifying students using a screener to proactively provide interventions to support student growth. According to Fuchs and Fuchs (2017), when implemented with fidelity, response to intervention is an effective strategy, but there are opportunities for failure due to individual practices (Castillo et al., 2016). My support in the classroom in beginning

states of response to intervention is aligned with this research-based practice. The intended purpose of my support to teachers is to provide direct and indirect instruction to students with special needs in the general education setting. I also provide modeling and supports for general education teachers. My work in using the response to intervention model has been focused on facilitating students' progress when they are falling behind peers in the areas of social-emotional skills, adaptive skills, or cognitive development. As cited by Fuchs and Fuchs, teachers with the technical skills necessary to design and deliver intervention plans such as response to intervention are fundamental to student success.

I spent my 1st year in a self-contained classroom teaching kindergarten through fifth grade. In previous years, the students were housed in a separate building on the school campus and did not attend class in the general education setting for any portion of their academic day. Researchers (Henson, 2017; Thompson & Thompson, 2018) have indicated that the collaborative effort between stakeholders leads to student success. In an effort to initiate a collaborative effort within the school, and promote the inclusive model, the principal and I set out to include students in special education in the general education setting. We started the year by assigning each student to a general education classroom. Then, we experienced setbacks as teachers were unable to manage some of the significant behavioral deficits displayed by some of the students with disabilities. The teachers cited lack of necessary training and staff supports as barriers to implementing inclusive strategies in the general education setting. Along with a teacher concerns, parent concerns related to classroom climate and student behaviors increased. The difficulties teachers were experiencing with classroom management resulted in student complaints and parent

volunteer complaints. The principal made the difficult decision to move back to a self-contained model.

My first attempt to implement inclusive practices for these students failed. The principal and I did not address teacher needs and beliefs about inclusion prior to implementing an inclusive model. Shoulders and Krei (2015) identified a relationship between teacher beliefs in their ability to implement instruction and the likelihood of successfully implementing inclusive practices. There is evidence that teacher proficiency and confidence are correlated to outcomes in students such as increased anxiety, lower test scores, and ultimately lower graduation rates (Shoulders & Krei, 2015). Fuchs and Fuchs (2017) suggested that inadequate training in inclusive practices and interventions can lead to negative outcomes. In this school, the students were moved back into a more restrictive setting, as the staff did not feel prepared to support the students.

My next teaching experience was in an elementary school as a resource room teacher. I had a caseload of 40 to 45 students ranging from kindergarten to fifth grade with services in the areas of reading, writing, math, adaptive, and social skills. I spent my 1st year in this position building relationships and listening to teachers while I made no changes to the structure for providing support in the building. I found it useful to slow down, listen to teachers, and authentically collaborate. Up until this experience, I had felt that general education teachers lacked empathy for students in special education. In listening authentically, I understood general education teachers lacked skills or confidence in their existing skills. Self-efficacy in teachers is tied closely to student learning (Gage et al., 2017; Shoulders & Krei, 2015). As I gathered background knowledge related to teacher training and overall attitudes toward inclusion, I did not

suggest or make any changes to the existing model in the school. Students left their classrooms daily to attend instruction in reading, writing, math, social, and adaptive skills as defined by their Individualized Education Programs.

Over 3 years, with the support of my building principal, we moved the school into an inclusive model. The inclusive model in education has been described as promoting equity in education by addressing the needs of the whole child, not just the disability (Gay, 2018; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). Students were gradually included in the general education setting and supports in math, reading, writing, and social skills were differentiated to facilitate equitable access to the classroom. However, during that time, the school principal was focused on the School Improvement Plan and was under pressure from the district to produce concrete test results indicating student progress in math, literacy, and science. The supports for building staff were not in place to promote the inclusive model, as all monies and supports were going toward increasing test scores in the building. Special education students in the general education setting represented a burden to teachers already overwhelmed with the focus on improving test scores.

To implement a successful inclusion model, staff training, and classroom supports must be put into effect concurrently (Choi et al., 2017). The principal and I saw a declining implementation fidelity, as teachers did not have the training or skills to manage student behaviors or suggestions for differentiation of the academic materials. Teachers experiencing the pressures of the increasing demands placed without the foundational skills in differentiation across all academic and social domains became increasingly disheartened with inclusion. Students began to experience setbacks in the classroom, such as failure to progress academically, disruptive behaviors, and increased

suspension rates. The failure to progress academically and increases in disruptive behavior in the classroom have been cited in the literature as correlates to insufficient staff training (Shoulders & Krei, 2015). Further, negative outcomes such as low academic achievement occur where appropriate pedagogical practices are not being implemented with fidelity or teacher training on inclusive practices is insufficient (Shoulders & Krei, 2015). Teachers can aggravate the impact of a disability on learning when unable or unwilling to implement strategies to support students in inclusive classrooms.

Ultimately, as is the case in many settings across the country, this lack of a cohesive strategy led to an increase in suspension rates for students with disabilities (Ohlson et al., 2016; Shoulders & Krei, 2015). The school leadership team made the difficult decision to revert to the less inclusive pull-out service model. These two similar early experiences in teaching shaped my practice as an educator. Teachers must have a shared vision, and thus administrators must provide ample opportunities for professional development, authentic communication, and collaboration among all staff to engage in equitable pedagogical practices in the classroom (Martin et al., 2018; Ohlson et al., 2016). My experience supported that school staff first must have a thorough understanding of the vision, mission, and values of a school to implement teaching practices that support that mission to influence long-term systemic change related to equitable, inclusive pedagogical practices.

Description of the Setting

The study school district serves over 16,000 students in 29 schools and has a student-to-teacher ratio of 19.6:1 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). The district is in the Pacific Northwest. Home to over 100,000 citizens, the district spans a

diverse community. The community covers a geographic area of 32.5 square miles with over 2,800 parks and playgrounds. The median household income is $71,622, and 12.9% of children in public schools in the district are from families below the poverty level. Most of the schools are in urban settings.

The district employs 896 teachers (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019). Teachers in the district are mostly certificated, with roughly 86% certificated and 11% holding limited certification. The proportion of certificated teachers on staff declined between 2018 and 2019, from 95% to 86% fully certified (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019). Teacher qualifications have an impact on student achievement (Gilmour, 2020; Ingvarson & Rowley, 2017) because critical skills in differentiation and tools available to support a wide range of learners increase with training. The decrease in fully certificated teachers in this school district could lead to declining student performance (Gilmour, 2020; Ingvarson & Rowley, 2017). According to the findings in Ingvarson and Rowley's (2017) study, a correlation existed between countries with programs in place to ensure quality of newly trained math teachers, and student math achievement. Teachers of color make up 10% of the teachers in the workforce, which is 8% higher than the state average.

Of the 16,000 students enrolled, in 2019, 53.9% met English language arts requirements, 46.0% met math standards, and 40.2% met science standards (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019). Ethnically, the student population is 45% White, 23% Asian, 13% Hispanic, 12% Black, 6% multiracial, and 1% Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Currently, 81.9% of students graduate in 4 years, with 82.6% regularly attending. Students with Individualized

Educational Programs represent about 13% of the student population. The district's current

exclusion rate for a behavioral violation is 4.5% (Washington Office of Superintendent of

Public Instruction, 2019). The overall graduation rates for students in the district are below

the state average and are significantly lower among non-White students (Washington

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019).

Organizational Background and History

The study school district is adjacent to four other school districts in an urban

setting. This part of the county is lacking many of the services that are typically found in

urban settings such as adequate medical care, mental health services, quality childcare

and affordable housing. Services are disproportionately dispersed in the county. This may

be due to the income inequality that exists within the county (Valenzuela, 2017). The

overall life expectancy data for this part of the county is measurably lower (Dwyer-

Lindgren et al., 2017). This discrepancy could be related to equity of services and access

to preventative health care due to socioeconomic conditions in the lower portion on the

county. The access to medical care for families experiencing poverty correlates with a

student's ability to thrive in an academic setting (Berkowitz et al., 2017). Poverty levels

in the south portion of the county and lack of infrastructure to support the populations in

this area impact families and in turn result in stress on learners and learning behaviors

and needs in the school setting.

Over the last 6 years, 2014–2020, the school district leadership has turned over

four times (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019). The

leadership turnover, although high, cannot be attributed to any single cause but a variety

of reasons including work–life balance, board dissatisfaction and retirement. Frequent

changes in leadership are detrimental to an underperforming school district (Finnigan et al., 2016) and certainly had an impact on morale during my tenure in the district. Fortunately, the district has had continuity in leadership over the last 4 years. In addition to a background in the district as a student, teacher, and leader, the current superintendent has done extensive research in social justice and equity. Leadership prepared to address equity and focused on culturally responsive practices is needed to address the inequities that exist in schools (Mette et al., 2016).

The Mission Statement

A well-defined and executed mission statement can have a significant impact on the overall health of an organization (Alegre et al., 2018; McClees, 2016). The mission of an organization can serve not only as a guide for practice, but also as a tool to measure progress toward the vision (Alegre et al., 2018). Since the 2014–2015 school year, the emphasis in the school district has been on creating an environment that leads itself to self-efficacy and advocacy, ultimately producing students who are active participants in our democracy (see Appendix A). Teaching the skill of self-efficacy in education is achieved when all students obtain basic skills, and individual characteristics such as race, ethnicity, family background, or gender do not prevent academic achievement (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2012). Equity in schools builds the confidence students need to actively participate in their education and their communities and protects democracy by producing adults ready to lead and contribute to society (Martin et al., 2018; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). In this school district, it is clearly communicated that a teacher's primary responsibility is to nurture curiosity, build self-esteem, and teach students to see themselves as lifelong learners. While

conversations regarding standardized test scores occur, teachers show an overall commitment to collaborate and differentiate instruction to support students equitably. This statement aligns with the move toward social justice and equity in society. As noted by DeMatthews et al. (2017), making changes that are sustainable requires that leadership work with communities to support change based on example and information rather than directives.

The Vision Statement

A quality vision statement should be forward thinking and address the future of an organization in the positive while providing a clear destination as the mission of the organization is being carried out (Alegre et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2018; McClees, 2016). Curiously, the study school district does not have a defined vision. The mission statement is written as what would typically be defined as a vision statement (see Appendix A). The lack of a clear vision statement supported by a mission and value statement could lead to fragmented implementation of the mission (Alegre et al., 2018; Stefanski et al., 2016). This occurs because the mission defines the purpose of an organization. Although the mission and vision statement in this organization are somewhat interchangeable, clearly defining a vision and mission is seen as best practice when developing an organizational strategy (Alegre et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2018; McClees, 2016; Stefanski et al., 2016). The vision typically provides the destination for the members of the organization, whereas the mission could be viewed as the map. The mission as written could be interpreted as a vision, since it describes the future landscape of the organization. The district's use of guiding principles to describe how the organization will achieve the mission would be aligned with the vision (see Appendix). A

well-written, concise vision statement would benefit this organization and stakeholders because these tools will guide the practices that move the organization forward.

The Value Statement

In the study school district, the core values are service, excellence, and equity (see Appendix A). Each value is clearly defined with actions that describe how each value would look in practice. A value statement should define the expected behavior of the organization based on a shared set of beliefs; the values represent system behavior from the top down and are vital to the success of an educational organization (Alegre et al., 2018; Gurley et al., 2015). The core values are communicated throughout the organization. This is a strength for the organization, although there is no evidence of metrics in use to track implementation.

Schools are part of an ecosystem within a community; when these relationships are nurtured, student achievement increases (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Medina et al., 2020). Rigor and high-quality instruction are valued in the school district. Holding high standards for teachers and students in the learning community supports student confidence and efficacy (Huber et al., 2016; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). High-quality, equitable practices include differentiated, culturally responsive teaching delivered by competent professionals; such practices are critical elements for creating learners who can self-advocate (Thompson & Thompson, 2018) and ultimately contribute to the health of a democracy. Finally, equitable practices are paramount when designing organizations serving diverse populations (Penuel, 2019; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). The focus on equity is critical to address the needs of the individual, supporting optimal growth and self-worth in students (Huber et al., 2016; Thompson & Thompson, 2018).

When educational leadership emphasizes engaging families, hiring highly skilled educators, and setting goals around equity rather than equality, student achievement shows measurable growth (Alegre et al., 2018; Huber et al., 2016). Ensuring that teachers and students are treated equitably increases teacher satisfaction and retention and supports student achievement.

Organizational Reputation and Sustainability

The organization has had mixed success in student achievement over the 4 years between the 2014–2015 and 2018–2019 school years. The reasons for this include lack of a district-wide plan for improvement in schools, changing school leadership and lack of implementation of rigor and high standards, lack of staffing to address and support teachers and implement a research-based curriculum, and disparity among schools related to instructional practices and community involvement (Finnigan et al., 2016; Martin et al., 2018; Ohlson et al., 2016). District test scores in English language arts decreased over those 4 years, while scores in math increased slightly (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019). Student scores may be influenced by inconsistent teaching practices and collaborative practices within the organization. In areas with more parent participation and higher rates of employment, student graduation rates and quality of education tend to be higher (Martin et al., 2018; Ohlson et al., 2016). High school graduation rates fell below the average in the region but have increased annually in the district over the 4 years, and discipline rates are higher than those in surrounding districts as well (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019). Schools typically identified as low achieving by graduation rate and test scores within the district also show higher rates of discipline referrals, higher rates of free and

reduced-price lunch qualification, and higher rates of non-White populations.

Relevant Terms

The *disciplinary exclusion rate* is calculated by taking the number of distinct disciplinary actions that result in exclusion divided by the total number of distinct students (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019). This rate includes expulsions and out-of-school suspensions.

The *external factor evaluation (EFE)* is a process by which a weighted score is calculated to evaluate the organization's capacity to respond to threats and opportunities that exist outside of the organization.

Equitable practices in schools is used to describe a set of pedagogical and leadership practices that address the student's individual needs as a learner.

The *graduation rate* is calculated by taking the total number of students enrolled in a cohort of students in ninth grade who graduate in 4 years, divided by the number of students in the cohort (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019).

The *internal factor evaluation (IFE)* is a process by which a weighted score is calculated to rank internal factors identified within the organization as strengths and weaknesses that can be used strategically to improve the overall function of an organization.

A *quantitative strategic plan matrix (QSPM)* is a strategic planning tool used to rank attractiveness of potential solutions to a problem within an organization based on the SWOT analysis (David et al., 2017).

School climate refers to a set of characteristics found in schools dependent on leadership, teacher, student, and community behaviors that influence the development of

students.

A *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis* is a term used in strategic planning to describe evaluation of an organization to determine weaknesses and threats by capitalizing on existing strengths and opportunities.

Identify Potential Gaps or Areas for Growth

A qualitative analysis of the organization's SWOT was conducted to determine factors that influence that district's ability to carry out its vision and mission. Research has shown that this model is an effective way to synthesize information related to the organization's overall performance to make strategic planning decisions (Banihashemi & Rejaei, 2016; Rezazadeh et al., 2017). The factors were determined using professional judgment and the absence or presence of key indicators of best practice in education. The results were then examined quantitatively using an internal and external factor analysis. According to Creswell (2015), using both qualitative and quantitative data allows for a more thorough analysis of a research problem. Results of this activity will be the basis for recommendations for improvement in the movement of this organization toward implementation of the mission.

SWOT Analysis

The first step in a SWOT analysis involves qualitatively evaluating organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the organization. This research-based method was used to identify 10 strengths, 10 weaknesses, 10 opportunities, and 10 threats to the organization (see Table 1). Guided by previous research of Alexander and Choi (2015) and Rezazadeh et al. (2017), key indicators were used to determine priorities for the SWOT analysis.

Table 1

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Area of analysis	Items
Strengths	1. Availability of curriculum
	2. Teacher professional development opportunities
	3. Core values
	4. Executive leadership
	5. Staff diversity
	6. Mission
	7. Staff salaries
	8. Union strength
	9. Diverse learning community
	10. Staff commitment to core values
Weaknesses	1. Implementation strategy for equitable practices
	2. Technology
	3. Facilities
	4. No vision statement
	5. Relationship between teachers & midlevel management
	6. Support for English language learners at home
	7. Authentic family engagement
	8. Teacher workload
	9. Afterschool programs & supports
	10. Teacher burnout
Opportunities	1. Increase inclusive practices
	2. Student peer-tutoring program
	3. Community partnerships
	4. Assessment
	5. Staff equity training
	6. Early childhood education community partnerships
	7. Technology needs for students and families
	8. Language and translation services
	9. Support for families experiencing financial hardship
	10. Family engagement in student learning/partnerships
Threats	1. Financial deficit
	2. Outdated curriculum
	3. Teacher shortage
	4. Transportation
	5. Decreasing family engagement in schools
	6. Availability of technology in homes
	7. Support for non-English-speaking families
	8. Changing demographics
	9. Inequitable practices
	10. Teacher burnout

When doing a SWOT in an educational setting, the analysis should include budget and funding patterns, community needs, external economic needs, political culture, and

outcomes for students (Alexander & Choi, 2015). Using professional judgment and publicly available data on the organization, an analysis was then conducted to evaluate these areas for the study school district.

Strengths. The strengths were chosen based on correlates to achieving the mission of the organization. As indicated in recent research (Penuel, 2019; Thompson & Thompson, 2018), actions that are community centered support equitable outcomes for students. The core values, executive leadership, mission, and staff commitment to core values were chosen as strengths for this reason. Each of these strengths not only supports the mission of this organization but also represents a strength found in organizations more likely to engage in equitable practices (Penuel, 2019; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). Alexander and Choi (2015) cited funding patterns and economic needs as indicators of strength. For this reason, the availability of curriculum, teacher professional development opportunities, staff salaries, and union strength were cited as strengths because they influence the quality of the workforce and retention.

The final two strengths identified were related to diversity both in the diversity of the workforce and diverse learning community. Diversity in school students and staff were chosen as strengths because diversity allows opportunities for staff and students to engage in authentic dialogue and share personal experiences, enhancing equitable practices and learning. Congruency between teacher and student ethnicity has been shown to increase student success (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018; Rasheed et al., 2020). The diverse staff in this organization allows for greater opportunities to authentically engage in conversations to support the student population based on personal experience, which has been linked to student achievement (Rasheed et al., 2020).

Capitalizing on the diversity within this organization could support increased student and family engagement, impacting overall student achievement.

Weaknesses. Berkowitz et al. (2017) cited school climate as critical to success in schools. Weaknesses were chosen based on organization climate were relationships between teachers and midlevel management, teacher burnout, and teacher workload. The district also has weaknesses related to funding and support for programs that would further the mission, such as deficient technology, inadequate facilities, and low-quality afterschool programs and supports. According to Thompson and Thompson (2018), unaddressed student needs such as support for English language learners and supports facilitating equity in school can significantly impact a student's access to an equitable education. Although the mission, values, and leadership of this organization are a strength, weakness exists in implementation strategies for equitable practices, support for English language learners in the home, and authentic family engagement. Left unaddressed, the weaknesses would hinder implementation of the mission of this organization. Finally, the organization's lack of a clearly defined vision statement is seen as a weakness, as a clear vision could provide the framework to cohese the fragmented implementation of the mission and values in this organization.

Opportunities. Increasing community stakeholder involvement in schools has been linked to student achievement (McClees, 2016; Yavuz, 2016). Collaboration opportunities between community stakeholders and the school district include community partnerships, family engagement in student learning through partnerships, early childhood education community partnerships, language and translation services, and supports for families experiencing financial hardship. Providing funding to support

programs and engaging the community are key factors for successful implementation of equitable practices within an organization (Alegre et al., 2018; Gurley et al., 2015). Opportunities chosen as a mechanism for improving the quality of the workforce and instruction include increasing staff equity training, addressing technology needs for students and families, adopting student peer-tutoring programs, and increasing inclusive practices and assessments. Taking the opportunity to engage in the community and utilize resources to streamline supports would demonstrate district commitment to the core values.

Threats. The challenges to address in this area could be financial, as the district is currently recovering from a financial deficit of $12 million in 2019. For this reason, the financial deficit, outdated curriculum, transportation restrictions related to budget, and the inability of the district to provide students with technology in their homes are threats to the health of the organization and student achievement. That said, using the current resources available in capital and building on relationships in the community, the district could make significant strides to authentically engage families to support a more equitable learning environment (Alegre et al., 2018; Gurley et al., 2015). Authentic community engagement results in practices that support student achievement and success by increasing student support outside of the school setting. Engagement is also linked to greater accountability in schools, again supporting achievement (Morrell, 2017; Yavuz, 2016). This weakness could be addressed through changes in practice without a significant increase in cost by changing communication strategies.

The teacher shortage and teacher burnout were identified as threats because of their direct impact on student learning (Thompson & Thompson, 2018; Wong et al.,

2017). These threats impact the overall quality of the educational programming by resulting in frequent staff changes. Threats were identified that may be signs of declining quality in the district or a result of the rising taxes in the area, decreasing family engagement in schools and changing demographics. This district is located in an area in transition; once affordable housing is becoming scarce, and families and teachers are being forced out due to rising housing costs in the area. Learning is subsequently impacted because the teacher shortage may force leaders to hire substitutes without the knowledge and training to effectively manage the classroom or deliver the curriculum. Threats identified based on observed variation from class to class and building to building that directly impact student achievement are inequitable practices in the classroom and lack of support for non-English-speaking families.

IFE

Banihashemi and Rejaei (2016) described the internal factor analysis as an effective practice of providing the organization with a comprehensive analysis of strengths and weaknesses within an organization (see Table 2). A quantitative internal factor analysis was done to evaluate potential weaknesses within the organization. First, the items were weighted on scale from 0–1 with a total score for all items not to exceed 1. The items were ranked from 1–4, with 1 being a *major weakness* and 4 being a *major strength*. Weaknesses were given scores of 1 or 2, and strengths were given scores of 3 or 4. A composite score was given to the strengths and weaknesses within the organization (see Table 2).

Table 2

Internal Factor Evaluation Matrix

Factor	Items	Weight	Rating	Weighted score
Strengths	Core values	0.10	4	0.40
	Executive leadership	0.07	4	0.28
	Staff commitment to core values	0.07	4	0.28
	Staff diversity	0.05	4	0.20
	Mission	0.05	4	0.20
	Availability of curriculum	0.03	3	0.09
	Teacher professional development opportunities	0.03	3	0.09
	Staff salaries	0.03	3	0.09
	Union strength	0.03	3	0.09
	Diverse learning community	0.03	3	0.09
Weaknesses	Afterschool programs & supports	0.07	2	0.14
	Implementation strategy for equitable practices	0.07	1	0.07
	Authentic family engagement	0.07	1	0.07
	Support for English language learners at home	0.10	1	0.10
	Technology	0.03	2	0.06
	Teacher workload	0.06	1	0.06
	No vision statement	0.03	2	0.06
	Teacher burnout	0.05	1	0.05
	Relationship between teachers & midlevel management	0.02	2	0.04
	Facilities	0.01	2	0.02
Total		1.00		2.48

The composite score in this evaluation was 2.48 and considered below average. Addressing areas of weakness and further supporting and utilizing strengths would benefit this organization. Citing 2.50 as the mean, Banihashemi and Rejaei (2016) stated scores lower than that may indicate areas of weakness as well as ineffective capitalization on strength. An example of this would be the core values in equity listed as a strength but inequitable practices seen as a weakness. After evaluating the ranking of each item, four strengths and four weaknesses were determined as priorities based on possible impact on

the organization, guided by the research of Choi et al. (2017). These priorities will be further evaluated when determining action plans for the organization moving forward.

Strengths. Internal strengths identified for this organization are values, executive leadership, staff commitment to core values, and staff diversity (see Table 2). The rationale behind the choice to focus on these factors was based on the impact of these measured strengths on the weaknesses of this organization. McClees (2016) emphasized the importance of stakeholder knowledge of the mission and area of strengths in an organization that will be an asset when addressing weaknesses in the organization. As was noted in the SWOT analysis, the organization has strengths related to values from the highest level of leadership down to the individual contributions within the organization. There is evidence (McClees, 2016; Mette et al., 2016) that when the mission, vision and values are clear to the staff, the organization can move toward accomplishing the tasks associated with realization.

Weaknesses. The four internal weaknesses of the organization are afterschool programs and supports, implementation of strategy for equitable practices, authentic family engagement, and support for English-language learners at home (see Table 2). These four internal weakness factors were emphasized because of their impact on both the community and school through inequitable practices. Interestingly, the core values for this organization have strong support from staff and leadership. In organizations without a strong presence in the community, equity issues are common because there is a disconnect between community need and perceived need from district leadership (Heinze & Zdroik, 2018; Penuel, 2019). Leadership is committed to addressing these areas of weakness as they are contrary to the core values of this organization and reduce the

effectiveness of the organization.

EFE

A quantitative external factor analysis was done to evaluate potential threats

outside of the organization (see Table 3). This method provides the organization with a

comprehensive analysis of the factors outside of the organization (Banihashemi & Rejaei,

2016).

Table 3

External Factor Evaluation Matrix

Factor	Items	Weight	Rating	Weighted score
Opportunities	Increase inclusive practices	0.07	2	0.14
	Language & translation services	0.07	2	0.14
	Support for families experiencing financial hardship	0.07	2	0.14
	Family engagement in student learning/ partnerships	0.07	2	0.14
	Staff equity training	0.05	3	0.15
	Technology needs for students & families	0.05	4	0.20
	Community partnerships	0.04	1	0.04
	Student peer-tutoring program	0.03	3	0.09
	Early childhood education community partnerships	0.03	3	0.09
	Assessment	0.02	4	0.08
Threats	Support for non-English-speaking families	0.07	4	0.28
	Inequitable practices	0.07	4	0.28
	Decreasing family engagement in schools	0.07	3	0.21
	Availability of technology in homes	0.07	3	0.21
	Financial deficit	0.05	4	0.20
	Teacher burnout	0.05	3	0.15
	Outdated curriculum	0.03	2	0.06
	Teacher shortage	0.03	2	0.06
	Transportation	0.03	2	0.06
	Changing demographics	0.03	2	0.06
Total		1.00		2.80

Items listed as external threats to the organization were ranked 1–4, with 1 being

not attractive and 4 being *highly attractive*. Scores of 1 or 2 were considered not

attractive and scores of 3 or 4 were considered attractive. A weight was given to each of

the factors (see Table 3). The total weighted score is the sum of the individual weighted

scores.

      The external factor analysis results indicated a 2.80 overall score. A mean score

higher than 2.50 indicates that this organization has more opportunities than threats

(Rezazadeh et al., 2017) Based on a score of 2.80, this organization has the capacity to

address threats more fluidly. Higher values in external factors indicate that the

organization is postured to address deficits that exist internally. This information was

utilized to determine which areas would have the most impact on the overall composite

score and potential health of this organization.

      Opportunities. The four external opportunities identified in this organization are

increase in inclusive practices, language and translation services, support for families

experiencing financial hardship, and family engagement in student learning and

partnerships. These opportunities were chosen because they represented the four factors

aligned with moving the organization toward the mission by supporting student learning.

Seizing on the opportunities that exist within a community in need of critical

infrastructure to support the students and families they serve should advance the mission

of this organization (Stefanski et al., 2016). These needs related to services, supports, and

authentic engagement are paramount to equitable access a core value for an organization

(Martin et al., 2018; Ohlson et al., 2016). Addressing these needs will support

development of programming that represents the students within the building, ensuring

equity. As these areas also have the lowest composite scores on the matrix, improving

these scores through intervention should have the greatest impact on composite score of

the organization, signaling improvement.

Threats. The four external threats identified in this organization are supports for non-English-speaking families, inequitable practices, decreasing family engagement in schools, and availability of technology in homes. Although the staff and leadership are committed to equity and access, implementation is fragmented. As with the opportunities chosen for further exploration, these threats have an impact on moving toward the mission, and in this case as weaknesses, stray from the values of the organization (Martin et al., 2018; Ohlson et al., 2016). The threats identified are closely tied to families and access to services in the home, and thus investigating these needs further supports district goals related to removing barriers and increasing family engagement. Given the significant shortage of funding in the district at this time, focusing on threats related to relationships and existing staff skills, such as supports for non-English-speaking families and changing inequitable practices, rather than the more costly threat of increasing technology in homes, would be the most practical approach to supporting an overall increase in the EFE score.

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Part 2: Define the Problem

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Synthesis of Literature Related to the Problem

Using the results from the SWOT analysis, IFE analysis, and EFE analysis as a rationale for determining priorities, equitable practices has been selected for further investigation. Equitable practices are fundamental to increasing positive outcomes for all students (Choi et al., 2017: Penuel, 2019; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). Equitable practices ensure that all students can engage in learning allowing multiple entry points. Supporting learning in this way has been shown to increase student achievement. This

synthesis of literature is focused on the impact of organizational behavior on equitable

practices. This review of relevant research focuses on three qualitative and three

quantitative studies organized by type and then synthesized by theme. The analysis will

be used to make recommendations for further investigation within the organization.

Research Methods

To provide an analysis incorporating similar research styles used to conduct both

evaluations, qualitative and quantitative research was incorporated into this brief

literature review. This summary is organized by the technique employed. No single

approach or methodology appears to be universally suitable. Combining both measurable

and descriptive analyses can provide a comprehensive analysis of a research problem

(Creswell, 2015; Shekhar et al., 2019). The articles selected were chosen based on their

alignment with the topic of equitable practices. The quantitative research related to this

topic was sparse; for this reason, a data parameter of 6 years was used to identify relevant

quantitative studies, rather than 5 years for the qualitative studies reviewed in this

section.

Qualitative Studies. Whang (2019) investigated the practices in a junior high

school setting related to school led to social justice implementation. The researchers

focused on identifying implementation strategies for equitable practices, the risks

associated with staff involved in implementation, and tools to mitigate political risks to

staff implementing programs with fidelity. The study was a qualitative case analysis. The

research setting was a junior high school in Taipa, Taiwan. The school demographic was

mostly students with high socioeconomic status, with some families from farming areas.

A significant disparity in socioeconomic status existed between the two groups. The

interviews were conducted with 14 participants: administrative staff, team leaders, and field supervisors chosen based on specific criteria, such as identity, role in the organization, and gender (Whang, 2019).

The study results in Whang (2019) indicated an overall commitment to social justice, acknowledging the need for full participation and support of the school community to work to support those at a disadvantage. Results suggested that implementation of social justice policies taxes the social system within a school. Further, successful implementation relies heavily on leadership's moral commitment to practice and the ability to champion the cause while navigating the school setting's complex social environment. Limitations to Whang's study include sample size and location of study.

Heinze and Zdroik (2018) investigated the increasing practice of public schools charging fees for sports participation. In the study, an inequitable effect of decreased participation in sports was noted for low-income families as "pay-to-play" practices increased. The researchers focused on district attributes that lead to eliminating sports fees. The study was a qualitative case study analysis. The research was conducted in a rural Michigan, with participants selected using a central case study model. In this model, participants were selected from seven nearby districts with similar demographics to the focus district. The central sample district was chosen due to leadership implementation and subsequent elimination of the pay-to-play practice. Heinze and Zdroik also noted the district was chosen out of convenience, as it was near the college one researcher was attending, facilitating data collection. Surrounding districts with aligned demographics were included as tertiary samples. Interviews were conducted with 24 participants,

including 15 in the central district and 9 in tertiary districts for comparison. The participants were chosen based on participation in pay-to-play decision-making for their district (Heinze & Zdroik, 2018). The interview questions asked related to the origins of pay-to-play practices in their districts, participant involvement, and perception of how the program was received.

Although Heinze and Zdroik (2018) studied pay-to-play practices, the findings may have implications in other areas that influence decision-making in public education and equity, community collaboration, and leadership. The findings indicated that communities that value education and equitable practices, district leaders' knowledge of the community culture, and commitment to equity are less likely to make decisions institutionally, leaving decisions to be driven by the community. Leadership decision-making was influenced by an understanding of the community based on authentic engagement. Limitations to the Heinze and Zdroik study included a focus on a single case, which might not generalize if repeated, as noted in Creswell (2015).

Jacobs et al. (2014) analyzed practices that support school equity using teacher leaders. Teachers can influence the school community related to equity and high expectations within the building. The researchers examined a range of issues pertinent to supporting teacher leaders. Jacobs et al. noted the literature to support understanding of the roles of teacher leaders in social justice and equity is sparse. The purpose of their study was to examine the teacher leader role in facilitating equity education in learning communities. The evaluation of roles was completed using qualitative analysis, implementing action research (Jacobs et al., 2014). The participants in the study were selected from a cohort of teacher leadership candidates in Georgia. Of the 11 students in

the program, 5 choose to participate in the study.

The participants reported that conditions in the schools could impact a teacher leader's ability to implement ideas that support equity. Notably, they were fearful of making changes based on the school climate (Jacobs et al., 2014). Participants cited that leaders who were dismissive or seemingly unaware of equity issues within schools interfered with teachers' ability to move their training to practice as new teacher leaders. Conversely, school leaders who encouraged open communication and better climate overall were more receptive to addressing equity and were more responsive to changes to school practices (Jacobs et al., 2014). This research adds to a growing body of evidence that teacher voice is critical in planning and implementing practices that support equitable practices in the classroom.

Quantitative Studies. Goodman et al. (2011) investigated the graduation rates of students with mild disabilities in schools utilizing inclusive practices. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the correlation between inclusive practices and graduation rates for a student with disabilities. The study investigated graduation rates and compared them to inclusive practice increase. Inclusive practices were defined as increased time spent in the general education setting (Goodman et al., 2011). A quantitative design was used to examine the graduation data for 67,748 students with mild disabilities over 6 years. Mild disabilities were defined as students with the disability categories of specific learning disability, emotional behavioral disorder, mild intellectual disability, and other health impaired (Goodman et al., 2011).

The results indicated a 62% increase in the rate of inclusion, yet no statistically significant increase in graduation rates (Goodman et al., 2011). Findings showed that

inclusive practices were not being implemented with fidelity in the classroom (Goodman et al., 2011). Policymakers and leadership ensuring professional development for teachers and monitoring of equitable access to high-quality inclusive practices implemented with fidelity may increase outcomes for these students to graduate (Goodman et al., 2011). Limitations to this study were the variation in graduation rate calculations and the definition of inclusive practices from district to district. Further research was suggested to examine the relationship between graduation rates and the use of standardized testing as a factor that might influence dropout rates.

Recent research aligned with Goodman et al. (2011) has supported the correlation between student characteristics and graduation rates. Henson (2017) studied the influence of characteristics such as attendance, disability category, and socioeconomic status on graduation rates. The study was conducted in the largest city in Florida using analysis of existing school district data. A correlational design was used to analyze existing descriptive data on 692 students. Henson suggested data to identify specific traits associated with lower graduation rates could be used to support targeted interventions to increase graduation rates. Significant findings were a correlation between lower graduation rates and students with disabilities, restrictive teaching settings, and those categorized as low socioeconomic status.

Yavuz (2016) investigated the relationship between collaborative efforts between leaders and key participants and improved college access rates in school districts with high poverty rates. The researcher introduced a training program to increase college enrollment for students attending an urban school. The training program was an intensive intervention developed collaboratively among stakeholders to increase college access for

students. A comprehensive list of 19 targeted interventions concentrated on academic support, family support, and student access to direct counseling for application processing was developed to support student access to college. Accountability measures were put in place to tie personal performance goals to student success in the program.

The participants in the Yavuz (2016) study were in cohorts by graduating class. Ninety percent of the students received free or reduced-price lunch. The longitudinal quantitative research design utilized data collected over 4 years to evaluate the training program's effectiveness. The results of the study indicated over time that students who had participated in the program were 20% more likely to attend college. A linear relationship was found between level of parent education and college enrollment. A negative relationship was found between special education status and college enrollment. Home visits to discuss students' college and career goals had a statistically significant, positive impact on enrollment. School leadership played a significant role in the program's success and relied heavily on the collaborative and systematic effort of the community beyond the school building. A limitation to the Yavuz study is although results demonstrated that interventions, strong community commitment, and leaders could make a difference in college access and enrollment, the study did not examine college degree attainment.

Pertinent Theories

A common theme in the problem statements of each article was of equity of access or teacher ability to carry out practices to support equity. The theoretical frameworks referenced were social justice theory and culturally responsive teaching theory. Both theories are similar in that these ideologies align with the notion that

teaching supports the whole child (Gay, 2018; Wang, 2018). Culturally responsive teaching aligns with social justice theory but with a specific emphasis on the cultural components of equity and student voice. Social justice theory ties in closely with the mission and values of this school district and could be used as a basis for implementing changes to this organization, because the construct would be familiar to the staff within the organization.

Social justice theory is aligned with increasing equity and access in schools, providing professional development, and supporting school staff as they move toward authentic engagement in the work (Brubaker et al., 2010; Wang, 2018). Social justice in the education setting calls for equal access, opportunities, and practices designed for all learners. According to Wang (2018), social justice leaders engage and encourage student voice. Social justice theory addresses the root cause of inequities within a system (Valenzuela, 2017). Leaders focused on social justice seek out opportunities to improve practices leading to a more equitable education system for all students.

Culturally responsive teaching theory also emphasizes the importance of pedagogical practices based on equity. Increasing teacher cultural competence supports student achievement and promotes equitable practices within the building (Gay, 2018). Culturally responsive teaching theory differs from but is aligned with social justice theory in that both are focused on equitable access to education. Culturally responsive teaching supports students by integrating and embracing cultural differences while designing instruction to support a diverse learning community (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). Ideologically aligned with social justice, culturally responsive teaching supports the diversity found in a learning community.

Summary of Findings

Few studies have quantified the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving equitable practices in schools. As was evident in the literature, much of what is known about implementing social justice or equitable practice in schools is through case studies and qualitative data. Substantial qualitative evidence has shown the effects of inequitable practices on students, yet little comprehensive quantitative evidence has indicated how to measure systemic change in schools. In this brief review of the research, themes emerged related to equity. First, engaging communities authentically with stakeholder support and input is important to influence equity and outcomes for students (Yavuz, 2016). Second, school climate (Jacobs et al., 2014) and accountability measures (Yavuz, 2016) impact stakeholder commitment to implementing practices, leading to authentic communication and implementation (Yavuz, 2016). Third, specific student characteristics that negatively impact student success, such as socioeconomic status, attendance, and presence of a disability, should be considered in plans to remediate practices (Goodman et al., 2011; Henson, 2017). Recommended next steps include narrowing the research area to one focus to support positive changes to equitable practices in the organization.

Statement of the Problem

The current leadership and dedicated staff in the buildings are clearly committed to the mission and values of the organization. The disconnect exists between building staff and leadership staff in authentic communication and collaboration based on this shared mission of equity. This relationship results in fragmented implementation of equitable practices (Jacobs et al., 2014). Research has provided evidence of a negative correlation between referral rates to special education, behavioral referral, and graduation

rates (Elbaum et al., 2014). This information can be used to support strategic plans and practices as well as growth in pedagogical practices to facilitate a more fluid response within the organization. A common theme is creating a culture of collaboration and authentic communication between stakeholders to support implementation of inclusive practices (Jacobs et al., 2014; Yavuz, 2016), because implementation is a comprehensive process impacting schools and the communities they serve. According to Whang (2019), increased communication and a plan developed with stakeholder participation, including measurable outcomes, could mitigate weaknesses and support equity for students. Stakeholder communication and participation ensure an outside accountability measure leading to increased implementation fidelity.

Description of the Context of the Problem

Anecdotally, little evidence exists to suggest that this school district has metrics in place to track implementation of equitable practices. According to research (Martin et al., 2018; Ohlson et al., 2016), a strategic plan that is measurable with stakeholder commitment at all levels is paramount to success. No evidence exists within the district of a solid set of plans to align building-to-building measures to evaluate and respond to progress in the area of equitable outcomes. As indicated in the literature review, progress is more likely to occur when stakeholders at all levels are involved in the planning and implementation of practices. Jacobs et al. (2014) and Yavuz (2016) noted that when teachers and teacher leaders were engaged and empowered to make changes to pedagogical practices, both morale and implementation fidelity increased. When collaborative efforts include a diverse group of stakeholders, the needs of the whole child can be more effectively addressed because this process aligns the voice of the community

with the pedagogical practices in the classroom.

Scope and Significance of the Problem

In this organization, teachers are often reacting to campus directives without the background knowledge or relationships with leaders to support continuity within the district, a critical factor for student success. Evidence of the commitment to the district's mission combined with the implementation weaknesses seen in the SWOT, IFE, and EFE analyses point toward problems related to leadership communication and authentic collaboration with campus stakeholders. Further investigation by researchers (Goodman et al., 2011; Jacobs et al., 2014; Whang, 2019; Yavuz, 2016) on recent equity in schools outlined a predictable pattern of outcomes; increased stakeholder participation and strategic implementation of programs with measurable outcomes led to student success. It could be inferred that the team is ready, but leaders have not put the systems in place to support global implementation of equitable practices. If this problem is not addressed, the mission of the organization is out of alignment with practices, and students will continue to experience inequitable access to education in this district.

Rationale for Investigating the Problem

Equity and access were chosen to investigate because they represent both a weakness and a strength in this district. As evidenced in the mission statement, leadership is committed to strategic initiatives to support progress toward equity in schools (see Appendix A). These strategies are currently being carried out to support pockets of students with measurable benefits. Authentic engagement between leadership and building staff appears to be lacking yet is critical for implementation of equitable pedagogical practices (Jacobs et al., 2014; Yavuz 2016). The rationale for investigating

the problem of inequitable practices is that the district does not address the initiatives globally; there is no evidence of a comprehensive system of support, assessment, and collaboration within the schools or between schools in place at this time.

Problem Statement

The fragmented execution of equitable pedagogical practices within the school district is negatively impacting student learning.

Part 3: Research Possible Solutions

Introduction

The district's fragmented execution of equitable pedagogical practices is negatively impacting student learning. A literature search was conducted focused on the solutions that support the delivery and implementation of coherent pedagogical practices within school districts leading to academic achievement for all students. A systematic method used to address this problem will support student achievement by meeting the needs of all students as individuals in the classroom. Themes emerged related to teacher training, leadership structure, implementation fidelity, and quantitative measurement of both practice and outcomes. The following is a review of literature for each of the four solutions selected.

Possible Solutions

Possible Solution One: Teacher Training

Ultimately, implementation of practices that are equitable resulting in measurable outcomes for students rests with the teacher. To understand teacher acquisition of pedagogical skills that support equity in the classroom, it is necessary to examine key components frequently associated with teacher learning related to equity. These

conversations and learning can require courage but are necessary to engage students equitably in the classroom. Investigating the factors that contribute to teacher skill acquisition aligns with increased student learning (Riordan et al., 2019; Robinson, 2017). The following research has summarized challenges and successes related to teacher equity training and practice.

Robinson (2017) examined preservice music teachers' understanding of how social and cultural power structures interact with their pedagogical practices. To prepare teachers to implement equitable practices, Robinson put forth the idea that teachers must understand power structures that exist within societies; these power structures influence teachers' ability to objectively meet individual student needs. Often in schools, staff are sent to short equity trainings without follow-up or support in the classroom. Research has supported robust training that includes follow-up and support over time (Choi et al., 2017). Robinson acknowledged that providing teacher training to support and develop empathy in staff is complex. However, to utilize equitable practices in the classroom, teachers need to use strategies that provide time to contemplate the factors that influence student needs (Robinson, 2017).

As with any pedagogical practice in the classroom, ensuring equity is dependent on teacher skill and comfort with implementation. Psencik et al. (2019) investigated learning coach training and collaboration and the impact on equitable practices in the classroom. While ensuring that learning coaches are supported with robust professional development and professional learning communities to have a greater impact on student learning, teachers were also given a voice and autonomy to work together. Jacobs et al. (2014) noted similar findings indicating a relationship between teacher voice and

implementation fidelity. Using a district-wide approach to professional development and support for learning coaches, across all areas, resulted in increased confidence in coach's ability to adjust teaching plans leading to increased teacher learning. Teacher voice and autonomy within their professional learning community were also cited as factors contributing to moving the skills from training to classroom practice. Teachers also reported increased use of data-based decision-making, using a systematic approach to collection and analysis (Psencik et al., 2019).

High-quality equitable education allows students to experience a learning environment tailored to their needs (Hammond, 2015). Riordan et al. (2019) examined the relationship between teacher professional learning and equitable pedagogical practices. The researchers noted that often strategies used to teach professional development in the area of equity are not fully implemented. Professional development opportunities that allow for the integration of equity training and academic content are more likely to result in these practices being implemented in the classroom (Riordan et al., 2019). Further, this practice allows teachers time to investigate difficult social justice issues authentically with support of colleagues, leading to enhanced student learning, as evidenced by student interviews in Riordan et al. The relationship between teacher implementation and student ability to describe equitable practices in the classroom and student outcomes is dependent on teacher engagement and involvement in student learning.

To design coherent instruction aimed at increasing pedagogical skills related to equity, trainers must understand teacher perspectives. Samuels (2018) pointed to the minimal training and opportunity for planning and integration of equity into pedagogical

practices for preservice teachers as a factor contributing to lack of implementation in the classroom. Teachers in the Samuels study cited being uncomfortable with practices and conversations that support equity in the classroom. As evidenced in the research (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018; Riordan et al., 2019), practices in schools that address teacher need to further understand the relationship between equity and culturally responsive teaching improve learning for all students. In the Samuels study, allowing space for teachers to participate in design and delivery of trainings along with opportunities to safely reflect on personal bias with colleagues led to increased implementation in the classroom.

A consistent theme emerged in the research related to teacher practices, training model, and implementation of equitable practices. Researchers indicated (Riordan et al., 2019; Robinson, 2017; Samuels, 2018) when teachers are supported with professional development that integrates opportunities for authentic conversations and strategies to support equity in the classroom, implementation increases, as does student learning. Classroom teachers are more likely to implement strategies related to equitable practices when the learning environment is engaging and supports teacher learning needs and voice (Psencik et al., 2019; Riordan et al., 2019). Inadequate equity training in preservice teachers has an impact on classroom implementation unless remediated (Psencik et al., 2019; Robinson, 2017). Strategies that support continued professional growth include learning coaches focused on whole-child learning and equitable practices, high-quality professional learning communities, teacher voice, and teacher ownership of skill acquisition. The evidence suggests a need for continued investigation into specific strategies that would support both fidelity of implementation and measurable outcomes

for students over time.

Possible Solution Two: Leadership Structure

Leaders with a personal commitment to equity create a community of support. Leaders with extensive training and experience are best suited to globally implement and sustain equitable practices within the organization. Moving a school district toward this goal requires leadership adept at motivating and supporting changes at all levels of the organization (DeMatthews et al., 2017). Recruiting leaders who have demonstrated alignment with the core values of the organization is critical to authentic implementation of equitable practices at all levels and supports learning for all students (Penuel, 2019). In this analysis of the literature, potential solutions are analyzed from the perspective of leadership traits as well as structure.

DeMatthews et al. (2017) outlined the effect of personal experience on leadership practices. In a district recovering from scandal due to cheating to show test scores passing for English language learners, in order to gain funding, the new superintendent was tasked with reforming practices with the district. Using modeling and collaborative efforts to turn attitudes and practices around was effective and in the long term led to systemic change, more equitable practices, and higher student achievement (DeMatthews, et al., 2017). When approaching the complexities of equity, leaders must acknowledge that ideas that may move the group forward collectively also may threaten those necessary to carry out the values and mission of an organization (Tuters & Portelli, 2017). In this case, while personally effected by his own experience, to make systemic changes the new superintendent used his personal narrative to motivate and model for others, without preaching to those carrying out the mission. Notable changes occurred

when the superintendent was able to use his empathy based on personal experience to shape his practice.

Rosenquist et al. (2015) found evidence of success in a study on partnerships between researchers and leadership to improve scattered implementation of district-wide teaching initiatives. In their study, leaders worked alongside researchers to evaluate practices and implementation for teaching strategies with fidelity over multiple districts over multiple years. The findings of the 6-year study indicated that approaching implementation using research-based methods of inquiry addressed the achievement gap in math for the districts studied (Rosenquist et al., 2015). Having researchers on board to support and model critical analysis of teaching strategies and outcomes in other areas would likely lead to similar results. Henson (2017) noted identification of variables that may impact student learning and ultimately graduation rates can be done using large-scale data mining when the research questions are carefully crafted. Rosenquist et al. also noted although evidence supports using research-based instruction designed to mitigate the achievement gap in math, implementing such instruction effectively over a district or districts is challenging. The challenge is largely due to the scale of these instructional changes but also involves changes in staff practices. Adding research professionals working alongside the leadership team to support data analysis would lead to an unbiased assessment of practice because the research professionals do not have a vested interest in the results.

Welborn (2019) put forth the idea that when district leaders adopt a framework aimed at implementing well-researched equitable practices, they can mitigate some of the difficulties associated with comprehensive changes to practice. In this study, leaders

adopted a cultural proficiency framework. In aligning goals to support equitable

practices, leaders must acknowledge socioeconomic issues are not driven by ethnicity but

rather an overarching problem of access to education designed to support learning for all

students. Leaders engaged with the community are better equipped to implement policies

that reflect the needs of their stakeholders. Heinze and Zdroik (2018) reported leadership

engagement in the community resulted in the elimination of pay-to-play practices,

increasing access to school sports for students. The achievement gap is persistent in

school districts because leaders do not have the training to implement and sustain long-

term change to the system (Welborn, 2019). Leadership education and training that

results in empathy and authentic listening aligns with equitable practices. Leadership

training programs and leaders who show these skills should be sought out in districts

seeking to implement and sustain equitable practices to increase student achievement.

Leadership attributes and training can influence implementation of equitable

practices. In an Ontario, Canada study, Tuters and Portelli (2017) examined the current

state of equitable support of students in schools. Of note was the lack of support for

students with challenges related to socioeconomic status. Although the overall graduation

rate was high, at 85%, data sorted by race and socioeconomic status or immigration status

revealed a discrepancy of almost 40% (Tuters & Portelli, 2017). Tuters and Portelli stated

when leaders meet challenges associated with implementing policies that are not

supported or understood by colleagues and subordinates, the work can be arduous and

requires a highly specialized skill set to make and implement policy changes with

fidelity.

District leaders should ensure that the process of hiring for leadership positions

includes standards involving analysis of temperament, personal interest and experience in the work, and documentation of specialized training in the field as a prerequisite for pooling candidates. Leadership style and ability to engage with the community based on personal experience have been attributed to successful implementation of significant changes to district-wide equity policies (DeMatthews et al., 2017). Successful implementation of equitable practices requires a shift to the analysis of student data related to practice with accountability measures designed by highly skilled leadership (Rosenquist et al., 2015). Approaching leadership from a strength based mindset focused on leadership and teacher skill rather than student deficit may further support implementation of practices that are equitable because the focus is on improving practice.

Possible Solution Three: Implementation Fidelity

The problems associated with creating schools that deliver equitable supports to all learners are woven within the systems. Implementation fidelity is heavily dependent on high-quality instructional practices, leadership, and accountability to community stakeholders (Yavuz, 2016). Increasing implementation fidelity involves addressing multiple layers of practice with the school district (Fetterman et al., 2020). In this section, research is reviewed related to implementation of practices related to instruction, resulting in equitable practices. The research reviewed included effects using differentiation, curriculum modification, changes in the power structure, and teacher training and resources to carry out the Common Core State Standards in every classroom equitably.

Bannister (2016) argued that a purist's form of differentiation could have an unintended effect of perpetuating issues with equitable practice and be detrimental to

students already marginalized due to ethnicity. Banister cited that differentiation of instruction in classrooms based on socioeconomic status or ethnicity could lead to further perpetuation of issues related to equity in the classroom. Instead, instruction should be designed as a teacher collaborative to meet the needs of all students (Bannister, 2016). Providing instruction that assumes differing strengths rather than deficits supports all students, increases equity, and increases access to learning. This theory aligns with the concept of universal design of instruction and collaborative practices based on research and is less likely to single out individual students or groups (Capp, 2017). When addressing global implementation of equitable practices, moving toward solutions that include teacher collaboration and strengths-based learning with multiple entry points could support student achievement while providing a structure for teachers that is manageable, leading to fidelity across schools.

The overarching need to address cultural change in education at the national level has a tremendous influence on implementation of equitable practices at the district level. Morrell (2017) explained unaddressed issues at the national level are interfering with all aspects of implementing equitable practices in schools. Addressing policies that support access at a national level is necessary to fully support implementation of equitable practices. Principles based on the research that could support implementation fidelity are identifying ideas that promote equity practices and reproducing them and ensuring equitable distribution of resources (Morrell, 2017). Accountability measures that include stakeholder accountability have been shown to be effective methods to improve implementation fidelity (Yavuz, 2016). A strategy noted by Morrell that could be applied with success and improve implementation was changing the power structure so that

education leadership did not occur from the top down. Instead, stakeholders directly impacted by the results of practices that ensure equity and student outcomes designed measures and held leadership accountable for progress (Morrell, 2017).

According to Fetterman et al. (2020), implementation fidelity can be supported with modifications to existing research-based curricula and teacher supports. Using the system of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports, the researchers studied the persistent issue of disproportionality of discipline referrals in the Latino population in a school. After adapting the curriculum to address the needs of a mostly Spanish-speaking population both linguistically and culturally, the staff was trained to deliver instruction. Adapting curriculum to support a diverse population of learners from a strengths-based perspective is critical to the implementation of equitable practices in the classroom (Bannister, 2016). Fetterman et al. reported that with supports including student, family, and staff training as well as teacher observation and feedback, over time fidelity of implementation improved. Interventions implemented with fidelity are more effective and can be more easily adapted if needed (Fetterman et al., 2020). The analysis and adaptation of the curriculum based on student and family need and strengths supported better communication between students, families, and staff members as they worked together to modify the curriculum to support a more equitable practice.

Along with training on modifications of curriculum, as described by Fetterman et al. (2020), addressing inconsistencies in professional development related to the Common Core State Standards could increase equitable instruction and student achievement. In a study of kindergarten through Grade 5 teachers in seven rural school districts in the South, teachers reported insufficient instruction in the Common Core State Standards

(Barrett-Tatum & Smith, 2018). Addressing this concern to support equitable practices in schools would involve supporting teacher beliefs that all students can reach mastery and likely would increase student achievement. Barrett-Tatum and Smith (2018) suggested that standards to increase achievement and equity in schools and education reform must include practices that ensure teachers and school districts are prepared and supported with resources to implement the standards with fidelity.

The three factors that consistently influenced implementation fidelity reviewed in this section were staff support and accountability measures, curriculum supports, and allocation of resources to implement effectively. Equity can be influenced by how leaders and teachers are trained and supported (Bannister, 2016; Morrell, 2017). Ongoing teacher and leadership training could be combined with accountability measures designed by the stakeholders to increase fidelity and provide all staff opportunities to reflect on the effectiveness of their practice. Measures designed by stakeholders to guide implementation of equitable practices support the needs of the community through accountability (Morrell, 2017; Yavuz, 2016). Using a combination of high expectations for all students allowing for multiple entry points without modifications to the curriculum could support student achievement. While warning against modifications based on skill deficits that could decrease implementation of equitable practices, Bannister (2016) suggested a strengths-based approach, delivering instruction with multiple entry points, supporting all students.

Modification of curriculum to support equity was also investigated as it relates to behavioral education and equity. Modifications to the curriculum may honor cultures represented in a school; teacher training and support to deliver the modified curriculum

positively influence fidelity (Fetterman et al., 2020). Implementation fidelity increases in classrooms where curriculum aligns with students needs because teachers have the necessary tools to deliver the instruction. Resources are necessary to ensure practices are carried out equitably throughout school districts across the country. The failure of equitable implementation and delivery of high-quality instruction using the Common Core State Standards is a result of inadequate resources allocated to support the task of teacher training, ongoing fidelity measurement, and modifications to practice ensuring equity.

Barrett-Tatum and Smith (2018) and Fetterman et al. (2020) cited teacher training and ongoing support as critical when implementing large-scale changes related to delivering instruction equitably. Training in the classroom is more costly and individualized implementation can be challenging. Financial resources also must be distributed equitably based on need to support student achievement. Finding resources to support real organization change may be difficult, but without resources dedicated to ensure equity, the results of other supports to ensure fidelity would be negligible. This is due to the cost associated with ongoing teacher training and supports as well as the level of technical expertise necessary to support the process of differentiation of curriculum to support equity.

Possible Solution Four: Quantitative Measurement of Outcomes

High-stakes testing largely implemented to address the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 are in place to hold schools accountable for the quality of education delivered and to move toward equitable education for all (Park, 2018). School leaders, coaches, and teachers utilize standardized test scores and formative assessment as an integral part of

evaluating and improving student achievement. The research in this section was selected based on integration of data analysis and improvement of pedagogical practices that support equity rather than remediation of skills. Utilizing data to inform instruction related to equitable practices can support narrowing of the achievement gap (Henson, 2017; Park, 2018). The use of data-based decision-making requires staff and leadership training, a collaborative process, and well-planned intervention strategies to support equitable pedagogical practices leading to student achievement (Park, 2018). Stakeholders need training to utilize data effectively to support equity. The following summary of research highlights some strategies that may be used to reframe how schools utilize data and improve practice.

Park (2018) suggested that leaders can influence equitable outcomes through their approach to data analysis and communication with teachers. The researcher analyzed specific communication strategies used by leaders and facilitators while engaged in data discussions in an elementary school. Authentic communication and incorporating teacher voice in decision-making using data support implementation fidelity in schools (Jacobs et al., 2014). The uses of triangulating, reframing, and extending were examined for effectiveness in moving toward equitable analysis of data from a strengths-based perspective. Park noted that triangulation—the analysis of data gathered from different sources—allowed teachers to question data and learn how to use further inquiry. Reframing allowed teachers to use a strengths-based mindset to analyze the data, while extending or facilitating deeper inquiry through questioning. Such reframing led to changes in practice that supported equitable teaching (Park, 2018). Using conversations to ensure the evaluation of data allowed an opportunity for teacher coaching to shift the

pedagogy to a strengths rather than deficit perspective. Shifting teachers' thinking and evaluative practices to a strengths-based approach when using data would reduce the tendency to inaccurately relate characteristics such as ethnicity, linguistic background, or socioeconomic status, resulting in equitable practices.

Soria and Ginsberg (2016) examined a method to motivate and support teacher thinking using data to problem-solve equity issues. The researchers worked with a team to reflect on the discrepancy in attendance and grades data between English learners and native-English-speaking students. Native English speakers were more likely to have passing grades than their English learner peers with the same attendance. Since both sets were experiencing classroom instruction at the same rate, pedagogical practices to support equity were hypothesized to be deficient. Supporting conversations that allow for data-driven decisions to improve practice can involve highly charged feelings in teachers and facilitators. Soria and Ginsberg suggested a multistep approach to questioning and teaming that could improve pedagogical practices related to equity by relying on skilled facilitation and leadership supporting data analysis. Empowering teams to collaborate and problem-solve issues related to practice is highly effective (Morrell, 2017; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). Data analysis techniques that allow for individual contribution to group problem-solving can facilitate better communication and collaboration between team members, moving schools toward practices that support the mission.

Looking at data from a deficit-oriented perspective inadvertently perpetuates the achievement gap (Garner et al., 2017; Park, 2018). Garner et al. (2017) posited that researchers must focus on the historical context of the equitable practices and achievement as a part of data analysis. School teams under pressure to produce test

results to address the achievement gap are more likely to teach to the test rather than address systemic inequities within the organization (Garner et al., 2017). The punitive nature of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 creates stress in teachers and leaders in some of the most challenging settings, due to lack of funding and inequitable conditions in and outside the school (Garner et al., 2017). Data analysis that is focused on improvement of practice allows teachers to develop strategies and skills with leadership support to mitigate discrepancies caused by deficient pedagogy rather than strategies aligned with remediation that do not address equity (Garner et al., 2017).

Strong evidence supports addressing equity through data analysis, but this approach should involve a plan based on coaching, collaboration, and practice improvement rather than remediation of student skills. Utilization of communication strategies and teaming results in a teacher's ability to improve practice and to engage in difficult conversations related to their own practice and equity (Morrell, 2017; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). Ensuring that leadership and coaches are adept at supporting teachers as they unpack data enables a shift to a strengths-based approach toward differentiated instruction. Data analysis using both quantitative and qualitative data can be a useful source of feedback on current pedagogical practices and support implementation of practices leading to systematic changes within a school district.

Part 4: Select a Solution

Overview of Four Potential Solutions

In the following analysis, each potential solution will be addressed in terms of pros and cons as well as barriers for each solution. Finally, a solution based on the current conditions in the district will be recommended. Teacher training, leadership structure,

implementation fidelity, and quantitative measurement of outcomes were selected as potential areas of focus. These solutions were chosen using SWOT, IFE, and EFE analyses described earlier based on their overall impact to the organization and feasibility of implementation (see Tables 1, 2, and 3). Barriers that significantly impact the recommendation at this time are the COVID-19 crisis resulting in 100% online learning and an unexpected $12 million financial deficit in the district based on funding source changes. Along with these formidable hurdles, barriers unrelated to the crisis but impacting implementation of each solution are discussed in detail.

Pros and Cons of Solutions

The following section is a discussion of pros and cons of each solution using a synthesis of research related to each potential solution. According to Creswell (2015), synthesis of research in this way supports the narrowing of focus toward a solution. This synthesis also includes a discussion of each of the pros and cons within the context of the organization based on the SWOT, IFE, and EFE analyses. Pros were determined by evaluating the potential impact to the organization and the previously identified strengths that could support implementation based on the research. Cons were determined by evaluating research-based practices for implementation and problems within the organization that may interfere with implementation based on the SWOT analysis.

Solution One: Teacher Training

Pros. Addressing teacher training to increase equity and student outcomes could impact practice in the classroom. As evidenced in the research (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2017; Ingvarson & Rowley, 2017), student learning is impacted by the quality of teaching skills and training; any solution chosen ultimately will be impacted by staff training.

Introducing training with an experiential component would support implementation in the classroom and improve the overall effectiveness of teaching in the district. Using a training format that includes formal training, classroom application, and support with an opportunity for teachers to provide feedback is effective (Riordan et al., 2019). Aligning with this model would support improvements in this district if implemented in all schools with fidelity. As staff training opportunities are listed as a strength (see Table 1), the district already has the structures in place to implement globally. Capitalizing on this strength through training to specifically address equity and access also would support efficient use of existing structures within the district.

      Cons. The disadvantages to approaching the problem through teacher training involve deficits in the staff development structures within the organization. To be effective, trainings should include authentic engagement between staff and leaders as they are gaining new skills (Psencik et al., 2019; Robinson, 2017). The use of comprehensive training and follow-up with time to reflect on practice has been shown effective when engaging in difficult problems of practice (Riordan et al., 2019). Frequently, training is ineffective because follow-up to support application in the classroom is not provided, as such follow-up is more costly and involves a significant amount of planning (Riordan et al., 2019; Robinson, 2017; Samuels, 2018). Currently, district leaders and coaching staff do not have the capacity based on skills and financial supports to implement trainings using these strategies.

Solution Two: Leadership Structure

      Pros. The advantages to addressing leadership structure include the potential to support sustained improvement to deficiencies within the organization by example.

DeMatthews et al. (2017) stated that global change was more likely to occur when leadership was aligned personally with the mission of the organization. Leaders in the district have demonstrated a strong commitment to the mission centered on equitable practices, noted as a strength in the SWOT analysis. Focusing on leadership is fundamental to implementing sustainable changes in any organization (Welborn, 2019). As administrative leaders are already focused on equitable practices, implementing global changes may be possible. Another key factor in the implementation of practices that support equity is stakeholder voice facilitated by leadership (Penuel, 2019; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). Shoring up leadership practices related to both the district community and the local community would support opportunities listed in as a weakness in the IFE analysis (see Table 3) by addressing the need for structures and plans that strengthen management and teacher partnerships as well as outside or community partnerships.

Cons. The disadvantages to addressing leadership structures are the current personnel beyond the superintendent in this organization. District and school leaders have focused on achievement and less on equitable practices. Equitable practices support learners as individuals; this evidence-based approach to learning, starting with district leadership, produces better academic outcomes for all students (DeMatthews et al., 2017; Welborn, 2019). Neighboring districts recently have recruited and retained equity chiefs, but the study organization has not adopted this role. As noted in the research, long-term sustainable results will rest on district leaders recruiting and retaining leaders with an understanding of the inequities that exist in schools and knowledge of the community they serve (Yavuz, 2016). This must be addressed long term, but other solutions may produce results more rapidly and build momentum prior to taking on the challenges

associated with mindset and staffing that may be necessary.

Solution Three: Implementation Fidelity

      Pros. The advantages to addressing equity and student outcomes through practices that support implementation fidelity include increasing equitable practices and achievement as a bottom-up approach. Addressing implementation fidelity supports teacher confidence and efficacy, also a contributing factor to better outcomes for students (Fetterman et al., 2020). Supporting implementation fidelity and teacher confidence leads to collaborative practices and accountability between colleagues (Jacobs et al., 2014; Yavuz, 2016). In this district, the professional learning communities' goals and directives vary building to building. Practices that improve implementation, such as progress monitoring, could improve outcomes for all students. As seen in Jacobs et al. (2014), a focused effort to increase fidelity using teacher-led accountability measures to ensure implementation of equitable practices can lead to increased collaboration between teachers.

      Cons. The disadvantages to attempting to address implementation fidelity as a stand-alone intervention relates to the dependence on leadership and teacher training practices. In this district, much of the training, although cited as a strength in terms of availability in the SWOT analysis, does not typically include in-classroom supports. Research is clear regarding implementation fidelity as it relates to equity, significant teacher training, and support in the classroom (Fetterman et al., 2020; Shoulders & Krei, 2015; Tuters & Portelli, 2017). Implementing changes in this district would be difficult without first addressing professional development planning and teacher training. Frequently, teachers are given tools to improve practices in trainings and then are sent

back to the classroom to apply the tools without support. Training without implementation can occur for a variety of reasons: (a) lack of confidence and experience with differentiation as it relates to equity, (b) insufficient time, and (c) teacher burnout. Training alone may not lead to global change for the district because this organization lacks structures to support and monitor teachers as they apply new strategies in the classroom.

Solution Four: Quantitative Measurement of Outcome

Pros. Using quantitative measurement of outcomes to improve equitable practices could be done at a relatively low cost and would support leadership development and teacher practices if done collaboratively. The use of data allows for trend analysis of large volumes of student information, allowing trends to be identified and addressed more efficiently. Quantitative data analysis has been shown to be an effective method for addressing weaknesses related to the achievement gap (Rosenquist et al., 2015). In this district, professional learning communities vary from building to building, but a pilot program with five elementary schools is currently involved implementing intensive coaching and data-based decision-making with targeted interventions to support student learning. Garner et al. (2017) described addressing implementation of pedagogical practices that support equity by analysis of student achievement data.

Cons. The disadvantages to utilizing quantitative measurement of outcomes are they are dependent on highly skilled staff to ensure data mining is not biased and is relevant. Currently, the data analysis in the district is centered on student achievement as a measure of equitable practice, utilizing standardized testing and formative assessments after each academic unit. In terms of implementing equitable practices, this method

designed to address achievement gaps does not address equable practices in classrooms

(Garner et al., 2017), and in some cases may increase the divide through a focus on

achievement rather than systemic changes related to equitable practices. The district is

not currently engaged in practices that would support researched methods for addressing

equitable practices in the classroom, such as including equity conversations while

evaluating student achievement data (Morrell, 2017; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016) or

including community voice (Morrell, 2017; Yavuz, 2016). Another significant hurdle in

moving away from addressing the gap using standardized assessment is tremendous

pressure on districts across the country to produce results using test scores based on the

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2002) and, to a lesser degree, the Every Student

Succeeds Act (2015).

Discussion of Barriers

Currently, barriers exist to some extent for any of the proposed solutions. To

select a solution that will have the greatest impact on this organization at this time,

barriers were analyzed to determine feasibility of implementation of each solution. This

school district is currently addressing the issues related to 100% remote learning due to

COVID-19 and a $12 million budget deficit for the 2020–2021 school year due to

funding source issues based on changing state laws. Along with these barriers, addressing

equitable practices is difficult because it can lead to uncomfortable conversations, making

global implementation a formidable task for even the most highly skilled leadership

(Tuters & Portelli, 2017). A weakness in this organization is the relationship between

district midlevel management staff or cabinet members and teaching staff. This

disconnect has a predictable outcome, in that teachers are less likely to implement

strategies when they are not engaged with leadership in problem solving pedagogical practices (Psencik et al., 2019; Riordan et al., 2019). The discussion that follows examines potential barriers for each specific solution with a recommendation of one solution in an effort to address the problem of implementing equitable practices uniformly throughout the district under the current conditions.

Solution One: Teacher Training

The barriers that could impact teacher training are financial and structural. Although addressing existing structural issues is feasible, such as increased staff training related to professional learning communities and equity training, this solution requires funding unavailable to the district at this time. Equity training is more effective when in-class supports are included to ensure implementation (Riordan et al., 2019). Addressing this barrier could include increased collaborative time with cabinet leadership or appointees to engage with the professional learning community. Using existing personnel to follow-up with classroom supports could decrease the financial impact. Removing this barrier has been linked to improved practices within schools (Psencik et al., 2019). The current leadership structure and culture do not support global implementation of equity training and supports building to building. To decrease fragmentation, this barrier would need to be addressed at the superintendent level, requiring significant organizational changes such as increased teacher voice, examination of leadership hiring practices, and analysis of current professional development opportunities and outcomes. All of these practices could mitigate expenditures, while supporting increased application of equitable practices and student achievement.

Solution Two: Leadership Structure

Currently, leaders are challenged to address two significant threats to the district, the COVID-19 crisis and the unexpected $12 million financial budget loss. As the district is in a crisis, suggesting changes to the structure is not feasible. Looking ahead, the current pool of leadership may need to increase knowledge related to implementation of programs to address equitable practices district wide rather than in pockets. Organizational leadership plays a pivotal role in the difficult task of implementing equitable practices throughout a district (Penuel, 2019; Tuters & Portelli, 2017). Doing this during a pandemic with a budget deficit seems insurmountable, and even in more typical times would require a highly skilled group or an appointed council member to unite the district in the task of implementing global changes in practice. In the future, these barriers could be addressed by appointing an equity director with the skills to develop and implement a plan to support a leadership structure aligned with equity improvements.

Solution Three: Implementation Fidelity

Barriers to increasing implementation fidelity without first addressing training and leadership weaknesses include lack of staff readiness or willingness to implement changes without background knowledge or training. Overcoming this barrier would be difficult without first implementing structural changes to the organization in staff training, leadership structure, and systematic analysis using data to inform practice. The relationship between leadership staff and building staff can increase or decrease the likelihood of implementation fidelity (Goodman et al., 2011; Jacobs et al., 2014). As noted earlier, the district is under significant pressure to solve two converging crises and

does not have the capacity at this time to implement programs to sufficiently support analysis of implementation fidelity that would address the problem of fragmented practices building to building. Addressing leadership structural issues and teacher training prior to analysis of fidelity and problem solving is recommended.

Solution Four: Quantitative Measurement of Outcomes

Addressing the use of quantitative analysis of data as a potential solution would be challenging with the current skill set in midlevel management. This work is significantly different from analysis of student performance data. Leaders responsible for planning and implementing a global change of practice would need to address both methods used to perform data analysis and equitable practices. Reframing the way data are analyzed around equity requires analysis of practice rather than analysis of standardized testing results (Garner et al., 2017). One problem noted in the research is more work needs to be done defining which variables to examine to produce results that are meaningful to the user (Henson, 2017). With the current staffing structure and personnel, shifting the culture of the organization may be difficult. Many highly skilled staff members in the district could be engaged to support a plan to collect and review data related to problems of practice. However, as noted in the SWOT analysis, there is a disconnect between midlevel management or cabinet members and the school teaching community. Leadership personnel rarely utilize the knowledge within the organization that could support this endeavor without additional cost.

Summary of Rationale for Selected Solution

The use of quantitative supports to produce outcomes was selected due to budget constraints and the need to have a method to address the problem globally. Compared to

the other solutions, utilizing data and targeted interventions could provide a foundation

for further improvements to the implementation of equitable practices globally at a

relatively low cost. This approach supports research-based recommendations to address

equity globally (Garner et al., 2017; Rosenquist et al., 2015). Garner et al. (2017)

suggested utilizing data focused on pedagogy rather than student achievement supports

equity by identifying weakness in pedagogy for remediation. Analyzing data collected at

the district level could support strategies to address pedagogical gaps in the district

related to equity, mitigate intervention costs, and decrease fragmentation.

<div align="center">**Part 5: Strategies to Accomplish the Selected Solution**</div>

Strategy One: Building-Based Data Intervention Teams

The utilization of building data teams can be an effective method to improve

teacher pedagogical practices and equity in the classroom (Park, 2018). This strategy

could increase teacher skills within the organization by facilitating collaborative

relationships focused on data collection, planning, and quantifiable outcomes

(Schildkamp, 2019). Park (2018) cited professional learning communities with guided

conversations related to data collection and equitable outcomes for students as an

effective method for improving outcomes for students. These conversations can at times

be uncomfortable because they require stakeholders to work together analyzing problems

of practice. I have witnessed communication breakdown based on questions related to

practice and equity because staff members felt threatened or accused rather than

supported. Unless leaders are highly skilled at conflict resolution, these negative

interactions can do permanent damage to the collaborative sentiment within a building.

Strategies for designing, implementing, and measuring equitable practices in buildings

are most effective when staff involved in the process have a shared vision (Jacobs et al., 2014; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). A strategy focused on data teams with the support of highly skilled facilitators trained to guide equity conversations and data analysis could mitigate the fragmented implementation of equitable practices across the district.

Synthesis of Literature Related to the Strategy

To decrease fragmented implementation of equitable practices within the district, a unilateral approach is recommended. Schildkamp (2019) suggested increasing teacher and leadership skills including data collection and interpretation, along with action plans to effectively implement practices. Similarly, Soria and Ginsberg (2016) emphasized the importance of teaching staff and leadership engaging in professional conversations regarding data collection and analysis. A strategy focused on teams within each building utilizing data-based decision-making could address the problem of fragmented implementation. Frequently, data are collected to examine achievement using a student deficit approach (Garner et al., 2017; Schildkamp, 2019). The use of a whole-child strengths-based approach to instructional design, implementation, and measurement facilitates equity because this method is based on student need.

Evaluation of teachers' current practices and competency related to equity and quality can be uncomfortable because such evaluation puts pressure on teachers to address potential areas of practice that need remediation. Open dialogue, accountability measures, and questioning of current pedagogical practices are critical when problem solving equity issues within schools (Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). The effectiveness of multidisciplinary teams within a building is dependent on building climate (Jacobs et al., 2014). The building climates in this school district vary widely from building to building,

which may account for some of the fragmentation in implementation. The team method is effective when climate is collaborative and supportive (Jacobs et al., 2014). Data related to building-to-building variances in climate could be a good starting point for any recommended changes in process. Barriers to open conversations, such as a top-down leadership style in the district, fearful building climate, or staff focused on process improvement and accountability, should be considered prior to implementing this strategy. These variances in practices within the district, combined with the current top-down leadership style in this district, could interfere with implementation of solutions if climate across the district related to midlevel management or cabinet members is not addressed.

Strategy Two: Centralized Data-Intervention Teams

The use of data mining at the district level and intervention teams may decrease fragmented implementation of practices in schools. According to Schildkamp (2019), the method of staff training and support to increase data competency skills, data mining, and accountably measures at the district level is likely to improve cohesive implementation of equitable practices in schools. Henson (2017) described a data-based early warning system put into place to alert leadership of potential areas of concern related to inclusion based on predetermined criteria. The use of partnerships between researchers and schools supports equity when the focus is on problems of practice rather than student deficit (Rosenquist et al., 2015). A similar approach could be used in this district to identify schools with the deficits related to equity in student learning. Such deficits could be addressed by defining school characteristics associated with successful implementation and setting up systems to track and measure progress.

Synthesis of Literature Related to the Strategy

The use of a centralized data collection system paired with district-level intervention teams trained to implement interventions could support remediation of skills within specific schools. According to Datnow and Park (2018), the use of large-scale systems to address equity though accountability alone does not address the conditions that lead to inequitable practices. However, a strategy that supports implementation procedures aligned across the district and training with ongoing support for data teams at the building level could lead to a more cohesive outcome. The use of research-based partnerships does support equity when focused on problems of practice rather than student deficit (Garner et al., 2017; Rosenquist et al., 2015). Garner et al. (2017) suggested utilizing student achievement data as a starting point to mitigating pedagogical deficits. This method also ensures that the interventions are focused on pedagogy rather than student deficit. In this district, the process is similar, with the focus on student remediation rather than pedagogical practices in many schools. The fragmented implementation of practices that are equitable and produce results may be overlooked if the overall student achievement in the building is within an acceptable range, leading to a disparity that could be addressed with remediation of pedagogical practices.

Summary

The two strategies described require a paradigm shift from data analysis based on student deficit to analysis based on pedagogical practices. Both strategies would utilize highly trained data teams focused on remediation and data analysis. Researchers have suggested that a change of practice is associated with a collaborative strengths-based approach (Henson, 2017; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). The use of outside unfamiliar

teams may increase anxiety in teachers focused on remediating pedagogical practices, creating barriers to implementation (Jacobs et al., 2014; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). Conversely, the use of school-based teams may present fewer barriers to authentic conversations and practices due to existing relationships within the building.

<div align="center">**Part 6: Evaluation of the Strategies**</div>

Quantitative Strategic Plan Matrix (QSPM)

The QSPM is a tool used to support organizational strategic planning by ranking of attractiveness of potential solutions to problems within an organization. In this research-based method, the data collected during a SWOT analysis are used to make decisions related to suggested solution effectiveness (David et al., 2017). The comparative analysis is effective because solutions are evaluated relative to peripheral factors influencing organizational performance (Rezazadeh et al., 2017). During the analysis, the researcher is also able to eliminate factors that do not need to be addressed when formulating an action plan. Utilizing the QPSM tool to compare two or more solutions based on relative attractiveness also supports a more objective approach to organizational decision-making because it utilizes a quantitative comparison.

The QSPM is completed by using the factors identified in the SWOT analysis. According to David et al. (2017), completing the QPSM involves six steps: (a) listing external and internal factors, (b) assigning weights to each factor, (c) defining strategies to compare, (d) calculating the attractiveness score, (e) calculating a total attractiveness score (TAS), and (f) calculating the sum of each TAS to produce a sum total attractiveness score (STAS). A comparative analysis was completed using a Likert scale of 0–4: 0 = *not relevant*, 1 = *least attractive*, 2 = *possibly attractive*, 3 = *reasonably*

attractive, and 4 = *highly attractive*. This score is then multiplied by the weighted value of each factor, resulting in a TAS for each factor. This process is followed for each of the proposed solutions resulting in a final score for each solution; these scores are added for the STAS. Rezazadeh et al. (2017) noted this method allows for numerical values assigned to each strategy to be used in decision-making.

In this study, two solutions were compared using the QSPM based on the problem of fragmented implementation of pedagogical practices within the school district leading in equitable outcomes for students. The first proposed solution involves implementing and monitoring at the building level though collaborative practices. This method could result in a positive school climate and has been associated with positive student outcomes (Park, 2018; Schildkamp, 2019). Centralized data collection and remediation have been effective in schools where staff use data to support pedagogical practice and decision-making (Garner et al., 2017; Henson, 2017). The second proposed solution involves a district team charged with monitoring data and implementing remediation plans based on this quantitative information. In the following section, the QSPM evaluation for this project is described with a rationale for both the scoring and selection of a solution based on the STAS.

QSPM Evaluation of IFE

An evaluation was conducted on internal factors within the organization. The 10 strengths and 10 weakness within the organization were given a weight and then scored based on relative attractiveness, resulting in an individual TAS for each strength and weakness (see Table 4). Due to the broad nature of equitable practices in schools, all factors could have some impact or rate as attractive.

Table 4

Quantitative Strategic Plan Matrix Scoring of Possible Solutions to Internal Factor Evaluation

Items	Weight	Building-level data-intervention teams		Centralized data-intervention teams	
		AS	TAS	AS	TAS
Strengths					
Core values	0.10	4	0.40	4	0.40
Executive leadership	0.07	1	0.07	3	0.21
Staff commitment to core values	0.07	2	0.14	2	0.14
Staff diversity	0.05	0	0.00	0	0.00
Mission	0.05	2	0.10	2	0.10
Availability of curriculum	0.03	3	0.09	3	0.09
Teacher professional development opportunities	0.03	3	0.09	1	0.03
Staff salaries	0.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
Union strength	0.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
Diverse learning community	0.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
Weaknesses					
Afterschool programs & supports	0.07	0	0.00	0	0.00
Implementation strategy for equitable practices	0.07	2	0.14	4	0.28
Authentic family engagement	0.07	3	0.21	1	0.07
Support for English language learners at home	0.10	1	0.10	4	0.40
Technology	0.03	1	0.03	3	0.09
Teacher workload	0.06	0	0.00	0	0.00
No vision statement	0.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
Teacher burnout	0.05	0	0.00	0	0.00
Relationship between teachers & midlevel management	0.02	1	0.02	3	0.06
Facilities	0.01	0	0.00	0	0.00
Totals			1.39		1.87

Note. AS = attractiveness score. TAS = total attractiveness score.

Some factors would have a negligible or no effect on the outcomes; these factors were scored at zero (David et al., 2017; Rezazadeh et al., 2017). Factors scored at zero were staff diversity, staff salaries, union strength, diverse learning community,

afterschool programs and supports, teacher workload, no vision statement, teacher burnout, and facilities. Scores of zero were not included in the discussion of factors that influence the plan.

Discussion of Internal Factors That Influence the Plan

Eleven internal factors were identified as attractive based on each of the solutions. Starting with the solution of using a building-based data-intervention team, items were scored between 1 and 4 in attractiveness. As shown in Table 4, lower attractiveness scores of 1 or 2 were given for the building-based solution for executive leadership, staff commitment to core values, mission, implementation of strategy for equable practices, supports for English language learners, technology, and the relationship between teachers and midlevel management. Lower scores were given in this area because these strategies are dependent on centralized leadership. Implementation of equitable practices is dependent on leadership (Penuel, 2019; Tuters & Portelli, 2017). Higher attractiveness scores of 3 and 4 were given for core values, availability of curriculum, teacher professional development opportunities, and authentic family engagement. Higher scores were given in these areas because each could be implemented utilizing building-based data-intervention teams.

Attractiveness scores were then assigned to the solution using a centralized data-intervention system. Scores of 1 and 2 were given to staff commitment to core values, mission, teacher professional development opportunities, and authentic family engagement because these areas require collaboration and cooperation of teachers to implement, as noted in Table 4. Currently, the relationship between teachers and midlevel management is strained. This relationship can result in difficulty implementing practices

with fidelity (Goodman et al., 2011; Jacobs et al., 2014). Scores of 3 and 4 were given to

core values, executive leadership, availability of curriculum, implementation strategy for

equitable practices, support for English language learners at home, and relationship

between teachers and midlevel management because the centralized system can control

both capitalizing on existing strengths and addressing weaknesses related to these areas.

QSPM Evaluation of EFE

An evaluation was conducted on external factors within the organization. The 10

opportunities and 10 threats to the organization were given a weight and then scored

based on relative attractiveness resulting in an individual TAS for each strength and

weakness (see Table 4). As with the IFE analysis, some areas were given a zero score as

the impact on the problem was not relevant using either solution (David et al., 2017;

Rezazadeh et al., 2017). The external factors given a score of zero were support for

families experiencing financial hardship, decreasing family engagement in schools,

teacher shortage, and transportation. As the problem and solution statement are related to

remediation of practice, these factors were given a zero score and were not included in

the discussion of factors that influence the plan, in the following section.

Discussion of Factors That Influence the Plan

Eleven external factors were identified as attractive based on each of the solutions

(see Table 5). Lower attractiveness scores of 1 or 2 were given for the building-based

solution for language and translation services, staff equity training, community

partnerships, student peer-tutoring programs, early childhood education community

partnerships, assessment, availability of technology in homes, financial deficit, teacher

burnout, outdated curriculum, and changing demographics because of their dependence

on district leadership. Lower scores were given in this area because these strategies are

dependent on a cohesive plan at the district level.

Table 5

Quantitative Strategic Plan Matrix Scoring of Possible Solutions to External Factor Evaluation

Items	Weight	Building-level data-intervention teams		Centralized data-intervention teams	
		AS	TAS	AS	TAS
Opportunities					
Increase inclusive practices	0.07	4	0.28	4	0.28
Language & translation services	0.07	1	0.07	3	0.21
Support for families experiencing financial hardship	0.07	0	0.00	0	0.00
Family engagement in student learning/ partnerships	0.07	4	0.28	1	0.07
Staff equity training	0.05	1	0.05	3	0.15
Technology needs for students & families	0.05	3	0.15	4	0.20
Community partnerships	0.04	1	0.04	4	0.16
Student peer-tutoring program	0.03	2	0.06	3	0.09
Early childhood education community partnerships	0.03	1	0.03	3	0.09
Assessment	0.02	2	0.04	4	0.08
Threats					
Support for non-English-speaking families	0.07	3	0.21	3	0.21
Inequitable practices	0.07	4	0.28	4	0.28
Decreasing family engagement in schools	0.07	0	0.00	0	0.00
Availability of technology in homes	0.07	2	0.14	4	0.28
Financial deficit	0.05	1	0.05	3	0.15
Teacher burnout	0.05	1	0.05	4	0.20
Outdated curriculum	0.03	1	0.03	2	0.06
Teacher shortage	0.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
Transportation	0.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
Changing demographics	0.03	2	0.06	4	0.12
Totals			1.82		2.63

Note. AS = attractiveness score. TAS = total attractiveness score.

Planning and implementation are also dependent on collaborative practices (Jacobs et al., 2014), which are fragmented building to building. Implementation of equitable practices is also dependent on leadership (Wang, 2018).

Higher attractiveness scores of 3 or 4 utilizing building-based solutions were given for increase of inclusive practices, family engagement in student learning/partnerships, technology need of students and families, support for non-English-speaking families, and inequitable practices because these areas could be influenced by or influence building-based interventions. Higher scores were given in this area because these strategies are dependent on a cohesive plan, which is easier to accomplish in a stand-alone setting.

Attractiveness scores were then assigned to the solution using a centralized data-intervention system. Lower attractiveness scores of 1 or 2 were given utilizing a centralized intervention for family engagement in student learning/partnerships and outdated curriculum. Higher attractiveness scores of 3 or 4 were given to increase inclusive practices, language and translation services, staff equity training, technology needs for students and families, community partnerships, student peer-tutoring program, early childhood education community partnerships, assessment, support non-English speaking families, inequitable practices, availability of technology in homes, financial deficit, teacher burnout, and changing demographics because these factors could be influenced to support solutions to the problem. Collaboration and cooperation between leadership and stakeholders have a significant impact on change within and organization (Jacobs et al., 2014; Yavuz, 2016). This is clearly illustrated by the number of attractive options available utilizing a centralized approach to this solution.

First Alternative Attractiveness Score and Benefit for the Organization

The strategy of utilization of a building-based data-intervention team, the first

alternative evaluated, received an STAS of $1.39 + 1.82 = 3.21$. Utilizing building teams

would be an effective strategy to shore up processes within buildings. This plan could be

effective if leadership and staffing levels were consistent. A mission statement can have a

significant impact on the organization (Alegre et al., 2018; McClees, 2016). Since the

district mission and value statement align with equitable practices, the teams may have

the tools in place or partially in place to improve processes that exist building to building.

Utilizing building teams already engaged in collaborative practices in a positive school

climate is highly effective (Jacobs et al., 2014; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). For this method

to address the problem of global implementation, first understanding building climate

should be addressed, as in this district climate varies from building to building.

Second Alternative Attractiveness Score and Benefit for the Organization

The second strategy of utilization of centralized data-intervention team received

an STAS score of $1.87 + 2.63 = 4.50$. Starting by addressing the problem globally ensures

that systems are in place from the top down to sustain long-term change building to

building. A notable discrepancy was observed between the number of attractive options

with values of 3 or 4 based on this solution versus the total number of values of 3 or 4

using a building-based approach. Centralized systems are not influenced by teacher or

leadership turnover, which can lead to continuity issues because new staff may not have

all the information or training to sustain practices (Garner et al., 2017). If processes are

monitored from a centralized location, building-level staff changes that result in process

failures can be readily addressed by the centralized team because data collection,

progress monitoring, and fidelity checks would occur at the district level (Henson, 2017).

This centralized monitoring of progress and centralized support teams would minimize the impact of staff turnover because the process would not rely on building data or building teams to support remediation. Accountability issues are mitigated because teachers and building leaders would no longer be responsible for the collection of progress-monitoring data (Park, 2018). This process ensures that the staff are focused on fidelity and equitable practices and not involved in the collection of data used to evaluate program effectiveness (Yavuz, 2016). Garner et al. (2017) suggested that this step has been shown to eliminate the problem of data collection fidelity that sometimes occurs when those being held accountable for the data are also collecting the data.

Summary of Most Important Strategy

A centralized data-intervention team based on data collected and monitored globally with strategic interventions where needed is suggested to address the problem of fragmented implementation of pedagogical practice in this district. This team also demonstrates to stakeholders intentional effort to work collaboratively to support global implementation of equitable pedagogical practices. Centralized teams may lead to a more cohesive implementation of the overall mission while supporting a positive relationship between management in the central office and individual building staff. This relationship is currently rated as a weakness for this organization and is critical for implementation of organizational change (Goodman et al., 2011; Jacobs et al., 2014). This centralized approach would ensure that the mission and values of the organization are clearly communicated and allow for district leaders to stay connected and engaged authentically with building stakeholders.

Part 7: Development of an Action Plan

Action Steps

The purpose of creating an action plan is to provide a roadmap to address the problem of fragmented implementation of equitable practices in this school district. In the following section, each step of the plan will be described sequentially. According to Datnow and Park (2018), centralized systems to address equity using accountability measures alone are ineffective because these practices do not remediate pedagogy systematically. The action plan will utilize data-driven decision-making and collaborative remediation of skill from a strengths-based perspective. This collaborative practice supports staff investment in the process leading to more favorable outcomes for students. Guided by research (Garner et al., 2017; Schildkamp, 2019), this action plan will target the goal areas of assembling a team, training the team, collecting data, and implementing and assessing interventions (see Table 6).

The ability for leaders to empathize with the problems inequitable practices create is critical, and thus selection of staff to implement this plan should include the appointment of an equity chief in this school district. This position should work collaboratively with school and community stakeholders to remediate practices within the district to implement equitable practices globally (Cruze & López, 2020). Leadership characteristics have been demonstrated to have a significant influence on implementation of equitable practices in schools (Wang, 2018). Leaders who can empathize with both their staff and students are able to address concerns authentically and connect with staff and the community. Once this position is hired, the chief will drive the implementation of the plan beginning with recruitment of the data team lead; assessment team lead; and data

and assessment team members, with representation from schools within the district as well as community stakeholders.

Table 6

Action Plan

Goal and activities	Personnel responsible	Start date	End date
Goal 1: Assemble team			
Hire equity chief	School Board, superintendent	08/31/21	10/15/21
Recruit community members	Equity chief	10/15/21	11/12/21
Recruit district employees	Equity chief	10/15/21	11/12/21
Set norms, timeline, expectations	Equity chief	11/15/21	12/17/21
Goal 2: Train team			
Overview of project; gather team input	Data team members	01/03/22	01/07/22
Review demographic data	Data lead	01/03/22	01/07/22
Survey members, assess skill set	Data lead	01/03/22	01/07/22
Assessment training	Data lead	01/17/22	01/28/22
Facilitator training	Assessment team lead	01/17/22	01/28/22
Goal 3: Collect data			
Assess students	Assessment team	02/07/22	02/11/22
Survey building staff	Data lead	02/07/22	02/11/22
Survey families	Assessment team	02/07/22	02/11/22
Data mining (district-collected data)	Data lead	02/07/22	02/11/22
Review data	Data/assessment lead	02/14/22	02/18/22
Goal 4: Implement intervention, measure impact			
Set criteria for intervention	Data & assessment team	02/21/22	02/25/22
Identify trends in schools	Data & assessment team	02/21/22	02/25/22
Create action plan by school	Data & assessment team	02/28/22	03/04/22
Implement interventions	Data & assessment team	03/07/22	05/20/22
Measure progress, reports to schools, remediation plans	Data & assessment team	05/23/22	08/31/22

Assembling a team with stakeholder representation from school buildings and the community can lead to increased effectiveness of interventions because this system allows collaboration and accountability measures beyond the school setting (Cruze & López, 2020; Wang, 2018). The initial team meetings will be focused on setting meeting norms, timelines, and outcome expectations.

Team trainings should include an overview of the project, gathering team input, reviewing district-wide demographic data, assessing team-member skill set, and team-specific training (Garner et al., 2017). The primary objective during this period is to critically analyze data collected to design interventions aligned with the specific needs of this school district to support and sustain the global implementation of equitable practices. According to research (Cruze & López, 2020; Riordan et al., 2019), staff training is a critical first step when embarking on equity work within schools. To begin the process, team members will be assessed and trained to ensure each member is comfortable supporting building staff and conducting objective data analysis related to equitable practices within the school district. Equity work can be uncomfortable for teachers and leadership because it involves taking personal risks and examining personal bias that may interfere with student learning (Samuels, 2018). The assessment lead and the data team lead will review team member surveys and align training to support the unique needs of the team.

Once the team is assembled and trained, data will be collected to establish a baseline for the school district. As noted in the research (Garner et al., 2017), data analysis should inform pedagogical practice rather than focus on student deficit because test-based policies increase pressure on teachers to increase test scores rather than inform

practice. Data collected should include a staff survey, community stakeholder survey, district-collected data, and observational data utilizing a checklist. A comprehensive review of the data is an effective tool to prioritize interventions and rank buildings and classrooms to target remediation efforts (Henson, 2017; Park, 2018). A weekly data and assessment team meeting should occur to ensure fidelity of implementation while taking data and tracking progress.

Finally, a goal is set to both implement plans and assess impact in order to adjust practice routinely based on data. The team can utilize data collected to identify schools or classrooms with significant variances and begin planning collaboratively with the school teams to remediate and support pedagogy. Establishing a collaborative and transparent relationship with building stakeholders has been proven effective in the school setting (Morrell, 2017; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). Equity team staff should be prepared to work collaboratively at the building and classroom levels. As seen in Park (2018), triangulation of data with school team members is highly effective when addressing equity and remediating pedagogical practice. This process supports data-based inquiry of all team members by challenging participants to evaluate their data alongside other measures and articulate assumptions about student learning.

Data reviews should be transparent and include leadership while encouraging a strengths-based mindset to ensure implementation fidelity (Oakes et al., 2017; Penuel, 2019). These data will be reviewed with all stakeholders at the end of each progress reporting period, beginning June 2022. Involving community stakeholders in the data review process is aligned with better outcomes (Gullo, 2018; Penuel, 2019). Criteria for success should include improved student engagement and achievement, improved

community stakeholder sentiment, improved teacher sentiment, and improved use of classroom scores. Progress monitoring will then move to the months of October, March, and June following each district-wide progress reporting period.

Timeline

     The timeline was developed to allow for adequate staffing, training, and analysis of baseline data noted in Table 6. Although the initial startup of the project requires extensive time preparing for the implementation phase in the initial year, once implemented, data analysis can be done each trimester. This process ensures the project can be sustained from year to year by clearly establishing expectations and data collection procedures that can be implemented globally. Based on previous studies utilizing comprehensive data analysis (Schildkamp, 2019; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016), the data collected will be analyzed for progress based on student achievement, community survey and comment, staff sentiment, and equity checklist scores. Once the data are summarized, the team will begin work on the next remediation cycle to be implemented the following school year.

Roles and Responsibilities

     Utilizing an equity intervention team is becoming common in school districts around the country. This may be due to the growing body of evidence suggesting that the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2002) may be ineffective because practices are deficit based. The deficit-based approach along with being punitive may motivate educators to teach to test scores rather than meeting the needs of students (Garner et al., 2017). Previous research related to implementation of equitable practices in schools has supported the use of global interventions initiated at the district level (Oakes et al., 2017;

Penuel, 2019; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). This plan includes establishing a team composed of community stakeholders, leaders, and building stakeholders; implementing collaboratively; and establishing infrastructure to address equity within schools.

The school board will work to ensure community voice is represented as well as to receive public comment on the implementation of the plan. As evidenced in Heinze and Zdroik (2018) and DeMatthews et al. (2017), the school board can make policy changes aligned with the mission, vision, and values of an organization. Whereas equity is somewhat broad compared to a change in sports fees, as described by those researchers, equity was achieved for students based on a collaborative effort between the superintendent, the community, and the school board. To facilitate community voice, time will be allotted at the end of each trimester to review the equity intervention data during the school board meeting. The process of reviewing the information during a public meeting supports collaboration and ensures a potential feedback cycle from the community stakeholders (Jacobs et al., 2014).

The school superintendent role is to ensure all team members are trained and supported while engaging in the practice of data analysis and remediation. This work is most effectively done when equity staff members report directly to the superintendent while creating an infrastructure for teaching staff (Penuel, 2019). The temperament and previous experience of the school superintendent can influence the implementation of equitable practice, as empathy is tied to effectiveness (DeMatthews et al., 2017). Fortunately, the current superintendent has personal experience in this school district as a student, staff member, and now parent and has experienced inequitable practices throughout the district. The superintendent will collaborate with community leaders, the

school board, and the equity chief to ensure community voice is consistently incorporated into the district practices.

The equity chief will set the tone for the program. Leaning into the collaborative process based on research (Goodman et al., 2011; Jacobs et al., 2014), the equity chief should be adept at ensuring that all voices are heard. The equity chief will report progress to and collaborate with building staff, building leadership, the data intervention team, and the superintendent to work toward global implementation of practice and remediation. As noted in the literature (Jacobs et al., 2014), this staff member also must make a concerted effort to create relationships not only with the team members but also with building staff to support implementation.

The data team lead and data team members will ensure that the data collected are summarized for review by the team. Methods utilizing data collection support global implementation because large volumes of data can be effectively and efficiently analyzed (Garner et al., 2017; Rosenquist et al., 2015). These roles will require skills in data mining, data analysis, and data summary. The team lead should have excellent organizational skills to summarize the information for presentation to team members and building leaders. These positions also will require knowledge in teacher training and equitable practices. The data team members will analyze data collected by the assessment team, teacher surveys, community surveys, and other relevant data summarized by the data team lead. This team will engage in collaborative conversations with the assessment team to analyze data and to define and implement intervention strategies.

The assessment team lead and assessment team members will ensure observation and academic data are collected with fidelity but utilizing resources selected by the team.

Along with this responsibility, the team lead will support design and implementation of assessment based on best practice. Utilization of research-based assessments to identify students at risk can mitigate deficits in skill (Henson, 2017). The purpose of utilizing an assessment team lead and assessment members to conduct progress monitoring, equity audits, and community surveys is related to accountability measures and remediation. Research has shown that allowing those accountable for the data, such as building leaders and individual teachers, to provide the data can result in intentional or unintentional skewed positive bias. In this role the instructional team lead will be responsible for summarizing instructional practices that support global implementation using an equity checklist. This process supports the infrastructure within schools needed to implement equitable practice (Penuel, 2019). A current weakness in this district is the relationship between the district office personnel and the building staff in the classrooms. The instructional facilitator should actively engage teachers using a strengths-based collaborative approach as practices are reviewed and remediated (Jacobs et al., 2014). Initial function could be to review teacher self-assessment data and build on reported strengths, differentiating coaching based on teacher skills.

The assessment team member will have the most contact with classroom teams. Assessment can serve to alert staff to trends within school and classrooms (Henson, 2017). The team members will support the team by gathering assessment data in targeted classrooms and schools. The data will be used to establish a baseline in each classroom as well as assess progress with interventions. The team member will have direct contact with teachers and students in the buildings and should be adept at creating a positive strengths-based approach to assessment and interventions. The assessment team members

should include stakeholders from the district and the community. The team members will support classroom teachers as they implement new practices based on data team recommendations. As research has supported the use of the professional learning community as a teaching and data analysis tool for building staff (Schildkamp, 2019), the team member could offer to join this collaborative time and offer coaching. This role is a supportive position, again using a strengths-based approach and encouraging collaboration while supporting a cohesive set of interventions. To be effective, this team member should be adept at taking and giving productive feedback and engaging staff in collaborative conversations related to equity (Jacobs et al., 2014). For this school district to engage teachers in a global change of practice, support staff must be motived to engage in the process.

Resources

This plan is based on funds being available to support a new program at the district level. Initial funding would be needed to hire the equity director position. This is a new position for the study school district. The average salary for director of equity positions in two neighboring districts is $136,000 annually ("Washington Teacher Salary Database," 2019). Stipends for internal staff could be covered utilizing existing funds supporting committee work. Additional funding would be necessary to pay stipends for community members' support. The work in the summer would be limited to strategic planning between district leadership and building leadership due to teacher contracted workdays.

Various checklists and resources are available to support equity teamwork and data-based decision-making. Although purchasing data collection tools and resources

may not be necessary, each tool must be utilized as intended and acquired from a research-based source. The tools used should be a discussion point with the equity director and the team to facilitate collaboration, because long-term outcomes are associated with a collaborative approach (Morrell, 2017; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). A universal equity checklist can be used by the assessment team to evaluate classroom and building practices. A universal teacher sentiment survey will be needed to measure current teacher sentiment related to equity to gather baseline data and track progress. A universal stakeholder sentiment survey will be needed to gather baseline data on community stakeholder sentiment and monitor progress. Academic baseline data can be mined at the district level and tracked using the current practice. Student demographic data can be mined from the district database and summarized to identify additional supports needed, such as language services to meet demand, lunch and community services to address community need, demographic information to assess school attendance, and community sentiment.

Organizational Support

Currently, district leadership and the building staff have a problematic relationship. The current practice reflects top-down decision-making without connection to the individuals doing the work. This approach to leadership is not compatible with implementing a global change of practice with fidelity (Jacobs et al., 2014; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). Evidence supports implementation fidelity and sustained changes in practice occur when all stakeholders are supported and accountable for the outcomes of the organization (Yavuz, 2016). District leaders must engage and support staff in the buildings collaboratively, utilizing a strengths-based approach to increase staff

investment in outcomes (Jacobs et al., 2014). Initially, district leaders should focus on relationship building critical to implementation building to building.

Barriers or Resistance

Barriers include resistance to change of practice and skepticism of building staff, as the relationship with district staff traditionally has been top-down and directive rather than collaborative. A top-down or directive management style does not align with global changes to practice (Goodman et al., 2011; Jacobs et al., 2014). The use of district staff to report progress to the equity team could create anxiety in teaching staff, leading to a further divide. Community members may be unavailable to support the program due to restraints related to the pandemic and the budget deficit. Building leaders may be resistant to assessment and remediation planning done at the district level because they have not been sufficiently trained on authentic collaborative practice. The recommendation to the team is to address barriers in a transparent manner with each staff member while integrating intentional relationship building into practice at the district level.

Evaluation

Program evaluation will occur at the end of each fiscal year, with modifications made prior to start of the new fiscal year to allow time for training staff or making changes prior to the start of the new school year. Leaders are more effective when working collaboratively with stakeholders in the community and in schools (Yavuz, 2016). Program evaluation should include classroom observation using a research-based equity checklist, teacher and community stakeholder sentiment survey results, student assessment data, and district-collected attendance and demographic data. Evaluation also

should measure implementation fidelity to track progress toward global implementation of equitable practices. Incorporating stakeholder voice into evaluations supports more equitable programming (McClees, 2016; Yavuz, 2016). This process should be supported by a quarterly summary to the school board to encourage public comment and questions that could result in improvements to practice.

Reflection on the Overall Experience

This project highlighted the importance of utilizing a collaborative strengths-based approach when implementing any change of practice in public education. The recurring theme was fragmented process because the mission, vision, and values were not being implemented intentionally. Ensuring alignment between district and school staff involves transparency and authentic communication between educators at all levels. Relationship building and transparency are free untapped resources in this school district. Relationship building, transparency, and a positive building climate are linked to implementation fidelity (Jacobs et al., 2014) and equity (Samuels, 2018). This approach of intangible relationship building along with a systematic approach to pedagogical change must function concurrently to result in sustained global implementation of equitable pedagogical practices in this school district.

Part 8: Visual Presentation of Strategic Research Project (SRP)

Narrative of Visual Electronic Presentation

A visual presentation was made describing the SRP process (see Appendix B). Areas covered were role of the researcher, method for identifying the problem, potential solutions, strategies to accomplish solutions, evaluation of strategies, summary of chosen strategy, and action steps. The quantitative analyses used to evaluate the program were

discussed, including SWOT, IFE, EFE, and QSPM analyses. Research has demonstrated that these methods-based scoring supports identify factors that influence organizational performance (Rezazadeh et al., 2017). The overall attractiveness scores for the building-based data intervention team and centralized data intervention team were reviewed. The rationale for selecting the centralized intervention system was given based on the higher score of 4.50 and potential impact on fragmented practices within the school district. Along with the higher score, the centralized team strategy would mitigate accountability issues because teachers and building leaders would no longer be responsible for the collection of progress-monitoring data (Park, 2018).

Based on this selected intervention, the implementation plan followed a chronological order based on four critical components:

1. Establish criteria for evaluation prior to implementing an intervention.

2. Identify trends within buildings and schools that either support equity or require remediation.

3. Create an action plan and measure progress at the district level.

4. Finally, trained staff should be tasked with remediation of pedagogy from a strengths-based perspective.

As students enter classrooms with varying needs, following a process to address these needs should be based on data (Thompson & Thompson, 2018). Remediation of practice should be focused on preparing staff to teach to all learning styles with an equity lens, rather than teaching students to adapt to teaching styles.

Peer Review Questions

After reviewing each of the presentations, peers in the SRP program created a list

of questions for each presentation (see Appendix C). The 12 questions related to the

action plan in the areas of training, data collection, implementation, personnel, and

significance of the problem. Two questions were selected to address during the oral

defense of this p*r*oject. Based on previous research, personnel and leadership structures

impact outcomes in classrooms (Fetterman et al., 2020; Garner et al., 2017). The

questions were selected based on their relationship to personnel selection and leadership

structure described in the plan.

Oral Defense of the SRP

The purpose of this oral defense of the SRP is to address questions raised during

the peer review of the oral presentation of this project. Oral defense of doctoral work is

frequently conducted to examine the student's knowledge of the subject matter studied.

The oral defense is a process used to assess the qualities and confirm the skills of the

doctoral candidate (van der Heide et al., 2016). Twelve questions were submitted by

peers based on the review of the visual presentation. The questions were then reviewed

by the advising professor, who narrowed possible responses to eight questions with the

direction to formally respond to two of the eight questions during the oral defense of the

project (see Appendix D).

Narrative Defense of Selected Questions

Question 1. "What is your rationale for determining the individuals selected for

the Centralized Data Intervention Team?" To address this question, further explanation

was given related to creation of teams. The team composition and leadership selection

were based on research related to traits associated with positive outcomes in schools.

Leadership and staff knowledge of mission and values of the organization are correlated

to successful implementation of the mission (McClees, 2016). Utilizing the staff within the district based on demonstrated aptitude and commitment to equity along with stakeholders in the community follows these findings. Intentional balance of community, building, and district stakeholders is also correlated with equitable outcomes for students (Yavuz, 2016). Creating teams that represent the community and the schools increases likelihood of implementation (Fetterman et al., 2020). For these reasons, a carefully composed centralized data intervention team both mitigates bias that may occur during implementation at the building level and improves fragmentation or ineffective practices.

      Question 2. "Could you elaborate on how leadership structure would support more equitable pedagogical practices?" As evidenced in the literature (Garner et al., 2017), leadership structure and commitment to equitable practices drive implementation of organizational change. According to Garner et al. (2017), decreasing fragmentation must focus on staff practice building to building rather than on the student. A team with stakeholder representation from school buildings and the community can lead to increased effectiveness of interventions because this system allows collaboration and accountability measures beyond the school setting (Cruze & López, 2020; Wang, 2018). Collaborative practice increases when systems are aligned with shared values. The district culture must change to influence practice in the classroom. The recommendation to hire and equity chief reporting to the superintendent first step is the foundational step toward implementing equitable practices globally. A shift in sentiment is most likely to occur by utilizing collaborative efforts between all stakeholders to implement strategies that address equity (Park, 2018). Carefully selected leadership such as the equity chief along with team members focused on equity can facilitate more equitable outcomes for

students because the teaching is tailored to student need.

Part 9: Conclusion

Findings

The findings of this project are based on a review of literature combined with SWOT analysis, IFE, EFE, and a QSPM matrix. A plan to increase equitable practices was created to address the fragmented implementation practices related to equity and student learning identified using SWOT analysis. Utilizing both the IFE and EFE to further narrow the scope of the plan, four possible areas of focus were determined as potential targets for improvement. Quantitative data analysis conducted by a district team was identified as most effective. This choice was determined by conducting a review of recent research related to school improvement in the areas determined to be most critical in the SWOT, IFE, and EFE.

Leadership at the district level is responsible for implementation and monitoring of practices that lead to equitable pedagogical practices that enhance student learning. Engaging staff authentically with stakeholder support and accountability improves outcomes for students (Yavuz, 2016). Attention should be paid to student and community characteristics that may influence practice. The focus on practice rather than student performance can greatly improve equity in schools, but student characteristics that negatively impact student success, such as socioeconomic status, attendance, and presence of a disability, should be considered in plans to remediate practices (Goodman et al., 2011; Henson, 2017). When leadership is authentically involved in implementation and accountability measures are developed and monitored at the district level with a variety of stakeholders, outcomes are better for all students (Yavuz, 2016).

This project revealed that combining the global implementation of practice and developing an equity leadership position could be an effective strategy for addressing the problem of fragmented implementation of equitable practices in this school district. The research (Rosenquist et al., 2015) suggested centralizing analysis allows leaders to target areas with greatest need and implement interventions. In this district, combining the use of parent survey data, teacher self-efficacy data related to equitable practice, and student assessment data and incorporating community voice could improve practices.

Recommendations

The research related to the appointment of equity chief has shown promise (Cruze & López, 2020). Further study is recommended to compare results and implementation strategies of districts in surrounding cities within the county with similar demographics and plans already in place to do a comparative analysis. This comparative analysis could support improvement in this district's practices related to implementation and data use. Another potential limitation of this plan is related the unaddressed issue of alignment of staffing with the demographic composition of in the district. As previously stated, congruency between staff and student ethnicity has been shown to increase student success (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018; Rasheed et al., 2020). Additional investigation in this area could include a plan to recruit and retain staff on the data intervention teams to reflect the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity within the community.

Final Conclusions

Leadership temperament and commitment to equitable practices have a tremendous impact on implementation of a strategic plan focused on improving practices

rather than student deficit. Conversations related to equity are at times difficult to navigate because they involve a great deal of staff vulnerability (Morrell, 2017; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016). Leaders need to be empathetic to the needs of students, families, and community members and approach change of practice and pedagogical remediation from a strengths-based approach. When leaders are authentically involved in implementation and accountability measures are developed and monitored at the district level with a variety of stakeholders, outcomes are better for all students (Alegre et al., 2018; Gurley et al., 2015). This practice facilitates alignment of district practices and stakeholder needs.

Recent research (Garner et al., 2017; Rosenquist et al., 2015) has supported the focus on practice rather than remediation. This project revealed that combining the global implementation of practice and equity leadership could be an effective strategy for addressing the problem of fragmented implementation of equitable practices in this school district. Centralizing analysis allows leadership to target areas with greatest need and respond more efficiently using data (Schildkamp, 2019). Since the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the focus on student deficit rather than on practice has perpetuated inequitable conditions in public education (Garner et al., 2017). Based on the evidence provided in this analysis, this district could see a significant increase in global implementation of practices by implementing the outlined plan focused on a strengths-based approach to remediation of pedagogy rather than an approach focused on student deficit.

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Appendix A

School District Mission, Priorities, Core Values

MISSION

Each student graduating with options and prepared to participate fully in our democracy.

CORE VALUES

SERVICE | EXCELLENCE | EQUITY

Mission

Each student graduating with options and prepared to participate fully in our democracy.

SERVICE

EXCELLENCE

EQUITY

2020-2021 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Family & Community Engagement
- Partner with families and our community during in-home learning and transition to in-person learning

Excellence in Learning & Teaching
- Implement inclusive and differentiated teaching practices that promote equitable learning opportunities for all students
- Enhance in-home learning and teaching to better meet students' educational needs

Removing Barriers & Supporting Students
- Support students in developing their social-emotional skills to increase meaningful learning and engagement in the school community
- Support families by providing resources needed for in-home learning
- Employ the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and tool to empower critical conversations about equity and spur meaningful action

Appendix B

Visual Presentation

Visual Presentation
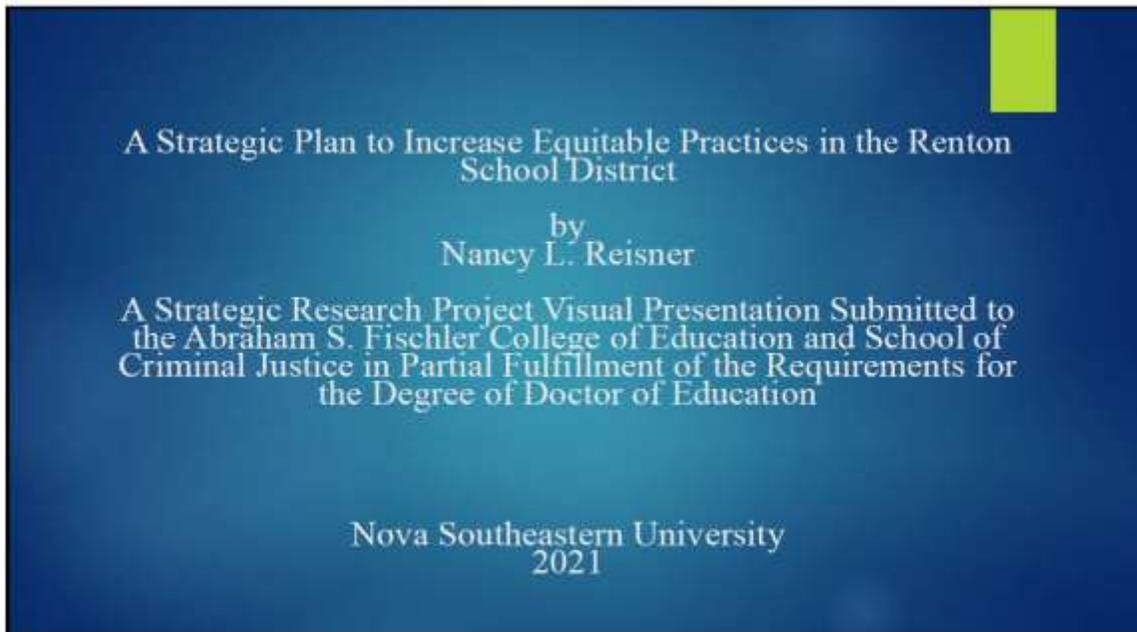
A Strategic Plan to Increase Equitable Practices in the Renton School District

by
Nancy L. Reisner

A Strategic Research Project Visual Presentation Submitted to the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova Southeastern University
2021

1
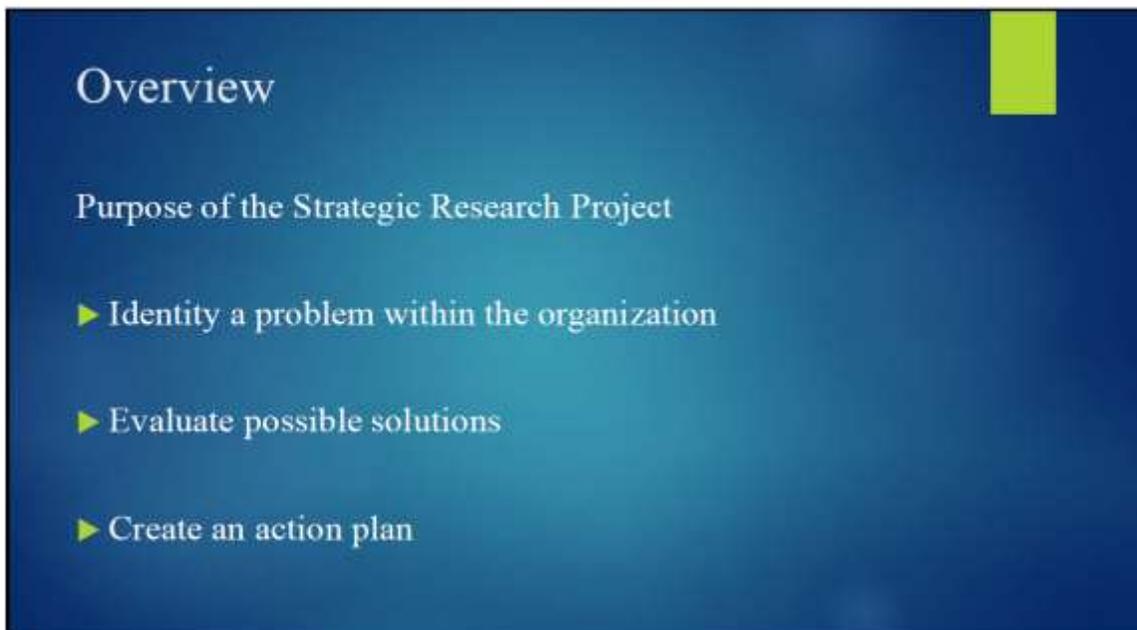
Overview

Purpose of the Strategic Research Project

► Identify a problem within the organization

► Evaluate possible solutions

► Create an action plan

2

Researcher Role

- I am a certificated special education teacher working in the study school district.

- I currently teach preschool and extended day for students with disabilities.

- I have also taught in an elementary school setting as a resource room teacher.

- I spent my 1st year in a self-contained classroom teaching kindergarten through fifth grade and became curious about equity in public education.

Identifying the Problem

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

- Internal and External Evaluation Matrix

- *Problem Statement:* The fragmented execution of equitable pedagogical practices within the school district is negatively impacting student learning.

4

Identifying the Potential Solutions

▶ Teacher training

▶ Leadership Structure

▶ Implementation Fidelity

▶ Quantitative Measurement of Outcomes

5

Choosing a Solution and Rationale

Quantitative
Measurement
of Outcomes

➢ District has 12M deficit based on levy funding changes.

➢ Method improves equitable practices globally at a relatively low cost.

➢ This approach supports research-based recommendations to address equity globally (Garner et al., 2017; Rosenquist et al., 2015).

6

Strategies to accomplish solution

Building-Based Intervention

- Effective strategy to shore up processes within buildings.

- Building staff committed to mission and values which can have an impact on practice (Alegre et al., 2018; McClees, 2016).

- Building teams engaged in effective collaborative practices can result in positive outcomes (Jacobs et al., 2014; Soria & Ginsberg, 2016).

Centralized Intervention

- Centralized teams may lead to a more cohesive implementation of the overall mission.

- Effective strategy to shore up processes within buildings.

- Accountability issues are mitigated because teachers and building leaders would no longer be responsible for the collection of progress-monitoring data (Park 2018).

7

Evaluation of Strategies

Quantitative Strategic Plan Matrix (QSPM)

- The QSPM is a tool used to support organizational strategic planning by ranking of attractiveness of potential solutions to problems within an organization.

- The comparative analysis is effective because solutions are evaluated relative to peripheral factors influencing organizational performance (Rezazadeh et al., 2017).

- Building-based Data Intervention Team Attractiveness Score: 3.21

- Centralized Data Intervention Team Attractiveness Score: 4.50.

8

Summary of chosen strategy

Centralized Data Intervention
Attractiveness Score: 4.50.

▶ Supports implementation procedures aligned across the district and training with ongoing support for data teams at the building level.

▶ Focused on practice and strengths-based remediation

▶ The use of research-based partnerships does support equity when focused on problems of practice rather than student deficit (Garner et al., 2017; Rosenquist et al., 2015).

9

Action Steps

➤ Goal 1 – Assemble Team

➤ Goal 2 – Train Team

➤ Goal 3 – Collect Data

➤ Goal 4 – Implement/Measure Impact

10

Action Steps – Goal 1

Assemble Team

➢ Hire Equity Chief

➢ Recruit Stakeholders

➢ Recruit District Employees

➢ Set Team Norms

11

Action Steps – Goal 2

Train Team

➢ Review project

➢ Review demographic data

➢ Survey intervention team

➢ Train intervention team

12

13

14

Appendix C

Peer Questions From SRP Presentation Review

Peer Questions From SRP Presentation Review

1. Explain why you think the 12-month process will improve equity in your organization.

2. What would you propose for types of questions to survey families during the data collection process?

3. What is your rationale for determining the individuals selected for the Centralized Data Intervention Team?

4. How will you incentivize stakeholder and district employee participation in order to achieve representation within buildings that may not be promoting equitable practices?

5. Who is the final decision maker for hiring an equity chief? Is there a contingency plan, should the district decide against a new hire (thinking about the large financial deficit previously identified within the district)?

6. Do you anticipate developing individual action plans for each building? Or do you anticipate identifying a common equitability issue across multiple buildings and addressing one issue at a time until the district as a whole is deemed acceptable?

7. How did your problem rate in comparison to the other strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in your SWOT analysis?

8. Could you elaborate on how leadership structure would support more equitable pedagogical practices?

9. Who would be responsible for hiring positions such as an equity chief, and what responsibilities would this position encompass?

10. How would the equity chief position be funded, and do you foresee this as a
    barrier?

11. How would the teams be comprised, and how would you recruit stakeholders?
    Are there incentives?

12. What would be included in the trainings and what would that timeline be?

Appendix D

Oral Defense Visual Presentation

Oral Defense Visual Presentation

SRP 9001 – Oral Defense

Nova Southeastern University
2021

Questions

▶ What is your rationale for determining the individuals selected for the Centralized Data Intervention Team?

▶ Could you elaborate on how leadership structure would support more equitable pedagogical practices?

Rationale for Selection

What is your rationale for determining the individuals selected for the Centralized Data Intervention Team?

➤ Knowledge of mission and values of the organization (McClees, 2016)

➤ Intentional balance of community, building and district stakeholders (Yavuz, 2016)

➤ Increases likelihood of implementation (Fetterman, 2016)

Leadership Structure

Could you elaborate on how leadership structure would support more equitable pedagogical practices?

➤ Aligns with research related to equity (Garner et al., 2017)

➤ Increases collaboration and accountability (Cruze & López, 2020; Wang, 2018)

➤ Increases likelihood of global implementation (Park, 2018)

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